

Signs of the Times

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IMPORTANT NOTICE

As of January 1st 2001, please address all letters for this paper containing subscriptions and remittances to:

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Elder J.R. Williams has asked to be relieved of his duties as of the above date. On behalf of all the board members and all the friends of this paper, we want to thank Elder Williams for a job well done. We expect Elder Williams to remain as president & chairman of the board of Trustees. Elder Williams has served as a trustee and as Secretary and Treasurer since 1977. He became circulation manager in 1979 and has served as president and joint editor with Elder Key since 1983.

As we express our thanks again for the untiring efforts of Elder Williams, we want to thank Elder Terry for his acceptance to carry on the work of Circulation Manager and Treasurer and we look forward to working with him in the future.

Elder Kenneth R. Key

CONTENTS

EDITORIAL	2
Elder R.H. Campbell	
ARTICLES	8
Elder J.B. Farmer	
VOICES OF THE PAST	12
Elder Silas H. Durand	
Joseph Ford	
CONTRIBUTIONS	24

EDITORIAL



Elder R.H. Campbell

Faith is the substance of things hoped for, evidence of things not seen.

I have read the above scripture many times, and each time I have wondered just what it meant. I know what it says, but what is the real every day meaning of it. I read it the other day, as I had many times in the past and was thinking about what it could actually mean, and as I did this thought came to mind; faith is the manifestation of the Spirit of God in the lives of his

children. The Spirit is manifested in their lives as they are led and directed to fulfill the purposes that he has for them here in this time world, and they are unaware of its presence because it comes sovereignly and takes up its abode within them and they walk in a different path. The spirit is what produces the faith that his children have and faith is what motivates them to believe, enables them to understand the things of the Spirit and to do all of the other things that they do in the name of Christ and for his sake, whether under the law dispensation, or in the gospel day.

The Spirit was manifested in the lives of the Israelites, under the law, and directed them all the days of their life, but not in the same manner that it does the saints, in the gospel day. Under the law they were given priests to be a go between, God and the people; now Christ is the high priest and just before his death he told the disciples that he would send the Spirit which indwells man and leads him in ways that are pleasing unto God, but, it is by faith in either case. Under the law God gave them the gift of faith which caused them to follow those whom he had sent to lead them, but their faith was in God, not in the law, because they feared God. As when he spoke to them from the mount and they saw the fire and smoke and exceedingly feared the fire and smoke and the loud sounds and asked God to speak to Moses and

let Moses speak to them as regarding the oracles of the law. They performed the miracles and manifested their faith even as the apostles did before the day of Pentecost; by God giving them a special dispensation of power as he did when he sent them out to preach, but the Spirit did not indwell them until the day of Pentecost when they responded and fulfilled the prophecy of Joel as he spoke concerning this day.

Faith is what leads the saints in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake, it is that which enables them to persevere in the times of adversity, that which strengthens them in times of weakness and causes them to stand against the distressing wiles of the devil: whether it be lions, fiery furnaces, pharaohs or any of the other natural fears and weaknesses of the flesh when it is faced with the temptations that confront them in this world of sin. This world is Satan's domain, in which he wields havoc with the saints, in his war against God and all that is holy and good, but he does not destroy one of these little ones, with all of his fury. Faith is the armour which God provides for the chosen generation in their war against principalities and powers of this earth, and against the spiritual wickedness in high places. This armour can withstand the strongest onslaught of Satan because even he is under the dominion of God, and in all of his raging is but fulfilling the will of God, as are all of the other forces in existence.

Since faith is the manifestation of the Spirit in the saints, and they are the chosen generation, Satan is powerless to do anything but disturb, harass and afflict them. He can never destroy a single one of the saints because greater is the Spirit that is within them, than the spirit that is within Satan and all of his unholy angels; and this is because God, in mercy, has determined that it should be that way, to cause them to turn to him in faith.

Faith is bestowed upon the saints of God to make manifest that they are his very special beloved, the ones he had chosen before the foundation of the world as his own; he formed them for himself, named them, and promised that he would never leave nor forsake them. He has loved them with an everlasting love, and faith is the indestructible bond that assures them that they shall never fail nor finally fall away, regardless of the weakness and frailty of the natural man. By faith, David slew Goliath, when but a lad, by faith Abraham believed God and left his former life and country and went to seek the country that God had promised that he would possess; by faith Moses forsook Egypt not fearing the wrath of the king, looking to him that is invisible: kept the Passover and by faith led the children out of Egypt and to the borders of the land of Canaan. All of these examples of faith are demonstrated in the children of God, and are but the substance of the things hoped for, the great cloud of wit-

nesses that encompasses them, comforts and encourages them in their journey here in time, all are evidences of the working of the invisible spirit that was directing their way. They do not understand, nor can they explain this faith to anyone, other than to say that it is not of an earthly origin because the things that it causes them to believe defies all natural laws and reasoning and yet they cannot deny the existence of them.

Faith caused David to reply to his brother, when he reprimanded him for coming to the battlefield by saying, what I have now done, is there not a cause. I don't believe that even David understood the reason of this reply; even as the prophets who prophesied of the grace that was to come to us; they were searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify. God is the author of all scriptural truth, and is the instigator or motivator of all events, which come to pass, even though the prophets, or David, uttered the words or performed the deeds.

Israel had been given evidence of the Messiah that was to come for many generations, prophecies concerning the things that he would do in behalf of the chosen nation, and yet when all of the things that were foretold were fulfilled in their presence, they did not recognize him. This too, was in the plan of God from the beginning, even as sin and all of the other pitfalls that were placed in their path, they were ultimately for

their good and were to teach them and cause them to turn to him in times of trouble, for he is the only source of help in their time of need, and this all because of this faith that Gods gives to the saints.

Through faith they understand the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear. Now this precept is foolishness to the natural mind, as are all of the other miracles described in the scriptures; as Elder Ramar L. Biggs, a former pastor of the Bordeaux Church used to say, the truth is not reasonable, it defies all of the logic of man, yet, by faith, the saints of God believe that the miracles were actual events which occurred as described. After all, the greatest event that shall ever occur is the greatest of all miracles and all of the saints depend on the authenticity of that miracle for their hope of eternal life. Some people will say that they don't believe in predestination, and my reply has always been, *"Well you had better believe in it, because only by absolute predestination of all things do you have any assurance whatsoever that there will be a heaven and immortal glory to hope for, in the end of the ages."* The scriptures declare that there shall be, and the very foundation of the plan of salvation depends on the author of the scriptures being able to perform that which he has promised and to do all that he has promised that he would do, and faith in the individual, is

what enables him to believe that God is able, and shall do everything that he has promised to do, without the omission of a single event. If one event is omitted, it might be, "that heaven" that is prepared for them that worship God, and if that be the case, what is the point of it all? It must all be there for it to be the work of a sovereign, all powerful God who created the heavens and the earth and who said, my counsel shall stand and I will do all of my pleasure.

Paul said by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God, and this is from the beginning to the end, and it never fails; as is recorded in (Isa. Chap 46, vs. 11) "yea, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass: I have purposed it, I will also do it." It is not of the creature, but is the work of God in bringing every heir of promise into the fold, and it is in a way and manner that causes them all to acknowledge their unworthiness of this gift and to declare, with Paul, that though they feel to be the chiefest of sinners, the longsuffering of God was extended to them in their lost and sinful condition, raised them up and blesses them to sit together, with their brethren, in these heavenly places, where they can worship him in spirit and in truth, from a pure heart.

Able offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain because it was offered in faith; he was but returning unto God a small portion of that which God had given

him, as an expression of his love, to show his appreciation for his many blessings, and to praise and honor his most holy name. God had respect unto Abel and his offering because it came forth from the heart that had been touched, and blessed to see the glory of the kingdom of heaven. By this faith he was impressed to shew forth his love in this manner. It was not of duty, but from an humble and contrite heart, as he was made to realize what he was in nature, as compared to what he should be before a Holy and Just creator. This knowledge comes by the revelation that is given with the faith when received; it is not engraved on tables of stone but on the fleshly tables of the heart, and cannot be erased.

By faith, the elders obtained a good report, and this is referring to all of the holy men of old who spake and responded as they were moved by the Holy Ghost to perform great deeds of valour as God worked in them both to will and to do of his good pleasure. They were, but men, as are all of the saints of God, but faith makes the difference in what man can do in nature and what he can do by grace; as Paul said, (Phil Chap 4, vs. 13) "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." and faith is this strengthening power of Christ being made manifest in the lives of his children. Faith enabled David to face Goliath, Daniel to face the lions den, the three Hebrew children the fiery furnace, Moses to face Pharaoh, and

untold millions to suffer persecution at the hands of the world's, so called, religious leaders and the rulers of the nations but they have never been overcome yet. They may die, but, just as Christ who triumphed in his death, so do they, there is no recorded incident in the scriptures where the powers of Satan overcame the power of God in the salvation of one of the saints, and he never shall. In the world they shall suffer tribulations, but, even as Christ overcame the world, so shall they. They shall triumph and reign with him in glory in that place that he has gone to prepare for them, and as he told them to be of good cheer because he had overcome the world; well, he overcame it for them and their faith gave them the knowledge of that fact.

(Eph. Chap 2, vs. 8) *"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."* How then is this grace given, and how is it received by man, we have stated that it is by the grace of God, so the creature is not involved in the process, except as the receiver of a gracious gift, which is bestowed upon him by the sovereign and irresistible grace of God. The man is completely unaware of the circumstances surrounding the gift, and can only wonder in amazement that it has been bestowed upon him, after he has been made to realize what he actually is in nature. In the flesh he would have said, I am entitled to it as much

as anyone else, I am as good as the next person, but by the grace that accompanies the gift he cries," Oh woe is me, I am undone, I am not worthy of this gift that has been given me, and his heart overflows with gratitude and thanksgiving unto the giver of the gracious and precious favor that has been shown him.

(Job Chap 33, vs. 14-17) *"For God speaketh once, yea twice, yet man perceiveth it not. In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men, in slumberings upon the bed; then he openeth the ears of men, and sealeth their instruction, that he may withdraw man from his purpose, and hide pride from man."* This scripture indicates that God alone is the author and the finisher of faith in man, he speaks to them and seals their instructions and they respond without even realizing when and where the faith which was imparted to them came from, until it is revealed unto them. They go to bed without it and wake up with it. This is, of course, over simplifying it but nevertheless all of the imparting of faith unto man is the work of God, they didn't have, now they do.

The apostle Paul started from Jerusalem professing the Jewish faith and arrived in Damascus a believer in Christ and all that Paul did was to be at the place of the appointment, of God, which was made before time began, and of which he was completely ignorant. Paul did not see it coming, and did nothing

to assist or deter the giving or the receiving of this faith, and so it is with all men. As Job said above, he does it this way, to withdraw man from his purpose and so that man has nothing to boast of in the work. Isn't this the same as the apostle Paul stated in Ephesians, by grace are ye saved through faith, not of works lest any should boast.

Yes, faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of future things not seen, as yet. It is the most precious of the gifts of God to his children because, it in fact, encompasses all of their dreams and desires and causes them to ever be found pressing on to the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus, even though they cannot see nor prove it to someone else, that is unfamiliar with the process. It is however stamped indelibly in their minds and will influence them as long as they live in this world. It is a special gift of love to them from their heavenly Father, even as the coat of many colors which Jacob gave unto Joseph, and in like manner is a mark that they are of the most beloved of the Father.

By faith, they live, move and have their being in this world, and by faith they shall overcome and have their being in that world which is to come; that high abode of the angels where all mystery will be ended, they shall see God, face to face, know as they are known, and rejoice in a way and manner that they have never done before. Here they have the shadow, there they

will have the actual substance. Faith will be but a memory of their earthly existence, for they will have the fulness of the things hoped for here in time, but til then, they will cling to this faith because it is the only real treasure that they have in these earthen vessels, which is where they must dwell, until the time appointed of the Father. Then will be the time when He comes to take his jewels home, to adorn that holy city the new Jerusalem, to the eternal honor and glory of his holy name. Faith, is the eye by which the saints of God see and understand the certainty and sure reality of these things that are to be theirs in that day, while they are still here in this time world.

Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the spiritual knowledge that is given to every heir of grace, to see the things that are unseen by the natural eye, but which are more real and present in their spiritual eye and mind than the things that are visible to them here in nature. The things that they view here with the natural eye are temporal, but these things are eternal, and the possession of this knowledge is worth more, to them, than all of the wealth of the world combined. Faith is their key to that city; that new Jerusalem, which shall come down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband, the most precious of all the blessings of time and eternity, unto the children of the heavenly king. All of these things were prepared for them before time began, were preserved in Christ

Jesus until the time of the end, at which time all mysteries shall be revealed and the fullness of the glory of God shall be known unto all of the saints. The grandeur and glory of these things cannot even be imagined with the natural mind, but they are the inheritance of the saints that is laid up for them when time shall be no more, and heaven shall ring with the songs of praise from the hearts of the saints who were redeemed by the precious blood of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, their elder brother.

In bonds of love;
Richard H. Campbell

NOTICE

Dear subscribers of the *Signs of the Times*. I was elected to the board of trustees in 1982. It has been a real pleasure to serve for this worth while cause. I consider it an honor to be asked to take the duties of the circulation manager. I look forward to working with Elder Key and the board in the future. I ask for your patience and forbearance as we carry on in the years to come.

Wm. Hale Terry

ARTICLES

“And when the queen of Sheba heard of the fame of Solomon concerning the name of the Lord, she came to prove him with hard questions.” 1 Kings 10:1.

Is it not a wonderful thing that the God of heaven and earth has been so kind and gracious to leave on record the details of His dealings with his people? We are taught that these things have been preserved and delivered to us for our learning and comfort. Also, that these things are veiled or hidden from the natural man (the wise and prudent) but revealed to His people (babes) as it has pleased Him to do. All of God’s things are in a mystery. They are presented in a true historical format but indicate much more than what appears to the natural eye. Very particular things are stated in very particular words which have great meaning to all who are blessed to see and hear and understand. To the rest they are hidden.

This account of Solomon and the queen of Sheba speaks volumes about the Lord of glory and His blessed and beloved people. If the Lord be pleased, may He make plain unto us a little of His great truth. First of all we are told the queen of Sheba heard of the fame of Solomon concerning the name of the Lord. *“But as it is written, eye hath*

not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man (natural man) the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him. But God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit: For the spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God." 1 Cor. 2:9-10. Job said "I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee." Job 42:5. God's people are made to hear of Him and are even given to see him by the eye of faith as He makes Himself known unto them.

"She came to Jerusalem with a very great train..." "But ye are come unto mount Zion, 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 Able." Heb. 12:22-24. She did not come there of the will of the flesh but was drawn there by love and loving kindness. "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. Does not her great train indicate that she came with all her heart and mind and soul?

"She came to prove him with hard questions." "She communed with him of all that was in her heart." How full of questions are God's little ones. How did this universe and world come into being? And for what purpose? Why are we here? What kind of creature am I? Why did the God of all power and wisdom and goodness condescend to save sinful worms of the dust? There is no end of questions while we are in this sinful world and are enabled only to see through a glass darkly. God's children are in constant communication with Him as the Spirit leads them begging for wisdom and understanding, sometimes with groanings which cannot be uttered.

"And Solomon told her all her questions: there was not anything withheld from the king, which he told her not." We know that there are many things which are too wonderful for us to know now, but there is a day coming when we shall see face to face and will know even as we are known. However, God is merciful and answers all our questions according to our needs. "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him." James 1:5. Our God is not limited in any way. He made all things for His pleasure. He upholds all things by the word of His power. He works all things together for good to them that love Him to them that are the called according to His purpose. He

works all things after the counsel of His own will. His knowledge and wisdom is unsearchable.

“And when the queen of Sheba had seen all Solomon’s wisdom, and the house that he had built, and the meat of his table, and the sitting of his servants, and the attendance of his ministers, and their apparel, and his cupbearers, and his ascent by which he went up unto the house of the Lord; there was no more spirit in her.”

“For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent. Where is the wise? Where is the scribe? Where is the disputer of this world? Hath not God made foolish the wisdom of this world? For after that in the wisdom of God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. For the Jews require a sign, and the Greeks seek after wisdom: but we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling block, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God. Because the foolishness of God is wiser than men. And the weakness of God is stronger than men.”

The house that God has built is not of this earth. *“For we know that if our earthly house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we*

have a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven.” 2 Cor. 5:1-2.

The spiritual meat or food which the inward man desires is not of this earth but is from heaven. Jesus said *“I am that bread of life. Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead. This is the bread which came down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world.”* John 6:48-51. God has prepared a table for His people in the presence of their enemies which the world has no desire or right to partake of.

God’s servants are made to sit and to rest from all their labors trusting in the finished work of His salvation. Jesus said *“Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and you shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”* Matt. 11:28-29.

The attendance or standing of God’s ministers is not in the strength of the flesh but in the power of God. The inspired apostle wrote, *“And I, brethren, when I*

came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified, And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and much trembling. And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God." 1 Cor. 2:1-5

The apparel of the saints is not the righteousness of the flesh but rather is the imputed righteousness of Christ. Isaiah said "*All our righteousnesses are as filthy rags.*" Here is the vision that John saw, "*And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they? And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said unto me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.*"

The cupbearers are those which cause God's people to drink. The saints will not drink of the wine of the wrath of God but will rather drink of the wine of joy with the Lord in Glory. Jesus said at the last supper, "*But this I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until the day*

when I drink it new in my Father's kingdom." Matt. 26:29. The children of the kingdom drink His blood. They receive and believe that His blood has atoned for all their sins and has washed them and made them whiter than snow.

When the queen of Sheba saw the ascent of Solomon as he went up unto the house of the Lord there was no more spirit in her. As the child of God is given a view, in the Spirit, of the Lord being raised up from the dead and when that child is made to believe that He has all power even over death, hell and the grave he becomes breathless. He is killed to this world and all its charms. He is made to have no confidence in the flesh and no hope in the righteousness of the law. The apostle Peter was inspired to say, "*Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.*" 1 Peter 1:3.

"And she said to the king, It was a true report that I heard in mine own land of thy acts and of thy wisdom. Howbeit I believed not the words, until I came, and mine eyes had seen it: and, behold, the half was not

told me: thy wisdom and prosperity exceedeth the fame which I heard." Thomas also could not believe the work of God until he was shown. The Lord was merciful unto him and came and revealed Himself to Thomas and said to him *"be not faithless but believing."* The holy apostle was given to praise God in the highest for His wisdom and power. *"Now unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we are able to ask or to think, according to the power that worketh in us, Unto Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen."* Eph. 3:20-21.

And finally the queen of Sheba said these true and inspired words which even the little ones to this day understand from a true heart as they, in the spirit, view their Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, *"Happy are thy men, happy are these thy servants, which stand continually before thee, and that hear thy wisdom. Blessed be the Lord thy God which delighted in thee, to set thee on the throne of Israel: because the Lord loved Israel for ever, therefore made he thee king, to do judgment and justice."*

Written in love, I hope.
J.B. Farmer
8-23-2000

VOICES OF THE PAST

DWELLING TOGETHER IN UNITY

"Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!"- Psalms cxxxiii. 1.

How wonderfully precious this sentence is to read; how far more precious it is to feel. It goes down into the deep places of the heart, and makes its power and effect and sweetness to be felt there, and then it goes out to all the ends of the earth and recalls the varied experiences of sorrow, condemnation, affliction and loneliness there felt by those who are now dwelling together in unity. These brethren who have now been gathered together in the name of Jesus, were first scattered to the ends of the earth. They were made to feel their need of salvation, and sought for it by the works and ways of men until they came to the end of all their earthly strength and wisdom and righteousness. Then from the end of the earth they cried unto God, who heard their cry, and made bare his holy Arm in their sight, and caused them to see the salvation of God. (Psalms lxi. 1; Isaiah lii. 10.) What a blessed season it is for these subjects of God's wonderful grace when they first find others of like experience and learn the inexpressible sweetness of gospel love and fellow-

ship. When these "ends of the earth" are first brought together how easy it seems for them to love one another; how impossible it appears that anything could occur that would cause discord or separation. It seems to the child of grace, when first breathing the fresh and fragrant air of this spiritual morning in this new gospel world, as though there is, and must be always, absolute agreement between all these dear people of God in all things, How startled and grieved, then, must each one be when he finds a difference arising between any of them, and especially when he sees in his own mind opposition arising against something said or *done* by a dear brother, and perhaps a feeling of anger stirred in his heart. Then comes a sense of opposition and a conflict within himself, against himself, which causes a feeling of astonishment and of self-aborrence in his own soul. How much each child of God has to learn through suffering before he is prepared to know in any great measure how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity. In Adam this unity is not to be found. Although all nations of men that dwell on the face of the whole earth were made of one blood, yet there is not unity either of body or mind among them, but infinite diversity. Unity is only found in the family of God; in Christ, and not in Adam. All of them have been born of the Spirit of God, and are, therefore, "*of one heart and of one soul.*"—*Acts iv. 32.*

But each one of those who have been born of God has still a fleshly, sinful nature, and soon must experience sadly that that which is born of the flesh is flesh still; that the fleshly nature has not been changed to a spiritual, sinless nature in the new birth, but a new, sinless nature, the divine nature, has been given and is made manifest by contending against the sinful inclinations of the carnal nature, which is "*enmity against God.*" So the apostle says: "*The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would.*"—*Gal. v. 17.* Now when one has experienced some of these bitter conflicts within himself, and has had some sad conflicts with brethren, and has known the sweetness of forgiving and being forgiven, then he begins to be able to appreciate the goodness and pleasantness of brethren dwelling together in unity. How poorly off we are when alone; how sad and sorrowful we are when separated from those we love in the Lord, but how infinitely more so when at variance and angry with them. We cannot live to ourselves alone; we need our brethren all the time; we need their help in difficulties; we need their sympathy in our trials; we need their daily experience. We are one with them in the living things of the Spirit, and we must have them in our lives as we have them in our hearts. So the apostle says, "*I beseech you that*

ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with long suffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."-Eph. iv. 1-3.

In the Spirit we are one. "Baptized by one Spirit into one body." Our spiritual desires are the same. But what a wonderful work this is, *"endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."* Because we differ from each other so greatly in the flesh, what long-suffering is necessary, what self-denial, what forbearance. Because we are one in Spirit we know that every difference must be in the flesh. But how difficult it is to allow that this difference may be in our flesh instead of in that of our brother. It is for us to decide this important thing ourselves, if the decision is that the blame is in our flesh. The grace of meekness and lowliness comes in to help us here. But if the fault is most surely with our brother, then what long-suffering is necessary, and what forbearance. We cannot insist upon the legal standard, *"An eye for an eye."* We cannot insist upon acknowledgment always, but must wait till the Spirit causes him to see and feel the wrong in himself. Forbearance! We cannot forbear where there is nothing to forbear. Sometimes one will not acknowledge the wrong that he sees in himself. Pride and a stubborn will prevent. But love tells us what to do; we must wait the Lord's

time. Forbear one another in love. Love saves the fellowship. Love insists that we wait till the Lord works meekness and tenderness of conscience in him. The bond of love and union grows stronger as we have more of these bitter struggles with our own unruly natures, and more need for the exercise in our own souls of these fruits of the Spirit. Now "we are learning how good it is, how valuable, how mutually helpful and serviceable it is for brethren to dwell together in unity, as well as how pleasant, how sweet and full of heavenly comfort and peace.

The psalmist makes a wonderful comparison here in saying that this dwelling of brethren together in unity is like the precious ointment that was poured upon Aaron's head, and went down the skirts of his garments. But this brings to the view of faith the anointing of Jesus with the Spirit of the Lord, by which he was prepared to bring all the infinite blessings of the gospel to the poor. This anointing is as the dew that descends upon the mountains of Zion, for there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life forevermore. This is the unction from the Holy One by which the saints know all things concerning the spiritual life. It is the anointing which they have received of Jesus Christ, as the apostle John declares: *"But the anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no*

lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him.”- John ii. 27. How greatly important it is that everyone of this family of God should carefully guard the unity of the Spirit, so far as it can be guarded by human effort. The apostle implies that it can be guarded in a sense, by exhorting the brethren to endeavor to keep it. It is over himself particularly that each one is to watch; it is his own words, and acts, and thoughts, and emotions, that each one is to guard; it is his own self that each one is to prove. Where each one is thus laboring with himself there will be found but little need for him to labor with any other member of the dear family. While all are in this state of mind this sacred unity is without conscious effort, kept in the bond of peace. This is dwelling together in unity.

Love is said by the apostle to be *“the bond of perfectness,”* and we are told to put it on, and to walk in it. How easy that is, at times. How easy it is to bear and forbear in the case of one we dearly love. How easy it is to forget or deny self when the welfare of a dear child is involved.

The word “good” means all that is valuable, substantial, beneficial and absolutely suitable to our need, while the word “pleasant” means all that is agreeable and gratifying to our purest, most exalted and most sacred desires. For those thus dwelling together nothing more can be wanted for this time state. They

shall be abundantly satisfied with the goodness of the Lord’s house. The longer we dwell upon the earth, and the more of trials and afflictions we endure, the more highly shall we value and prize this sweet fellowship and unity, and the more ardently shall we endeavor to keep it. The greater also will be our desire, and the more earnest our prayer, that we, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; and to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that we may be filled with all the fulness of God. (Eph. iii. 17-19.) Whatever we do, and say, and comprehend, when thus dwelling together in unity, we do and say and comprehend *“with all saints.”* No discord, no division here. In this is realized as fully as can be in this mortal state the fulfillment of the dear Savior’s prayer: *“That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us.”- John xvii. 21.* And so, as this mortal life goes on, with the trials and deliverances, the sorrows and joys, which are appointed unto us here upon the earth, the sweeter and more precious to us will be these blessed words of the psalmist: *“Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!”*

Silas H. Durand
OCTOBER 27, 1908.

1 THESSALONIANS IV. 14.

“For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.”

DEAR BRETHREN IN CHRIST:— I desire to present some thoughts for your consideration on the above Scripture, and also the connections. These words were written for the instruction and comfort of God’s people, for those whose hope is in Christ. It is most sorrowful to behold the divided opinions that exist even among God’s redeemed people who profess hope in Christ. I hope not to be the cause of making it worse than it is. One thing we should all labor to do, and that is, study to rightly divide the word of truth. Let us all be careful about making quotations to prove some idea we may entertain without first studying the connections carefully and prayerfully to see that the Scripture quoted by us is not being perverted to make it mean something entirely foreign to what the Scriptures teach. I have caught myself doing such things; I may do so in this article, but I hope not. It is a very solemn thing to handle the word of God at all, but to handle it in a careless manner is more sorrowful. O that we all could realize the need of wisdom from God in all our deliberations. The more I study the Scriptures the more conscious I am of needed grace every day of my life to rightly divide the word of truth.

My mind of late has been, greatly exercised over existing conditions of the church, and also the world.

Now let us proceed with the subject of our text. *“For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.”* If this is a truth that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. If we believe this, we then have a well-founded reason for sorrowing not, even as others which have no hope. Paul, writing to the Corinthians, said, *“For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures.”* Now do we believe this, We are duty bound to believe this first before we can justly claim a hope in Christ. It is surprising how many professed followers of Christ deny this; especially do they deny that Jesus rose again. If all we have to present to you today is a dead Christ, there could be no comfort in that. Paul predicated his arguments on the fact that Christ died and rose again. First, that the Scriptures taught this; second, that there were many living at that time who were eye-witnesses of that fact. *“He was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep. After that, he was seen*

of James; then of all the apostles. And last of all, he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time," said Paul. Read 1 Cor. xv. 3-8. In the twenty-seventh chapter of Matthew we read how the chief priests and Pharisees first went to Pilate, and said, "Sir, we remember that that deceiver said, while he was yet alive, After three days I will rise again. Command therefore that the sepulchre be made sure until the third day." Their object for so doing was lest his disciples come by night and steal him away and say unto the people, He is risen from the dead. Pilate granted their request; they made everything secure, sealing the stone and setting a watch, but "the angel of the Lord descended from heaven, and came and rolled back the stone from the door, and sat upon it." O what a victory! Here "his countenance was like lightning and his raiment white as snow: and for fear of him the keepers did shake, and became as dead men." Now listen to the proclamation of the angel: "And the angel answered and said unto the women, Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified. He is not here; for he is risen, as he said. Come, see the place where the Lord lay." These Scriptures are so clearly stated that it is most sorrowful to see anyone trying to pervert them so as to actually deny that Jesus rose from the tomb. "Come, see the place where the Lord lay." These chief priests and

Pharisees admitted that this man died and was buried, but they, tried to conceal the fact that he rose again. "Now when they were going, behold, some of the watch came into the city, and shewed unto the chief priests all the things that were done. And when they were assembled with the elders, and had taken counsel, they gave large money unto the soldiers, saying, Say ye, His disciples came by night, and stole him away while we slept. And if this comes to the governor's ears, we will persuade him, and secure you. So they took the money, and did as they were taught: and this saying is commonly reported among the Jews until this day." - Matt. xxviii. 11-15. Evidently there are only two positions for us to take: first, the angel of the Lord told the truth, or else the soldiers received large money for saying; "His disciples came by night, and stole him away while we slept." I ask again, Is it not strange that professed followers of Christ do deny that he rose again? Yet such was the case at that time, and it is yet true, at least of some. Again, there are some who tell us they do believe that Christ died and rose again the third day according to the Scriptures, but that it was not the same body that was buried that did rise the third day according to the Scriptures. Now, my dear brethren, my firm belief is that it was the very same body that was buried that rose again. The words of our text

convey that idea: *“For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again.”* Paul does not say, For if we believe that Jesus died and another Jesus rose, neither did he say that Jesus died and there was given to him another body. Luke xxiv 39, reads thus: *“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.”* These words are Jesus’ own words concerning himself after he had risen. The eleven saw and heard for themselves. The fortieth verse reads thus: *“And when he had thus spoken, he shewed them his hands and his feet.”* *“They gave him a piece of a broiled fish, and of an honeycomb. And he took it, and did eat before them.”*

Also read Acts x. 41. Here Peter refers to this time. These were *“witnesses chosen before of God, even to us, who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead.”* John xx, 27, reads thus: *“Then said he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing.”* Eight days previous to this Thomas had declared that he would not believe unless he could see in his hands the print of the nails, and thrust his hand into his side. O how different he felt when Jesus spoke to him as he did; he then could say unto him, *“My Lord and my God.”* *“Jesus saith unto him, Thomas, because thou hast seen me, thou hast believed:*

blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have believed.” Now all these witnesses are not enough in this our day for some, who say they do not know what became of the body of Jesus, but they do not believe that he rose again. In Acts, first chapter, we read the account of the ascension of Christ. *“And while they looked steadfastly toward heaven, as he went up, behold, two men stood by them in white apparel; which also said, Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus [not another Jesus] which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner, as ye have seen him go into heaven.”* Many years after the ascension of Jesus, he appeared to John in the isle that is called Patmos. Revelation i. 17, 18, reads thus: *“And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not; I am the first and the last: 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.”* This is the Jesus that was dead. Notice his words: *“I am he that liveth, and was dead.”* *“His head and his hairs were) white like wool, as white as snow and his eyes were as a flame of fire; and his : feet like unto fine brass.”* Read the fourteenth and fifteenth verses, also second chapter, eighteenth verse: *“Write; These, things, saith the*

Son of God, who hath his eyes like a flame of fire, and his feet are like fine brass." It was this one who said, "*I am he that liveth, and was dead.*" He was the same Jesus that died and rose again and ascended into heaven that was there talking to John. O what blessed words, "*I am he that liveth, and was dead; and behold, I am alive for evermore.*" Remember the words of our text: "*For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.*"

One is just as sure as the other. It was this same Jesus that taketh Peter, James and John his brother, and bringeth them up into a high mountain apart and was transfigured before them, and his face did shine as the sun, &c. This took place before the death of Christ. He was transfigured before them, yet it was the same Jesus all the time. Webster defines the word transfiguration, first, a change of form, especially the supernatural change in the personal appearance, of our Savior on the mount. Transfigure means, first, to change the outward form or appearance of, to transform, especially to change to something very elevated and glorious, to give an ideal form to. "*And was transfigured before them.*"- *Matt. xvii. 2.* If we observe these definitions it may help us to reconcile some seeming difficulties; for instance, Mark xvi. 12, reads: "*After that he appeared in another form unto two of*

them," &c. This does not say that Jesus appeared in another body, but in another form. This was after his resurrection, so we see his form was changed at the transfiguration. It was changed after his resurrection, yet evidently it was the same body all the time. He never changed that body that was nailed to the cross for another body. It is a glorious fact that he is reigning, and will reign until he hath put all enemies under his feet; the last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. Read 1 Cor. xv. 25. If this is our hope, we sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. We may sorrow for those who die in the Lord, but it will be a different sorrow from those who have no hope. "*For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.*" O, is that our hope? Well, it was Paul's hope. Paul said, "*If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable.*" Paul has in this fifteenth chapter of first Corinthians predicated his whole arguments on this one essential thing, that Christ died and rose again. That was his foundation to build upon concerning those who were asleep in Christ, and also those who are alive and remain unto the coming; of the Lord. "*But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept.*" As sure as Jesus died and rose again, just that sure (even so) them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with

him. I still desire to notice more fully the above words and their connections. I have devoted most of my time trying to show by the Scriptures that Jesus actually died and rose again. Paul believed that Christ died and rose again. His argument here is that it is just as true that they also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. There evidently is no getting around this one fact, that is, if Jesus did actually die, and rose again, just that sure all who die in the Lord will rise again. I verily believe the Scriptures teach this glorious and comforting doctrine; while there is great mystery in godliness, God was manifest in the flesh. Read 1 Tim. iii. 16. Paul acknowledged this to be a great mystery, yet he believed it just the same as though he could explain it. Just so there are great mysteries concerning the resurrection of the dead, yet not more so than how God could see and love his people, and even choose them in Christ before the foundation of the world, while as yet there was none of them, yet we are bound to believe this, if we believe the Scriptures. With man all these things would be impossible, but not so with God. Paul said: *"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."* O what a mystery this is, yet we are bound to believe it or reject the Scriptures. Paul did not attempt to explain this wonderful mystery; he could not do that, he just accepted it as a glorious truth. Notice

Paul's authority. Let us read the fifteenth verse of Thessalonians, fourth chapter, in connection with our text. It reads thus: *"For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord [the word of the Lord was Paul's authority for saying], to that which are alive, and remain unto the coming of the Lord, shall not prevent them which are asleep."* The connections here evidently show that Paul refers to death when he says sleep. He also used these two words interchangeably in the fifteenth chapter of 1 Corinthians. Jesus did the same regarding Lazarus. The martyr Stephen when being; stoned to death *"kneeled down, and cried with a loud voice, Lord, lay not this sin to their charge. And when he said this, he fell asleep."* And Saul (Paul) was consenting to his death. Now if we keep these things in view it does seem that we would not attempt to so change their meaning as to pervert the idea of death entirely, and also the glorious doctrine of the resurrection of the dead. Stephen died; he said: *"Lord Jesus, receive my spirit."* If the nonresurrectionists are right, Stephen that died will never be resurrected. Many of the nonresurrectionists claim to believe in the resurrection, but they claim that it takes place at death, therefore they leave the dead out entirely; and, as far as I know, they all claim the spirit does not die, hence when they are talking about the resurrection they are talking about that which never dies; being

resurrected. Paul was talking about the dead: *"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."* Evidently the dead spoken of here are the same as those referred to in our text as being; asleep in Jesus. Notice these words, "And the dead in Christ shall rise first." The Connections here show that Paul refers to some future event. He continues: *"Then we which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words."* O what comforting words they are. There is yet hope for all who sleep in Jesus.

"The dead in Christ shall rise first." It is because of this glorious fact Paul said, *"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."* Paul's arguments are founded upon the glorious truth that that is the reason we *"sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him."* Notice Paul's reason for all this is, that as sure as Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring; "with him. If this is our hope and

belief concerning all who sleep in Jesus, Paul would comfort all such believers by saying, *"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."* What a comfortless doctrine it would be if the dead rise not. *"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."* Paul was showing the vanity of a hope that only reached to death and there left all who had fallen asleep in Christ to eternally perish. There could be no comfort in such a doctrine as that, yet this is bound to be true unless there is a resurrection of the dead. Paul here leaves the miserable side and again presenting the hopeful side, he says: *"But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the first fruits of them that slept."* Evidently it would not be a perversion to say Paul meant Christ was the first that arose from the dead, as he did say, (Acts xxvi. 23,) that Christ should suffer and that he should be the first that should rise from the dead. Notice these words: *"But now is Christ risen from the dead [that is an established fact], and become the first-fruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead."* How sorrowful it is to see man trying to explain away these positive statements concerning the resurrection

of the dead, and in their stead present a doctrine that leaves the dead out entirely; no hope for the dead, if the dead rise not. In Hebrews xi. Paul dwells at length concerning a great multitude: *“So many as the stars of the sky in multitude, and as the sand which is by the seashore innumerable. These all died in faith, not having received the promises.”* If the nonresurrection doctrine is true they will never receive the promises; their dying in faith will not avail anything unless the dead rise again. Notice this great multitude died in faith; they did not die in hopeless despair, but in faith. *“These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off.”* These all died seeing something that they yet had not received; they saw them *“afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.”* These evidently were embracing something not to be found on this earth. Shall we say that they will be disappointed. They evidently will be disappointed if there be no resurrection of the dead for these all died in faith, not having received the promises. If they saw, them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and yet never will receive them, they died in a vain faith; they saw and embraced something that never will be a reality. Paul had a brighter side to present: *“For they that say such things, declare plainly that they seek a*

country.” My dear brethren, where is that country. Is it on earth, or is it in heaven. They confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. That did not satisfy their longing desire, they were seeking a country. Paul continues: *“And truly if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned. But now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly: wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; for he hath prepared for them a city.”* Shall we say that they never will reach that city that God hath prepared for them. One of two things evidently must be true: they either will actually inherit the city prepared for them, or else they just saw these things afar off and embraced them, but will never realize the reality of inheriting the city that God hath prepared for them. Now let us reason together. If this great multitude fails finally in reaching that they were seeking, who would be to be blamed. Certainly not those who died in faith; they could do nothing more. Nothing more is required of those who die in faith; if they fail to finally realize that sought and hoped for, the blame cannot be charged to them. How utterly helpless is their condition if anything is yet to be performed by those which died in faith, not having received the promises. Listen to our text: *“For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring*

with him." No, dear brethren, no one will be to blame, God will do as he has promised. This was Paul's hope: this great multitude died in this faith. They will not be disappointed, for God is not ashamed to be called their God, for he hath prepared for them a city. Abraham "*looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God.*"- Verse 10. Paul also evidently was seeking the same city that Abraham sought or looked for. Read Hebrews xiii. 14: "*For here have we no continuing city, but we seek one to come.*" That is, we seek a continuing city. That city we have not in this life, but we do seek one to come. Peter also had hope that reached beyond this life; his hope embraced "*an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God,*" &c. Read Philippians iii. 20, 21. This language is right to the point as to what yet shall be done. "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, Paul does not say this vile body shall be exchanged for some other body, but that it may be fashioned like unto his (Jesus) glorious body. John had the same hope. He said, "*Beloved, now are we the sons of God; and it doth not yet appear what we shall be : but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for*

we shall see him as he is." John cuts off all occasion for controversy as to how we shall appear. He says, "*It doth not yet appear what we shall be.*" It is enough to have a well-founded hope that when he (the Lord Jesus Christ) shall appear we shall be like him, and see him as he is. When this is done then our vile body will in truth be fashioned like unto his glorious body. David also had this hope, He said: "*As for me; I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness.*" This great cloud of witnesses all testify to the one grand conclusion, and that is, there is a better day yet in the future for all those who died in faith. "*Christ the first fruits, afterward they that are Christ's, at his coming. Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death.*"- 1 Cor. xv. 23-26. I can conceive of only one way in which death shall be destroyed, and that is when we awake with his likeness. This evidently was the hope of all them which died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, were persuaded of them and embraced them. Their faith was in God. There is none else to hope in. O how dark would death and the grave be in the absence of a

mighty God. The fiftieth verse reads thus: *“Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption.”* I do not believe that after this glorious change takes place with those who are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord we will still have a fleshly body as before, but that it will be changed or made spiritual. The forty-fourth verse reads: *“It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body.”* Paul does not say, it is raised a spirit, but it is raised a spiritual body; it yet remains a body; it is our vile body changed and fashioned like unto Christ’s glorious body, and as for the blood that is declared to be the life of the flesh, read Leviticus xvii. 10-14. It evidently will not be the life of our glorious body; our glorious body will not need blood, neither will it need the things of nature to sustain it in that respect; it will be far above mortality. The living at that time will be made just like the dead that have been raised. All shall be changed, whether dead or alive at that time, *“for this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality.”* - I Cor. xv. 53. O what a glorious change this will be! Think of it; our vile body changed and made immortal. Paul continues: *“So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death,*

where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?” What a victory the grave would have in the absence of our Lord Jesus Christ. On the other hand Paul said, *“But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.”* This is enough, dear brethren, it will do to live by, it will do to die by. Therefore Paul could say, *“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. For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.”*

Yours in a blessed hope in Christ,
JOSEPH FORD.

SENECA, Kans., Jan. 14, 1910.

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PROSPECTUS OF THE "SIGNS"

The existence, sovereignty, immutability, omnipotence and eternal perfections of the great Jehovah -- the revelation which God has given of Himself, as Father, Son and Holy Ghost. "These three are one." John 1-8.

The absolute predestination of all things.

Eternal, unconditional election.

The total depravity and just condemnation of fallen man.

That the atonement and redemption of Jesus Christ are for the elect only.

The sovereign, irresistible, and in all cases, effectual work of the Holy Spirit, in regenerating and quickening the elect of God.

The final preservation and eternal happiness of all the sons of God, by grace.

The resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment.

That the church of Christ is composed exclusively of baptized believers -- that to her are given able ministers of the New Testament; that the scriptures are the only divinely authorized rule of faith and practice for the saints of God.

That there is no connection between church and state.

CONTENTS

EDITORIAL 26
 Elder C.C. Wilbanks

ARTICLES 29
*Written by Sister Edrie Clifton &
 Submitted by Judy Poindexter*
 Jamie E. Cooper
 W.G. Chappell

VOICES OF THE PAST 35
 Elder Gilbert Beebe
 A. T. Benson
 J. C. Philpot

CONTRIBUTIONS 47

OBITUARIES 47
 Sister Lessie Quesenberry Cox
 Catherine Amanda Houchins

EDITORIAL

SACRIFICE VERSUS SUBSTITUTE



Elder C.C. Wilbanks

Some time ago I read a book of sermons by an old time gospel minister and I believed much of what he said, but he often referred to Jesus Christ as a substitute for his people when he was crucified on the cross. I have never believed that Jesus Christ was a substitute for anything. I do believe that he died in the behalf of the people chosen in him from the foundation

of the world, not as a substitute, but as a sacrifice. There is a vast difference between a substitute and a sacrifice. Not long after I read the book referred to, I found a letter in the "SIGNS" by L.H. Hardy published in 1916 in Vol. 84 No. 9 with the same title as above. His letter expresses my beliefs on this subject much better than I can: therefore I copy it. He refers to a substitute in time of war, and I do not know which war, but the meaning is the same.

The letter:

As a substitute one acts for or in the place of another. As a sacrifice one does that which has become his by imputation, though the cause of the sacrifice was by another. In substitution no good comes to the principle, only for the time being. In a sacrificial offering the cause for which the sacrifice was made is forever removed. The substitute does no more than the principal might do. He cannot exist until he for whom he is a substitute is first chosen or appointed to do that which the substitute must do in his stead. If the substitute becomes responsible to act for himself he for whom he is a substitute again becomes responsible to act for himself, therefore he was not free, only while his substitute was under the law for him; for after the substitute becomes amenable to the law for himself he can no longer set free the one for whom he was a substitute. One drafted to go to war may employ a substitute, but as soon as he

becomes of proper age, or by any means becomes subject to the war, the one who was first drafted stands subject to be drafted again, and must go and serve for himself, or get another substitute to act for him. The doctrine of substitution does not strike me as being sufficient for the salvation of sinners. It is like a bridge which does not reach either shore, and therefore the travelers cannot get on it, and if one is on it he cannot get off it. If Christ did not exist as our Savior prior to our being sinners then substitution is true, but if he did so exist I cannot understand substitution to be any stronger or better than the Arminian expression that he has made a way passable and possible. According to the Scriptures, and according to our doctrine (which is not ours, but God's, who sent us), Christ Jesus was our Savior before the world began, and therefore before we ever existed as sinners. When we were chosen in him unto salvation he was chosen and appointed to save us. The Mosaic law never required the life of the transgressor as an atoning sacrifice, but on every occasion it prescribed just what the sacrifice should be. If one had sinned, and the priest had slain him for his sins, and burned him upon the altar it would have been murder and sacrilege in that priest, and he himself must die for his sins. The law pointed out just what the sacrifice should be, therefore the sacrifice was appointed before the sin was committed, and nothing could be substituted in its

stead. The offering was ordained before the sin for which it was to atone was committed, therefore it was a sacrifice. Christ Jesus was appointed to die for sinners before there were any sinners. Those for whom he should die were chosen in him before they were formed in Adam. The election was in Christ, not in Adam. As children of Adam they are children of wrath even as others. As being chosen in Christ they are the beloved of the Father. For this cause he gave his Son a sacrifice for them. In this sacrifice an atonement was made, and they were reconciled to God. There is no priesthood in substitution, but there must be a priesthood in an acceptable sacrifice. An Israelite comes to offer for his sins according to the law; he does not approach the altar and offer that offering, he turns it over to the priest, and he offers it for the sinner. Though he brings it himself I cannot understand it to be a substitute for him, for the law never appointed him to do what that sacrifice is to do for him. A substitute does what we were chosen to do, a sacrifice does for us what we cannot do for ourselves. We did not bring the Lord Jesus, he came of himself, of his own accord. There never was any commandment given to slay the sheep of the Shepherd, and then he came in and took the fatal blow. He took the responsibility, and was the appointed sacrifice. Aaron could not do this. What the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God, sending his

only Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh. Christ the Lord is the Priest who offered this sacrifice. In him are combined both the priest-hoods: that of blessing and that of offering. He blessed his people and gave himself for them a sacrifice of sweet-smelling savor. In his sacrificial death he paid all the redemption price, and set the sinners free. They cannot become subject to the law any more, because this Sacrifice, High Priest, and acceptable year of the Lord continues forever, therefore no charge can ever be brought against them, because by him they are justified before God. As a Sacrifice and High Priest he liveth forever. The atoning sacrifice which was offered once every year had to be offered by the high priest alone, no other one dared to go beyond the veil into the holy of holies. Jesus, the great High Priest of our profession, is the only one who could make this everlasting atonement; he, and he only, was appointed unto this end by the Father, and it was written in the will concerning him, and therefore it behooved him thus to die. No sinner living or dead could make an atonement for himself, therefore Christ did not come to do for us what we might have done or might now do for ourselves, as a substitute would do, but he came to do that which we could not do, and to make reconciliation that we could not make. O what a blessed Sacrifice and High Priest is our Lord! We were mystically and virtually in him, cho-

sen in him before the world began and now he has died that that sacred and blessed unity should be revealed in us. Thus the blessed Holy Spirit reveals in our hearts that which the blessed Jesus did for us on the tree. This was the work which was appointed unto him, He has done it. As our Lord was appointed to redeem his elect, and save them from their sins, even so the Holy Spirit was appointed to take of these things of Jesus and show them unto us and to bring all things to our remembrance whatsoever our Lord has said unto us. As Jesus was faithful in all his work, even so the Holy Spirit is faithful in all his work, and what he is appointed to do he will do in his own good time and way, and none can hinder him any more than they could hinder the sacrifice offered by our blessed Jesus. As all opposition to him was appointed by the Father, to the sure accomplishment of that certain end unto which he was appointed, even so all opposition to the workings of the Holy Spirit in that which was appointed for him to do shall only work to the sure accomplishment of the word of God by him. We are commanded to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered unto the saints, and in so doing no one can justly accuse us of wrong. Our God has done all for us. How glorious he is to provide salvation for us in the sure way that the powers of hell and earth shall not prevail against the children of God though they are ever so weak. They are ever before the

God of the humble and contrite. Through the intercession of our Lord and High Priest the living streams of mercy are poured forth in our hearts. Thus the mourning sigh is heard and the penitential tear is gathered up, and we praise the Lord. END.

What I may say now may not be necessary, and I hope it will not detract from the letter, but I will add a few remarks, if God will so bless me. In Eph. 5:30 Paul tells us, *“For we are members of his body, of his flesh and of his bones”* In Eph. 1:22-23 Paul tells us that God gave him (Jesus) to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.” Since we are members of his body and he is the head, and the head cannot be separated from the body, can we rightly say he was a substitute for himself? Certainly not. Christ is our High Priest and he is also the offering for our sins. *“For such an high priest became us, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens; who needeth not daily, as those high priests, to offer up sacrifice, first for his own sins, and then for the people’s: for this he did once, when he offered up himself.”* (Heb. 7:26-27). *“For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.”* (Heb. 10:14). No substitute can ever do that which only Jesus Christ our Sacrifice did, and no substitute can

ever return to help us. But our Lord and Saviour, the holy and righteous Son of God, shall return again and raise us up in his own likeness to be forever with him in heaven and immortal glory. Praise his holy name!

May God bless the truth and pardon all errors.

Elder C.C. Wilbanks

ARTICLES

6-18-1999

“Afflictions, though they seem severe,

Are oft in mercy sent.

They stopped the prodigal’s career. And caused him to repent.”

I hear and read of many people being afflicted. Job was afflicted with sore boils. The Egyptians were afflicted with many plagues because they refused to let the children of Israel go worship the true and living God. Joseph was afflicted in many ways by his brethren and by the rulers in Egypt. Joseph told his brethren, *“Ye thought evil against me but God meant it for good to save many people alive.”* That may not be the correct quotation but it shows God’s purpose in Joseph’s afflictions. Many are afflicted with different sickness, broken bones and sore diseases. I’m almost 85 years of age and have not been afflicted with so much natural

sickness. For some reason, it has pleased the Lord to afflict me with hearing loss to the extent that I can hear very little of the sermons at church. Going to hear the gospel preached is my greatest delight and pleasure and its getting harder for me to understand the preaching. Is that one of the ways I'm being weaned away from this life? Is bodily afflictions what it takes to cause us to repent or is it afflictions of the soul? Or is it both? I am so ignorant I do not understand the wisdom of the world, much less the things that be of God. I believe it takes more than these things to save a soul. It certainly is not good works in this life, for if it be that, I know I'm lost because I feel to be a corrupt tree that cannot bring forth good fruit. No, it's not good works that saves a soul. It's not the preacher, so what is it? The Lord created the earth without man's help. He made everything that is on earth and in the firmaments without man's help. Man was created last, and made out of the most useless thing I suppose God created. What good is dust? I've never heard of it being used for any good purpose. So man had his beginning from something useless and he's never improved. God works in man to the extent that if man does anything good, it comes from Him working in and through man. If we are ever blessed to enter heaven and immortal glory, it will all be of God and His son Jesus Christ. Jesus died for us, took our many sins upon His own body and died a

shameful death on the cross so that His chosen ones who were elected in Him before the world was created should have eternal life. All glory and honor to the three-in-one God who doeth all things well. He suffered more than we can know and all for us. When He said, "*It is finished,*" His work of salvation was completed. Not one of that number for which He died will ever be lost, but all - a complete number - will be in that sweet blissful rest forever more to sing undying praises to whom all praise is due. Oh, to be in that number, the least, most unworthy one of all. If that wonderful, glorious blessing is mine, it will be because the Lord loved and pitied me before ever this world was, for there's no beginning and no ending with Him.

Written by: Sister Edrie Clifton
Widow of Elder Bennie Clifton
Submitted by their daughter
Judy Poindexter

PSALMS 27:12-14.

Deliver me not over unto the will of mine enemies: for false witnesses are risen up against me, and such as breathe out cruelty.

I had fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living.

Wait on the LORD: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the LORD.

WHAT JESUS MEANS TO ME

He is eyes to the blind, feet to the lame, ears to the deaf, strength to the weak, and might to them that have no power. He is a Father to the fatherless, a husband to the widow; a prophet to teach the mysteries of His Kingdom, the faithful and true witness, the bright and morning Star; the counselor to plead His people's cause; the leader that leads them by the right hand of His righteousness, the substance and glory of all the types, and end of the law the messenger of peace; the Son who is faithful. Owns His own house. The minister of the Sanctuary who preaches good tidings to the meek, who binds up the broken hearted, and proclaims liberty to the captive. The opener of the prison to them that are bound, who comforts all that mourn in Zion and gives unto them beauty for ashes. He is the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of Praise for the spirit of heaviness. He is all that a helpless soul can need and all that a God of infinite grace can give. He is the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of peace, the brightness of His Father's Glory and the express image of The Heavenly Father. The obedience of His life, His condescending love and grace. His imputed righteousness, His glorious resurrection and exaltation. He is the victor through His sufferings for the sins of His people, in the displays of His wrath against His and their enemies. He is the chief among ten thousand. In His nature,

dignity, character, and relationship, in his work, both of providence and grace. He is pleasing to the Father and delightful to the church. His head is as the most fine gold as the great Jehovah and as Husband, King and Captain, yes as the Head of His body the Church, the Head of influence. What gold so fine, valuable and desirable. He excels all the gold of Ophir, His locks are bushy and black as the raven. The purpose of His grace, The doctrine of His grace, the doctrine of His word, and the members of His body, though weak in themselves grow in Him as their Head, and are beautifully connected together. How wise, prudent and well connected are all His dealings with the object of His love. His eyes are as the eyes of doves by the rivers of water. He ever watched over His people for good. He sees all their enemies, nor is it possible they can be in any place, state or circumstance, but He beholds them all together. The fullness of Diety dwells in Him, and He will surely do them good. He beholds the place where, the time when and the means how. He will bless His Spouse. He sees the end from the beginning. Nor is there any place of darkness, nor shadow of death, where the workers of iniquity can hide themselves from Him. *"His cheeks are as a bed of spices, as sweet flowers."* How divinely animating the light of his countenance: how engaging and precious the displaying of His love, in His word and ordinances; how ravishing His beauty, and how

comely His looks. His lips like lilies, dropping sweet smelling myrrh. How cheering His promises, how firm the doctrines of Grace, how encouraging His decorations of mercy, with what sympathy, tenderness, and love He speaks to the church. How prevalent His intercessions, how cheering His communication, how fragrant His truth. *"His hands are as gold rings set with beryl"*. He is mighty to save, strong to deliver, and able to support. Nor shall earth, hell or sin pluck His people out of His hands. His own arm has brought salvation, and His fury has upheld Him. How great are the secret purposes of His love, which are hid from the wise and prudent, and revealed only to His spouse. The bowels of His compassion, the tenderness of His heart. Proclaim Him precious indeed.

He is pure, holy, and innocent, in all His works and ways. *"His legs are as pillars of marble, set upon sockets of fine gold."* He upholds all things by the word of His power. He bore all the sins of His people, and the vengeance due unto them. He bears all their sorrows, carries all their burdens, and enables them to lean upon Him as their staff and stay. The government of the church rests upon Him, He tramples under His feet all that exalts themselves against Him and His Kingdom. He trod the winepress alone and of the people there was none to help. His countenance is of Lebanon, excellent as the cedars. *"The smiles of His face, the visits of His grace,*

the glory of His name, offices and relationship. How dear, delightful, and precious.

His mouth is mash sweet, yea, He is altogether lovely, this is my beloved, and this is my friend, O daughters of Jerusalem." He speaks the sweet words of reconciliation, peace and pardon, life and salvation. The kisses of His lips are beyond comprehension. The words of His mouth are sweeter than honey, or the honeycomb. He has won my affection, my soul is taken up with Him, and His divine glory. There is none in heaven above or on earth beneath equal with Him.

When by faith I behold His divine excellence. I am overcome with bliss. Dear Lord let me live much in the enjoyment of Thee.

Amen.

Jamie E. Cooper

ISAIAH 40: 28-31.

Hast thou not known? Hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the LORD, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? there is no searching of his understanding.

He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength.

Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and the young men shall utterly fall:

But they that wait upon the LORD shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint.

"And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression." 1 Tim. 2:14.

Although the apostle Paul uses this statement in establishing, or setting forth, the order and authority in the church, like many scriptures it seems to also have a strong application concerning the relationship of Christ and His church. In many respects Adam is a type of Christ and Eve a type of the church. If the application of such a "type" is allowed, in the scripture quoted above, then we would seem to have a beautiful picture of what Christ did for the church, prefigured in the Garden of Eden. Consider that, in one sense, Christ was before the church, as Adam was first formed, then Eve. (See 1 Tim. 2:13). Yet, the church is the body of Christ and as individual saints "...we are members of his body,..." Eph. 5:30, and have ever been with Him. (Would anyone propose that the body of Christ has ever been incomplete?) In like manner Eve was created in Adam and was one with him. Gen. 1:27. *"So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them."* (In one body.)

In another aspect of this "type" comparison, consider that to bring forth Eve "...the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh

instead thereof; And the rib, which the Lord God had taken from man, made he a woman ..." Gen. 2:21, 22. Is this not a prefigure of Calvary? To bring forth the church in this Kingdom age Christ took upon himself the sleep of death. His side was pierced with a spear, "...and forthwith came there out blood and water." 1 John 19:34. Notice that the order of flow was "blood and water". As a living Eve was taken from Adams side, so was a living church brought forth from the side of Christ with the blood of cleansing and the washing of regeneration. Of course, the life of Eve was natural life while the life of the church is spiritual.

In further relating the "types" illustrated in the Garden of Eden consider the deception of Eve as related to in the scripture at the beginning of this writing. The serpent beguiled her. She was cunningly fooled. Adams bride did not deliberately do something with the intent of "getting in trouble". Again, "She was deceived". Is this not also the picture of the church, the bride of Christ?

Sin is deceitful. The temptor knows what is most appealing to our vanity. In the flesh all is vanity and vexation of spirit. Our confession with the apostle Paul is our daily bread, in speaking of the flesh, "...how to perform that which is good I find not." "...when I would do good, evil is present with me." (See Rom. 7:13-24.) But, Christ, the husband is not deceived. He know-

ingly took on himself the burden of the law and became sin for his bride the Church.

As Adam was put out of the garden and separated from the communion that he enjoyed with God in the garden, so was Christ made to feel the separation from the Father when He hung on the cross and cried, *"My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"* *Mat.27:46*. There is also a pattern to be seen in the benefits that Eve received from Adam eating of the forbidden fruit, as it compares to the benefit that the church receives from the sacrifice of Christ. In both cases, in the garden, as at the cross, each knowingly and willingly took upon themselves the guilt of his bride.

The benefits that were wrought by Christ, for the church, is the putting away of sin and receiving the blessings of salvation. The benefits of the *"type"* that goes before in Adam are very similar and very closely related to that which was done at the cross. In both cases there was something saved alive in the bride.

After the Lord God questioned the woman concerning the eating of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil He cursed the serpent and put enmity (hate) between her seed and the seed of the serpent. Also, her (Eve's) seed shall bruise thy (serpents') head.

Notice that it is her (Eve's) seed that shall bruise Satan's head. It is not his (Adam's) seed that shall bruise the head of the serpent (Sa-

tan). The sacrifice of Adam, (he was not deceived) preserved this spiritual seed that would bruise Satan's head, but he had to die (be separated from the garden) to do it. And it is in this seed that the church finds its wonderful hope, because this seed is Christ and the bruising of Satan's head was done by Christ at the cross. *"...the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night. And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb..."* *Rev. 12:10-11*.

There is also a beautiful picture to be seen in following this seed, that was in Eve, until it rests in a virgin whose name was Mary. An angel told her that she would conceive. She would bring forth a son and shall call his name Jesus. She would not conceive by a man because in Adam (man) all die. But this conception would be different. *"The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the son of God."* *Luke 1:35 part*.

This is the fullness of the seed, or the bringing forth of the seed, spoken of in Eden, that would bruise the serpents' head.

The story of what God has done for his people in Christ is retold in many ways and in many types and figures throughout the scriptures. Yet the words of the apostle Paul in Rom. 11:33 still ring loud and true. *"O the depth of the riches both*

of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgements and his ways past finding out."

W.G. Chappell

VOICES OF THE PAST

EDITORIALS OF THE LATE ELDER GILBERT BEEBE

HEBREWS XII. 22-24.

"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."

The Hebrews, as such, were brought up under the ritual and ceremonies of the Levitical law, and seemed very strongly inclined to cling to the observance of legal traditions, works and customs, from which the inspired writer labored to convert them. The whole epistle is devoted to that end. The two covenants are compared and contrasted, the priesthood of Christ shown to be of a far superior order to that of Aaron and his sons; the one by the law of a carnal command-

ment, the other by the power of an endless life. But in the changing of the priesthood there was of necessity a changing of the law. *"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."* Thus *"the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made us [the saints] free from the law of sin and death."* Being therefore redeemed from the dominion of the law and brought under law to Christ, the saints are required to obey the precepts of Christ from higher and nobler motives, and they are qualified for their new allegiance to Christ, not by fleshly or carnal ability, but by being made partakers of the same power of an endless life. Instead of being licensed to sin because grace abounds, and because abounding grace has made them free from the law, the apostle urges their obedience to Christ from that very consideration. *"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, entreated 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)."

*"Not to the terrors of the Lord,
The tempest, fire and smoke;
Not to the thunder of that
word*

That God, on Sinai, spoke."

"But ye are come unto mount Sion" (or Zion), which place literally was the highest eminence in Jerusalem, and the place] of power, where stood the royal palace of the king, of Israel, enclosed by invincible towers and walls of strength, a place of safety, &c., in all respects the type of the church of our Lord Jesus Christ, in her highest elevation, the palace of the great King" the center and throne of the spiritual Israel of our God. Hither, by grace, the saints of the gospel dispensation have come to worship the Lord their God in his holy hill. Not to be terrified by blackness and darkness, which even I Moses could not endure without fear and quaking, but a peaceful habitation, a quiet dwelling-place, where those who come are seated with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, to go out no more forever. Zion, the perfection of beauty, out of which I God hath shined, for God is in the midst of her, she shall not be moved; God shall help her, and that right early.

"And unto the city of the Living God." Jerusalem in the type was the consecrated city of God, and

Mount Zion was embraced and enclosed within her sacred precincts, the very name of the city signifying the vision of peace. Beautifully illustrative of the church of God in her gospel splendor; beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, upon the sides of the north, the city of the great King. The glory of this city is more perfectly delineated in the vision of John, as he saw her descending, from God out of heaven, adorned as a bride prepared for her husband. (See Rev. twenty-first and twenty-second chapters.) The city of the Living God, not of some imaginary or idol god; the God of life, who lives independently, being self-existent and eternal; the source and fountain of life, especially so of all spiritual, eternal life; the true God and eternal life, in whom the life of all the saints with Christ is hid. All other gods are dead; without vitality themselves, they can impart no quickening power to their worshippers. The God of our salvation lives, and blessed be our Rock. The city which the living God himself hath built, and in which he has set his throne, in which he will dwell forever, because he hath desired it, is truly the city of the living God, and to this city the saints are come. This city of the living God is the heavenly Jerusalem. Contrasted with the earth. For typical Jerusalem, which like Hagar, the bondwoman, rendering to bondage, being herself a slave, she cannot be the mother of a free posterity; she is in bondage with her children; they shall not be

heirs with the children of the free woman. But Jerusalem, which is above, is free, and it is just as impossible for her to be the mother of a slave as for Hagar to be the mother of a free child. Those who are born of Jerusalem, which is above and is free, are as Isaac was, they have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear, but the Spirit of adoption, whereby they cry, "*Abba Father.*"

"And to an innumerable company of angels. "The term" angels " is variously applied in the Scriptures, sometimes, and perhaps generally, to an order of beings superior to men, as the angels of glory, such as announced the birth of our Savior; and frequently the name is applied to the messengers or ministers of the gospel, as in 1 Tim. v. 21, and. also the angels of the seven churches in Asia. But in this text we understand the term as applied to the spirits of just men made perfect, the disembodied spirits of the saints in glory. Although there is a definite number of these, perfectly known to God, yet the multitude of them cannot be counted by men, and therefore they are an innumerable company, and in the same kingdom or city into which the saints in the gospel church have come. They have come from the east and the west, the north and the south, and are seated with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob in the kingdom of our God; not with the fleshly bodies of the patriarchs, for they have long ago returned to dust, and in their raves await the voice of the archangel and the trump of God

to raise them up spiritual bodies in the last time of Christ being a spiritual kingdom, cannot be inherited by flesh and blood, neither doth corruption inherit incorruption. (1 Cor. xv. 50.) Thus the apostle could speak of being absent in body, but present in spirit with the saints. This is blessed, spiritual society to those who are born of the Spirit, and whose angels do always behold the face of their Father in heaven. (Matt. xvlii. 10.)

"To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven." This general assembly is the church of the firstborn, the church of Christ, for he is the firstborn. He was not the firstborn in his flesh, for millions were born in the flesh before his incarnation, but he is the first begotten of the dead, (Rev. 1:5,) and he is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, (Col. 1:18,) the firstborn of every creature. (Col. 1:15.) And God has predestinated whom he did foreknow to be conformed to his image, that he may be the firstborn among many brethren. (Romans viii. 29.) His church, called out from all the tribes of the earth, come in the unity of the faith and knowledge of God to a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. All the members of his body, the church, shall come to him in general assembly, called out from the world and brought with singing to Zion, gathered with his arm and carried in his bosom. His church is the general assembly, for

all the saints are assembled within her sacred precincts, and their names are written in heaven. *"In thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them."*-Psalms cxxxix. 16. They are written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. (Rev. xiii. 8; see also Rev. xx. 12,15.) The record of the saints in heaven implies not only their personal election in Christ before the world began, but also their recognition in his gospel church, registered in and fellowshiped by the whole general assembly as the living in Jerusalem, as citizens with the saints and of the household of God. *"And to God the Judge of all."* All the saints were arraigned before God, in his judicial character, when they stood before the bar of justice, and before the mountain that burned with fire, and there they were stoned to death and thrust through with cruel arrows, but their Surety appeared on their behalf and paid for them the ransom price. He was delivered up to die for their iniquities, and he arose again for their justification. Now being freely justified through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus, they are redeemed unto God, brought nigh to God, and find him, in Christ, not only their Judge, whose decisions are final and irrevocable, but also their Advocate. It is God that justifieth."-Romans viii. 33. Now they rejoice in him as their Judge, and appeal to him as such, for they know that it is

written, "The Lord shall judge his people." He is the Judge of all, of all beings, of all events and of all worlds; he is the Judge of all their necessities, their supplies, their trials and their deliverance's, their conflicts and their victories, and as they have confidence in him, they can freely, unreservedly and cheerfully commit their cause to him, and rest assured that justice and judgment, are the habitation of his throne; righteousness and truth go before his face. Once they were in awful dread of appearing before him, but now his terror shall not make them afraid. Their longing spirits ardently cry out from time to time, As the heart panteth after the water brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God."-Psalms xlii. v 1, 2. *"And to the spirits of just men made I perfect."* These we understand to be the same as are called the innumerable company of angels. They are the spirits of just men, men who are justified freely, fully and everlastingly, through the blood and righteousness of our Lord Jesus Christ; made perfect by that one offering by which Christ has perfected them that are sanctified; clothed with the garments of salvation and covered with the robe of righteousness. They were made perfect, they did not make themselves so, for *"Their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord."*-Isa. liv. 17. These are just men, for God hath justified them;

they are made perfect, for Christ has forever perfected them. Their bodies may be moldering in their graves, but we are in communion with their spirits, for all being born of the one Spirit, there is one body and one Spirit, even as we are all called in one hope of our calling; one Lord, one faith and one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all. It is in the Spirit we commune with them, the flesh profiteth nothing. *“And to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant.”* In coming to this heavenly Jerusalem, or city of the living God, we come to Jesus, the Mediator of the new covenant or testament. As Moses was the mediator of the Sinai covenant to the carnal Israelites, for they could not endure the words spoken to them, and prayed that God would speak to Moses, and through him unto them, thus making him a mediator between God and them in the dispensation of the fiery law, so in the new covenant with the spiritual Israel Christ is the Mediator, and all the saints come to him. A mediator is one who mediates between two parties, and is qualified to equally represent both; equally allied, related and interested. So Christ as the Son of God on the one part, and as Head over all things to the church, which is his body, on the other, is the only divinely recognized Mediator or Daysman between God and man. No man can come unto the Father but by him. As there is but one God, so there is but one Mediator between God and man, the man

Christ Jesus, who gave himself a ransom for all to be testified in due time.

We have not time or space here to treat at large upon the mediatorial glory of our Lord Jesus Christ, but we will briefly speak of him as the Mediator of the new covenant, as it is through his mediation this covenant of life and peace exists, is made, ratified and ordered in all things and sure. By his mediation for his people the provisions and requisitions of the old covenant are met and canceled, and taken out of the way, for *“He taketh away the first, that he may establish the second.”*-*Heb. x. 9.* His canceling of the old covenant annulled our marriage with Moses, that by the new covenant we might be lawfully married to Christ our risen Savior, who as the head and husband of his church is fully qualified to fulfill all the provisions of the new covenant to the honor of his Father, and perfect safety and salvation of his church. This covenant is in him, through him and by him; he is the Surety of it, and as mediator of it stands responsible for the fulfillment or all its promises. *“I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people.”* *“I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities I will remember no more.”* Indeed, all the promises of God are in Christ Jesus, yea, and in him amen, to the glory of God by us. It is in him, through him and by him, as our Mediator, that Jehovah is our

God, and certainly it is only through him that we are redeemed unto God and recognized as being merciful to our unrighteousness; there was no mercy in the law. *"He that despised Moses' law died without mercy,"* and every transgression and disobedience received a just recompense of reward; but in the provisions of the new covenant under the mediation of the Son of God, *"mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other."* -Psalms lxxxv. 10. His mediatorial fullness covers and embraces all his official relations to his people, as Prophet, Priest and King, Shepherd, Bishop, Elder Brother, Husband, Head, Father, Way, Truth and Life, Leader, Ruler, Savior and Judge. We are not come to Moses to mediate for us, nor to Aaron, nor are we left to the mediation of men, or to attempt the work for ourselves; from all these we are come away, and are come to Jesus, the Mediator of the new covenant.

"And to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel." Answering to the figures of the ceremonial law. *"For when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and of goats, with water, and scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book, and all the people, saying, This is the blood of the testament [or covenant, which means the same] which*

God hath enjoined unto you. Moreover he sprinkled with blood both the tabernacle and all the vessels of the ministry. And almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without the shedding of blood is no remission."-Heb. ix. 19-22. *"But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood, he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh; how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God. And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament,"* &c. - Heb. ix. 11-15. Thus in coming to Christ as the Mediator of the new covenant we come to the blood of sprinkling, which being the blood of atonement, by which we are purified from dead works and purified from all defilement, it speaketh better things than that of Abel. The voice of Abel's blood, which had been shed by the fratricidal hands of Cain, called from the ground for righteous retribution upon the murderer. But the blood of Christ speaketh better

things; it speaks of atonement, of pardon, peace, reconciliation, redemption, cleansing, purification and justification; yea and of victory through the blood of the Lamb. Thus speaketh the blood of sprinkling to which the saints have come. *“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.”- 1 Peter v. 2. “Let us draw near with a true heart, in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.”- Heb. x. 22.* The sprinkling of the blood of victims sacrificed under the law, upon the books and the people, was to consecrate them ceremonially to the Lord, and the sprinkling the blood of the paschal lamb upon the lintels and door-posts of the dwellings of the Hebrews was to them a peaceful assurance of their redemption and deliverance from wrath; the destroying angel had no power to smite them. Even so the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all guilt and saves from all wrath. From all these considerations the apostle urges his solemn admonition: *“See that ye refuse not him that speaketh.”* If indeed we are come to Mount Sion, to the city of the living God, to all these gospel privileges, we should endeavor to walk

worthy of, the high vocation wherewith we are called.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
MIDDLETOWN, N.Y.,
August 15, 1864.

PROPHECY

Prophecy tells of future events coming to pass before they come to pass, This is called prophesying. This is the work of prophets, chosen for this work. In the Old Testament there were sixteen of these prophets, beginning with Isaiah and ending with Malachi. These men all spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit within them.

In the days of Isaiah, Israel was in a deplorable condition. There are a few verses in Chapter One I want to briefly notice. In verses 2 and 3, we find these words: *“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 master, and the ass his master’s crib; but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider.”*

These are strong words against human beings. They are brought down equal with or below the animals. The animals knew their masters and they knew their masters fed them. But Israel did not know, they did not consider.

There is something in man that is a mystery. It is called *“latent na-*

ture,” or something hidden, or something that lies dormant until it is acted upon. So there was latent nature in Aaron and the other Israelites when Aaron made a molten calf out of the earrings of the people, and they said, *“These be thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt.”* It is hard to believe a human being can stoop so low. So they worshipped idols in those days.

In verse 6 of Chapter One of Isaiah, we find these words: *“From the sole of the foot even to the head there is no soundness in it, but wounds and bruises and putrefying sore. They have not been closed, neither bound up, neither mollified with ointment.”* But we must notice the Lord still called Israel His people. *“My people doth not consider.”*

Now to verse 18: *“Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord; Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow. Though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.”* A question: How is this change to be accomplished? According to my understanding, this change was accomplished by the shedding of the blood of Jesus Christ at Calvary. The blood of animals or birds could not take away sin.

In verses 19 and 20, we read as follows: *“If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land. But if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured with the sword: for the mouth of the*

Lord hath spoken it.” The fact that the Lord spoke these words, we may rest assured they will come to pass as spoken.

These words are conditional. I believe there are some among the Primitive Baptists who base their authority for using the term *“Conditional Time Salvation”* on these words. They believe, if I understand correctly, that these words apply to those who have been born again or regenerated. But I think it is well for us to remember that the words in Isaiah 1:19 were spoken during the time of the old covenant which was done away with at the coming of Christ. *“Behold the days come, Saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel, and the house of Judah.”* (Jeremiah 31:31)

Now verse 33: *“But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord. I will put my law in their inward parts and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people.”*

We now turn to Hebrews, Chapter 8, for a continuance of the subject of the two covenants. *“But now hath he obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also, he is the mediator of a better covenant, which was established upon better promises. For if that first covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second. (Hebrews 8:6-7) Now verse 13: “In that he saith a new covenant,*

he hath made the first old. Now that which decayeth and waxeth old is ready to vanish away .”

In the Scriptures previously quoted, we have learned that the old covenant has become obsolete. He taketh away the first that *“he may establish the second.”* (From memory)

We have been dwelling upon the prophecy of the Old Testament, and the old covenant, now we turn to the New Testament prophecy. But someone may say, *“I thought all prophecy was fulfilled at the coming of Christ.”* All prophecy relating to the birth, the ministry and the death, burial and the resurrection of Christ, and His ascension to heaven were fulfilled. But there are New Testament prophecies also.

Your attention is invited to Second Timothy, Chapter 3: *“This know also that in the last days perilous times shall come.”* Remember, these words were written very near two thousand years ago. Are we living in the last days? The events that are coming to pass, and have been for several years convince me we are.

Continuing on in this third chapter, the apostle gives a sordid account of what would come to pass during the last days. Men would be lovers of their own selves; covetous, high-minded, loving pleasures more than lovers of God. Having a form of godliness but denying the power thereof. Timothy is told to turn away from all such.

The apostle has something to

say about women. He calls them silly, laden with divers lusts. There would be some no doubt among both men and women to whom these words apply. Both men and women are carried away with a desire to have a good time in the world. What these people call a good time is hateful to Him whose eyes are too pure to look upon evil. These worldly minded people do as is written of them: *“Choose darkness rather than light; because their deeds are evil.”* But these evil acts of men and women come under the head of prophecy because, as before mentioned, Paul wrote the words, *“In the last days perilous times shall come,”* nearly two thousand years ago; therefore these things must come to pass that the Scripture (prophecy) might be fulfilled.

Referring again to men and women choosing darkness rather than light because their deeds are evil, brings to mind what Christ said to Matthew, Chapter 24, and verses 37 to 39: *“But as the days of Noah were, so shall also the coming of the Son of man be. For in the days that were before the flood they were eating and drinking, marrying and giving in marriage, until the day that Noah entered into the ark, and knew not until the flood came and took them all away; So shall also the coming of the Son of man be.”*

The words *“They were eating and drinking”* in verse 38, to me are very significant. I have never

been in what is called a night club, and I am glad and thankful I have not. But from what I have heard about them, it is a place of eating and drinking; and these places are kept open till late hours at night, to give these pleasure lovers more time to continue on in their sinful ways; not knowing that the pure eyes of the Lord see all this evil, and some time, we know not how soon, these evil people will be taken away as were the people in the days of Noah and the flood.

We now come to what seems to me to be the end of all prophecy. I will quote from Isaiah, Chapter 2, verses three and four: *“And many people shall go and say, come ye and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and He will teach us of His ways; and we will walk in His paths; For out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people, and they shall beat their swords into plow shares, and their spears into pruning hooks; nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.”*

Now let us pause for a moment to meditate. We can hardly picture in our minds what a time like this would be like. Yet we know a state of tranquility will exist. Compare this with the conditions under which we are living today and note the difference. Today we are in peril or dan-

ger. It looks as though wicked men have invented their last destructive weapon. A weapon which, if used, would destroy all life upon the earth. And it would be used were it not for the fact the Lord is going to cut short the work of these wicked and depraved creatures.

In Matthew 24, verses 21 and 22, we find these words: *“For then shall be great tribulation, such as was not since the beginning of the world to that time, no, nor ever shall be.”* These words verify what is written in Daniel 12. Read it;

Now verse 22: *“And except those days be shortened, no flesh should be saved, but for the elect’s sake those days shall be shortened.”*

In Revelation, Chapter 21 and verses 5 and 6, we find these words: *“And he that sat upon the throne said, Behold, I make all things new. And he said unto me, write: For these words are true and faithful. And he said unto me, it is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end.”* (First clause of verse 6. Notice the words *“Behold I make all things new.”*)

So there will be a new heaven and a new earth. What this will look like, I don’t know, but it will be new. Who is going to make all things new? The answer is Christ. At His second coming the separation between the righteous and the wicked will take place, each being sent to the place prepared for them.

In Revelation, Chapter 22 and verse 16 we find these words: *“I,*

Jesus, have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star." I understand it was the apostle John who was sent to testify of these things in the churches. He was the angel. The book of Revelation completes the Bible. Nothing is to be added to the words written therein, nor nothing taken from them.

A. T. Benson
Delmar, Del.

DOVER, N. J., Dec. 1, 1909

E LDER S. H. DURAND-DEARLY BELOVED BROTHER: - I have been a long time thinking of writing you, but have been waiting, hoping for a better frame of mind, and feeling so incompetent to express myself, but I know that is all of the flesh. O the pride of my poor, sinful heart, how much I loathe it and desire to be freed from it, but I find myself no better as I grow older, as fondly hoped I should in my early pilgrimage; I have come so far short of what I hoped and desired, and what a true follower should be, yet there is always a longing desire and trembling hope that I have experienced these things which to know is eternal life. I had been for some time past feeling a comfortable hope, calmly trusting and feeling underneath were the everlasting arms, and felt my feet were on the rock;

my meditations were sweet in the silent watches of the night, and I felt the dear Lord" was leading and teaching me; Scripture after Scripture would be brought to my mind, and I felt the Lord was near, all earthly fears and sorrows were hid from my sight, and I felt to rejoice in spirit and have no confidence in the flesh, and the love that passes all understanding filled my soul. Happy moments! *"If such the sweetness of the streams, What must the Fountain be?"* My heart goes out in love to all the dear ones everywhere, and I long to sit down at their feet. I feel to be the poorest and smallest, and if a member of the body, one of the unsightly ones. I have thought much of the sheet that will let down from heaven, showing what vile creatures we are by nature, yet the Lord said they were cleansed. How true there is nothing impossible with God, the author and finisher of our faith, and hope, which is as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and enters into that within the veil, whither the Forerunner has entered. But I am so often cast down and filled with unbelief and questioning whether I truly love the Lord or no, am I his, or am I not. Sometimes with a little comfort it has come to me: lay hold of the hope set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith. I feel to be in a desert land, often hungering and crying for bread or a crumb from my Master's table, and, like the prodigal, I know there is bread enough and to spare in my

Father's house, but I must wait, for I am weak and lame, and cannot walk until strength is given me, and then I shall receive all and more than I can ask. The dear Savior says he knows our sorrows and pities us as a father pities his children. He has said he would send the Comforter and would not leave us comfortless; then we can sing,

"One day within the place where my dear Lord hath been, Is better than ten thousand days of pleasurable sin."

"How many great and precious promises he left in his will to his chosen bride, even of 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." When it is given us to lay hold of them as ours, then we feel our spiritual strength renewed, and for a little time go on our way rejoicing. But I am mostly down in the depths, and cannot see my way, and fear I was never in the way that was cast up for the redeemed of the Lord to walk in, which no vulture's eye hath seen. The poet says, Wisdom shows a narrow way, with here and there a traveler. Happy art thou, O people saved by the Lord. Is this my portion, or am I deceived. But why this love for those who have the mark in their foreheads, showing they have been with Jesus and learned of him They count this world dross and vanity, and are looking

and waiting for a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. If I know my own heart I love that poor, despised company, and feel to say with Ruth, "Entreat me not to leave thee," &c., and like one of old, follow at a distance. I am quite isolated here from the people I love for the truth's sake, and seldom hear one who speaks the language of Canaan or hear any preaching. My hearing is quite impaired, and I cannot hear everyone. I would be glad for all in the providence of God to call on me when convenient. The SIGNS is a welcome visitor. I have many blessings I wish to be thankful for. The Lord knows all about me, all my wanderings, faithlessness and sinfulness, but the angel said his name should be called Jesus, for he should save his people from their sins.

Please pardon this poor, disconnected and imperfect letter, and believe me your unworthy sister in hope,

LUCINDA B. BREWSTER.

Dear Subscribers of the Signs,

I desire to thank each of you, along with the board members, for patience with my mistakes in bookkeeping and updating of your renewal etc.

It will be some what a relief from years of updating of subscriptions etc., but already a void in not having almost a daily thought of what do I need to do today in the Signs. The contact I've had with many of

you through letters of appreciation and phone calls not ever having met you, has often melted my heart. Your sickness or failing eye sight has often been on my mind for some time. I believe to put it as I feel, you have become in many cases my business family and spiritual family all in one, but the latter the most important. Please support Elder Terry as you have me and we hope the Lord that has kept the paper going for so many years will bless each of you in the days to come to receive food for thought from it's contents. Thanks!

In hope,
J.R. Williams

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR DECEMBER 2000

Delores C. Weatherford, VA ...	\$2.00
Elizabeth Webb, IL	2.00
Eld. B.K. Smith, CA	2.00
B.G. Pryor, NC	7.00
Willie Shelton, VA.....	2.00
Vance Duncan, VA.....	7.00
Elizabeth Hedrick, VA	2.00
Gertrude Cox, VA	2.00
Nellie M. Dalton, VA	7.00
Charles Lovel, VA.....	2.00
Roy L. Locke, KY	5.00
Grace Locke, KY.....	5.00
Cleo Underwood, VA	5.00
Gayle Phillips, AL.....	10.00

OBITUARIES

IN MEMORY OF SISTER
LESSIE QUESENBERRY COX

Sister Cox was born December 11, 1919, passed away, June 29, 2000. Making her stay on earth 80 years 6 months and 13 days. She was the daughter of Asa and Alma Quesenberry. She was the widow of Deacon Ham Cox who died August 26, 1973.

She united with the church in 1941. She loved her Church and stood for the doctrine that was preached among the brethren. She attended church far and near as long as she was able. We miss her but we feel our loss is her eternal gain.

Survivors are: Sons and Daughters in law Harold and Wava Cox, Indian Valley, Va.

Danny and Shelia Cox, Chesterfield, Va.

Daughters and Sons in law Louise and Bill Hylton, Midlothian, Va.

Geneva Arnold, Columbia, South Carolina,
Wanita and Bud Wright, Christiansburg, Va.

Sharon and Arless Cruise, Woodlawn, Va.

Brothers Stanley Quesenberry, Melvin Quesenberry, Russel and Sister in law Vivian Quesenberry.

Sisters Verna Long and Areta Peters, 17 grandchildren, and 7 great grandchildren.

Services were held at Maberry Chapel on Saturday July 1, 2000 by her Pastor Elder Hale Terry and Elder Larry Hollandsworth. She was laid to rest in the Cox Cemetery beside her husband to await the second coming of Christ.

Written by request of Church by
Sister Dorcie Semones, Clerk
Elder Hale Terry, Moderator

OBITUARY OF CATHERINE AMANDA HOUCHINS

It has pleased our Lord to remove Sister Catherine Houchins from our midst. She had been in declining health for a few years. She had been a resident of Friendship Manor Nursing Home, Roanoke, Virginia for several months.

She was born Oct. 21, 1910 and died Sept. 22, 2000.

Her parents were Wakter G. and Sonora M. Shortt Houchins. She was a granddaughter of the late Elder Asa Short.

She is survived by one brother, Jabe M. and wife Arlene Houchins, two sisters, Nellie H. Conner, and Virginia H. and husband: Frank Fisher, one sister-in-law RLee Houchins. Also 17 nieces & nephews.

She joined County Line Primitive Baptist Church and was baptized in April 1933. She was the last member of County Line Church.

She visited many churches and associations with her sister Nellie and Elder Noel Conner.

The funeral service was conducted at County Line Primitive Baptist Church on Sunday Sept. 24, 2000, by Elders Lane Carter and Carl Terry, with burial in the Church Cemetery. She was a firm believer in the doctrine of salvation by the grace of God and the resurrection of the dead, when Christ shall come in the clouds.

May we be resigned to God's will in our loss and her eternal gain.

Humbly submitted,
Elder Carl Terry

PSALM 23 A Psalm of David.

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 for ever.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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A Child Loaned

"I'll lend you for a little time

A child of Mine," He said.

"For you to love him while he lives,

And mourn for when he's dead.

It may be six or seven years

Or twenty-two or three,

But will you, till I call him back

Take care of him for Me?

He'll bring his charms to gladden
you,

And should his stay be brief,

You'll have his lovely memories

As solace for your grief.

I cannot promise he will stay,

Since all from earth return,

But there are lessons taught down

there

I want this child to learn.

I've looked this wide world over

In My search for teachers true,

And from the throngs that crowd

life's lanes,

I have selected you.

Now will you give him all your love,

Nor think the labor vain,

Nor hate me when I come to call

And take him back again?"

I fancied that I heard them say,

"Dear Lord, Thy will be done.

For all the joy Thy child shall bring,

For the risk of grief we'll run.

We'll shelter him with tenderness,

We'll love him while we may;

And for the happiness we've known,

Forever grateful stay.

But though the angels call for him

Much sooner than we planned,

We'll brave the bitter grief that

comes

And try to understand."

author unknown

CONTENTS

EDITORIAL	50
Elder Richard H. Campbell	
CORRESPONDENCE	57
VOICES OF THE PAST	57
J.G.L. Hash	
Mrs. S.J. Cummins	
C.S. Bond	
Elder Gilbert Beebe	
J. C. Philpot	
CONTRIBUTIONS	71
OBITUARIES	71
Margaret Hollandsworth	
Quesenberry	
Arthur Wilson King	

POSTMASTER

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PSALMS 26:7-9.

The LORD is my strength and my shield; my heart trusted in him, and I am helped: therefore my heart greatly rejoiceth; and with my song will I praise him.

The LORD is their strength, and he is the saving strength of his anointed.

Save thy people, and bless thine inheritance: feed them also, and lift them up for ever.

EDITORIAL

Response to a question asked by a young lady,
"IF EVERYTHING WAS PREDESTINED OF GOD, WHY DID CHRIST HAVE TO DIE?"



Elder R.H. Campbell

In the beginning God created man upright and innocent before him, for when viewing all of his creation, on the sixth day, he pronounced that it was very good and man was included in this statement. Everything needful for man's happiness and peace was there, and he was given dominion over all things that were created, and God told him to go forth and replenish the earth and subdue it. God then placed man in the garden to dress it and keep it, and told him that he might eat of the fruit of all of the trees of the garden, except the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, for he told him that in the day that he ate thereof he would surely die. The first recorded deed of the man was to partake of this one particular tree, and he did in fact die to the state of innocence in which he was created, and his life of direct communion with God. Judgement for his disobedience plunged man into the realm of nature in which all succeeding generations have been made to dwell since that time, because of

sin: this is the realm of Satan, the domain to which he was sentenced because of his disobedience; it is contrary to the state in which man dwelt in the Garden of Eden, where all things were created for his comfort, and were for his pleasure and peaceful enjoyment.

This disobedience to the command of God brought sin into the world, with the knowledge of evil, for good had always been there, as per the declaration of God when he viewed his creation, (*Gen. Chap. 1, vs. 31*) "*And God saw every thing that he had made, and, behold, it was very good.*" This deed brought upon man the judgement of God, and this was separation from him by the death of the man; he was driven from the garden to dwell in the earth, subject to the laws of nature and under the dominion of the devil. This original sin passed upon all of the posterity of the man, just as did all of his other attributes and natural characteristics, and in this state of condemnation he was, and would forever have remained in the same depraved condition into which he fell because, if he could recover himself from this condition, he would have prevented it in the first state.

There was only one man created, and the succeeding generations are but a continuation and multiplying of this one creation, and all of these succeeding generations are subject to the same characteristics as the original, the vanity which man was created subject to,

the knowledge of good and evil, and the death that God had said he would experience when he partook of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. All of these things were passed onto the succeeding generations, and the cause of this state of total depravity and condemnation is because of this judgement, naturally speaking, and the natural man abides in this condition until this day, if nothing is done to correct this condition.

Man who was created in the image of God, but being subject to vanity, chose evil rather than good because it was more gratifying to the flesh; and this is true of all men in nature because they are as their federal head Adam. They cannot change from this carnal inclination, in and of themselves, because it is their natural disposition to desire those things that are pleasing to the carnal mind. In this condition all men are separated from God, unaware of the existence which they had before the fall, and are without any hope or desire for a restoration to his favor, as recorded, (*Gen. Chap. 6, vs. 5*) "*And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually.*" This is just as true of man today, in nature, as can be witnessed every day in the things that occur all around us. Therefore there is no desire for good in man, in his natural state, no fear of God in his heart because he is unaware of the spiritual realm,

and without help from some other source, all man's eternal destiny would have been in the life in the world of nature, even as the brute beast of the field, because of his disobedience to the commandment of God.

This was not, however to be the destiny of a certain portion of God's creation because there is a difference in some, for as is recorded in, (*Deut. Chap. 32, vs. 8-9*) "*When the Most High divided to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel. For the Lord's portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance.*" In the beginning God separated a portion of his creation as his own peculiar portion upon which he bestowed his love and mercy, in the person of their Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and because of his death, in their room and stead, they were redeemed from their state of just condemnation. This separation of the Lord's people from the others was prophesied before he was driven from the Garden of Eden, as is recorded in the scriptures, when God pronounced judgement upon the serpent he said, (*Gen. Chap. 4, vs. 15*) "*And I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou shall bruise his heel.*" This enmity which God placed between the two different manner of people,

to whom he referred to as the seed of the serpent and the seed of the woman has been manifested down through time by their being natural enemies with each other; showing that there is a difference between these two peoples. This enmity has been continually manifested with the passing of each new generation, and is still true today; but it was determined and declared from the beginning, fulfilling the purposes of God in his bringing many souls home to glory by the death of his only begotten Son, a ransom for them, in the end of the days.

This difference was first manifested between the first two sons of Adam, Cain and Abel; Abel was the one whose sacrifice was acceptable unto God, and Cain's offering was rejected. Cain's offering was of the fruit of the ground, which God had cursed, and even though that was all that he had to offer, for that was his portion in life, it was not pleasing unto God. Abel's offering was of the fattling of his flock, which was God's creation and his gift to Abel, and he was but offering a small portion of, his plenty, unto him in honor and praise and this offering was pleasing and acceptable unto God, because it was offered in faith. Faith is the gift from God unto his special people only, those whom he had formed for his own glory. All men have not this faith and are not of the chosen generation, as is recorded of Israel, (*Deut. Chap. 7, vs. 6*) "*For thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God: the Lord hath*

chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth." Though there be many who run to and fro in the earth declaring their allegiance to God, only those that God has set his love upon have any portion in the salvation that he has afore prepared for his beloved unto eternal glory.

This is further supported by the text found in the book of Romans referring to twin sons born to Isaac and Rebecca. Everything in their lineage was identical, same mother, same father, same conception and yet Paul records in, (*Rom. Chap. 9, vs. 11*) "*For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth,*" and again in 13th & 14th vs. of the same chapter it states, "*As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated. What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid. For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy upon whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy.*" The natural man will say, that this would not be fair, but who said it is supposed to be fair, in man's opinion, this is not a democratic process, God is the sovereign ruler of heaven and earth and all the hosts of them and his

word is the final solution in all things. These are the inspired words of the apostle Paul, the same one who wrote more of the new testament than any other writer, and if we deny this, what other portions will we deny? We cannot take only those scriptures that support that which we believe, for Paul also says, (*2 Tim Chap 3, vs 16*) "*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.*" All of the scriptures are from the same source, although recorded by different writers, they are not of any private interpretation, but were written by holy men of old as they were moved by the Holy Ghost, so they all agree in one, as to the truth. Man can only rightly divide the scriptures by the inspiration of the same spirit that inspired the original writer to record them, and whether man approves or not, they stand as recorded, the infallible word of God.

Now, we have a people that God loves, Jacob (Israel) and a people that God hates, Esau (Edom) and they all stand guilty before God, under the cloud of sin and just condemnation for their partaking of the forbidden fruit. God being a just God, demands satisfaction from all who have broken his holy law, and his beloved were just as guilty and alienated from him, in their natural state, as the children of the serpent.

Sin demands death for sin, or the offering of a perfect sacrifice to make an atonement for sin, and since man, as he is in nature depraved and corrupt, can never fulfill this requirement of being a perfect sacrifice without spot nor blemish; therefore according to the law he would be forever consigned to this lost and undone condition, with no reason to hope for anything else. He has but that judgement which was pronounced upon him for the partaking of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and can only expect the justice as required by the law. Satan is not going to release him, he cannot release himself, so, he has no hope of anything other than the life that he has here in this time world and the condemnation of the law of sin and death.

Therefore, because God having a chosen people whom he has loved with an everlasting love, Israel, his portion and since they are under the same sentence of death as the children of the wicked one, he sent forth his only begotten Son, in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh, and redeemed those that he loves, from under the law of sin and death. He did this by imputing the perfection and righteousness of Christ unto them, and their sin and iniquities unto that fleshly body of Christ, which was prepared for this same purpose, who died in their room and stead, making an atonement for their sin; releasing them from the bonds of death that was their just reward.

This atonement did not apply to the others because they were of their father the devil, and had no portion in these things that God had prepared for those that loved him, those who were of the chosen generation, and as prophesied in (Gen. Chap 3, vs. 15) that enmity that God placed between them, in his judgement, forever bars them from entering into the joys of the righteous and it continues until this day and there is no provisions made for their relief from this just judgement.

When Rebecca was found with child, she went to inquire of the Lord, and the Lord said unto her, (*Gen. Chap. 26, vs. 23*) *“Two nations are in thy womb, and two manner of people shall be separated from thy bowels; and the one people shall be stronger than the other people; and the elder shall serve the younger.”* Now remember, this was before they were even born into the world, and their destiny was already declared; it was not because of their actions or their character here in nature, but because of the election of God of a people that he had formed for himself. He loved them with an everlasting love and with loving-kindness he draws them unto himself and they will come to him; and they will love him because he first loved them, and redeemed them from the just consequences of their carnal nature and depraved condition in the flesh, made them new creatures in Christ, and reconciled them unto himself,

and all because it was his own good pleasure to do so.

Christ did nothing, for or against, the children of the serpent, but left them as they were in the kingdom of their father the devil; they are and shall ever be an abomination unto God, and their very existence in the world is because of the sin of the serpent by his beguiling Eve in the garden. The great multiplication of the conception of Eve because of her transgression brought in an innumeral number of these designated as the seed of the serpent, and those, the original spiritual creation being those that God created in the beginning and loved with an everlasting love, those whom he told to go forth and multiply and replenish the earth, in the sixth day of creation. This great multiplication of the conception of the woman brought in the offspring of the serpent those whose existence is because of sin, and their portion is, and always will be the heritage of their father the devil, and his works they will always do. and his just reward shall also be theirs.

Christ came to seek and to save those that were lost, those who were separated from God, because of sin. The children of the devil were never separated from God, because they were never with him in the sense of being of the chosen generation, they have ever been of their father the devil because their existence is because of his beguiling of Eve, and they have never known the love of God or the glories of his kingdom.

Their heritage has always been of the earth, earthy, they were never in the garden of Eden, before sin entered the world, because they were born after man sinned and was cast out of the Garden and therefore they have no portion in those blessings that God has prepared for those whom he loves, those who love him because he first loved them.

It was very necessary that Jesus come into the world and do his Father's will, as Jesus said, (*John Chap 6 ,vs 38-39*) "*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 raise it up again at the last day.*"(*vs 44*) "*No man can come unto me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.*" All of this Jesus fulfilled during his earthly ministry, saving every heir of heaven that was treasured in him before the foundation of the world, as he stated in, (*John Chap 17 vs 4*) "*I have glorified thee on earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do.*" The will of the Father was that Jesus should come into the world, assume flesh liken unto his brethren, yet without sin, pay the ransom for their sins and redeem them out from under the just condemnation of the law, by his suffering the ignominious death on the cross.

This he did, without the loss of one, and this fact is made known unto each one, as they are born of the Spirit and blessed to see the glorious salvation that was wrought for them by their Lord and their God. Without this knowledge of deliverance, why would they worship and adore their Lord and Savior? If they could have accomplished this of themselves they would have never let it happen to them in the first place, but they have no knowledge of their condition and their desperate need; but being made aware of this need and being made to realize what is required to fulfill the requirements of the law and their inability to meet those requirements, they worship and praise him from whom all these blessing flow. They praise him for his longsuffering, patience and mercy that he has shown them, even while they were dead in trespasses and sin, it was not something that was decided in time, but because it was determined before they were even born and demonstrates and makes manifest the everlasting love that he has had for them.

Jesus, told Nicodemus, (*John Chap 3, vs. 3*) “*Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.*” Man, in his natural state cannot see, or understand, that there is another kingdom, other than the kingdom of this world, and therefore he must be changed from this condition. Man can but see the kingdom of God with the eyes of faith, and these he receives in the

new birth when he is made a new creature in Christ; then the love and desire for the old things of nature pass away, all things are become new, and they realize that all things are of God. This has ever been true, but the new creature is but now made aware of it in the new birth, and they worship God in Spirit and in truth from a pure heart; purified by the indwelling of the Spirit of God within their heart.

Without this grand and glorious deliverance, those whom the Lord loved before the world was created, would have suffered the same judgment as the rest of world. The only difference, between the elect and the non-elect, is in what has been done for them, and not by them. Jesus, the way, the truth and the life, who of God, is made unto them wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption; all that is needful to assure that they will receive that inheritance which was laid for them in heaven. This is the heritage of the children of God, and it is reserved for them and they shall be delivered, at the time before appointed of the Father, in its fullness. They will hear that grand and glorious address, Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world, and it will all be due to the absolute predestination and foreordination of the sovereign God of heaven and earth, the sovereign of the universe, praise his Holy name.

In bonds of love;
Richard H. Campbell

CORRESPONDENCE

Jan 18, 2001

Dear Elder Key,

Hoping that you and your family are doing well, I would like you to consider an article for publication. I am enclosing a copy of the experience and call to the ministry of Elder J.G.L. Hash. It was copied from the book "Calendar Record of Events 1909-1959 of James Goode Lane Hash," which was a book of calendar entries of which Elder Hash had made, and was transcribed and compiled into a book by his son John and daughter in law Mory Hash. Although Elder Hash died almost 10 years before I was born, by reading this book I felt acquainted with him. I think of all those old soldiers that have gone on before, that are at rest in Christ Jesus, of the many joys as well as the trials that they had to undergo. I am left feeling deep admiration for all those that earnestly contend for the faith once delivered to the saints. I did know Brother Hash's son Elder Amos I. Hash as well as four of his daughters, Ruth, Ora, Virginia, and Gustavia. I used to hear Bro. Amos Hash preach at Bell Spur, Long Branch, Knob and other churches quite often as a child, but I regret that I didn't receive his preaching gift because I didn't have a hearing ear to understand the Gospel he and others preached. Know-

ing and realizing that is the work of God to give a child a hearing ear and a heart to understand. I do remember him saying "*If God be for us, it doesn't matter who is against us!*", which is precious to me. I hope that I have been made to believe and trust in the same Lord and Saviour that these dear brethren did, and all those that love His appearing, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

Yours in hope of the resurrection,
Elder Mark Terry

VOICES OF THE PAST

Experience and Call to the Ministry
by

Elder J. G. L. Hash, Ferrum, Va

Edited by his son, John H. Hash

It is my desire, the Lord willing, to leave for the people of God and my family, my reasons for being a member of the Primitive Baptist Church and a Minister for their faith. This is the Church I believe Jesus Christ set up when he said: "*That thou art Peter, and upon this rock*" (revelation) "*I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.*" (Matt. 16:18) I believe there is some of the Chosen-elect people among all the different organizations set up by man. There is only one Church, and Jesus Christ

set it up with Himself as the Chief Corner Stone, and the Primitive Baptists of our day are the only believers and teachers of the truth as revealed from heaven and believe the scriptures to be the word of God.

I was born in Franklin Co., Va. on Dec. 6, 1881, the seventh child out of a family of nine children. The oldest child was a girl followed by six boys of whom I was the youngest. There were two girls younger than I. My father, James Henry Hash, was a soldier in the Southern Army for four years (1861 to 1865). He was wounded ten days before General R. E. Lee surrendered to General U. S. Grant on April 9, 1865. Father was taken as a prisoner and was well cared for by the Union Soldiers. His wound was in bad shape as a ball had gone through his left thigh and gangrene had set in. The physicians in charge soon had father able to be up and out of danger. In a few months he was home. On Jan. 10, 1866 Father married my mother, Miss Sallie F. Thompson.

As I have already said there were nine of us children. We were all raised on a farm. I was taught to tell the truth, be sober, moral and live respectably. I was very mischievous, wild and reckless-in fact mean and selfish. My nature was so prone to sin. I loved the pleasures of this world. At times serious thoughts would come into my mind. I would try to offer some excuse for my conduct or justify myself with the thought that I am not so bad as others. At an early age I believed there

was a God in heaven. I knew nothing of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, or saving grace as treasured up in Christ before the world began. Mother was a sweet singer and often sang good old songs for us children. I soon learned to love the words of: *"Amazing grace; Am I a soldier of the Cross; Show pity Lord O forgive"* and others. I could sing these tunes from the time I was six or seven years old. The first real serious thought I had of death, hell and everlasting punishment came to me one morning when I was some seven or eight years old. Mother sent me to the corn field to gather something for dinner. I was full of self and began singing, *"While in this vale of sorrow, I travel on in pain. My heart is fixed on Jesus, I hope the prize to gain."* These words came to me like this: What is this Vale of Sorrow? My answer was this world. Do you travel on in pain? My answer was no. Is your heart fixed on Jesus, And hope the prize to gain? I had no answer for this and in tears upon the ground and in my feeble way prayed to God to be merciful to me and forgive me, a sinful child. I kept this to myself, and thought I would soon forget all about such and enjoy the pleasures of this world. For some years in my vain way I got a good share of head religion. I was careful to say my prayers as I thought every day, and at times more often than once a day. I was so self righteous had the opportunity presented, I would have like Saul of Tarsus joined in with the

Pharisees and called this religion: I lost this religion when I would get mad, do or say something I should not. Then I would go back to build more worthless huts of nothingness in the sand. In my early teens, while here alone in the same room I am now writing, (I own the old home where I was born) all at once flames of fire in every direction came to destroy me and these words were spoken: "*Resist the devil and he will flee from thee.*" At once I left the room and as I put my feet on the ground my strength was taken and I fell helpless upon the ground crying "*God be merciful to me a sinner.*" I do not know how long I lay there or how long I prayed. I will never forget these words: "*God be merciful to me a sinner.*" I made vows to be a better boy and promised in my feeble efforts in prayer to do good all my life. I was not mindful of this fact: "In me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing" (Rom. 7:18).

One of my teachers in learning me to write, wrote this: "Do good, be good and then you will be happy" for me to copy. I tried all the works of the flesh but to no avail. I grew worse in my vain way. I often cried out, "*God have mercy upon me.*" My pillow at night often was wet with tears on account of my sins. About this time I was walking up a grade and as I reached the top this thought came into my mind: What will you be in life? When this vision was presented I was caught up in the air with book in hand preaching to the

people of God. This was proof to me that I would soon be banished with the wicked to everlasting destruction, for I knew it was impossible for such a sinner to preach the gospel; one who was without the love of God and who had no hope of heaven.

I often read the scriptures which was a sealed book. Instead of finding relief, I was cut off as a brand from the burning (Amos 4: 11), without God and without mercy or hope. In my groans I often felt it was a sin to call upon a just, holy and righteous eternal God to have mercy upon me, a wicked sinner. When I went to meeting I felt to be one alone. The preaching was for the people of God. I was made to cry out as the poet, "*Like one alone I seem to be, O is there anyone like me.*" I continued to grow worse in my feelings until I came to the end crying, "*If it be thy Holy will O God, save or I perish,*" on the last evening that I felt I would spend on earth. After dark when all my people had retired, I thought for the last time to pray. I lay flat upon the ground with my face in the dust. There I tried to pray, when something seemed to say, "No mercy for such a wretch. As I went through the room where Father and Mother were resting, I felt I must go to Mother's side and tell her I was bound to die for my sins and be banished with the wicked to everlasting woe. I then felt best not to disturb them.

After retiring it seemed every sin and evil thought I ever had came up before me with sins enough to

sink a world to hell. I continued praying, *"thy will be done."* Something began taking my breath. I could not move or speak. I fully believed death was my doom and God was just in my condemnation. All of a sudden, a light above the brightness of the sun came from above and entered my whole being from head to foot. The burden was gone and I fell asleep with the sweetest rest in many months. Next morning when I awoke the sun was shining. After breakfast I was out as usual about the chores which was my lot to do. When it seemed this question was asked: Where is your burden? The next thing I knew I heard a little bird singing so sweetly its Maker's praise. I was singing too, *"Amazing grace how sweet the sound, That saved a wretch like me, I once was lost but now am found, Was blind but now I see."* I was in a new world. My whole being went forth in praises to God for His mercies to me a sinner, for saving *"my soul from death, mine eyes from tears, and my feet from falling."* (David, Psa. 116:8). I felt the love of God so sweetly. I thought I would never see any more trouble. In this love I felt light as a feather. To be born again is to be born of God. For God is love. In this I felt He was mine and I was His to praise His Holy Name forever. *"Heaven came down my soul to greet and glory crowned the Mercy Seat."*

I was vain enough to feel there would never be any trouble or worry here for me, as I often sang, *"And*

not a wave of trouble rolled across my peaceful breast." His sweet hope Christ formed in me was so wonderful I felt all would be well with me here in this life, and in the world to come everlasting peace and happiness. I remained in this peaceful frame of mind for several weeks. When all of a sudden the light went out and I was in such darkness I could feel it as Israel of old did. I cried out with Job, *"Oh that I knew where I might find him!"* (Job 23:3).

I began to cry and beg for mercy. My prayer was to God: *"If I am deceived O Lord send this burden upon me heavier than before, but if I am thine, send better evidence of thy mercy in delivering me of all my sins."* I was soon happy as ever singing, *"What wondrous love is this, O My soul."* At times the impressions came before me to tell to sinners round, *"What a dear Saviour I had found"*. This I kept to myself as I felt this could never be, by one so weak and sinful as I. The impressions to become a member and the duty enjoined upon me to *"arise and be baptized"* became a heavy burden.

In September 1899, I was received into the fellowship of the Church at Long Branch upon a confession of the reason of my hope of heaven as here set forth in this article. I was baptized by the late Elder W. A. Via, a worthy member and Minister of the Primitive Baptist Church as set up by Christ to Peter

“upon this rock” (Revelation) ***“I”*** (I the Lord not Peter nor any other man) ***“will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it,”*** (Matt. 16: 18) As we came out of the water singing ***“O how happy are they, who their Saviour obey”***, this was a sweet foretaste of heaven for me with all doubts removed at that time with proof that ***“Sinners”*** are saved by grace. I attended our meetings regularly and felt it was our duty to be present at every meeting both days (Saturday and Sunday) unless providentially hindered. I was soon chosen Clerk of the Church and with some help I have cared for the record for more than fifty-five years.

In June 1908, I was married to Miss Nannie Snead who has proved to be a gift from the Lord. She has been a member for more than forty years. We have seven children all grown and married with families except our youngest daughter Virginia who is with us to look after and care for us in our declining days, as a blessing from the Lord. I was appointed Rural Letter Carrier at Endicott P. O. In 1908. The duties were over dirt roads here at the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mts., on horseback and with buggy at times or a two-wheeled cart. I often suffered from exposure. Shortly after we were married I became seriously ill and had high fever with severe suffering. I became so sick I did not know whether I would live through the night. My wife was seated beside my bed to see how I got along. It was

near Midnight and neither of us had had any rest. I turned to the wall when I heard a noise, like a dove makes in flying. I looked up and an angel stood over me and said: ***“You go preach the everlasting gospel and glorify His great and good Name.”*** In tears of assurance, with the burden of the work of the Ministry upon me, I turned to my wife and said: ***“I know I will get well, for God has sent His angel and called me to preach His everlasting gospel.”*** From that moment I began to mend and the next day I could sit up. I was soon in doubts as to whether I should go or not to speak in His dear name, when these words of Paul came to me with much force: ***“For necessity is laid upon me: yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel!”*** (1 Cor. 9:16). I rebelled and felt this holy calling could not be for such as I. Any male member was better suited for this sacred duty than I. I prayed for deliverance from my distress, I dreamed of being before a congregation preaching from this text: ***“I thank thee O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes.”*** (Matt. 11:25, Luke 10:21). I was so ignorant of the scriptures, I did not know how to find this subject. Later I dreamed I found the answer in Acts 5:20: ***“Go, stand and speak in the temple to the people an the words of this life.”*** My burden became so heavy I was made willing

to tell my faithful old pastor, the late Elder Asa D. Shortt, of my impressions. As a father in Israel he asked me to join him in the stand. I used this hymn, "O for a closer walk with God.", offered a few words in prayer, and spoke for some ten minutes. This was such a sweet relief for a short season. I felt the burden was gone never to bother me again. In this I had no fears as to what the public would say for I was no preacher, I only spoke for relief of my mind. Soon after this, in walking along, these words were spoken to me: "*I will make you fishers of men.*" (Matt. 4: 19) This was not audible but at first I looked around to see if any one was near. The burden to "go preach" has followed me near all these many years. While I feel unworthy and unprofitable, I am encouraged at times to feel the Lord has blessed me to preach the gospel so as to comfort the believer, in setting forth salvation by grace.

In a few years I was ordained by a Presbytery of Elders to the full functions of the gospel ministry. In a short while I was called to come to the bedside of an invalid, to preach for him. After services he related a sweet experience and was received as a member with the request that I baptize him. This dear brother was helpless from paralysis from his hips down. I carried him down into the water in my arms while he was seated in his chair, and baptized him in the clear mountain stream with as much ease as if I had practiced for years. A dear Sister,

after the baptism, said to me, "Brother Hash, if you live to baptize for forty years you will never do a nicer job or have a prettier baptism." We left this dear brother happy and rejoicing in a Saviour's love. He was poor as to the goods of this world and never got to our meetings but once at Long Branch after his baptism, as his mode of travel was a ground sled drawn by a yoke of oxen. He was happy to be with us in our meeting. He was soon relieved of his suffering by death, and we were fully persuaded his spirit returned to God who gave it, and his body to the dust there to await the final resurrection of the Just and the Unjust. I was soon called to serve several Churches: "County Line" and "Thomas Grove" in Floyd County; my home Church, "Long Branch", in Franklin County; and "Charity" in Patrick County. I have never felt competent or worthy to serve churches or baptize the saints of God. At present, I serve my home Church and "*Charity*" and "*Mayo*" in Patrick County. In this service I have often been brought to my knees in prayer with tears to God for mercy and to direct my feeble efforts to His Name with praise, honor and glory. My desire is to spend my last days in this service for Jesus' sake as a servant in the house of God, and to lord nothing "*over God's heritage*" (1 Peter 5:3).

In 1920, I was chosen Assistant Clerk of the Smith River Association. In 1932, by unanimous vote I was elected Clerk of this associa-

tion. So far I am their servant yet. I do not admire members who seek promotions, whether it be for the ministry, deaconship, pastor or any office in the Church. The Church should see the gift and fill it and be burdened especially with the gifts of the ministry and the choosing of a Pastor. In my time many things have taken place among our people. I have seen Elders seeking the pastoral care of Churches. No good ever came of this. I also have seen men seek to be ordained to the ministry. This proved to be a curse. In some instances there was exclusion for their unreasonable demands when the Church did not feast upon their preaching or feel such would make a Pastor sent from the Lord. I have known some to move their membership for a selfish motive.

This should never be. Paul said, *"In me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing."* (Rom. 7: 18). Every time anyone comes in the flesh, beware of such. Remember the flesh dust is the dwelling place of Satan. After being, as I hope and believe by the power of God and the riches of His sustaining grace, a servant for Jesus' sake, I now, though feeble in body and mind, serve my home Church, Long Branch, and Charity and Mayo. Were it in me, *"I would praise God, from whom all blessings flow."* and preach the gospel at all times if I could. I know it is as easy for Man to make a world like this as it is to praise God in spirit and in truth without sustaining grace with faith,

which is a gift from God. One main reason all mankind fails to worship God is they come in the flesh, not sensible of the fact that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwells no good thing. For God is a spirit, and seeketh such to worship Him as do worship Him in spirit and in truth. This comes about by being born again. Jesus said to Nicodemus, *"Ye must be born again"* (John 3:7). To be born again is in the re-generation. The first birth is of the earth earthy. The second birth is from above, with Jerusalem above which is free as the Mother of us all. In this we are born with the love of God in our hearts. This is why we love each other for Jesus' sake. It is the love of God manifest in the hearts of His children. *"Ye shall know them by their fruits"* (Matt. 7:16). If we are taught of the Lord, we love the Church and the worship of God. In the many years I have been serving Churches, I always prayed for divine guidance in taking the oversight of the flock. I have seen men claiming to be Ministers, who would seek this sacred work. In near every case such proved to be volunteers and proved to be a curse. The servants of God are drafted by His Holy Spirit, and prepared in the school of grace, with faith, which is the gift of God to serve the Church for Jesus' sake as servants to lord nothing *"over God's heritage"* (I Peter 5:3). Jesus said to his disciples: *"Every plant which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up. Let them alone: they be blind*

leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch.” (Matt. 15:13-14).

I have seen this in men seeking to be ordained to the ministry as volunteer leaders in serving churches and such fell by the way, rooted up and lost their standing. Some proved they were deceivers by trying to destroy what they once tried to set up as the Church, after being excluded and dying in shame and disgrace. I knew one man who in a boasting way said: *“Hear and understand: Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man; but that which cometh out of the mouth, this defileth a man.” (Matt. 15:10-11).* Later his conduct was so disorderly he was excluded, and died without ever being restored. Is it possible that Jude, *“The servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James” (Jude 1:1)*, had under consideration such men when he said: *“These are spots in your feasts of charity, when they feast with you, feeding themselves without fear: clouds they are without water, carried about of winds; trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots; Raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever.” (Jude 1:12-13)?*

My hope is that I know the truth, and I know Jeremiah (Jer.17:9-10) told the truth, *“The heart is deceit-*

ful above all things, and desperately wicked: who can know it? I the Lord search the heart, I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings.” and Peter (1 Peter 1:3-5) *“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again to 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.”* In my pilgrimage, I found out many years ago what Peter meant in addressing his epistle to the strangers scattered throughout Pontius, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia. *“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.” (1 Peter 1:2)* could say for our comfort, and *“Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.” (1 Peter 1:5).* It seems there is no end to this wonderful work in the redemption of the children of God. *“Yea, I have loved thee with a everlasting love. (Jer. 31:3).* Some teach and believe the children of God can and do

fall away from their first love, so as to be lost. This is not true if Jeremiah was right when he said "Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love." In the beginning was God. This love is as old as God is, for Israel's God is a God of love. Grace was treasured up in Christ before the world began. This grace is love, this love is God: the Father, Son and Holy Ghost. It is all treasured up in the triune God.

Many people I have known fell by their conduct, so as to be excluded from the Church, and lost their standing as members. If they were goats they were at his left hand, to depart from His presence. While if they were sheep of His pasture, all will be found at His right hand to hear His welcome voice, *"Child your Father calls, come home."*

I have left out many things of interest to me, that I would be glad to include for my children and those interested in what I have written to see after I am gone. We raised seven children to be grown: four girls and three sons. All are married but Virginia our youngest daughter. Amos Hash, our oldest son, has been a member with us near two years. It was my privilege (thought unworthy I felt) to baptize him and a dear young Sister Turner at the same time. Before this took place I felt I would love my child the best. When we were in the water, all fear was gone. The love of God was so sweetly manifested I loved this dear Sister just as much as I did my own

son. She is a worthy Sister and both have proved a blessing to the Church.

Since then I baptized a dear Sister and her husband. She had this hope with love for the Church for 15 years. Thirteen years ago she dreamed I baptized her. This she kept hid and evaded me all these years. When the time came for her to be gathered into the fold, she with her dear husband, a previous lovely Brother, came in as little children in tears of joy. This baptism was sweet to me. While I was feeble and afflicted I was given strength without fear to baptize both in a clear stream of water this dear Sister had been shown thirteen years before. The Brother weighed 228 lbs. but I had no trouble at the baptism, as I had prayed it would be in decency and order. This was at "Long Branch". At "Charity" I baptized one precious young Brother. At "Mayo" I baptized two worthy brothers. My hope and prayer is I may be kept at the feet of my brethren by the power of God as a servant for Jesus' sake. To serve them in love and not for filthy lucre's sake. Your little Brother I hope in love from God and for His sake.

J. G. L. Hash

Editorial comments: My father wrote this article to leave a record for his children after his death. Unfortunately, after his death in 1959 the article was not made known to all of the surviving children and it lay unnoticed and forgotten in a trunk until it was recovered in the Spring of 1995.

TOUCHET, Wash., Sept. 28, 1909.

DEAR HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH:- It has been a custom of mine for several years to send greetings to the household of faith, the saints scattered over the land wherever the SIGNS OF THE TIMES Circulates. Many far distant from me are yet near and dear to my heart; some have lived with me in the old Hillsborough Church, in Oregon, but we are now scattered many miles apart, and our heads are blossoming for the grave. O what a blessed thought to me, for since September 10th, 1909, I have breathed the air of my eighty-first year. Many sorrows have pierced my heart during my long life, and it sometimes seems as though I must doubt the evidence of being born again. We read the Lord taketh the righteous from the evil to come. O who that has lived to see my age can say other than did Jacob to Pharaoh? Although to us the days seem many, yet with the "Alpha and Omega" one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. Dear saints, think of this, will it indeed be so that we shall be numbered among those who sing the song that no man can sing on earth? Then shall this vile body be changed, and this corruptible shall put on incorruption, and this mortal put on immortality, then will all that pertains to death be swallowed up in victory. What a glorious victory! Mortal mind cannot comprehend, nor mortal heart con-

ceive of, that which awaits the saints. The apostle said, "*For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God.*" Surely here we do realize that the creature is made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of Him who hath subjected the same in hope. Glorious hope! It is as "*an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast.*" Of all men surely would we be the most miserable without that hope. The Arminians of the world are daily energetic; they are stimulated to do the best they can, peradventure they may attain unto salvation. If perchance they step aside one day, they strive to make amends by repenting and laboring in prayer, in almsgiving and in missionary efforts, by giving money to societies to save the heathen, and so by their works they strive to make their calling and election sure. Is this the case with the saints of God? God forbid. To them the Lord has said, "*If ye love me, keep my commandments.*" He has also said, "*My yoke is easy, and my burden is light.*" The Arminian world will say, Why be sorrowful and in the dark? The answer of the believer is, Because I see a "*law in my members, warring against the law of my mind.*" Yea, the tempter is continually going about seeking whom

he may devour. He tempted our dear Lord and Savior, will he not also tempt the children? Nevertheless, when Jesus turns and looks upon us, we, like Peter, go out and weep bitterly that we have so grievously denied our Lord. The flesh is weak, we are not able to watch one hour without His divine presence. We are as clay in the hand of the potter, who hath power to make one vessel to honor, and another to dishonor, and if he send my soul to hell, his righteous law approves it well. But, dear household of faith, what more can he say than to you he hath said?

If you see fit to publish this, please correct all mistakes, and oblige a little one.

As ever yours,
(MRS.) S. J. CUMMINS.

TIOGA, Pa., Dec. 1, 1909.

DEAR BRETHREN :-We are saved by grace, and not by works, lest any man should boast. What have we to boast of we brought nothing with us into this world, and can take nothing out; all we have here God has given us, therefore we have nothing to boast of in our natural life. God gave us that life, and by that life we come into possession of the things of life. We are taught natural things because we have natural life and we desire the things of the earth. By that life we become exalted, or puffed up, thinking we are something when really we are nothing. When God in his own time gives

us spiritual life, then we are made to love the things we once hated, and hate the things we once loved; we are humiliated and brought down; we cannot even look up to the throne of God, but smite our breast and say, Father, be merciful to me, a sinner. Of what then can we boast? Boasting is excluded. We cannot claim any merit on our part. We then know that God has all power in heaven and in earth; there is no power but what is ordained of God. No man or school can teach that dividing line between the natural and the spiritual life; God's word only can divide. His word is sharper than any two-edged sword, when he speaks it stands fast. When he said, "Let there be light," light was. There is no power that can resist God; we are as clay in the potter's hand; He can make one vessel to honor and another to dishonor. We cannot add one cubit to our stature, or make one hair black or white. There are only two classes of people in this world: the believer and the unbeliever. The believer, by the revelation of God, knows that he is a sinner, and knows his heart is deceitful and desperately wicked, and that of himself he can do nothing; his works are as filthy rags. There is no boasting in him now, he knows that God must direct his steps and must guide him, and that He does lead him in ways he knew not of, and in that path which the vulture's eye has never seen, nor the lion's whelp trodden. The unbeliever thinks he must work

out his own salvation, and that it depends upon him, and is trying to climb up some other way, and is trying to steal the inheritance by his false testimony. God, by his Son Jesus, has willed to his children that which they will receive at the appointed time of the Father. Thanks be unto God, these things are kept safe and sure for his people.

If you desire to throw this in the wastebasket, all will be well with me.

Your unworthy brother,
C. S. BOND.

ISAIAH XXVI. 19.

“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.”

We have understood this passage to express a glorious promise given in prophecy, to the church of God, assuring her that her dead men should be quickened simultaneously with the resurrection of the crucified body of our Lord Jesus Christ. Some of our brethren however, have taken a different view of the subject. We do not claim to be wiser, or more infallible than they, but whether this text be applicable to the resurrection of Christ from the dead, and the life of his church in him or not, the apostles by inspiration have established the certainty that the church are risen

with Christ, and that God who is rich in mercy, for the great love wherewith he hath loved us, hath quickened us together with Christ, and has raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places, in Christ Jesus. We do not, however, understand that this, or any other passage, implies that the resurrection of the bodies of the saints should be simultaneous with the resurrection of the crucified body of our Lord, for the inspired apostles have, since the resurrection of Christ from the dead, assured us of a resurrection at the last day, when these mortals shall put on immortality, and these corruptibles, incorruption, and the saying shall be brought to pass, That death is swallowed up in victory. Then shall the last enemy be destroyed, which is death, and the kingdom of Christ, in all its fullness and glory, shall be delivered to God, even the Father. But in the subject which we understand to be contemplated in our text, and in parallel exists, the Mediatorial union of Christ and his church is strongly implied. As Christ has carried and borne his members all the days of old, so he carried and bore them when he poured out his soul unto death, when his body slumbered in the grave, and when he burst the bars of death and triumphed over the grave. It was our death which he died, as it is his life which we live. Zion's dead men were quickened together with Christ, and they were raised up together, and sit together in heavenly places.

Omitting the italicized words used in this text, by the translators, it will read, "*Thy dead men shall live, my dead body shall they arise,*" &c. If this be the correct rendering of the text, the promise which it contains would seem to us to imply either to the regeneration and ingathering of the saints is the members of his mystical body, and the bringing them into the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man; to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, or to the final resurrection of the bodies of His redeemed people. Which of the three applications is correct, if any, we leave to our readers generally to judge, as in any or all of them the doctrine is established by the plain Scriptures. Therefore, "*Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust.*" God's people while here in the flesh, dwell in the dust, for their mortal bodies are of the earth, earthy, even as the Lord said to Adam, "For dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return." And Paul 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 [or the dust], I live by the faith of the Son of God,*" &c. In this sense God's quickened children, while in the house of their pilgrimage, dwell in the dust, and are called on to awake and sing. But there is another sense in which the words are sometimes, and perhaps more generally used in the Scriptures, as signifying a low

condition, captivity and worldly afflictions, and this seems to harmonize with the state of the church as set forth in the chapter of which our text is a part. All their own efforts for deliverance had proved abortive, and they are represented as discouraged, but the word of the Lord comes to them in their lowly condition with consolation, turning their mourning into joy, saying, Awake and sing, thou that dwellest in the dust. As in Isaiah lii. 1, 2, "*Awake, awake; put on thy strength, O Zion: put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city: * * * shake thyself from the dust; arise and sit down, O Jerusalem: loose thyself from the bands of thy neck, O captive daughter of Zion.*" As her day of joy and gladness dawns upon her, she is called upon to arise and sing. Let her tears be dried, and let the bands of her captivity be removed from her neck, let her put on her beautiful apparel, and be clothed with her strength. "*For thy dew is as the dew of herbs.*" The doctrine of God our Savior is compared to dew. Deut. xxxii. 2, "*My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew.*" The doctrine expressed in the speech of our Lord, has the reviving effect on the disconsolate saints, that rain has upon grass, and dew upon the tender herb. It revives, quickens, invigorates the saints, as the rain and dew causes the earth to develop its vegetation. When the precious seed is buried in the earth, it remains

there concealed, until the earth is moistened by the showers of rain, or refreshed by the genial dew. Under the influence of the heaven inspired doctrine of Christ, the saints arise from the dust, they awake and sing, they arise and shine, the lame man leaps like the hart, the tongue of the stammerer speaks plainly, and the dumb shout for joy. *“And the earth shall cast out the dead.”* As the parched ground which contains the precious seed, when cheered by the dew, casts out the tender blade; and finally the full corn in the ear, so shall the earth cast out, make manifest and fully develop the sons of Zion, when the seasons of refreshing came from the presence of our God. And so the fruits of the Spirit are made to appear in the saints who dwell in the dust, when the doctrine of our God descends on them, and their fruit is unto holiness, and the end everlasting life.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
 Middletown, N.Y., Dec. 1, 1855.

January 13.

“Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you.”-1 PETER iv. 12.

THE “fiery trial,” then, is not a strange thing which happens only to a few of the Lord’s family, but is more or less the appointed lot of all. Do we not hear the Lord

saying to his Zion, *“I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction?”* All then that are chosen must pass through the furnace of affliction, and all know experimentally the fiery trial, for by it they are made partakers of Christ’s sufferings. But this is indispensable in order to be partakers of his glory. *“If so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together.”* Thus they suffer with him, *“that when his glory shall be revealed, they may be glad also with exceeding joy.”* And this suffering with and for Christ in the furnace of affliction salts the soul, preserves it from corruption, communicates health, gives it savour and flavour, is a token of interest in the everlasting covenant, and is a seal of friendship and peace with God.

J. C. Philpot

REVELATION 22:1-4.

AND he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb.

In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations.

And 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.

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR JANUARY 2001

Lucile Akers, VA	5.00
Banks Conner, VA	7.00
Tiny Flippin, VA	2.00
Virginia Gladding, PA	7.00
Arlie Thompson, VA	2.00
Livie Thompson, VA	2.00
James Meador, VA	2.00
Joyce Ingram, VA	2.00
Cline Chandler, NC	2.00
Hoyt Sparks, NC	2.00
Dora Vick, NC	7.00
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T.E. Hall, NC	2.00
Udell Young, NC	2.00
Edwin F. Dyer, VA	2.00
Rebecca Smith, FL	2.00

PSALM 136 : 23 & 26.

Who remembered us in our low estate: for his mercy endureth for ever:

O give thanks unto the God of heaven: for his mercy endureth for ever.

OBITUARIES

MARGARET HOLLANDSWORTH QUESENBERRY

In memory of our Dear Sister Margaret, she was born June 14, 1933 passed away November 21, 2000 at age 67.

She is survived by her devoted husband Theron D. Quesenberry, Willis, Va. Two daughters & son-in-laws, Debbie & Raymond Weeks, Salem, Va.; Donna & Mike Hodges, Roanoke, Va.; one son & daughter-in-law Joe & Pam Quesenberry, Madison, N.C.; one sister: Fay Quesenberry, Willis, Va. Six grandchildren: Kari Quesenberry, Scott Quesenberry, Derek Weeks, Megan Weeks, Amy Hodges, and Andrew Hodges; special friends Jim, Andrea and John Garland.

Sister Margaret joined the church in year 1977 and was baptized by her Pastor.

She had been afflicted for many years, was in a wheel chair much of the time.

She attended her church regularly. Her faithful husband took care of her and attended church with her.

We miss her so much knowing our loss is her eternal gain.

Her services were held at Mayberry Chapel at 1:00 p.m. on Friday, Nov. 2000 by Elder Larry Hollandsworth. She was laid to rest

to await the second coming of Christ in the Turman Cemetery.

By request of church, written by
Sister Dorcie Semones, Clerk
Elder Hale Terry, Moderator

ARTHUR WILSON KING

Brother Wilson King passed away April 18, 2000 at Alamance Regional Medical Center in Burlington N.C. after six months of declining health. He was 84 years old and a precious brother. He is sorely missed by his church, his family, and many friends. But we feel, as the Apostle Paul expressed it, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better. Wilson was a member of the Greensboro Church and served as a deacon for many years. He was always faithful to attend and serve his brethren. He joined Bush Arbor Church in 1952 and was baptized by Elder W. Curry King.

Brother King's funeral was held Friday April 21, 2000 in McClure's Funeral Chapel in Burlington, N.C. His funeral service was conducted by Elder Kenneth Key and Elder C.B. Davis. His interment was in the Blalock Cemetery. Brother Wilson was laid to rest, in this most serene place, beneath a mound of flowers and accompanied by many friends and family.

Brother King was born March 15, 1916 to Mr. Will King and Mrs. Minnie Oakley King. On December 25, 1938 he married Sara Frances Blalock who was his wife for 52 years until her death December 24, 1990. They were a very devoted and loving couple. And to this union was born two daughters, Nancy and Linda, and one son, Gary.

Wilson has a very supportive and loving family. They made sure he had a way to church after his health began to fail. And they attended church and met with Wilson for lunch many times, which he looked forward to and appreciated very much. They also took care of his other needs after his health started to decline. Wilson was very blessed to have a family like this.

Wilson was preceded in death by a brother, Mr. Leonard King. Survivors include two daughters, Mrs. John (Nancy) Ghatt and Mrs. Kirk (Linda) Loy, both of Burlington; a son, Mr. Gary Wilson King of Prospect Hill; three sisters, Mrs Dolly Mae Garrison of Yanceyville, Mrs Wilbert (Sue) Harris of Mebane and Mrs. Ed (Kathleen) Powell of Burlington; five brothers, Mr. Alvis F. King, Mr. Banks B. King, Mr. Joe D. King and Mr. Billy King, all of Burlington, and Mr. W. Jones King of Graham; seven grand-children; and seven great-grandchildren.

Submitted by request,
Wayne Edwards, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

202 Carousel Lane, Meadows of Dan, Va. 27120-4403

SONG

*JESUS, the very thought of thee,
With sweetness fills my breast:
But sweeter far thy face to see,
And in thy presence rest.*

*No voice can sing, no heart can frame,
Nor can the memory find
A sweeter sound than Jesus' name,
To those of heavenly mind.*

*O Hope of every contrite heart!
O Joy of all the meek!
To those who ask, how kind thou art!
How good, to those who seek!*

*But what to those who find? Ah! this,
No tongue nor pen can show;
The love of Jesus, what it is,
None but his loved ones know.*

Bernard of Clairvaux. 1153

Tr. By E. Caswall. 1849

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CONTENTS

EDITORIAL	74
Elder J.B. Farmer	
CORRESPONDENCE	78
VOICES OF THE PAST	82
Elder W. C. King	
Elder W. D. Griffin	
Elder Silas H. Durand	
MEETINGS	92
CONTRIBUTIONS	93
OBITUARIES	93
Elder J. J. Aderhold	
Blanche Morton Collins	
Elder Wallace Harvey	
Peircy Davis Holland	
Sister Mae Hudson	

EDITORIAL

ELDER JERRY FARMER

The Signs of the Times' board of trustees unanimously agreed to add Elder Jerry Farmer as an associate editor to the Signs. I have been requested to write an introduction to you readers of Elder Farmer and to welcome him as a contributor to the Signs.

Some years ago, he was a member of another denomination and he was ordained as a minister among them. I am told that he informed them of his interpretation of the scriptures, which was the doctrine

of the Primitive Baptists although he had never heard them preach or talked with anyone from our denomination. They went ahead with his doctrine for a time but eventually turned against him in a very angry way and would have no agreement with his preaching.

After separating from this people, he searched for someone that believed as he did. I'm told that a fellow employee told him to go to the Primitive Baptist meeting as his daddy was a member and he believed that it was what Elder Farmer believed.

Elder and Sister Farmer have been sweetly received among us as we have seen the evidence of their being the sheep of His pasture. Truly, God moves in a mysterious way, His wonders to perform.

Elder Farmer's deep understanding of the scriptures and his feeding of the sheep and lambs through his preaching, is being performed and none of it will be wasted or fail to accomplish that where-in the Lord sends him to preach the gospel.

As our members decrease (church membership, I refer to) the evidence that the Holy Comforter is active as Jesus Himself, promised to His people when He ascended into Heaven. May His name forever be praised and all Honor and Glory be His.

An unworthy sinner,
Burnell Williams

***“How shall we escape, if we neglect so great salvation”
Heb. 2:3***

In the world, almost all we hear is bad news. But, thanks be unto God, what we hear in the church is good news. The good news of the gospel of grace has sounded to all generations. That good news has been proclaimed and is now being proclaimed of that great salvation which God has wrought on behalf of His people. I would love to be enabled, by the grace and mercy of God, to ascribe greatness to our God and to write a little concerning His great salvation.

First of all we understand that our God is greater than all. ***“He is the Rock, His work is perfect: all His ways are judgement: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is He.”*** Deut. 32:4 He is the great I Am. He was before all things, without beginning and having no end of days. By Him all things consist. He made all things by the Word of His power. He made all things for Himself and for His pleasure. He has done all things well. This world and the universe and even the things not seen or known by us were made by Him. He is the Word, He is love, He is a Spirit and He is even a consuming fire to all that know Him not and obey not the gospel. He has all Power in heaven and earth. He has worked all things together for the good of

His people. He has seen the end from the beginning and declared it so that all things must come to pass according to His will and purpose. He is all in all to us that believe. In Him we live and move and have our being.

This great God, in His wisdom and love and mercy, purposed in Himself to create a people in Christ Jesus for Himself. They would be a people generated by Himself for Himself to love and to show His great kindnesses and mercies unto. These people, the vessels of honor, He would form of the dust of the ground naturally and make them to be earthen vessels into which He would place a great treasure, even His Holy Spirit by which they would be kept and show forth His praise.

Of the same lump of clay from which He would make His people, He also would make another people which He called the vessels of wrath. They, not having His Spirit, would be left to themselves to follow out the lusts of the flesh. They would know not God and would neither see nor know the things of the holy kingdom and would not obey the gospel of Jesus Christ. They, like wicked Cain who hated and killed Abel his brother in the flesh for no good reason, would persecute the people of God. But they would be held in check and could only go as far as it suited the wise purpose of God. God said that the wrath of man would praise Him and the remainder of wrath He would restrain.

This warfare has been going on from the time of Cain and Abel and continues to this day. God's holy prophets and saints of old, Jesus Christ, the disciples and apostles in Christ's day and even His people today have been misunderstood and hated for the truth's sake. But, thanks be unto God, because our God is greater than all, He has delivered His people, He is delivering them and we trust He shall yet deliver. We are made to say with the apostle I know whom I have believed and am persuaded that He is able to keep that which I have committed unto Him against that day. No weapon formed against them shall prosper.

This great God whom we hope to serve, prepared a great salvation for His people before He made them. God, with all wisdom and knowledge, foresaw the fall of all creation into sin and ruin and prepared a remedy for His people that He had created in Christ Jesus. This remedy for sin was necessary for them since the righteous God of heaven and earth is also a just God. In His great wisdom and justice, God declared, that according to His law, the soul that sins must surely die. The penalty for sin is death. God saw that there would be no help for them by the arm of flesh. According to nature, they would be without God and without hope in this world. In order to deliver the chosen vessels of mercy from that awful condition, God in His great love, mercy, wis-

dom and justice, purposed to send His only begotten, sinless, spotless, holy and undefiled Son into the world to redeem His beloved people to Himself by His own blood. All this was done before the world was made according to the scriptures.

God in His perfect wisdom also determined to keep His people that He had given to His Son by His power and through His faith. He would keep those that He brought into the world so that sin could not have dominion over them. Although the whole world lies in wickedness, God determined that he would cause His people to overcome the world in Christ and that they should show forth His praise. He, as with Peter, prayed for them that their faith fail not therefore it cannot fail. He has placed His Holy Spirit in them to keep them and to preserve them through their many trials and afflictions unto His coming. He promised to be with them even to the end of the world and is fulfilling His promise.

God also determined that He would raise up in the last day all that He had given to His Son. He predestinated them to be conformed to the image of His Son that He might be the firstborn of many brethren. Jesus said *"I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live."* He said *"because I live, ye shall live also."* He said by His apostle that *"He that raised up Christ from the dead shall*

also quicken your mortal bodies by His Spirit that dwelleth within you." After Jesus as our great high priest offered up His body as a perfect sacrifice for our sins - after He gave His life a ransom for many - after He died the cruel death of the cross - after He lay in the tomb for three days and three nights - He came forth victorious over death, hell and the grave. And He, by resurrecting His earthly body changed to a spiritual body, gave us the victory and assured us of the promise that we also will be raised up in that same power at His coming.

God's great salvation is manifest to His people in many ways of which I would like to mention a few. God saved His people in eternity by choosing and electing them to salvation by His grace. He saved His people before the world was by preparing a remedy for their hopeless condition. He saved them from the curse of the law by sending His Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, but without sin, to fulfill it in every aspect. He saved them by offering up His Son for their sins - the just for the unjust, that their sins would be remembered against them no more forever. He saved them by His resurrection from the dead in giving them a lively hope. He saves them by the gospel and by the truth in delivering them from error and false doctrine. He saves them from the power of sin by putting them under grace. He saves them from death

by His life. He saves them from their enemies by holding their enemies back so they cannot do the things that they would. He saves them by the gift of faith and the Spirit that they no longer are controlled by the flesh. There are many other ways He has saved and is saving us, I am fully assured, which you may be given to reflect upon as He gives light. His riches are unsearchable. I would like to conclude with this one other facet of His great salvation. When He comes again, He will save us from hell and the grave by raising up our mortal bodies and fashioning them like unto His own glorious body. *"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. Every man that hath this hope in him purifies himself, even as He is pure."* 1 John 3:2-3.

These things are written in love and in hope of eternal life. Your little brother (I hope).

Elder J.B. Farmer

ST. MATTHEW 5:10.

Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.

CORRESPONDENCE

February 7, 2001

Dear Elder Key,

I have been impressed for some time to try to write this but could not seem to do so. I do not consider myself a writer and am a simple man but hope that I can say with Paul *“that by the grace of God that I am what I am.”*

I was called to serve my first church, Old Union Church, Indian Valley, Va. In May of 1972, which meets the 4th weekend of each month. A regular stop was at my wife’s Grandpa and Grandma Bond either on Saturday or Sunday on 4th weekends or sometimes more often the Lord permitting.

Grandpa asked for a home at Old Union Church in November, 1924 placing his membership with Old Indian Creek Church, Indian Valley, Va. Grandma joined Old Indian Creek Church in May of 1925 and both were baptized by Elder John Sumner in May of 1925. Grandma passed away September 24, 1984 her membership being 59 years.

Grandpa passed away April 27, 1995 his membership being 71 years.

The Lord blessed us to visit with Grandpa on the 4th weekend in March 1995. As always Grandpa began to talk on the scriptures. He had a clear mind and could quote scriptures and talk about how good the Lord had been to him. Grandpa could not read or write. It was such

a blessing to hear him tell of the goodness and mercy of God. I always looked forward to these visits and enjoyed them so much. Grandpa said, *“I want to tell you something that I saw this week. I was setting in my chair in the living room and I heard children playing. I looked into the kitchen and I saw two of most beautiful little girls playing that I have ever seen. They were laughing and were so happy. I went to the window and looked outside to see who was with them. There was no car in the driveway and no one was there. I went into the kitchen and looked all around but they had disappeared and I could not find them.”* Then he said, *“I do not know if I will live to know what this means but I believe that someday you will know.”*

In January of 1997 my youngest daughter became pregnant with her first child. The wife of my nephew also became pregnant. Both girls were due to deliver in September 1997. My nephew, brother Duane Gray, is a member of New Bell Spur primitive baptist church. In a few months the doctors told my daughter that her baby would not live outside of her body. Oh what a sad pitiful time. At first I begged the Lord if it could be possible to let this baby live, but as the time passed all I could do was beg for His Will to be done. Gina went into labor in July and our first granddaughter little Hannah Marie was born. She drew

three breaths and fell asleep in Jesus' arms. Gina had asked the Lord to please let little Hannah Marie open her eyes to look at her and to know that she was her Mother. This she felt that the Lord did grant to her and had answered her prayer. Gina and her husband asked me to preach the little one's funeral. I told them that I did not think I could. Then she said Daddy if you cannot then call a minister that you have confidence in to conduct the service.

The day before the time set for the funeral I was so burdened I felt that I could not do this and should call another minister. I went outside walking around the yard begging the Lord to show me what to do. Suddenly I saw a pair of arms and in the arms was little Hannah Marie and the voice said **"SUFFER THE LITTLE CHILDREN TO COME UNTO ME, AND FORBID THEM NOT: FOR OF SUCH IS THE KINGDOM OF GOD"** Oh I cannot express my feelings at that moment. I went into the house and told my companion that the Lord has shown me that I will preach the funeral tomorrow. So many that attended the funeral said no one else could have said those beautiful things. I answered I did not - but the Lord did. Oh praise His Holy name.

The week before the first weekend in September of 1997 I received a phone call from my nephew, brother Duane Gray. He said please come to Lewis Gayle Hospital our baby is dead and they are going to

put my wife in labor and we need you to come. I told him I will be there as soon as I can. They had chose not to know the sex of the baby as technology now permits, but on the way to the Hospital I remembered Grandpa's vision and I knew that the baby would be a beautiful little girl. We arrived at the hospital and there was so many sad faces and so many tears. It was another sad pitiful time. My heart went out to this precious family as we asked for the Lord's will to be done. One of the family said I wonder if it will be a boy or a girl. I said it will be a beautiful little girl. Everyone looked at me and asked how do you know? I said wait until she is born and I will tell you. After she was born, yes a beautiful little girl, I related to them Grandpa's vision. The tears of sadness turned into tears of joy. Oh what a wonderful God and Savior we have.

Elder Key, I hope that this article will encourage others to write the experiences and visions that the Lord has revealed from Heaven. Oh how we love him that has taken our sins away by his death on the cruel cross and given unto us that lively hope by the resurrection of Christ from the dead.

Love to All the Little Children In Christ,

Elder Wm. Hale Terry

Feb. 10, 2001 Dear Elder Williams,

Elder Wm. Hale Terry:

Dear Brother Terry, I have not had the pleasure of meeting you. But I enjoy reading the Signs of the Times. So I am sending for renewal, enclosed you will find a check for \$20.00 for 1 year subscription to the Signs and \$10.00 for a gift to the Signs. I will ask to be forgiven for this sorry writing for I did not go to school but just a few days. So I am doing the best I can. Me and my great wife of many years, last December 22nd, 67 years. God has blessed both of us all our lives. And if I could I would thank God every day. We live in Autumn Village Rest Home and getting old she 85 and me 89.

I enjoy reading the Signs of the Times and may God bless the Signs of the Times and all of you good brethren for the good writing. May God bless all of you.

Saved by hope if saved at all,
Whitley Mobley

Feb. 7, 2001

Dear Editors:

I see I'm late sending renewal for "Signs of the Times" I do enjoy the many good writers of the Signs. I am 92 and live so far from Church I just don't get to go.

I am glad you Editors can get the "Signs" out.

A sinner saved by grace if saved,

Sister Jane Carroll

Please find enclosed check for \$20.00 for two years subscription and \$2.00 for the fund. I have been subscribing to the Signs since 1952 and don't want to be without it. I find a lot of comfort in the articles and sermons. I'm not able to attend meetings anymore so the Signs is extra special to me. I've had some wonderful experiences that causes me to hope that I might be one of His children, and I do love the Signs.

Yours in Hope,
Doris Rivard

Jan. 22, 2001

Dear Elder Terry,

Please renew our subscription to the Signs. Sickness & worry caused us to be late - how many months I'm not sure.

Some years ago Brother and I came to Texas and Elder and Sister Hamrick, with Elders Campbell and Chapel, met you.

How glad we would be to welcome you at Memphis Church any Sunday God leads you here.

Love and hope in Christ,
Brother and Carrie Jo Williams

ISAIAH 40:1.

Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God.

Jan. 28, 2001

Brother Terry:

I hope the dear Lord will bless you and others to write and get this paper out. The Signs have meant much to me, and I would pray God blesses me to read and enjoy them as long as I'm on this earth.

I hope you and your family are well. We would love to see you at any of our meetings.

With love I hope
Reidy Pickral

"And seekest thou great things for thyself? Seek them not." - Jeremiah xlv. 5.

Whatever schemes and projects the Lord's people may devise that they may prosper and get on in the world, he rarely suffers their plans to thrive. He knows well to what consequences it would lead; - that this ivy creeping round the stem would, as it were, suffocate and strangle the tree. The more that worldly goods increase, the more the heart is fixed upon them; and the more the affections are set upon idols, the more is the heart drawn away from the Lord. He will not suffer his people to have their portion here below. He, therefore, says to them in his providence, as well as in his word, *"Seek them not."* But you will perhaps say, *"What are we then to seek?"* I will

tell you in one word, *-Realities*. What are these great things that you are seeking after? say in religion. Could you see them in their right light, you would see that they are but shadows. You feel, for instance, your deficiency in gift in public when you are called upon to pray, or in private when you converse with those who possess readier speech, and you want what are commonly called *gifts*, such as a greater fluency of utterance, more ability to quote Scripture, and a more abundant variety of expressions, so as to make a deeper impression on the hearers - the real want being that you might stand higher in their estimation. But what would these gifts, if you had them to the fullest extent, so that men might almost worship you for them, do for you when you shall be called upon to lie upon a death-bed - when eternity is in view, and your soul has to deal with God only? You will want no gifts then. Grace will be the only thing which can do you any good.

J.C. Philpot

PSALM 31:23-24.

O love the Lord, all ye his saints: for the Lord preserveth the faithful, and plentifully rewardeth the proud doer.

Be of good courage, and he shall strengthen your heart, all ye that hope in the Lord.

VOICES OF THE PAST

EXCERPTS FROM A SERMON

Excerpts from a sermon preached by Elder W. C. King at Bush Arbor Church, N.C., on December 13, 1959.)

Recorded in the gospel according to St. Luke, 1st chapter, 37th verse, are these words: *“For with God nothing shall be impossible.”*



Elder W. C. King

hundred years old and his wife Sarah was ninety years old, when the Lord appeared unto him saying, *“Sarah thy wife shall have a son.”* Sarah laughed, realizing she was old and stricken in age. But, according to God’s promise, Isaac was born. The things that are impossible

We find in the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. There was no man to help or to hinder: there was no man upon the Earth. The earth was without form and void, and darkness was upon the face of the deep and God said, *“Let there be light, and there was light.”* God divided the light from the darkness, and called the light day, and the darkness He called night. The things that would be impossible with man are possible with God.

The Lord said unto Abram, *“Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred and from thy father’s house, unto a land that I will show thee.”* God told him that He would make of him a great nation, and that his seed should be as the sand of the sea. Abram was one

with men are possible with God. If I could, I would like this morning to point out to you some of the things that seem impossible with men but are possible with God: Knowing that He has all power in heaven and in earth, does all things after the counsel of His own will, having seen the end from the beginning.

Men by wisdom cannot understand how that Daniel could be cast into a den of lions and not be destroyed. Yet God had sent his angels and shut the lions’ mouths that no harm should be done to Daniel. He having all power even over the beasts of the forest, the birds of the air, and the fish of the sea. He could cause the raven to feed Elijah to find him in his desolation and sadness, and feed him meat and bread twice a day. We know by nature the raven

would prefer to feed upon his body, but God commanded the raven to feed Elijah. How impossible these things seem to man. God makes a way where there is no way.

When the Hebrew children refused to worship the false gods, King Nebuchadnezzar ordered that the furnace be heated seven times more than it was wont to be heated. He commanded the most mighty men of his army to cast them into the burning fiery furnace. The king arose early, and in haste said to his counsellors, *“Did we not cast three men bound into the midst of the fire? Lo, I see four men walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt. The form of the fourth is like unto the Son of God.”*

We cannot understand with the carnal mind how these things can be: without even the smell of smoke upon their garments. No condition or circumstance is such that our God doesn't have complete power to save from every destruction. Many of the trials and experiences of God's little ones here in this world seem a miracle, yet in God's holy providence all provisions are made for their security and protection.

The angel from heaven appeared unto Zachariah when he was in the temple of the Lord about the duties and customs of the priest's office. When Zachariah saw the angel, fear fell upon him, but the angel said unto him, *“Fear not, Zachariah: for thy prayer is*

heard; and thy wife Elizabeth shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name John. For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord and shall neither drink wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb. ...And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just: to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.” How impossible this must have seemed to Zachariah, knowing that his wife Elizabeth was old, and barren. He asked the angel, *“Whereby shall I know this?”* The angel answering said, *“I am Gabriel, that stand in the presence of God; and am sent to speak unto thee, and to shew thee these glad tidings. And, behold, thou shalt be dumb, and not able to speak, until the day that these things shall be performed.”* When Elizabeth's full time came that she should be delivered, she brought forth a son. When the cousins and neighbors heard how the Lord had showed great mercy upon her, they began to talk about a name for the child. Some, of course, wanted to name him after his father, but his mother said, *“Not so; but he shall be called John.”* They reasoned that none of their kindred was called by that name; and they made signs to his father how he would have him called, and he

asked for a writing table, and he wrote, "*His name is John.*" Immediately his mouth was opened, and his tongue loosed, and he spake and praised God.

Do you not sometimes challenge God, dear believer, by asking him to give you some greater evidence of his love and mercy to you, that you might have a greater assurance of his promises.

Sometimes in our meditations and prayers we ask God to grant us certain things. I remember so well in my early experience, where I asked God just to spare my life until a certain time, and if He would do that, I would be submissive to what I felt to be my duty. But I found that I was not able to keep my promise even to God when He had spared my life to see the time requested. My heart was as cold, as ice. I was made to weep and cry unto Him for mercy, learning that I was not my own keeper: That without Him I could do nothing.

God sent an angel unto a city of Galilee to a virgin espoused to a man named Joseph. This virgin was Mary. The angel said, "*Hail, thou that art highly favored, the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou among women. And when she saw him she was troubled 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*

reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end." "*Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man? And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.*" "*For with God nothing shall be impossible.*"

"Then Joseph her husband being a just man and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privately. 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 they shall call his name Jesus, for He shall save His people from their sins.*" "*Then Joseph being raised from sleep did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him and took unto him, his wife. Knowing her not until she had brought forth her first-born son and he called His name Jesus.*" How impossible this seems to men; how preposterous for human reasoning to believe that a virgin should conceive of the Holy Ghost and bring forth a son; even Mary pondered these things in her

own heart. ***“For with God nothing shall be impossible.”***

Joseph and Mary went up from Galilee to Bethlehem to be taxed. While they were there the days were accomplished that she should be delivered, and she brought forth her first born son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

The angels of God made the announcement of the birth of the blessed Savior of sinners, to those humble shepherds who were abiding in the field keeping watch over their flock by night; saying, ***“Fear not, for behold I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be to all people, for unto you is born this day in the City of David a Savior, which is Christ Jesus the Lord.”*** I feel this morning that when the Gospel is preached it is good tidings of great joy, coming from a far country; so far that mortal arms can't reach it, yet so near that it can be felt in every heart that God has touched by the finger of his love.

There was no room in the city of Philippi, although God showed Paul by vision to ***“Come over to Macedonia to help us.”*** As great as this Roman city might have been there was no place for the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. We find Paul on the Sabbath going out of the city by the river bank, a place where prayer was wont to be made, The Lord opened the heart of Lydia, not

only did she hear but she attended to the things she heard, and was baptized; and said to Paul, ***“If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house and abide there.”*** I want to say to you beloved that there is a love, a power that binds the hearts of believers together that the world by wisdom can never know. They are hid from the wise and prudent and revealed unto babes. Just as these shepherds were made willing to leave their flocks and every possession; they had to go to where their Savior was. No man will desire to, go where their Lord and Master is until they have had his love in their heart. These wise men had the Star of Bethlehem to guide them. I believe that star is still shining. Every poor sin benighted soul has their eyes set on that star and the Lord Jesus Christ to lead and guide them to that City of habitation.

We don't know how many days it took them to travel the distance they covered. I don't know how many valleys they had to cross and how many mountains they had to climb. I don't think they turned either to the right or left. They had their eyes set on the Star of Bethlehem. It is Jesus Christ your Lord and Master that you have your eyes focused on. Every poor helpless sinner has learned there is no where else to go. You can witness with Paul when he said it was better for him to depart. I am so glad he told us why it was better, to be with

my Lord Jesus Christ.

So these wise men were so divinely sent; nothing could prevent them from reaching where this child Jesus lay. They found Him in a manger wrapped in swaddling clothes, They presented to Him these treasures, gold, myrrh and frankincense, Herod had told them, "*When you have found Him, come and tell me that I might go and worship Him.*" Herod no doubt thought that he would dethrone Him as king. Oh, how wonderful and past finding out is the great work of our God. He had the wise men to go back another way. You or I can never go over this road but once. How much you would like to have some of your experiences of God's precious presence with you over again! The things that are impossible with men are possible with God. It was never the desire of Jesus to be honored and praised by men for what He did. When men sought to praise Him and to make Him king, we find Him absenting Himself from the crowd, going to the mountains in prayer. The poor, needy souls He never turned away empty. The poor leper that came to Him (who knew he was doomed to be cast into isolation, and there to spend his last and expiring days) had faith to believe: that Jesus could heal him. We hear him saying to Jesus, "*If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean.*" Jesus had the power to cleanse the leprous. This morning do you not believe that He still has the same power to

cleanse you from all sin that your soul can be set free, that the Christ Child would be destroyed? How impossible that decree was, just as God had warned the wise men that they shouldn't return back to Herod, but go back another way. The Lord appeared to Joseph and told him to take the child and its mother and flee into Egypt. The Scripture tells us that they departed in the night. Oh, how much of our traveling seems so dark as in the night! The Lord appeared again to Joseph when Herod was dead saying, "*Arise, take the young child and His mother and go into the land of Israel.*" The unseen power of the everlasting God was controlling every move to take care of this blessed child.

Joseph and Mary went to Jerusalem at the Feast of the Passover every year, and they carried this child Jesus with them, who was twelve years old at that time. When they had fulfilled the days and started on their journey back, Jesus tarried in Jerusalem. After a day's travel they sought Him among some kinsfolk and acquaintances, but they found Him not. So they went back to Jerusalem seeking Him some three days. Later they found Him in the temple sitting in the midst of Doctors, both hearing them and asking them questions. When they saw Him they were amazed. His mother said unto him, "*Why hast thou dealt with us? Thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing. And He said unto them*"

“How is it that ye sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father’s business?” How strong and amazing it must have been to see this lad of a boy, the son of a poor carpenter, there in the Temple among the most learned and intelligent people of the land, asking and answering questions. Yes, He must be about his Father’s business. God’s business is a business so important that He can call men from the various occupations of life and cause them to leave all and follow Him.

The Scriptures have but little to say about Jesus from about the age of twelve until about thirty. ***“He went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them, and Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man.”*** John says, ***“And there are also many other things which Jesus did, which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written.”*** We know the half will never be told. No power that could be formed could take His life until the appointed time of the Father. Every demand of the law must be fulfilled. The church of the living God must be cleansed from all sin! by the one offering of our Heavenly Father, His only Son Jesus Christ.

How impossible it seemed to His own disciples when He began to tell them that He must go away, must

leave them that the Holy Comforter may come. When He had eaten the last supper with them, He tells them that I am now betrayed and shall be crucified and put to death, and I shall rise again. In the third day.

I want to say to you that every single soul that has ever come into this blessed fellowship with the Lord Jesus Christ is brought there by His own glorious power and love. It is an impossibility that men in nature, or natural minds, can know this glorious truth as it is in Christ our Lord. No greater miracle can be performed than to see a poor sinful lost man or woman that seemingly have had no love for heaven or immortal glory, be touched by the finger of God’s love and turned about by his Holy Spirit made to come down in sackcloth and in ashes to beg God for mercy on their poor, sinful souls. What is more impossible than that to human reasoning? Confessing that by the grace of God I am what I am, having no confidence in the flesh. No man can resist successfully this blessed power. It subdues and brings you under subjection and makes you willing in the day of His power; ascribing all power to His Holy name. You and I can’t understand the great mystery of godliness unless they are revealed to us. How impossible it must have been for those who would comfort Mary and Martha, to believe that Jesus could raise Lazarus from the grave after he had been dead four days. Mary and Martha didn’t believe that he

would be raised until the resurrection of the last day. Jesus said unto them, *"I am the resurrection and the life, he that believeth on me though he were dead, yet shall he live."* Jesus asked, *"Where have ye laid him? They said, come and see."* Jesus had only to say, *"Lazarus, come forth,"* and he that was dead came forth.

Oh! What grief and sorrow it brings to us when our loved ones are taken from us. It is impossible for us to call them back. Their spirits return to God, while their bodies rest in the grave to return to dust from whence they come, awaiting our blessed Savior to come again and call them to come forth. I can't tell you, my beloved, this morning how these things shall be, but I can assure you they will come at His command, without blemish, spot, or wrinkle or any such thing, to be made like unto His own glorious body.

His promise to His dear ones cannot fail. I believe with all my soul that He will come again. He told His disciples before He was crucified: *"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 you may be there also,"*

If I never address you any more on this side of eternity, I want to tell you that Jesus reigns. This child Jesus which was born in Judea in the City of Bethlehem is still alive. He is seated at the right hand of God

making intercession for His saints upon the earth and that He will at His own time call the jewels of His mercy unto himself. There will not be one of the objects of His mercy that shall not hear His blessed voice to arise and come forth to be like unto His own glorious body.

As we approach this Christmas season we would if we could share our natural resources with those less fortunate, but we know there is a limit. We know we can do but so much, yet I can point you to the one whose eternal power and Love is without limitation nor bounds, He is able to reach the most remote parts of the earth and give a gift that far surpasses all the gifts that man can give. So I say to you this morning that the greatest gift that you have ever received or that you will receive as these days come, is, the gift of His Holy Spirit in your heart as your Savior; who is the anchor to your soul both sure and steadfast. Anchored to that within the veil that shall never be severed. This gift will never be obsolete or out of date. I am persuaded that as the years go by and we grow older, these precious promises become brighter. We know our shoulders become stooped, our heads silver for the tomb, the time for our departure is near. His promise becomes more precious, that He will not leave nor forsake us, but will be with us always even to the end.

I want to assure you that all

things are possible with God. Not one single blessing that God sees you stand in need of will be withheld from you; though He has left you here in a land of trials and afflictions, the eternal God is at the helm. He will do all His will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of earth, and His church shall be brought out from the world by His mighty hand and at last be presented to the Father a glorious Church perfect as Himself.

John saw the Holy City New Jerusalem coming down from God out of Heaven prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. *“And I heard a voice out of heaven saying, Behold the tabernacle of God is with men and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself shall be with them and shall be their God. 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.”*

What a glorious hope we have. What a blessed promise that some day we are going to move into this new house made not by hands, from this old house of clay. One day we are going to leave the cares and burdens of this sinful world to go home to God to appear in His likeness, to see Him as He is, to be like Him; where we can ascribe all honor and praise to His Holy Name forever. Momentarily here in this life we feel that

our souls are lifted to the mountain-top soon to find we are again in the valley of despair. We are told that in this glory land there will be no shedding of tears. No sorrow can come, no death to separate us from loved ones. What a glorious Savior we have, One who has power to call us from the ways of this world, into the blessed fellowship of our God and with His saints upon the earth kept by the power of God ready to be revealed at the last day.

In conclusion let me say, May God bless you, keep and guide you in wisdom's ways, and at last deliver you securely and safely into the fold of God, where sickness, sorrow, and death and separation shall be, no more.

“For with God nothing shall be impossible.”

Elder W.C. King

(Signs of the Times, July, 2000)

REVELATION 7:15-17.

Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them.

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.

CIRCULAR LETTER

(Written by Elder W. D. Griffin)

Once more the wheels of time have rolled around to the time of our annual meeting of the Salisbury Old School Baptist Association; and as it has been our custom through the years to write what is called the Circular Letter, we attempt it with fear and trembling; we hope realizing that we cannot write in any way comforting to the household of faith except the God of all grace and mercy sees fit to guide our minds and trembling hand.

Therefore, as we attempt to write, we humbly pray that our eternal God, who has been pleased to lead his people, though in a mysterious way, will be pleased to guide us that this letter may be to the comfort and edification of the saints of our God; of which we hope to be a part. As we have been led to believe by the mighty hand of God in the words of Moses when he said to Israel, "*The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms,*" (Deuteronomy 33:27) we feel that it is a wonderful blessing to be given a mind to realize that there is a power that is above all other powers, that is watching over his little children here in the vain world, keeping them under his watchful eye and his ever shielding arm.

We believe that God's chosen people, his heirs of salvation according to promise, are led in ways they know not, through many storms

of life, to teach them that they cannot direct their steps, and to show them their need of our Heavenly Father to keep and sustain them in that pathway that Job spoke of when he said, "*There is a path which no fowl knoweth, and which the vulture's eye hath not seen.*" (Job 28:7) Thus we feel that the natural mind of man cannot understand the things of God, neither has, or ever will, walk that heavenward journey by his natural mind, for we are told by the Apostle Paul, "*The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them because they are spiritually discerned.*" (1 Cor. 2:14) We believe that man is born in this world with a natural mind, and he keeps it as long as he stays here on these mortal shores; but we also believe that our eternal God gives his chosen people another mind, a spiritual mind to see things that the natural mind cannot see, for the natural mind never sees the vanity of its being.

We feel that God has and still does throughout the world, in his own time and place, bring his chosen ones out of the darkness in which they were born, into the light and knowledge of the truth which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Darkness has always preceded light, for in the beginning the evening and the morning was the first day, and so on. Therefore, if we are what we hope to be, we are traveling in newness of life, viewing things that we did not

view at one time; viewing from day to day our weakness in the flesh, and thus hoping in the mercies of our eternal God and not in our own works; for Solomon said, *"There is not a just man upon the earth, that doeth good and sinneth not."* (Eccl. 7 :20) We believe that God knew his people before the beginning of time, and loved them with an everlasting love; that he chose them in his Son - for as Eve was in Adam, so was the church in Christ : he being the foundation of that building not made with hands, for we are told in God's holy word, *"For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ."* (1 Cor. 3 :12)

As we journey here, though, we are made to wonder, and to say with the poet,

*"Tis a point I long to know;
Oft it gives me anxious thought;
Do I love the Lord or no Am I his,
or am I not."*

We do not believe that anyone knows that he or she is one of God's chosen people, but we do believe that God works in the hearts of his people in such a way as to show them the vileness of their nature, and to cause them to hope in his mercies, and to realize that it is not by our own strength, but by the grace of God we are what we are. Rannah said, *"For by strength shall no man prevail."* (1 Samuel 2:9)

We do feel that God has a people in every nation, kindred and tongue, and that they are all taught of the Lord. It may be that some have never heard the audible voice of man speak the wonderful truth which is in Christ Jesus our Lord, but we feel they are all taught of the Lord, though in a mysterious way; for, as the poet has said:

*"God moves in a mysterious way
His wonders to perform;
He plants his footsteps in the
sea, And rides upon the storm."*

We are also told in God's holy word, *"For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts."* (Isaiah 55:9)

Dear Brethren, as we have been gathered here in this association, we feel a desire in our hearts that the Lord may be pleased to bless us with love for one another; that our hearts may be joined together as one; and that we may have all things in common. May it please the Lord, if it be his holy will, that we may be blessed to sit and feast on the gospel truths, and be made to rejoice together in the Lord; for the Apostle Paul said, *"Rejoice in the Lord always; and again I say rejoice."* (Phil. 4:4) Amen .

PSALM 119:109.

My soul is continually in my hand: yet do I not forget thy law.

IN the midst of such a dark time of distress in a church, from which our gracious and long-forbearing Lord has not yet removed the candlestick, a dear child tells a sweet experience of grace. All hearts are at once brought under the controlling power of love, and experience a season of refreshing from the presence of the Lord. One of the songs of Zion is sung, and at once each one of the company is singing and making melody in his heart unto the Lord. Brethren begin speaking with each other and are surprised to find no difference among them. The disputed points are approached, and no one sees any thing to dispute; all belong to the one rich and all-comprehensive theme of salvation by grace. There is nothing worthy to disturb the holy quiet that rests upon them, and the fellowship which binds them strongly together. As they talk, and sing, and worship, Jesus is in the midst of them, saying, "*Peace be unto you.*" This peace of God which passeth all understanding is the only officer needed among them now. It is this peace which keeps their hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Each one has a feeling of repentance, a feeling to turn away, not from his brother, but from his own former selfish and mankind ways. Each one feels that blame was his, and he is ready to confess his faults to his brethren. Their former troubles make them much more careful and tender toward each other than before, and more fearful of hurting one

another and of disturbing the holy quiet of the church of God. Their mutual love seems stronger than ever they feel it to be "the bond of perfectness," and are glad to be putting it on, as the apostle enjoins them. They are now forbearing one another in love, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake has forgiven them. They are, as at the first, of one heart and one soul; neither say any of them that taught of the things which he possesses are his own, but they have all things common. There is nothing on earth so beautiful and lovely as this. This is that Zion, "the perfection of beauty," out of which God hath shined. "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!"

SILAS H. DURAND.
SOUTHAMPTON, Pa., No. 23, 1909.

MEETINGS

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The Staunton River Union will be held, the Lord willing, with Canaan Primitive Baptist Church the 5th Sunday and Saturday before in April.

Song service will begin at 10:00 a.m.

We invite all our ministers, brethren and friends to meet with us.

Elder J.R. Williams, Pastor
Geneva B. Scarce, Clerk

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION

The West Country Line Union will convene at the Greensboro Church on the fifth Sunday in April. The church is located on the corner of Tate and Carr Streets in Greensboro, NC.

From Highway 29 go West on Lee St. (#6) for 2.1 miles, until you reach Tate Street turn right and go north .5 mile until you reach Carr Street.

We welcome all lovers of the truth to be with us.

Elder Kenneth R. Key, Moderator
 Brother Wayne Edwards, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FEBRUARY 2001

Dale Haygood, TX.....	5.00
Charlotte Richardson, VA.....	3.00
Brenda Wright, NC.....	2.00
Reidy Pickral, VA.....	3.00
David Bailey, WV.....	4.00
Jerry Fanner, KY.....	2.00
Lavenia Biggs, TN.....	18.00
Beatrice Miller, NC.....	2.00
A. R. Patterson, LA.....	7.00
R. T. Jacks, AL.....	7.00
Bobbie Adcox, AR.....	2.00
Inez Gearner, TX.....	2.00
Doris Rivard, TX.....	2.00
H. W. Brinkley, NC.....	7.00
Eva Cruise, NC.....	2.00
Martha Lunsford, VA.....	10.00
Whitney Mobley, NC.....	10.00
Dessie Goodman, AL.....	10.00
Anita Creech, AR.....	2.00

ISAIAH 53:4-6.

Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows: yet we did esteem him stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted.

But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed.

All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.

OBITUARIES

ELDER J.J. ADERHOLD

ADERHOLD Elder Judson "Judy" Aderhold, age 96 of Winston, GA, died January 2, 2001. He was born in Turner County, GA, August 23, 1904, the son of the late Dr. and Mrs. John Jackson Aderhold. He was a member of Cold Springs Primitive Baptist Church. He was pastor of New Hope Primitive Baptist Church in Villa Rica, GA. for over sixty years, a life-long resident of Bill Arp in Douglas County. He was a dairy farmer and served

the Grove Park Area in Atlanta for more than twenty years with dairy products. He was preceded in death by his loving wife, Laura Beard Adernold. Survivors include several nieces and nephews and a host of other relatives and friends. Services were held Friday, January 5, 2001 at 11:00 a.m. in the Rosehaven Chapel with Elder Frank Andrews and Elder Larry Keaton officiating. Interment followed at Cool Springs Cemetery on Post Road in Winston, GA.

ST. MATTHEW 5:7-9.

Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.

Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.

BLANCHE MORTON COLLINS

In Special Memory; I'll try to write: Asking God for Strength, Knowledge, and Guidance to do so.

Sister Blanche was born in Onslow County May 13, 1913. Her parents were Edward Ward and Alice Gertrude Morton. She was raised in a large Family Circle. Thirteen children in all.

Sister Blanche married in the year 1929 to Charlie Collins. They were blessed with 2 sons and 3 daughters.

She asked a Home with this Church in the early 1950's. A faithful member until her health confined her at home.

Great love was shown in her every day of life.

Sister Blanche passed away October 11, 2000.

Her survivors are: A daughter Vivian and a son Bennie Collins. Five Grandchildren and five great grandchildren. Two sisters: Eula Lovitt and Ada Newman. Two Brothers: Edward Morton and Joe Morton. They were members here for many years.

Sister Blanche suffered a lot here on earth. But God called and gave her a new birth.

To her dear family I say! You have suffered a great loss, press onward to the Mark of the High Calling! Which is in our "Lord Jesus Christ".

Burial - Collins Family Cemetery and service conducted by "Elder Milton Lupton.

Written by "Order of North East Church"

In conference Second Saturday in February 2001

Mary Lillie Hall (Sister I hope)

ELDER WALLACE HARVEY

Elder Wallace Edgar Harvey, 89, passed away from this life into the hands of the Lord on Tuesday, Feb. 20, 2001, following heart failure.

Born June 7, 1911, in Streeter, he was the son of the late Virgil B. and Matilda Adkins Harvey.

Elder Harvey was a minister and Elder of Newfound Primitive Baptist Church, Pineville, W.V. having served the Lord under the old school Baptist faith. He had labored as a coal miner and carpenter. He was preceded in death by his first wife, Ethel Effie Crawford Harvey; three sons, James Clowney Harvey, Lonnie Lee Harvey and Wallace Edgar Harvey Jr.; four grandsons; two brothers, Fred and Cecil Harvey; and two sisters, Florence Waddell and Glenna Perry.

Survivors include his wife, Barbara E. Childs Harvey; three sons, Frank Harvey and his wife, Gayle, of Walkertown, N.C., Michael Harvey and his wife, Cindy, of Jumping Branch and Dale Harvey and his wife, Eunice, of Shady Spring; six daughters, Ona Wickline and her husband, Frank, of Shady Spring, Norma LaRocque and her husband, Earl, of Saginaw, Mich., Betty Moore and her husband, Frank, of Lilburn, Ga., Drema Mishaw of Newberry, S.C., Sharon Cox and her husband, Robert, of Rockwell, N.C., and Judy Whittaker and her husband, Dennie, of Pax; a brother, John Wesley Harvey of Cool Ridge; four stepchil-

dren, Shara Barnet and her husband, Johnny, of Fayetteville, Tenn., Kenny Foley and his wife, Diane, of Midway, Teressa Williams and her husband, Lenny, of Kelso, Tenn., and Gary Foley of Farifax, Va.; 25 grandchildren; 16 great-grandchildren; and four step-grandchildren.

Service was at Rose and Quesenberry Funeral Home Shady Spring Chapel with Elder D.R. Cabbage and Elder J.B. Farmer officiating. Burial was in Crawford Cemetery, Blue Jay Six.

Sent in by J.B. Farmer

PEIRCY DAVIS HOLLAND

*One year ago today)
God called our Mama away.
We miss her so) but she must go.
We knew she could not stay.*

On January 14, 2000 we believe our Mama heard His sweet voice say "*Child your Father calls, come Home*".

Peircy Davis Holland was born Oct. 4, 1904 to Stephen and Lugenia Ballance Davis.

On Nov. 27, 1921 she married Gurney Leland Holland. To this union nine children were born.

She united with Pittman Grove Primitive Baptist Church on Sunday) March 10, 1940 and was baptized second Sunday in April, 1940 by her pastor, Elder W. E. Turner. She was a faithful and lovely sister-in-Christ and attended church as long as her health permitted.

She was preceded in death by an infant, her dear companion of 54 years, and three daughters.

Her funeral was conducted on January 16, 2000 at Coley Funeral Home in Kenly, North Carolina. The service was conducted by Elders Harvey Holland and Harold Pittman. She was interred in Pittman Grove Church Cemetery .

She left behind five siblings who love and miss her very much. They are two sons. L.C. and Celion Holland and three daughters - Udell H. Young, Edith H. Beasley and Dora H. Vick; also 23 grandchildren, 45 great grandchildren, 15 great,great grandchildren. *"The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away blessed be the name of the Lord."* Job. 1:21

In Christian Love,
Dora Vick

SISTER MAE HUDSON

"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."

That time came for our precious, sister Mae Hudson, Nov. 30, 2000. Sister Mae united with Malmaison Primitive Baptist Church Oct. 5, 1975. She loved her family

and her church family. I think she was the most zealous person I ever saw to entertain her home church family. When we were together she always desired the conversation be on spiritual subjects. She once told me she felt cheated if the discussion was on natural things. We have surely lost a lovely sister. She had not been able to attend church meetings for over a year due to her illness. In her condition, I feel the Lord was so gracious to take her.

Survivors include 1 daughter, Lois H. Haywood, 1 son Charles W. Hudson, 1 sister, 1 brother and 3 grandchildren. She was predeceased by her husband Bro. Bill Hudson, her father and mother Bro. Ed & Sis. Sallie Butcher, and 1 sister.

Her funeral was held at Wrenn-Yeatts North Main Chapel. Conducted by her pastor Elder Julian Williams and Elder C.B. Davis. Shirley Grubbs gave some reflections on her long friendship with Sis. Mae thru the years.

Interment was in Highland Burial Park, Danville, Va.

May we be given reconciliation to say not our will but Thine be done.

Written by one who loved her for Christ sake I trust.

Peggy Wells

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES

202 Carousel Lane, Meadows of Dan, Va. 24120-4403

SONG

*Raise your triumphant songs
To an immortal tune,
Let the wide earth resound the
deeds
Celestial grace has done.*

*Sing how eternal love
Its chief beloved chose,
And bade him raise poor sinners
up
From their abyss of woes.*

*His hand no thunder bears,
No terror clothes his brow,
No bolts to drive our guilty souls
To fiercer flames below.*

*'Twas mercy filled the throne,
And wrath stood silent by,
When Christ was sent with mercy
down
To rebels doomed to die.*

Watts.

POSTMASTER

Please send address changes to:

Signs of the Times
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Meadows of Dan, Va 24120-4403

CONTENTS

EDITORIAL	99
Elder Richard H. Campbell	
ARTICLES	107
Elder Leonard J. Brammer	
VOICES OF THE PAST	111
L. L. Trent, Jr.	
Elder George Ruston	
J. M. Fenton	
Elder J.C. Philpot	
MEETINGS	120
(CORRECTION of April Issue)	

MY CHURCH - A DEAR PLACE.

Oh our Church is so precious to me

*One of the least I feel to be,
Let me meet there and sing of
grace,
And see the dear Saints humble
face.*

*Let me meet them to sing and
pray
When all foolish things are put
away,
Just let me eat the heavenly
food
And praise the Lord who is so
good.*

*When I enter the Church and
walk down the isle,*

*To greet the dear ones with a
hand shake
and a smile.
Oh it is so peaceful, such a
sweet retreat,
How wonderfully blessed we are
to meet.*

*Oh I do desire to be just a tiny
part,
of this dear Church so close to
my heart.
I know I'm not worthy to be
therein,
Because I am so wretched and
full of sin*

*There the dear pastor proclaims
the glorious truth,
The gospel I've loved since my
early youth,
Still at times I doubt and won-
der if I have a part,
Is mine head religion or is it
from the heart.*

*It is there we seek the Lord to
find relief,
And forget at times our sorrows
and grief
The humble tears roll down the
face,
As we are told of the wonders of
grace.*

*May I be kept and found faithful
Day by Day,
Knowing the Lord is listening to
all I have to say.
Oh may he cleanse my heart
and give me peace,
That I may be one of his faithful
witness.*

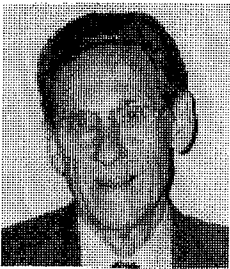
*The blessed hope that Jesus is mine,
Is so sweet at times so divine.
But then I become so full of unrest,
I desire to go "home" and be with the blest.*

*I pray that when the trials of this life is O"er,
That we may meet on the golden shore.
There by His mercy, we'll sing of grace,
And see our Saviour face to face*

*By Rlee B. Houchins
Roanoke, Va.*

EDITORIAL

For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost; and these three are one.



Elder R.H. Campbell

The above scripture defies the wisdom of man in nature, stating that these three separate entities are one; man says that this is impossible, they are three, or it is one, but the three cannot be one. In the laws of the realm of nature this is true, they are one way or the other, but they cannot be singular when they are three different and dis-

tinctly separate beings; each omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent and equal in every respect within themselves; yet one entity, and this is exactly what the above scripture is saying. The laws governing the spiritual kingdom are completely different from the laws of the world of nature, which can easily be understood by man; these laws are foolishness to him because they are based on a spiritual foundation. Only those who have been born of the Spirit can understand this difference and that is because, as Jesus told his disciples, (*Mark Chap. 4. Vs. 11*) "*Unto you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God: but to them that are without all these things are done in parables: that seeing they may see, and not perceive: and hearing they may hear, and not understand: lest at any time they should be converted and their sins should be forgiven them.*" This was designed in this manner to insure that the outsider cannot have access to the tree of life, or obtain salvation by his own wisdom. This too, is in the wisdom of God, that his election of a certain people unto himself might stand certain and sure. This knowledge of the mystery is given unto the elect in the new birth, when they receive and are blessed with the comforter that Jesus told them would come when he went away.

There is one God, the fullness of whom is manifested as the Father,

the Word and the Holy Ghost in the salvation of his children here in this time world, working all things according to the good pleasure of his (singular) will. 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? He speaks and it is done, he commands and it stands fast, yea, even as he has thought, so shall it come to pass. Oh! the mighty power of this God that has given such precious and comforting promises to those whom he has chosen for his own.

God is love, and all of his works are because of this love and are to make this love known and experienced by the heirs of promise: for whom all things were created. This is the record that shines forth out of Zion, the perfection of beauty, and bears witness in the earth as the spirit, the water and the blood, in the salvation of the saints as they are brought forth from nature's darkness into the glorious light and liberty of that heavenly kingdom toward which their desires have been directed. They love him because he first loved them, and demonstrated this love in sending his only begotten Son into the world to redeem them unto himself as his own peculiar treasure.

When this occurs, in the lives of these individuals, the things of this earthly kingdom have nothing to offer them when compared to the things of the heavenly kingdom,

nothing to attract the affections of those that have been given a hope in things eternal; those who have been shown the glory of the heavenly kingdom and who have been quickened by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. This enables them to see and believe in the trinity of the Godhead, as they experience the presence of each entity in their lives, and they recognize and understand this mystery of their God as he is being manifested in their lives in these various ways. This is not learned by human reasoning, but by revelation from on high, the light that shines into their heart, as it did unto the apostle Paul, on the road to Damascus, for thereafter he went forth declaring, (*Gal Chap 1, vs 11-12*) "*But I certify you , brethren that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it. but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.*" (*Gal Chap 4, vs 4-5-6*) "*God, who when the fulness of time was come sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that they might receive the adoption of sons, and hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into their hearts crying, Abba, Father.*" Oh, the praise honor and adoration that goes forth from the heart that has been blessed with such a grand and glorious plan of salvation, one that was established and executed by God alone and is just as sure and certain to

come to pass as planned, as the fact that there is a God.

The Father is the omnipotent, the omniscient, and omnipresent Jehovah which created and is in control of all things that exist in the world. He created them for his own good pleasure, and he disposes of them in the manner that is according to his own determinate counsel and foreknowledge, which was ordained before the beginning of time, as we know it. He answers to no authority above himself and works his own will in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. It is to Him that the Son prays, and whose will the Son came into the world to do, for Jesus said, (*John Chap 6, vs 38*) "*For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that hath sent me, and this is the Father's will which hath sent me, of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.*" He is the designer, controller, and director of the entire plan of salvation of the saints. but it is always in complete agreement and accord with the will of the Word and the Holy Ghost, for it was determined in that counsel, consisting of these three, which was held before man was even created.

He elected them before the foundation of the world, sanctified them unto himself, and in time, makes manifest that election under the two covenants, law and grace: and he leads and directs their ways in such

a manner as to enable them to believe that they are of that number chosen in Christ, those whom the Lord hath blessed. That people unto whom God said, (*Deut. Chap 7, vs. 6*) "*For thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God: the Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth.*" and in spite of what they feel to be, in and of themselves, they have been made to claim these promises as their own, by the grace that has been bestowed upon them.

Man is totally passive in this whole process, whether under the legal dispensation or under the law of the liberty of life in Christ Jesus because, it stood complete in the mind and purpose of God before he formed man of the dust of the earth, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life and he became a living soul. Man only knows and worships God after he has been blessed to see him and to understand the condition that he was in, by nature, *and realize that, even as Paul said, "It is by the grace of God that I am what I am"*. The change in man is solely by the sovereign and irresistible grace and mercy of God which has been bestowed upon him; when he was dead in trespasses and sin, when he was by nature a child of wrath even as others, yea, he was going the way of all flesh until the light shined round about him enabling him to see the glory of the kingdom of heaven. This

same procedure occurs whether it is a man of considerable intelligence, as was the apostle Paul, or a wild man, as was the Gaderene, it takes the same display of the grace of God, to convert all.

The Word was made flesh and dwelled among the saints of God, here on earth, that he might be partaker of the characteristics of the flesh, experience the things of the flesh, be tempted with the temptations of the flesh, yet without sin of which man is guilty, and therefore be the perfect sacrifice for the sin of the chosen generation under the law, those which were under the sentence of death because of sin. By the Word taking their sins upon himself, imputing his righteousness unto them, dying the ignominious death on the cross, taking the law out of the way, nailing it to his cross so that it has no more demands over those under the law, and being the end of the law for righteousness for those under grace, he secures salvation for every child of grace, by the one sacrifice.

By Christ taking the law out of the way, nailing it to his cross, it has no more dominion over those under the new covenant, those who were never under the Mosaical law of sin and death, as Paul said, (*Rom. Chap 8, vs. 1-2*) "*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 Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and*

death." Christ came in the likeness of sinful flesh, for sin, and by so doing, condemned sin in the flesh, and therefore sin only has power over the flesh but never over that new creature in Christ, that one who is in the image of God which sinneth not.

The Word has the same holy characteristics as the Father and the Holy Ghost, but it has a specific mission, a specific role in the plan of salvation, and is to be loved and worshipped with all of the fervor, adoration and respect that is due the other entities in the godhead. In the covenant, before the foundation of the world, they were all in total and full agreement to the proposed plan which required the participation of each to bring it to its determined conclusion. The role of the Word was to fulfill the law to a jot and a tittle; live a life in the flesh without spot or blemish, demonstrate the power of God over his creation by the miracles that he performed, die the death on the cross, raise himself from the tomb, prophesy of the coming of the day of pentecost and the establishing of the Gospel dispensation and then to return unto his Father, triumphant over death hell and the grave. This was all performed in the presence of his own witnesses who were before chosen, the apostles, who went forth testifying to this truth that those in ages to come might have hope in the finished work of Christ. This he proclaimed to be fully accomplished in his prayer unto his

Father when he said, (*John Chap. 17, vs. 4*) *"I have glorified thee on earth; I have finished the work thou gavest me to do."* and then he ascended into heaven and he is now seated at the right hand of the Father proclaiming this intercession, for the sins of those that the Father gave him, when he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel, those who are the Lord's portion.

The Holy Ghost is equal in every respect to the Father and the Word, but, as we said above, its mission also is for a specific purpose. Man is flesh, sold under sin and in this condition can never receive or understand the mysteries of godliness. (*Isaiah Chap. 55, vs. 8-9*) *"For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thought than your thoughts."* Since the spiritual realm is so much higher than the earthly realm in which the natural man dwells, he could never know or understand anything of the spiritual kingdom, or its mysteries, and yet there is a people among them, whom God loves, who are also included in this dilemma. God promised that he would never leave nor forsake his own, therefore, the power of God, in the person of the Holy Spirit, transforms them by the renewing of their minds to see and understand the spiritual things by imparting a little of himself unto

them, by way of the new birth. This is one of the gifts of the Spirit, the discerning of spiritual matters.

As father Abraham told the rich king, who fared sumptuously while Lazarus desired the crumbs that fell from his table, who in torment requested that Lazarus be sent and dip his finger in water and cool his tongue: (*Luke Chap 17 vs., 25-26*) *"Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivest thy good things and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted and thou art tormented. And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us that would come from hence."* Even so, there is a great separation between the natural and the spiritual kingdom and man in nature cannot, of his own will or efforts, transcend this great gulf. That which is flesh will always be flesh, and that which is spiritual will always be spiritual; the natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit and never shall, unless they first be transformed by the renewing of their mind, which is the mission of the Holy Ghost. It is the comforter that Jesus said that he would send unto his children after his death, for he said except I go away, the comforter will not come, but if I go away, I will send him unto you. Even as the Father sent the Son into the world, the Son sent the Holy Ghost into the world that he would take the things of Christ, which is his finished work,

and shew them unto the saints via revelation. This procedure alone transcends that great barrier that exists between the fleshly man and the spiritual man. This barrier however was placed there for a specific purpose, and that purpose was that the natural man could never partake of the tree of life, of his own will. This would be contrary purpose in God's driving man from the Garden of Eden, lest he put forth his hand and partake of the tree of life and live forever. The Cherub and the flaming sword were placed eastward in the garden to keep the way of the tree of life, and they have always kept it for those for whom it was reserved, and this purpose has never changed for whatsoever the Lord does it is forever, nothing can be taken from it and nothing can be added to it.

The Holy Ghost reconciles the chosen generation unto God and all of his ways. The apostle Paul said in, *(II Cor. Chap 5, vs. 18-19)* "*And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to 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.*" This reconciling of the flesh and the Spirit is the function of the Holy Spirit, as he is sent by the Son, and is that which is accomplished when the natural man is born of the Spirit of God. The Spirit takes up it abode in the heart of the

saints of God and henceforth they walk after the Spirit and not after the flesh, the new creature in Christ that sinneth not, perfectly reconciled to the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus their Lord.

Within this world in which man dwells there is a natural realm and a spiritual realm and there are laws within each, and they are not the same. All men, in nature, live in the natural physical realm as they were sentenced by God when man was driven from the garden of Eden. They live under the laws of nature and everything that they think or do is subject to that law, they know nothing else. That which is born of flesh is the natural man which is enmity toward God and all of his ways; he is not subject to the laws of God, neither indeed can be because they are foreign to the laws of nature under which he has lived and moved and has a being here in this time world; and therefore he has no standard by which to measure or judge the things of the Spirit. Man tends to hate that which he does not understand, and he is too proud to admit his ignorance and therefore declares that these mysteries do not exist, or else they are not as they are interpreted to be by the children of God, but they interpret them to suit their own sense of values and vain desires trying to compare natural things with spiritual things using natural standards, and this cannot be done. That is like trying to mix water with oil, no matter how thoroughly you may blend them, they are

still two separate substances, so it is with the natural and spiritual values, they are just not compatible.

There is a spiritual realm, and within this realm, citizenship carries with it the revelation and understanding of the mysteries of Godliness. Faith, which is the gift of God, is the means whereby the new man believes in the validity of the truth which is contained in all scriptures. This is the realm in which the saints dwell, and all who live therein believe these things to be true: they may not understand them completely, but what they do see and understand is because of the power and the conviction that comes with the revelation, and they receive them as the absolute truth in their heart and mind. They have been born of the Spirit of God, and one of the gifts of the Spirit is the discerning of these mysteries; the understanding which is freely given them of God and which is the substance of their faith. They search the scriptures continually to learn more of these truths that have become so precious to them in the new birth, and are ever seeking for more evidence that they actually do apply unto them, because of the fear which they experience, as they are made to see and to realize the depths of the wickedness and sinfulness of the flesh in which they must continue to dwell.

Much of the scriptures are written on the vast separation between the natural and the spiritual as God by the mouth of the prophet Isaiah

declared, unto Israel under the law, (Isa. Chap 55, vs. 8-9) quoted above, declaring the extremely high and lofty elevation of the spiritual kingdom above man and his ways and the following scripture which declares the depraved condition of man in nature, without the Spirit, (*John Chap. 8, vs. 44*) "*Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it*". So there you are, the same truths from the opposite extremes in both, the old testament doctrine, and in the new testament order. Two positions as far apart as it is possible to be, but both agreeing as one regarding the truth; different times and covenants, but the same doctrine. One, God the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, whose ways are beyond the reach of man, in nature, and the other describing the depths of the depravity and corruption of the natural kingdom as compared to the kingdom of Jesus, which as he said is not of this world. He was in the world of nature, when he said this but his kingdom is not of this world. He was testifying of his Father's kingdom, which is the sincere desire and prayer of all of the saints of God who have experienced a little foretaste of it, in this life, as they are given an earnest of their inheritance, to keep them pressing on to the mark of the

prize of the high calling of God.

(Rom. Chap 11, vs. 33) "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!" Though men may seek and search all the days of their life, regarding the mysteries of godliness they will never be able to rightly divide the scriptures unless they have been born again and given an understanding of the mysteries of the Spirit of the Godhead. They can only speculate and surmise, using the wisdom of this world, but Paul said, they would never achieve success in this manner because that was not the plan of God as is recorded, *(1 Cor. Chap 1, vs. 21) "For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe."* Man with the highest degree in human learning cannot understand them, and yet a baby can, even when in its mother's womb, or a small child, as Paul declared of Timothy, *"And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus."* This unquestionable truth is found in the writings of Solomon as he sets forth the doctrine of the frailty of man and his inability to discern these mysteries and the fact that this the plan of God from the beginning. *(Eccl. Chap 3, vs 19-11) "I have seen the travail, which God hath*

given to the sons of men to be exercised in it. He hath made everything beautiful in his time: also he hath set the world in their heart, so that no man can find out the work that God maketh from the beginning to the end." Times have changed, men have become more and more sophisticated, in their opinion, and make loud boasts of their attainment of a better knowledge of godliness, but the heart of man has not changed, and that is where the change must occur first.

Paul says, *(II Cor Chap 6, vs 17-18) "Wherefore come ye out from among them,, and touch no unclean thing; and I will receive you, And will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Almighty."* And yet all of man's efforts are directed to bringing more and more of the worldly pursuits and pleasures into the church, rather than being separated on the basis of doctrine and practices, and they do it to please the natural man and to attract more of like kind. The scriptures say of such, these are those who have had no change, or as Jude says, these are those who are sensual having not the Spirit. Paul also says above that these things too are in the wisdom of God, it is the foolishness that man uses to cloak the evil heart that is within, and to think, he does it under the guise of religion. One can understand their believing as they do, since the truth is hidden from them, but the mystery

is, that they use the holy word, as the basis for their spurious doctrines.

Surely, this is the flood that issues out of the mouth of the dragon to consume the woman, but, it says the earth swallows up the flood to save the woman (church) from destruction. Even this too is in the plan of God, the world is satisfied with their traditions and practices and take little notice of the seed of the woman here in the world, because they are so few in number. They are so wrapped up in themselves and the great work that they are doing for God, that this in itself is a great blessing unto the household of faith.

Yes, there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word and the Holy Ghost and they are all equally manifested in the salvation of the chosen generation, without the loss of one. That record in heaven, is unchanged by any of the events which occur in time and is witnessed by the water the spirit and the blood as they appear in the affairs of men. The record stands firm, as decreed before the foundation of the world, and will continue throughout time and on into the very portals of eternal glory where God the Father, Word and Holy Ghost reign, in all their splendor, surrounded by the objects of their everlasting love and mercy, who are singing the new song of their deliverance from this low ground of sin and sorrow.

In bonds of love;
Richard H. Campbell

ARTICLES

OBEDIENCE

(1 Peter Chap. 1-V-2) "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."

Peter called them strangers, But in the next Verse, he 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 hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,

V. 4 To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, V. 5 - Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

I hear much about the election, and that it took place before the foundation, and I believe that, But I do not hear much about, what we were elected to, and for, I suppose that they mean that we were elected, to be the children of God, and if they are, they were elected to obedience. And to sanctification, of the Spirit, and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ; now I do not believe that these things come by the work of the flesh, or the works of man, But I do believe that they are the works

of God and Christ and the Holy Ghost, or the Holy Spirit, because the Lord said I will send another comforter that will take the things of mine and show them unto you. When we are given to see the things of God, in the bible or wherever we look, it is the Holy comforter, the Holy Spirit that shows them unto us, because with the natural eye we cannot see spiritual things.

If you have ever been able to see a Vision, you can see it just as plain with your natural eyes closed, as you can with them open, and sometimes much better, because sometimes when I have felt that I saw a Vision with my eyes closed and when I opened my eyes it would disappear. I do not believe we can see spiritual things with our natural eyes. So then I believe that obedience must come from the holy spirit and through the blood of Jesus Christ, and his obedience was for his bride the lamb's wife. He died to give us life, He died that we may live, It was His obedience that bought our salvation and it was paid by his blood in full.

Now then what is the definition of obedience, Webster's says state or fact of being obedient; doing what is ordered; submission in Church's jurisdiction. But I think that the command of the Father and Son and Holy Ghost is far more than the orders of any man.

When we baptize we do not baptize in the name of any man, but in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost. Now I do not

doubt but what there are many that are baptized in the name of some man, even though they may use the name of the Lord, But the Lord's hand is not seen in it. When the Lord's hand is in it, He will baptize with the Holy Ghost and with fire, who's fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor.

I believe that every heaven born child, has a desire in his heart to be obedient unto the Lord, and or his spirit. You may see a natural child who is obedient to his or her parents, and they do not get into as much trouble as the child who will not obey, as I have said before, I have seen children who would take the switch out of their parent's hand and break it while the parent looks on, that child is headed for trouble and plenty of it and the parents are making a big mistake. But the Lord has a way that he chastised his children and it is said that all of his children are chastised and if they are not chastised, they are bastards and not sons. Now no chastisement is pleasant at present but afterward it yieldeth the peaceful fruits of righteousness unto them that are excised thereby. Has there not been times with you that you felt that the Lord was not smiling at you? And it caused you to go back to the throne of mercy and ask him to forgive you for your wrong doing, well until you feel his smile again, you feel like you are having a whipping, and sure enough you had rather be beat with a stick, than for the Lord to not smile upon you.

I remember some time back, and I have wrote about this before, but it is on my mind again. I had gone to bed but had not gone to sleep, and I was asking the Lord for mercy and grace as I do much of my time, and much of the time when I lay down at night, I try to pray and ask him to lead me and guide me in the right way.

On this time it seemed so clear that the Lord was not hearing me, and I desired so much that he would, and it seemed like that I wanted to be just a little closer to him, but I felt like I could not reach him, and I said Lord I want to be closer to thee, but it seems like I was at my creature distance as much as I ever was in my life, well I wanted to pray but did not know what to pray for. Do you, my dear reader, ever get in this shape, if you do then I believe we are close kin; well it came on my mind and I felt the need of the Lord, but my thoughts that I was doing something wrong, was the reason why I could not feel the presence of the Lord. I tried to think of something bad that I had done, but at that time it seemed like all that I did was bad. And I thought about asking the Lord to search me and see what he could find; but to ask the King of all Kings to search me, what in the world am I thinking about? It seem like I was afraid to ask such a thing, the fear, I do not know how to express it, but ask I must. And I said Lord search me and see what you can find, I know that thou, Oh Lord, can see everything, but if I am do-

ing something that is not pleasing in thy sight, I beg of thee that thou would find it and, whatever it is, I ask thee to bless me to refrain from it, that thou dear Lord would correct it for me, or bless me to overcome it if it is thy will.

And while I was asking him, These words came to my mind, as if someone had spoke them to me, (THERE IS NOTHING THERE) and it was so plain and so clear that it was no doubt in my mind but that the Lord was talking to me, but I said Lord do you mean to tell me that I do not even have thy spirit, I thought that he meant that there was nothing there that was worth his notice, But while thinking on this these words followed, (THE BLOOD OF MY SON HAS COVERED YOUR SINS, SO THAT I DO NOT SEE THEM).

Well I guess I lay there about an hour and a half, so happy That I did not need to sleep, I was trying to praise his Holy Name, to think a poor sinner like me, and that Jesus Christ would shed his blood for a wretch like me, the tears were flowing freely, and I was so happy I did not know what to do, but for a while all was well.

Now as I write this the tears are flowing still, this to me has been a bethel spot in my life, I go back to it often and it still is a great comfort to me, PRAISE HIS HOLY NAME.

Now I do believe that it takes the blood of Christ to wash our sins, they cannot be put away any other way, I believe that his blood was shed for the whole Church, the

whole family of God. And that he, Christ, paid the whole debt, for all of his children, no more no less. Thanks be unto Him; Now let me go back just a little bit, before I heard the above words, while trying to ask the Lord for mercy. In my mind I thought I was up at Goblin Town Church, on the left side of the Church, looking from the road, But when I heard the Voice I was on the right side of the Church, Close to where they would take the bread and wine years ago. And where I stood on the outside of the ring and wished that I was fit to take the bread and the wine.

As I have stated before, when I was a child I went to that Church, And the memory of it still lingers in my mind, and I think it will as long as I live, As I wrote in my book; I had a dream; before I began speaking in public, and in this dream I was standing on the Church grounds at Goblin Town, and this was my text *“For the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus, hath made me free from the law of sin and death.”* ROM. Chap. 8-2).

Now I have only hinted at the subject, of *“Obedience”* but if you will trace it out I think you will find it, many times in the old Testament, also in the new Testament,

You will find in the book of Samuel (15-22) to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams.

(Rom. 5-19) For as by one man's disobedience many were made sin-

ners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous.

Now this did not say that the whole world would be made righteous, but many and I believe that the many is all that the Father gave to the Son, because it is said that as many as the Father has given me shall come to me. And he that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out, but will raise him up at the last day.

I have a strong hope that He will raise me up at the last day, and that I will see Him face to face, There is nothing in this world that I can think of that is better than that.

If this be the case? Then it is all by the (OBEDIENCE OF CHRIST OUR LORD) BLESSED BE HIS HOLY NAME, FOR EVER AND EVER;

Elder Leonard J. Brammer
March 8th, 2001

PSALM 119:9-12.

Wherewithal shall a young man cleanse his way? by taking heed thereto according to thy word.

With my whole heart have I sought thee: O let me not wander from thy commandments.

Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.

Blessed art thou, O Lord: teach me thy statutes.

VOICES OF THE PAST

L. L. TRENT, JR.

This is a dream that came to me several years ago, soon after being given to feel to be under bonds and unable to free myself, if indeed that be true.

I did not understand the dream but could not keep it off my mind. Over the years it seems to be becoming clearer, therefore will tell what I can for, if not badly deceived, it seems part of "that Way the Eye of the Vulture hath not seen," "The Straight and Narrow Way that few find." I did not find it because I was not looking for it. It is certainly not of me.

It seems I saw myself at work, working in a field of tobacco just off the yard of my home, when three Negro men came to me in the field. They told me they had come to ask me to go with them to another place and preach for them. I said I was no preacher and could not preach. They followed me as I worked in the direction of my home - insisting - and me denying the ability or desire. They followed and insisted, and I denied. When I finished the row I carried, it put me right at my home. As I stepped from the field I seemed to have been made willing, as I could see nothing else to do. They would not be denied.

The thought came to mind: "What will I preach on if I must preach?". "If you preach, why not start at The Beginning" seemed as if spoken to me.

That is all of the dream and it seemed foolishness, but the text I heard or dreamed would not leave me. What follows seems to have been shown me over a period of years.

The field seems to be the World, and I was under the Law of Work. The rows I were in were the longest ones in the field. They were narrow and very crooked and led downhill on a determined grade to drain the water from the field. While being narrow and crooked, they led straight to my home - or can I say straight to God. The three Negro men seem to be Children of God who had been shown their sins and the black vileness of them. Being made willing to go with them as I finished the row seems to show that I was brought to the end of my row and made helpless and willing.

The text spoken to me is not too clear except as a sign. Since then I have had many wonderful thoughts on it which I hope to be of Him.

While writing this, I have been given to feel and wonder if going to another place" means church.

Another thought comes to mind. The crooked rows on a determined grade to lead water from the field - would this represent His Word not returning to Him void but would ac-

comply that whereto it is sent? Wonderful thought! The Waters of Life are FROM Him and TO Him.

“And the fragments thereof they picked up twelve baskets full.” A text in itself. Can these things that we hear spoken of be for such a one as I?

Brother Trent was a long time member of Reidsville Church, and was highly esteemed by those who knew him.

(Editors)

MEDITATIONS

ON

PORTIONS OF THE WORD

BY

ELDER SILAS H. DURAND

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MICAH 5:5

“And this man shall be the peace, when the Assyrian shall come into our land: and when he shall tread in our palaces, then shall we raise up against him seven shepherds, and eight principal men.”

We have been requested to write our views upon the above Scripture, which we have often read as we have turned to read Micah 5:2, which was the verse that the chief priests and scribes found for wicked king Herod when he enquired of them where Christ should be born. Matthew 2 :6. In answering him, they gave only part of the verse, but we would like to declare faithfully who this Christ was. He is and was the Wisdom of God and the Power of God. I Corinthians 2:4-5. *“Whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting.”* Read Proverbs 8. Verse 23 says, speaking of him, *“I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was.”* *“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.”* Isaiah, divinely inspired, could say over seven hundred years before Jesus was born, *“Unto us a child is born, (born of the Virgin Mary) unto us a Son is given,”* for *“God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son.”* The eternal Son of God came in the likeness of sinful flesh, and such was the goodness

of divine mercy that those chosen of God saw his day and were glad. Abel saw him in the innocent lamb offered in his room and stead, Abraham saw him as the ram caught in the thicket of God's eternal purpose, and through faith could receive his son Isaac as from the dead in a figure. The Old Testament is the record of his goings forth, not only to the individual, but as Captain of the Host of the Lord to lead Israel into the Promised Land. Joshua 5:13-15. If we read the four gospels, we see Jesus made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, finishing the work of redemption, and true to his word, linking up Jonah, who was three days and three nights in the whale's belly, with the Son of man who was in the bosom of the earth three days and three nights. He lived a holy life to produce a righteousness that would cover all for whom he came to save. He submitted to a shameful death on the cross, the penalty for the sins of those for whom he died. He arose at the appointed time, was seen of many of those who were his, and he, Jesus, ascended into heaven, crowned with glory and honour. Read I Timothy 6:11-16, in which Paul, as a faithful shepherd, charges Timothy. This Jesus, blessed Jesus, said in his last sentence in *Matthew 28:20*, "*Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.*"

This man, Micah said, shall be the peace, when the Assyrian shall come into our land, and when he shall tread in our palaces. Who were

the Assyrians? They represent the people of the world who think that they can build a way to heaven; you can read of their origin in Genesis 10:22. We see that Asshur was the son of Shem, during whose lifetime the tower of Babel was built, and it is said that his offspring became a nation whose capital was Ninevah, until it was utterly destroyed. Much could be written about this people, but with our limited space we prefer to direct our readers to the written word in Kings and Chronicles. Micah was living at a time when due to the wickedness of both Israel and Judah, God's judgments were about to be meted out. In 2 Chronicles 28 when one of the most wicked kings, Ahaz, came to the throne and war was on every side, Israel and Syria slew thousands upon thousands of the inhabitants of Judah, forcing wicked Ahaz, king of Judah, to ask the Assyrians to come and help him. This wicked king took the gold and silver from the house of the Lord to give to the Assyrians. He shut up the doors of the house of the Lord and made him altars in every corner of Jerusalem. He made images for Baalim and caused his children to be burnt in the fire after the abominations of the heathen whom the Lord had cast out before the children of Israel. In 2 Kings we read of wicked king Hoshea making peace with Assyria by giving them presents, then, proving unfaithful to their word, the Assyrians carried them away into captivity. In this dark and dreadful day, God saw fit that

the son of wicked Ahaz, named Hezekiah, should come to the throne of Judah with a God-given desire to do *“that which was right in the sight of the Lord, according to all that David his father did.”* And the prophet Micah saw one in that dark day who *“removed the high places and brake down the images, and cut down the groves, and brake in pieces the brazen serpent that Moses had made, for unto those days the children of Israel did burn incense to it: and he called it Nehushtan”* (a piece of brass). The Assyrians in our subject are a people who have not a true regard for a *“Thus saith the Lord,”* and would bring into Israel today, if possible, that which is contrary to what Christ and his apostles established. These men were led as those of old, by the Holy Ghost, and wrote of those things which they had heard, seen and handled of the Word of life. The apostle John wrote, *“The world knoweth us not, because it knew him not.”*

Micah speaks of seven shepherds, this number seven comes often in the Scripture and sets forth God’s perfection in dealing with mankind. For the sin of ignorance, blood was sprinkled seven times before the Lord. (Leviticus 4:6) Seven golden candlesticks are seen in Revelation 1:10-20, while John was in the Spirit on the Lord’s day. The seven golden candlesticks were the seven churches and One like the Son of man in the midst. He had seven stars in his right hand, which

were the angels or messengers of the seven churches. In Malachi 3:1, John the Baptist, the forerunner of Jesus, is spoken of as a messenger, and our Lord also, who is called the messenger of the covenant. The good shepherd, who gave his life for the sheep, in his covenant, saw fit that there should be a perfect ministry. The stars are heavenly. The Rock of Ages is spoken of by Peter as *“A stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them who stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed.”* (1 Peter 2:8) Zechariah 3:9 tells us that this stone had seven eyes. Our Lord established a perfect testimony, and when one preaches the word by the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven it is evident that he is in the right hand of him whom John saw in the Midst of the Churches. We view the churches set forth by the golden candlesticks as representing the various phases of the church during the gospel dispensation, and there are many signs that we are in the Laodicean period, when, as James 5:9 says, *“The Judge standeth before the door.”*

We could use most of our space in showing that the Assyrians under various conquerors were finally established in Babylon, which was a type of Babylon the Great, which is still flourishing, so that all the world wonders after the Beast. We feel its likeness, history and fall are fully set forth in the word of God, so will get on with our subject. The eight prin-

cipal men are the eight writers of the New Testament, Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Peter, James, Paul and Jude. The Old Testament has much of the New Testament concealed therein. Solomon, the wise man in Ecclesiastes 11:2, says, "*Give a portion to seven and also to eight.*" We know the eight writers were so guided so that they recorded so much of the Old to confirm the New. The worldly-wise deny that Jonah was in the whale's belly; in doing so, they deny that Jesus was in the bosom of the earth, for one confirms the other. The seven messengers, who have been in the right hand of our Lord, also have their portion in the Old Testament as in the New. We have spoken of the Assyrians as setting forth the world walking after the flesh, but there is much of the world in us, for we are still in the flesh, and in the flesh we cannot please God. Paul says, "*But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you.*" Are we today any different from the Corinthians or from the brethren of James scattered abroad? Read that faithful shepherd's testimony and you will see how much they needed a faithful ministry. In Micah's day there were only a few who feared God and looked to him for help, and there are but a few today. He said, "*When the Assyrian shall come into our land: and when he shall tread in our palaces.*" What is our land? The place where we live and walk, the palaces are heavenly

places in Christ Jesus. Our Lord said, "*They are not of the world.*" In the church we have a home, it is where Jesus is in the midst. Are we fit for such a dwelling? This dwelling might look like a cave to the world. Cave Adullam was where David found an escape from the world around him and where HIS BRETHREN and all HIS FATHER'S HOUSE went down to be with HIM. "*And everyone that was in distress, and every one that was in debt, and everyone that was discontented, gathered themselves unto him; and he became a captain over them.*" (I Samuel 22:1-2)

We sing "*Prisons would palaces prove, if Jesus would dwell with me there.*" Often God's afflicted children have found a sick room a palace, and they have been blest to find themselves in sweet fellowship with all who have ever tasted that the Lord is gracious, and the Man Jesus by his reconciling love was their Peace. We have mentioned James, one of the eight, and we would like to speak of the scattered brethren to whom he wrote. One can see that the flesh or Assyrian got in there, yet how faithful James was; he did not have any variance with Paul, another of the eight, who wrote about being justified by faith, not of works lest any man should boast. James believed the same as Paul, but it is evident that already there were those who talked, but did not live, their religion, as there are today, and it is good

when the Church of God raises up against such, the testimony of the seven shepherds and the eight principal men. There is much in the epistle of James applicable to the Church in the present day, and when prayerfully read, we hope will be to the instruction and building up of the brethren in practical godliness. There is also in Paul's, Peter's and John's, and it is becoming, when we in godly fear, study to show ourselves approved unto God, workmen that need not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

We remember an old brother in New York State who had seen the Church in its loveliness in his younger days, and to his sorrow and the grief of many, they witnessed the flesh get the better of good men and divide them. It grieved him the more when good brethren said such unkind things about those they had once fellowshiped. Both sides professed the same truth, sang out of the same hymnbooks and read from the same bibles. That afflicted brother one day in pouring out his troubles said, "*Brother, is it possible for those whom you know love the same truth that you love, and you loved them for years, for you to cease loving them?*" The writer said, "*No, it is not possible, if it were the Love of God, that is like God himself, unchangeable.*" Brothers and sisters of natural families fall out, and parents, if they are wise, will want them to acknowledge their faults one to another. How much more it

becomes God's dear children to confess their faults one to another and to wash one another's feet. What stops them if they are what they have professed to be? Our answer unequivocally is the flesh, the Assyrian, and the seven shepherds and the eight principal men will ever prove it to be so, for they testify of the man, the only MAN who is our PEACE. They preach him still in the midst of the throne, the LAMB as it had been slain, slain for sinners, of whom Paul said, "*I am chief.*" Surely the faithful testimony presented by a servant of God, upheld by the right hand of our glorious Lord, would break a heart of stone.

Do we see this MAN who is our PEACE just in pictures on the wall, or have we pictured him in our minds? That is no better, but do we still see him as we have, I hope, seen him in our brethren as he was in the Ark of old? so that "*the wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together, and a little child (the holy child Jesus) shall lead them.*" (Isaiah 11:6) The writer is glad to be able to state that the old brother lived to see his cries and prayers answered, and estranged brethren falling on one another's necks in a loving embrace, proving that Micah's testimony was true, that this man born in Bethlehem with our names engraved upon his hands, is our PEACE.

Elder George Ruston

ROMANS VIII. 26.

"We know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered."

The subject of prayer is of vast importance to the poor, miserable sinner. What shall he pray for? How often shall he pray? Shall he pray at all? What is prayer? As I have been exercised from time to time as to the subject of prayer, I feel to write somewhat upon it. I am persuaded that prayer is not in a form of words only, but in groanings which cannot be uttered, and Paul says in the following verse, *"And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God."* Sometimes we are ready to fall into the error of believing that if we have any need of praying it will be given us according to the will of God, and it need not concern us whether we pray or do not pray; we will not be concerned. I lived along in this frame of mind for some time, until Elder Durand, in conversation, said that *Jesus* believed he was the Son of God, but nevertheless he prayed upon one occasion all night unto God, and his prayer in Gethsemane, when he sweat as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground, tells in a measure to us the great agony of soul the Son of man was

passing through, and also the prayer unto the Father, recorded in the seventeenth chapter of John, is the Redeemer's petition unto God, not only for the saints, but for himself as well. So we see how easy to fall into error and be taken captive of the devil.

But, *"We know not what we should pray for as we ought."* Prayer I understand to be the desires, longings and petitions unto God for something we do not possess, or feel we are yet lacking in, in the measure we would desire. But the great trouble is to know if it is *"according to the will of God."* God's will is known only to himself, and Jesus was not praying for his own will when praying, to God in Gethsemane, for he said, *"Father; if it be possible, let this cup pass from me! nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt."* So we see that we are upon sacred and holy ground when we are praying to God, and cannot bring our own will, but the will of God, in our petitions. Along this line I wish to say that everyone who is brought unto the presence of God by the Spirit is washed by the *"washing of water by the word,"* and is cleansed and sanctified, as was Aaron the high priest under the legal dispensation, and who was ceremonially washed with water, and cleansed in order that he might offer acceptable sacrifices and prayers unto God, whereas in the gospel dispensation the children of God are made kings and priests unto God, washed and

cleansed by the Spirit, and do offer prayers as indited by the Spirit. Every one who enters into the presence of God must be cleansed, for nothing unclean shall enter into the city.

There are several things we may consider along this line, and it would be well to mention some of them. None but living subjects pray, none but hungry, poor, weak, lame and halt subjects feel the burden of prayer, so there is a comfort and consolation to our mind if we can see in our earthly pilgrimage, our Bethel, as did Jacob, when he took the stones and put them for his pillow and God appeared unto him.

I know of one who saw his little boy kneel at the bedside to pray God to bless papa, mamma and sisters, and he felt he wished he were a child again that he might pray unto God in childlike simplicity; but no, the heavens were brass and no petition from him could ever reach the place where God dwells; but in time that same person was as that little child, and brought into the church, so there was an evidence that the groaning which could not be uttered was heard and answered of God. James says, If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, but let him ask in faith. So it is living subjects that pray, being made alive from the dead, quickened by the Spirit, and their affections set upon things above not on things of the earth, for where the treasure is there the heart will be also.

Subjects of grace are given to believe by faith, and faith is the fruit of the Spirit. "*He that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.*" - Heb. xi. 6. So it is impossible for nonbelievers to pray, for they have nothing to pray for; they are not troubled like other men, they have all that heart can wish; David was envious of them, until he went into the house of God (the church). God's people are hungry, poor, weak, lame and halt, not naturally, but spiritually, hungry for righteousness; poor, and all their righteousness is as filthy rags; so weak they have exhausted all their strength to attain the favor of God; lame and halt, that their walk is imperfect, cannot do as they would. These are the subjects God has prepared for a habitation with himself, and Jesus named them as "*blessed*" in the fifth chapter of Matthew.

As these various infirmities are presented to us by the Spirit, then, and then only, do our prayers go up unto God as a sweet-smelling savor, and being asked according to the will of God, they shall be answered. John says, "*And this is the confidence that we have in him, that, if we ask anything according to his will, he heareth us: and if we know that he hears us, whatsoever we ask, we know that we have the petitions that we desired of him.*" - John vs. 14-15. What child of God can but say that

his petitions have been heard, and also answered; not in the way he supposed, but by terrible things in righteousness. We are not heard for our much speaking, but for that which is in accordance with His will, the Spirit of God would give us petitions individually for what we need, and also give us prayer for the welfare of Zion.

The Lord has given gifts to the church, and they are not all the same gifts; to some the gift of healing, to some exhortation, discerning of spirits, the word of wisdom, teaching and that of prophecy, and each one is to profit withal in whatever gift or gifts the Lord has bestowed.

As we are directed and shown wherein Zion is languishing and becoming desolate, therein are we led to pray and petition the throne of grace. When Jesus was in the flesh and dwelt among men he said, So Zion is to pray to the Lord of the harvest for laborers. If one is exercised to labor in the harvest and the church recognizes a gift, she is to pray to the Lord to develop that gift and to hold up his hands. When Moses held up his hands Israel prevailed, and when he was not able to longer hold up his hands Aaron and Bur held them up. We are given the privilege and blessing to pray for each other, and thereby hold up each other's hands. I believe that the

true laborers are brought forth in this manner. As Zion is the habitation of God, we feel that every branch shall prosper in the graces of our God, and be partakers of his benefits and be fruitful unto good works. Each branch, as well as each member, shall dwell in the unity of the Spirit and the bond of peace, not railing for railing or evil for evil, but return good for evil.

"We know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us." How glorious are all the ways of God! While we lack the wisdom, the Spirit gives us wisdom, the wisdom which, is from above, the wisdom of God through our Lord Jesus Christ, for he is made unto us wisdom. I have in mind one who felt the prayer, *"Angels to beckon me,"* and shortly afterward the Lord took her only son; also another who felt the words, Lord, guide me, and she was bereft of her son; so the Spirit had made intercession before the subjects knew the meaning, of their prayer. Peter went upon the housetop to pray, and I have no doubt his prayer was in accord with his further work. The subject is endless, so I leave it.

J. M. FENTON.
PHILADELPHIA, Pa.
Jan. 19, 1910.

"For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no Sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God In him."- 2 CORINTHIANS V. 21.

OUR blessed Lord offered himself for sin; that is, that he might put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. *"Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree" (I Pet. ii. 24).* It was absolutely necessary either that the sinner should suffer in his own person, or in that of a substitute. Jesus became this substitute; he stood virtually in the sinner's place, and endured in his holy body and soul the punishment due to him; for he *"was numbered with the transgressors."* He thus, by the shedding of his most precious blood, opened in his sacred body a fountain for all sin and all uncleanness (Zech. xiii 1). The cross was the place on which this sacrifice was offered; for as the blood of the slain lamb was poured out at the foot the altar, sprinkled upon its horns, and burned in its ever-enduring fire, so our blessed Lord shed his blood upon the cross. He there endured the wrath of God to the uttermost; he there put away sin by the sacrifice of himself; he there offered his holy soul and body, the whole of his pure and sacred humanity, in union with his eternal Deity, as an expiation for the sins of his people. Thus all their sin was atoned for, expiated, put away, blotted out, and will never more be imputed to them. This is the grand

mystery of redeeming love and atoning blood. Here the cross shines forth in all its splendour; here God and man meet at the sacrifice of the God-man; and here, amidst the sufferings and sorrows, the groans and tears, the blood and obedience of God's dear Son in our nature, grace reigns through righteousness unto eternal life.

Elder J.C. Philpot

MEETINGS

(Correction of April Issue)

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION

The West Country Line Union will convene at Dan River Church on the fifth Sunday in April.

The church is located on highway #700 between Eden and Danville. Greensboro Church will be host for this meeting.

We welcome all lovers of the truth to be with us. We especially invite all ministers of our faith and order. Song service begins at 10:00 a.m.

Elder Kenneth R. Key, Moderator
Brother Wayne Edwards, Clerk

PROVERBS 8:10-11.

Receive my instruction, and not silver; and knowledge rather than choice gold.

For wisdom is better than rubies; and all the things that may be desired are not to be compared to it.

Signs of the Times

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES

202 Carousel Lane, Meadows of Dan, Va. 24120-4403

SONG

*Faith is the brightest evidence
Of things beyond our sight;
Breaks thro' the clouds of flesh
and sense,
And dwells in heavenly light.*

*It sets time past in present view,
Brings distant prospects home,
Of things a thousand years ago,
Or thousand years to come.*

*By faith we know the worlds
were made*

*By God's almighty word:
Abra'm, to unknown countries
led,*

By faith obeyed the Lord.

*He sought a city fair and high,
Built by th' eternal hands;
And faith assures us, though we
die,*

That heavenly building stands.

Watts.

POSTMASTER

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CONTENTS

EDITORIAL 122
 Elder C.C. Wilbanks

CORRESPONDENCE 125

ARTICLES 126
 Eugene F. Osborne, Sr.

VOICES OF THE PAST 128
 Elder Silas H. Durand
 Elder E.J. Lambert
 Elder Gilbert Beebe

MEETINGS 140

CONTRIBUTIONS 141

OBITUARIES 141
 Sister Alice Foy Allen
 Sister Violet E. Bird
 Andrew Crisley Cox
 James Daniel Cunningham
 Sister Thelma Foy
 Florence Dudley Maxey

EDITORIAL

CONVERSATION



Elder C. C. Wilbanks

Every literate person understands that conversation is an exchange of thoughts or ideas between two or more individuals in a common spoken language. But the use of the word in this manner is very limited when compared with its use in ancient times, and when used in the Bible. I do not understand a word of the Hebrew language, but according to Strong's concordance the word "conversation" is derived from the word

DEREK, that basically means a trodden road, a course of life, manner and behavior of individuals. The word is used twice in the Psalms and eighteen times in the New Testament. Biblically the word does not mean social intercourse by means of language, but it refers to the whole behavior, conduct or character of the individual. This is the primary meaning of the word wherever it is used in the scriptures. Only Paul's use of it in his letter to the Philippians is there an exception, and he used it to mean "citizenship," or to behave as citizens. We do violence to this expression, and greatly limit its meaning if we mean only that our conversing or talking together is in heaven, which is the church of Jesus Christ. To be a citizen of this heaven one must be born there. *"And of Zion it shall be said, This and that man was born in her: and the highest himself shall establish her. The LORD shall count, when he writeth up the people, that this man was born there."* Ps. 87:5-6. This heaven is not that glorious heaven above, but our heaven on earth. To be born there we must be born again, *"—not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."* As Jesus said to Nicodemus, *"—Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of heaven."* And, *"Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."* All men, the sons of Adam, are born

dead in sins and trespasses; we were separated from God when the first Adam transgressed God's holy commandment. We have a natural life, but we live in nature's total darkness concerning anything spiritual and are slaves and servants to sin until being translated into the light and liberty of the kingdom of Christ. Enoch was translated that he should not see death, and every subject of God's grace shall never eternally die, for Jesus gives unto them eternal life, and he is that life. By his death and resurrection he triumphed over death and the grave and brought life and immortality to light through his glorious gospel which is revealed unto us by his Holy Spirit. Our natural bodies may sleep in the dust, but they will be changed and raised from the grave in the likeness of Christ when our Saviour shall return to receive his beloved bride unto himself. Those who are alive and remain shall also be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, and shall rise with those who sleep. *"For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the arch angel, and with the trump of God: and the dead (asleep) in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord."* 1 Thes. 16-17.

Whosoever is born in the kingdom of heaven is born of God and

cannot sin. *"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."* 1 Jn. 3:9. As long as we remain here on earth in the flesh we will sin, for this new birth does not change our Adamic sinful nature in any way. John said, *"If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us."* We are tempted and drawn away by our own lusts and enticed. *"Then when lust hath conceived, it brings forth sin: and when sin is finished it brings forth death."* James 1:15. Paul told the Corinthians, *"There hath no temptation but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it. Wherefore, my beloved brethren, flee from idolatry."* 1 Cor. 10:13-14. Without the power of the Holy Spirit working within us we will not accomplish this. I have tried for many years to accomplish this without success; that is, if I have ever done the thing I ought to have done it was never the result of my trying to do so, but the result of a higher power. Brethren, is it this way with you? Paul said, *"Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ."* This does not mean only our talking together about the gospel, but if we give the word conversation its full force it signifies, Let

your behavior, or life, as citizens of heaven be as becometh the Gospel of Christ. We may talk one way but act another. But if we be the children of God we are not simply to talk the gospel, but live it. The power to do this must come from on high. In Paul's letter to Titus he said, "*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 the present world.*" The same grace that teaches us these things never leaves us but abides in us to cause us to deny the flesh and its lusts, to the end that we may by grace live and behave as citizens of heaven even while we remain in this ungodly world. Only Christ within us can do the teaching, and if we have not Christ in our hearts then we are none of his.

Brethren, I must confess that I do not always live as I should, if I ever do. There are many times when I say things that should not be said, and do not say what should be said. And I do things that I should not do. Many times I instantly regret what I have said or done and at times it is revealed to me later. In either case it causes me pain in heart and I must beg for mercy to the Most High. 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. It is too long to copy here, but I would like

for you to read Romans 8:14-25. This does not apply to Paul only, but to every child of grace.

In the first book of Peter we find these two scriptures: "*Be ye holy in all manner of conversation,*" and, "*For as much as ye know that ye were not redeemed *****from your vain conversation.*" Again, it is not talking together, but our behavior or conduct is meant. In these scriptures we find holy conversation and evil conversation. A man may say things that sound holy, yet his behavior or conduct betrays him as evil. That man is not being led by the Holy Spirit but is following after the lusts of the flesh. If this conduct continues unabated it will cause much trouble in the church. Paul called these men grievous wolves, and Jude said they were certain men who crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation. Paul also tells us that of our own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.

Brethren, I have seen both the holy conversation and the evil conversation in our churches. I do not wish to point to any individual or church, but to bring it to your attention. I have seen this evil conversation, and I feel sure that at least some of you have also, and we do know that it has split associations and destroyed churches. If it should continue we will see even more. Because this evil is against the

church of God, we should bring it to the attention of the church in an orderly manner. The church should never act hastily, but with the help of the Holy Ghost seek to convert the offending brother from the error of his way. This should be done in a kind and brotherly way. But if the brother will not hear the church he should be put out, to be delivered unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. If the brother should return later, and show by his behavior that the Spirit of Christ has changed him, he may be returned to church fellowship. This brings to mind that Peter had been taught of the Father to know that Jesus was the Son Of God, and yet he cursed and swore that he knew him not when Jesus stood before Pilate. But when Jesus looked upon him O how he went out and wept bitterly. I feel at times that I am much like Peter at that time. Is your experience like mine? If so, we can have sweet fellowship.

God is love, and if we love God it is because he first loved us. How can we love God whom we have not seen if we do not love the brethren whom we have seen? It is impossible. Without charity we are nothing. If love is in our hearts we can easily show it in many ways. Charity is love in action. A warm handshake, a hug, a kind word, a simple pat on the back, etc. will suffice. Just telling someone that we love them has little value if we do not prove it

by our actions. Paul said, "*Owe no man anything, but to love one another: for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law.*" He also said, "*But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another. This I say then, Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh.*"

Beloved brethren, let us always strive to fulfil the law, praying for the Holy Spirit to lead us. Let our conversation be as becometh the citizens of Zion. I need your prayers when at the throne of Grace.

Eld. C.C. Wilbanks

CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Elder Terry,

Hope you and your family are well. I have been receiving the Signs of the Times for about 2 years and I'm glad to be getting it. I don't know who had it sent to me. I enjoy reading the articles. Hope I can witness with The Writer. I believe the doctrine of Salvation by Grace, Election and Predestination, and nothing can separate God's people from his Love.

I just hope I am one of his. Enclosed is a check for \$15.00.

Love in Christ I hope,
Winfred Young

ARTICLES

To the household of faith.

“Praise ye the Lord”

These words are recorded in the Psalms at least twenty-two times giving emphasis to a very important commandment. To praise the Lord is to glorify his holy name above all other names. If the Lord permits and helps me I shall endeavor to examine these precious words in that pure minds may be stirred.

Praise is rendered in loving exaltation with sincere reverence for it is good to actively worship the Lord in truth, to love him, to obey his commandments, to rejoice in him, to pray without ceasing, and to give thanks unto him for every gift and blessing (1 Thes., ch. 5).

The psalmist exhorted all of God's creation, the celestial, the terrestrial, and all creatures that breathe to praise him (Ps., ch. 148). The psalmist has declared that the children of Zion are permitted to *“be joyful in their King,”* and that they *“Let the high praises of God be in their mouth”* (Ps., ch. 149).

The apostle Paul advised the saints that *“whatsoever - ye do. all to the glory of God”* (1Cor. 10:31). A question may arise in the reader's mind concerning where — at what place — praise is to be rendered. The psalmist answers *“Praise ye the Lord. Praise God in his sanc-*

tuary: praise him in the firmament of his power” (Ps. 150:1).

Are there any limits, dear children of Zion, embodied in the actions or deeds of praise? Perhaps it may be useful to review the precise distinctions between the word “praise” and other words found in the scriptures, such as “regard,” “respect,” “honour,” “esteem,” etc. Does the scriptures mean praise when referring to “them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord,” “to esteem them very highly in love for their works' sake” (1 Thes.5: 12-13)? Or is it praise when it is recorded to *“Honour all men, love the brotherhood. Fear God. Honour the King”* (1 Pet. 2:17)? Do the children of Zion glorify the works of men or praise any individual person sitting within or standing before the congregation of saints? God forbid! *“Let them praise the name of the Lord: for his name alone is excellent; his glory is above the earth and, heaven”* (Ps. 148:13; also Ps. 8:1 and Is. ch. 12). From the prophet, *“I am the Lord: that is my name: and my glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images”* (Is. 42:8 and 48: 9-11).

When, in the day by day journey of life, a child of Zion is alone, or when cast into a multitude of humanity, or when walking a wilderness path, that child remains within the firmament of God's power. Wherever that child of Zion is, I believe,

God is in his sanctuary for that child's body is the temple of God (1 Cor. 3:16-17; 6: 19-20; and 2 Cor. 6:16). Also, when the children of Zion assemble as a militant church they are in the firmament of God's power be they gathered upon a hillside or within the sanctuary (as we traditionally understand the word) of a meetinghouse.

"Praise ye the Lord. Praise God in his sanctuary: praise him in the firmament of his power."

To the Church at Corinth, the apostle wrote ***"If any man defile the temple of God, him shall God destroy" (I Cor. 3:17).***

From the prophet ***"Wherefore, as I live, saith the Lord God: Surely, because thou hast defiled my sanctuary with all thy detestable things, and with all thine abominations, therefore will I also diminish thee; neither shall mine eye spare, neither will I have any pity" (Ez. 5:11: also see Deut. 7:26).***

There are numerous verses throughout the sacred scripture that forbid defilement, profaneness, and pollution of the Lord's house and its sanctuary. The consequences of such deeds are to be seen in the New Testament letters to the seven churches in Asia. (Rev. chs. 2 and 3). So dear reader, by what deeds or actions is God's sanctuary of the heart or of the meetinghouse defiled, profaned, or polluted?

The following is submitted for your loving consideration in the interest of the militant gospel church

of the living God to whom all praise should flow. Is the sanctuary of the heart or the meeting house defiled, profaned, or polluted:

1) by our demeanor through which we bring in pride, despair or apathy; or

2) by our failure to condemn behavior and deeds that the scripture teaches us that GOD hates. Behavior of men or

Satan that promotes disorder, brings dishonor, breaks the bonds of brotherly love, or promotes cultism, preacher worship and divisions in the congregation. (Read Jer. 7:8-16; Prov. 6: 16-19; Mal. 2; Gal. 5; 19-21; etc.) or

3) by accepting the preaching of error and false doctrine that either adds to or takes away from the gospel of our LORD. (Rev. 22:18-19); or

4) by the introduction and display of material objects within the meetinghouse sanctuary, especially in the areas in view of the congregation during worship services - objects that praise and glorify men, living or dead, in violation of the 1st and 2nd commandments as given to Moses? Please note that ***"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 beneath the earth: Thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them: for I the Lord thy GOD am a jealous GOD,"(Ex. 20:4-5);***

I'm confident that we would not place a statue of any apostle or any sculpture of the crucifixion in our sanctuaries as do some denominations. I believe that any item glorifying men are a distraction to the congregation and I fail to see how they can possibly glorify a jealous GOD.

Beloved children of Zion, as we gather in remembrance of Jesus for observance of the Lord's Supper, let us remember that all of our sins were cast upon his shoulders, let us praise the Lord, him alone, for only he is excellent. He has given us the breath of life, he has been our Keeper, our Protector, our Redeemer, and our Salvation all the days of our lives. In our prayers, let us praise and give thanks unto him. Indeed we have an abundance of gifts and blessings to be thankful for. Jesus is the straight gate and morning star. He is the eternal life in whom the children of Zion rejoice.

Turn us (and me) unto thee, O Lord, is my prayer for Christ's sake. Amen.

Eugene F. Osborne, Sr.

PSALM 33: 5-6.

He loveth righteousness and judgment: the earth is full of the goodness of the Lord.

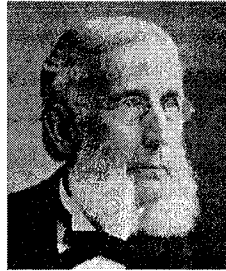
By the word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth.

VOICES OF THE PAST

WHERE THE DOVE DWELLS

(Song of Solomon ii. 14)

"O my dove, that art in the clefts of the rock."



Elder Silas H. Durand

The Savior thus addresses his church in her present state of existence, and thus presents her condition of safety. The dove, pursued by birds of prey, would seek and enter into one of the clefts or fissures in the rocks, where she was safe from her enemy. This figure is used by the heavenly Lover to show in what consists the safety of his bride. He himself is the Rock, and the clefts of the rock represent the sufferings and death which he endured by the stroke of the law for the salvation of his people. When Moses struck the rock waters gushed out; so when the law struck Jesus waters of salvation came forth for all his people. At the second time that Moses struck a rock, in the desert of Zin, which was nearly forty years after he struck the first rock, he spake unadvisedly with his lips, and the Lord told him that he could not go over into the promised land. (Num. xx. 12.) So when the law struck Jesus, the Rock of salvation, its work was done, and it must die. The law could not take the Lord's people into the gospel land;

its work ends with the crucifixion of Christ. When the Lord would show Moses his glory, and cause all his goodness to pass before him, he put Moses in a cleft of the rock on which he stood, and covered him with his hand while his glory passed by. A cleft in a rock is not a pleasant place to be forced into, but it is safe. *"I am crucified with Christ,"* Paul says. He says, *"We which live [a spiritual life] are always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh."* - 2 Cor. iv. He says, *"That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made, comformable unto his death."* Here are the clefts of the rock where the dove is, where the Lord's people find their salvation. It is not in peace and quiet of mind, not while lying on beds of ivory and stretching themselves on their couches, that they find safety, but in affliction and trouble; in suffering with Christ; in *"bearing about in our body the dying of the Lord Jesus."* Here is Moses, held in a close, rough, unpleasant cleft of the flinty rock, trying to get out into liberty and see what is passing by; but for his salvation he is held down in a place he does not like, and covered with the Lord's hand. This is his salvation. If he had been outside of that rock he would have been destroyed. The power of the Lord's name which he pronounced would have been his destruction. No man

could endure the last syllable of that name; it would destroy any of Adam's race: *"And that will by no means clear the guilty."* The Rock only could endure it. No man can see God's face and live, but hidden in Christ, in the cleft of the Rock, we can see his back parts; can see the glory after the Lord has passed by; can see the goodness and blessedness of what he has done.

How we fret, and worry, and complain at this constant trouble; this cutting off and hedging in; this daily crossing of our worldly desires, or the greater sorrow and shame when our fleshly desires are fulfilled; this constant dissatisfaction with ourselves and our works; this self-aborrence and self-loathing; this "great tribulation;" this withering of the glory and goodness of man like the grass; this lack of joy and comfort in worldly things, and often such questioning as to our interest in heavenly things. But in this is our safety. Through great tribulation we must enter into the kingdom of heaven. All of those who stand before the great white throne have come out of great tribulation.

The dear Savior recognizes his people in this condition, and calls to them, as his dove, seeing them in the clefts of the Rock. Also he speaks of them as *"in the secret places of the stairs."* The stairs were in the right side of the temple, and it was by winding stairs that the people went up out of the first into the second story, and out of the second into the third story, winding

about, hardly knowing whether they are going up or down, often in a dark, secret place of the winding way. But he tells them where they are, they are in the stairs all the time. Every change, every turn, every new trouble and affliction, however it appears to oppress them and sink them down, is really lifting them higher. They are rising, they are in a secret place, hidden from the world, who cannot see them as the Lord's people, and who cannot understand the Lord's way of taking his people up from the world, up from self, up from legal works; but they are still going up by winding stairs out of the legal into the gospel dispensation, and out of the things that are seen from day to day into *"the things which are not seen,"* into the *"building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."*

So Jesus, the heavenly Lover, speaks to his dear people as an afflicted and poor people, and tells them where they are. He recognizes them as suffering with him, as crucified with him, and lets them know while in the furnace of affliction that *"as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ."*— 2 Cor. i. 5. In their feeling of self-aborrence and humiliation their faces are in the dust; they would not dare to speak to him except in a cry for mercy, nor even lift up their eyes to him; but in infinitely tender and prevailing love he calls to them by this

endearing name, and says, *"Let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice; for sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely."* That voice is expressive of mourning on account of a sinful heart, but how sweetly it comes up into his ears on that account; that face is full of sorrow, and their eyes are pouring out tears unto God; but the sadness and the tears make the countenance comely in the sight of the dear Savior, for there are expressed a hunger and thirst after righteousness, and a hatred of all sin. That is what makes the face of a poor sinner lovely in the Lord's sight. And when they hear the loving accents of his voice speaking unto them, and with tender power acknowledging them as his dove, his bride, whom he has redeemed from all iniquity, and when they see, by faith, his face looking upon them in love, with "the light of the knowledge of the glory of God" shining in it, how it makes their own sad faces lose the look of sadness and shine with holy and solemn joy because of his love to them. Then are they thankful that they have a dwelling-place in the clefts of the Rock, and in the secret places of the stairs, and glad that it is their blessed privilege to suffer with Christ, that they may by that fellowship of his sufferings be more effectually separated from the world, and glorified together with him.

Elder Silas H. Durand
OCTOBER 26, 1905.

ASSOCIATIONS OF CHURCHES

Two hundred years ago seven churches formed themselves into what is known as the KEHUKKEE ASSOCIATION at a meeting house called "Kehukee" near Kehukee Creek, in Halifax County, North Carolina. This was in the year 1765 according to Hassell's Church History. Since this year, 1965, is the bicentennial year of this ASSOCIATION; we are impressed to write a short editorial upon the subject of ASSOCIATIONS OF CHURCHES. We shall endeavor to treat upon the aims of our forefathers in forming these churches into associations and to point out the necessity of conducting such associational meetings in such manner that the churches will retain their scriptural position as the highest ecclesiastical organizations. We shall consider associations as creatures of the churches and shall warn against these creatures attempting to discipline and to set themselves above their creators. Seven Churches of Asia were written to by John. Seven churches originally adopted what is now known as the London Confession of Faith in abridged form in 1643. (Hassell Church History, see Page 663) There were seven elders in the twelve churches constituting the Sulphur Fork Association of Texas in 1845 at Providence Church, Mount Vernon, Texas. Let us now leave the historical phase and immediately examine the purposes of these associations.

One of the aims in forming associations of churches is that personal acquaintance and contact might be enlarged to include a larger circle of brethren than would be probable with a single church in a neighborhood. It is as a good result of associations that thousands often meet together from different states to worship God in unison, and to become acquainted with many new brethren embracing sovereign grace principles. Our aim is to embrace more in our fellowship instead of trying to reduce the number. Our aim is to further unite rather than to divide; add to instead of cutting off; and to be for one another rather than being against.

Paul said, *"Be of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits."* (Romans 12:16) *"Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord, Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment."* (1 Cor. 1 :10) *"Fulfill ye my joy, that ye be like-minded, having the same LOVE, being of one accord, of one mind."* (Phil. 2 :2) David said, *"Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity."* (Psalms 133:1) The number TWO has been considered by some as being accursed as it is the first departure

from unity. Only God who makes men's hearts can unite them. Whoever God joins together in this divine love can never be separated by the cunning craftiness of men without causing unhappiness and misery because of such separation. United we stand, divided we fall. All who possess the spirit of God's love are as harmless as doves. Doves live, feed, and fly by companies. Doves desire unity; and it was the dove that would not leave Noah's ark. (Gen. 8:9) We must warn against these wolves who have come in among us, as well as the foxes who have crept into our numbers, who care not for the flock. They connive with their plots, schemes, tricks, and "Legal justifications" to handle churches as if they were the judges, lawgivers, and kings. They will band themselves together to annihilate churches and ministers. A whole psalm was written against this sin. Read the entire 83rd Psalm. The 12th verse is the expression of their central desire.

"Who said, Let us take to ourselves the houses of God in possession." Those who plot together to cut off churches from the union of churches I take crafty counsel against thy people, and consulted against thy hidden ones. They have said, COME, AND LET US CUT THEM OFF FROM BEING A NATION."

It is comforting to know that the Lord is the one to take vengeance on them. The Psalmist asked the Lord to "Fill their faces with shame."

The Lord created the wicked for the day of evil, and created the waster to destroy. He will fight our battles for us against our enemies in His way with that which He hath designed for the work of vengeance. True brethren do not need to waste time in warring with false brethren for if God be for us none can successfully come against us. He will deliver us from their clutches. We do not need to defend ourselves but use the time and talents in pressing on toward the mark for the prize of the high calling in Jesus Christ. We shall press for the unity of TRUE brethren. We realize that when these false brethren have done their dirty work they will separate themselves from us and go out from us, as the CHIEF Shepherd does His mighty work in protecting the sheep from the wolves and foxes.

Another aim is to encourage inter-communion of churches. Churches formed in such associations write letters to the other churches giving such information as each church may think prudent for the good and welfare of the union. This inter-communication so links the churches together that brethren composing one church feel free to commune with the churches so linked together. We know that all members of the church universal are all the saved, and that Christ is the only Head, and the Church is His Body. (See Eph. 1:22-23 & Colossians 1:18-24) The church militant is composed of all the saints now on

earth. The invisible church is all the Elect not yet called. A particular church is a society of believers called out of the world who have bonded themselves together, to be guided and governed by discipline agreeable to the laws of Christ as given in the New Testament.

Another purpose of associational meetings is to bring together the different gifts in the ministry in order that they may preach together and hear one another feeding the children of God with a variety of spiritual food. Many say they enjoy associational meetings because they are privileged to hear different ministers from the different sections of the country in different manners proclaiming the same gospel truth. It is indeed a blessing to be convinced that all these ministers have been brought up in the same School and have had as their teacher; God, the Father; God, the Son; and, God, the Holy Ghost.

Associational meetings are heavenly when so many voices can be blended together in singing the songs of Zion in the spirit and God-given understanding, having their voices mellowed by the Love of God bringing them into the joys of Zion. It is wonderful to make new acquaintances and to visit so many who embrace the same sovereign grace principles which is our food and drink. It is wonderful to talk on the Scriptures together in smaller companies in the homes of the neighborhood in which the associational

meeting is held. It is enjoyable to feel the warm welcome extended to us in these homes and to partake of the kind hospitalities so lovingly given us by the occupants of these homes.

When we see so many people together to worship God it inspires and encourages those who have been made to feel that there are only a very few of us, and that it will not be long until there will be none of us left. I have heard people say at such meetings: "Old Baptists are not all dead as some would have us believe." It is encouraging when you are made to know that the Lord has reserved unto himself many more than you thought existed.

Interlinking of God's people by the method of associational correspondence is a blessing when we are blessed to extend the chain rather than break any of these links. I will here quote the body of a corresponding letter which I wrote several years ago - which is yet my conscientious convictions and yearning desires relative to associational correspondence: "Dearly Beloved Brethren: We are bound to give thanks unto God for you, brethren, because our drooping spirits have been revived by the presence of so many of you who compose the membership of the several associations with whom we correspond. We have been greatly refreshed by the coming of your lovely and friendly correspondence. We appreciate your elders whom God hath endowed

with His Holy Spirit to preach unto us salvation by grace through faith in the complete work of God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, in saving His Elect Family. Our aching hearts have been renewed while we are blessed to drink together from the fountain that springs up into everlasting life.”

“We are bound to thank God for this medium of fellowship granted us through associational correspondence. This chain of correspondence has united in one body many of our people from different states covering hundreds of miles. May God enable us to appreciate this grand blessing to the extent that we be given to watch and pray and so conduct ourselves that this chain will not be broken-but rather extended may keep us together and at one-another’s feet. May this letter bear to you love and fellowship. We covet a continuation of your correspondence and visitations.”

All of these objectives heretofore mentioned, together with the practice of the apostles and apostolic churches writing to the churches and brethren, would certainly commend general meetings when we consider their visitations among the churches. Brethren and churches then desired to learn of the welfare of others as well as to inform others of their own welfare. Letters were written then and sent by messengers to each other. This would not be a departure from apostolic practice to have associational meet-

ings regularly scheduled provided that messengers would not attempt any disciplinary action in dealing with any church or member. Associations have no Bible authority to deal in any manner disciplining churches or members. Since the church is the only organized body sanctioned by the Bible, and any other society or combination of men would be without Scriptural authority; then associations constituted to be continuous existing bodies must be unscriptural. Since we are all forgetful creatures, Old Baptists should be often reminded that there is no Bible authority for any formally organized association of God’s people other than the church itself; and because of this, no organized association of churches can be properly considered as a standing organization which is to be held sacred. Churches are continuous bodies; associations are not. When we refer to “Our Moderator” between sessions of associations when speaking of the one who presided over the last associational meeting, we are sanctioning the idea that we do believe there is some other permanent Christian organization other than the church. When the associational meeting ends the duty of the moderator ends. When the churches meet again in an associated capacity, they are obligated to re-organize for that session. We enjoy visiting these associations, not for the sake of these humanly organized bodies, but for the wonderful heavenly privi-

lege they provide, for the general assembling of the Saints of God, for the sole purpose of worshipping God, and associating with one another.

Have we departed from the steps of our forefathers in the use of associations? This is a vital question. We should ascertain the answer by examination. The church cannot confer authority to anyone or ones to act in its behalf. Christ is its only representative. Question 1, Do you have a copy of the Articles of Faith, Constitution, Rules of Decorum, Church Covenant, and copies of minutes of proceedings of the church of your membership? Question 2, Do you have copies of the Constitution, Articles of Faith, Rules of Decorum, and proceedings of the Association in which your church is catalogued as a member? If your answer be NO to question 1 and YES to question 2 it will show that a greater regard is shown toward the association than to the church of your membership. Question 3, Has the church of your membership by an act of the church barred any church or minister from your affiliation in the past several years? Question 4, Has the association barred any church or minister within the past several years which has affected the affiliation of the church of your membership? If your answer be NO to question 3 and YES to question 4 it will show that your messengers have acted beyond their authority and that you respect

your association more than the church of your membership. Question 5, Has the church of your membership desired to invite certain ministers to preach to you but because of some action of the association unauthorized by the church of your membership, you are afraid to invite? If your answer to this question be YES; then, you are allowing the association to infringe on your internal rights and to bring you into its bondage. Question 6, Have you ever had a church to seek affiliation with your church and a host of your membership would say to them, "We all have fellowship for you but you must present the matter to the association when it convenes"; and, you do not take any action upon the matter and make no recommendation to the association in your letter in order that messengers from other churches may present this matter to their churches? If this be the way you handle the matters, you are supporting the idea that messengers making up the association are to be the executive board to govern, discipline, and regulate church affiliation and fellowship. I cannot believe that our forefathers who first organized such meetings meant that they should be used in this manner. They were aware of the fact that it could easily lead to this. Therefore, safeguards were well written in their first organizations of associations with the hopes of preventing such unscriptural use. We have before us the Constitution of the Sulphur Fork

Primitive Baptist Association of churches. We shall quote these safeguards as written by our forefathers in forming this association: - "CONSTITUTION ... 3. The members thus chosen and convened shall not have power to lord it over God's heritage, nor shall have any ecclesiastical power over any of the churches, nor shall they infringe on any of the internal rights of any of the churches of the union ... 11. We believe that all societies or combinations of men, professing for their object the promotion of God's kingdom, for the spiritual good of men, except the Church of Christ are unauthorized by the Word of God, and are a fruitful source of contention and strife. Such as Foreign and Domestic Societies, Bible Tracts, Sabbath Schools, and State Conventions, all of which we believe are unscriptural and un-Christian in the origin, operation, and tendency; and as such we will not fellowship."

It is worse to esteem associations higher than the church than to approve of auxiliaries within the church. Question 7, When you travel abroad and you are questioned by Old School or Primitive Baptists relative to your religious affiliation, What is your answer??? If your answer be that you are a member of a certain association, you either esteem your association higher than your church, or, there has been more effort and expense used to make the actions of your association prominent rather than your

church. When you give such answer you are aiding the idea that there is some other Christian organization that is perpetual and continuous in its operations other than the church. Question 8, Do you think it necessary that your church belong to an association? If your answer be YES you aid the idea that the church of your membership is somewhat dependent upon someone other than Jesus Christ as its Head.

I am convinced that associational meetings are a blessing to God as long as churches are blessed to use them as tools for the promotion of bringing more and more of the Lord's little ones into affiliation of one-another. I am convinced that associations become a curse when they begin investigating, dropping, disciplining, not receiving, and barring from fellowship, churches who have had membership with them. I am convinced that as wealth is a blessing as long as it serves you and becomes a curse when you become its servant : so is an association a blessing as long as churches use it, but becomes a curse when it uses the churches as its servants.

Associations are without scriptural authority to settle difficulties. If difficulties arise in a particular church let us look to the Scriptures which contains the "ONLY RULE OF FAITH AND PRACTICE." If after much fasting, prayer, meditation, and study of the Scriptures; a satisfactory solution cannot be reached,

let us, then, call upon a sister church or churches to come and sit with us to aid us in counsel and advice. If the solution is not reached after all this, **WHERE ELSE CAN WE GO BUT TO THE LORD?** We must patiently wait for His deliverance. Do not disturb the peace of an associational meeting with problems which you together with the combined efforts of sister churches cannot settle. Do not turn your back upon a sister church who is in trouble. True churches of Christ mourn when they are in trouble. Do not tell them that they are in "disorder," and because of this, you cannot affiliate with them. This is the proper time for you to mourn with those who mourn. Do not leave them to themselves because of this disturbance. They need your helping hand. They need the caresses of your love and the manifestation of your fellowship more than before. When the peace of a particular church is disturbed, it is sick. It is in need of your loving care. If a member of that body is afflicted do not tell the body that we will have nothing more to do with you until you cut this member off. This would be like telling a loved one who has an afflicted arm that you will not come to visit him until he has his arm removed. Associations sometimes quickly cut off affiliation and correspondence even without a due course of labor in order to save in fellowship, just over rumors and misunderstandings. These things ought not to be and are unauthorized

in the testimony of the Word of God.

Dear Readers: I make this personal appeal to you: My soul has been on its knees for a long time. I go groaning, moaning, and sighing, as a lone pilgrim in a weary land. I am waiting, praying, and watching. I crave to get a letter from each and everyone of you whose hearts have been melted and softened in the furnace of afflictions. I deeply desire the sweet comradeship of true friends. I want to dwell with friends who do not render harsh judgment against each other. I want the comradeship of a people who will not hold my sins against me. I confess that my sins are many and that my mistakes are great. I admit that I am weak and do not know how to walk perfectly and have erred many times. I am seeking the friendship of the citizens of Zion who really forgive. I want to walk with a people who - *"Serve in the newness of the Spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter."* (Romans 7:6) I want the correspondence of those whose theme is: The Sovereign Power of God's Everlasting Love Through Jesus Christ Our Lord and Redeemer. I have prayed for deeper convictions, richer experience, stronger faith, brighter hope, and more fervent charity; but I was perplexed when I found I must go through greater tribulations and persecutions in answer to my prayer. May we rejoice together in many more associational meetings here and finally climax it in that Eter-

nal Session of Heaven's ASSOCIATION. Cast a mantle of charity to cover my many mistakes I may have made in this Article.

Elder E. J. Lambert

PERSONAL REMINISCENCE.

NEW VERNON, N.Y., April 30, 1834.

"This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief."

PAUL.

We are acquainted with an individual whose history we will give in the following words:

He was, like all the race of which he is a member, conceived in sin, and shapen in iniquity. He was born in the eastern part of the State of Connecticut. He was a *religionist* from his birth, yet an enemy to God, and a stranger to grace during the first seven years of his natural life for he was alive before the commandment came. He had at this period been taught to say his prayers, but had never been taught to pray; he had made some progress in the Westminster Catechism, and in short, as touching the religion of the Pharisees, he excelled many of his equals. It would have terrified him exceedingly to have gone to sleep at night without counterbalancing all

the sins of the day by a repetition of his forms of worship; but on all occasions when he had "*paid his vows, he had peace offerings at home.*" Up to about this period of life he was led to suppose that as touching the righteousness of the law he was blameless. We cannot describe to our readers the mortification and disappointment of this young lad, when being suddenly arrested by an arrow from the quiver of the Lord, he was summoned to stand at the dreadful bar of divine justice and give the reason, if any he had, why the tremendous sentence of the law of God should not be executed upon his guilty soul. Great was his consternation when he cast his eager glance around in search of those fancied treasures of personal holiness which he had believed himself to be in possession of. Alas! His stronghold failed him in this very critical moment he felt that he was ruined. But like Edom he said, "*I am impoverished, but I will return and build again my waste places.*" Great were his efforts, his labors, toils and pains to mend again that holy law which he had broken. He would have prayed, but he could no longer view the great, the dreadful God as a being that might be thrilled with, or pacified by what he could do. He struggled, but the harder he struggled the deeper he seemed to be involved in a horrible pit and in miry clay. These exercises continued for many days and weeks. Sometimes he meditated a retreat

from this awfully wretched state, but whither could he flee, if on the wings of the morning he should fly to the uttermost sea, God was there, everywhere present, beholding the evil and the good; there could be no retreating from God, before whose flaming eyes all things are naked and open. At length the day seemed to arrive when the dreadful sentence of the inexorable law of God must be put in execution. Now blackness and darkness and tempests gathered round his frightened soul. Hell yawned before him; justice stood with uplifted arm and the flaming sword of vengeance was drawn from its scabbard, and brandished over his guilty head. The books were brought. The arch accuser was also there, and what was to him more dreadful still than all, the piercing eye of God brought the black crimes of years to light, and what had been transacted in midnight darkness was now exposed upon the housetop. Chilled thus with horror, and pressed down to death with intense despair, remorse, guilt and keen anguish throbbing in his breast: tell us, dear reader, did he need an anxious bench, or knives, or lancets, to secure his conviction or would it have comforted him to have been informed by some Universalist that there was no hell, when the very pains of hell had got hold of him. As well might he be told, when writhing on a bed of embers, that there was no heat in the fire. The spell of such delusion was now broken. The Spirit had moved upon the

face of the great deep of his inmost soul, and although all had been without form and void, yet God had said, Let there be light, and light broke in upon him; and in this light, that heart which he had thought was a temple meet for the Holy Ghost to dwell in, was now manifestly the habitation of dragons, and the hold of every unclean and hateful bird. It was thus, when in or about his seventh year, he went to a distant barn, under an impression like that expressed by the poet:

*"I can but perish if I go,
I am resolved to try;
For if I stay away,
I know I must forever die."*

He fell upon his bended knees, but he could not pray; a rustling leaf, a turning straw, frightened his guilty soul, and chained his speechless tongue; awful apprehensions and fearful forebodings pursued him back to his chamber, when despairing of mercy he threw himself upon a bed to die and meet his fiery doom. Worn out with labor and want of rest, nature sank beneath the load, and he fell into a sleep. Unconscious of what passed while sleeping, he awoke himself singing these words:

*"How glorious is our heavenly King,
Who reigns above the sky;
How shall a child presume to sing,
His dreadful majesty?"*

He seemed indeed in a new world, his load of guilt and *sin* were gone, the love of God shed abroad in his heart.

*“His tongue broke out in unknown strains,
And sang surprising grace.”*

At the age of eleven years and four weeks, on the second Sunday in December 1811 he was permitted to be buried with his precious Lord in baptism, in the river Thames, in the city of Norwich, Connecticut, by Eld. John Sterry, who has since fallen asleep.

After remaining eight years a member of the Baptist church in Norwich, he removed his relation to the church in the city of New York, then under the pastoral care of that champion for the truth, Eld. Jonathan Van Velsen, who also, has fallen asleep. While a member of the Ebenezer Church in New York, the subject of our narrative, when in his twentieth year, was licensed to preach the gospel. The peculiar circumstances of his call to the work of the ministry our present limits will not admit. Let it suffice to say, that being experimentally, he could not help being doctrinally, Predestinarian. For more than fourteen years he has been lisping the name of Jesus with such abilities as the Lord has been pleased to bestow, without any of the polish of Gamaliel’s school; and although it has been his privilege to suffer some persecution, yet he has not resisted unto blood, striv-

ing against sin. He finds by every day’s experience that he is a sinner yet, his nature is still as evil as ever it was. *“To will is present with him, but how to perform that which is good, he finds not.”* He is still the chief of sinners, and if a saint, the least of all.

Elder Gilbert Beebe

MEETINGS

OLD PINE CREEK CHURCH

An annual all day meeting will be held, the Lord willing, at Old Pine Creek Church on the fourth of July 2001. The Church is located off #221, five miles north of Floyd, Va. Those coming from Floyd turn left on to road #682. Those coming from Roanoke, turn right on to road #682. All lovers of the truth are invited and especially all ministers of our faith and order.

Elder Hale Terry

Job 37: 23-24.

Touching the Almighty, we cannot find him out: he is excellent in power, and in judgment, and in plenty of justice: he will not afflict.

Men do therefore fear him: he respecteth not any that are wise of heart.

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR MARCH 2001

Hetty Sutherland, Va.....	18.00
Hazel Jackson, NC.....	7.00
Winfred Young, NC.....	5.00
In Memory of Bro. Jesse and Sister Emma Somers.....	25.00
Francis Knight, VA.....	5.00
Edna Shipman, TX.....	2.00
Peggy Phillips, VA.....	2.00
Alice Johnson, TX.....	2.00
J. D. Neely, AR.....	2.00
Eld. J. Y. McCormick, GA.....	7.00
Ruth Jones, VA.....	2.00
Colleen Cox, Va.....	2.00
Lillian Wood, NC.....	2.00
Anonymous.....	90.00
Sam Lilly, VA.....	2.00
Tim Barron, TX.....	7.00
Everett Goodman, AL.....	7.00
Inda Wingate, NC.....	2.00
Duane Gray, VA.....	2.00
Eli Smith, NC.....	2.00

OBITUARIES

SISTER ALICE FOY ALLEN

Sister Alice Foy Allen, beloved member of Stump Sound Primitive Baptist Church, died January 7, 2001 after a long illness. She was born July 14, 1915, in Onslow County, N.C.

Sister Alice was preceded in death by her husband, Elder Oliver Allen. On December 6, 1986, they both moved their Membership to Stump Sound Church. Funeral services were held by her pastor, El-

der Gene Lupton, and Elder Milton Lupton. She is survived by a daughter, Mrs. Bonnie Rang of Jacksonville, N.C., a son, Phillip Allen of Charleston, S.C., a Sister, Mrs. Louise Baugus of Morehead, N.C., a brother, Louie Foy of Veron, N.C., several grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Sister Alice loved the doctrine of predestination of all things by God, and that salvation is by grace and grace alone. She was truly a helpmate to her husband as he served the churches Wherever he was called to go many, many years. She was Faithful to attend church meetings as long as she was able.

Written by request of Stump Sound Church.

Elder Gene Lupton, Moderator
Sister Evelyn Pratt, Clerk

SISTER VIOLET E. BIRD

We bow in humble submission to the Father who saw fit to call from our midst our beloved sister and friend Violet E. Bird. Sister Violet was born February 12, 1916 and was taken from this low ground of sin and sorrow March 11, 2001 making her 85 years and 1 month. We feel our loss is her eternal gain. She went to sleep in Christ in her sleep. She was afflicted for many years in her natural body. She now sleeps, waiting for that great day when Christ shall come and unite her Spirit and her body that it will be changed to a Spiritual body,

liken unto Christ's glorious body. Our deepest sympathy goes out to her family and may they be comforted by God's love and mercy, and words of comfort is our prayer. She had a hope in an all wise, all powerful, and an all merciful God who has done all things well. For there is nothing that can be added or taken away from God's finished work. For what God has done, it was done forever. She had a hope not in herself but in Christ. She believed in the Election of God, Grace and mercy before the foundation of the world. She was a member of Indian Fork Primitive Baptist Church for many years. She was married to Norman N. Bird January 22, 1939 who preceded her in death. To this union was born one son, who she leaves to mourn her passing, also a daughter-in-law, two grandchildren, and a great granddaughter, one brother Elder Willard Bird and a host of family and friends. Services were conducted at Allen Funeral Home at Hurricane, W. Va., by Elder Veldon Lynn. She was laid to rest at Mt. Moriah Cemetery Hurricane, W. Va. to wait that call "*Awake all ye sleeping dust*" for dust we were and to dust we shall return. For this writer, in hope, believes in three callings of God. Sister Violet answered the first call, when she asked for a home in the church. She answered the second call, when God called her out of this world, and she will answer the third when that loud

voice calls come forth. For Job stated "*when thy call I will answer.*" **AMEN**

Written by request of Indian Fork Primitive Baptist Church.

Elder Ronald Crouch

ANDREW CRISLEY COX

Andrew Crisley Cox, 41, of Radford, died Friday, January 26, 2001 at his home. Andy was born August 6, 1959. He graduated from Floyd County High School in 1978 and was a member of the Floyd County Volunteer Fire Department Station #4 for twelve years. An avid auction follower, he spent much time collecting, restoring and trading antiques. He was especially interested in pieces from Floyd County. Dedicated to his friends and family, Andy always had time to help out a neighbor or visit a friend. He devotedly cared for his grandmother, Evie Duncan Shelton, until her death. He was preceded in death by his father, Elder Jack Willard Cox. Survivors include his mother, Colleen Duncan Cox of Radford; brothers and sisters-in-law, David and Brenda Cox of Rocky Mount, Joe and Judy Cox of Radford, Sam and Dana Cox of Christiansburg, Arthur and Carol Cox of Radford, Mike Cox of Galax; sister, Faye Cox of Roanoke; nieces and nephews, Todd Cox, Dean Shatley, Brian Cox, Jason Cox, Thomas Cox, Crisley

Cox, Mandy Atkinson, Matthew Cox, Alice Cox, Marsha Cox, and Michelle Cox, who were like the daughters he never had of his own; aunts and uncles, Martin Hollandsworth of Floyd. Nettie and Alvis Duncan of Norfolk, Dorcie and Grover Semones of Salem, Mabel and Bill Curry of Danville, French Hogan of Vinton, Mary Marshall of Christiansburg, Herbert and Ava Cox of Christiansburg, Arnold and Treva Poff of Christiansburg; special cousins, Mary and Keeko Allman of Roanoke; and special friend, Evelyn Rutrough of Floyd. Funeral services were at the Valley View Primitive Baptist Church of Riner with Elder Raymond Goad and Elder C. B. Davis, Jr. officiating. Burial followed in Sunset Cemetery, Christiansburg.

JAMES DANIEL CUNNINGHAM

My husband James Daniel Cunningham was born April 30, 1918 and passed away May 18, 2000. He was very fond of the Signs of the Times. It held great sentimental value as well as being a blessing to read each month. J.D.'s grandfather received the paper and then his father (Dan Cunningham) also received the paper until his death in 1973. It was then that J.D. started to receive and did so until his death and now I receive it each month. So, you see, "The Signs of the Times"

has been passed through 3 generations in our family and we look forward to future issues.

May God richly bless each of you.

In his love,
Opelene Cunningham

PROVERBS 8:10-11.

Receive my instruction, and not silver; and knowledge rather than choice gold.

For wisdom is better than rubies; and all the things that may be desired are not to be compared to it.

SISTER THELMA FOY

Sister Thelma Allen Foy, beloved member of Stump Sound Primitive Baptist Church passed away August 25, 2000.

Sister Foy moved her membership to Stump Sound March 27, 1987. She was a firm believer of the doctrine of predestination of all things by a Sovereign God, and that salvation is by grace, and grace alone.

She was the mother of Sister Sarah Jane Foster, and she was the sister of the late Elder Oliver Allen.

Written by request of Stump Sound Church in conference September 23, 2000.

Elder Gene Lupton, Moderator
Sister Evelyn Pratt, Clerk

FLORENCE DUDLEY MAXEY

Another one of our dearly beloved Sisters in Christ at Roanoke Primitive Baptist Church was called from our midst on March 9, 2001 to forever rest in love and peace with her Heavenly Father. She was born August 23, 1911 and was the last survivor of 13 children of the late Brother Davis and Sister Milia Dudley. She was pre-deceased by her husband, Brother Roy P. Maxey of Roanoke, Va. They were married October 20, 1927, and he passed away March 25, 1972.

She is survived by one daughter and son-in-law, Elnora M. and Marion P. Paitsel, Vinton, Va.; one granddaughter and husband, Melissa P. and Thomas Vaughan, Richmond, Va.; two great grandsons, Bobby and David Vaughan, Richmond, Va.; one sister-in-law, Mrs. Rachel Dudley, Rocky Mount, Va. and many nieces and nephews whom she loved dearly.

The funeral service was conducted at Lotz Roanoke Chapel 10:00 a.m. on Monday March 12, 2001 by her pastor, Elder Leonard J. Brammer with interment in Mountain View Cemetery, Vinton, Va. with so many beautiful flowers as a blanket. She joined Roanoke Church April 1947 and was baptized by the late Elder Cecil E. Turner.

She was such a special member who walked softly before the Lord and her brethren and sisters these

many years. Although she will be missed so much by her family and her church, we feel she is resting now in the arms of her Heavenly Father, waiting for that great day when she and brother Roy will be brought forth where *“Congregations never break up and Sabbaths never end.”*

She will always be remembered and loved for her humble walk and care of all that knew her - I personally have lost such a great friend, one that over 50 years was there through many joys and sorrows. Her family was so attentive through her afflictions and did all for her that human hands could do.

I've never known anyone more devoted to her church than Sister Florence in caring for the welfare and comfort of her brethren, sisters and friends. Her home was always open to entertain them and her greatest desire was to hear the scriptures discussed. She traveled many miles to visit other churches of her faith and associations for as long as she was able.

Many years ago she requested that this unworthy one would write this memorial and send to The Signs of the Times for publication.

By the Grace of God I have done the best that I could.

Written by an unworthy Sister, who loved her dearly,

Rlee B. Houchins

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES

202 Carousel Lane, Meadows of Dan, Va. 24120-4403

*In Memory of
My Mother,
Annie B. Cobb*

*One night, while I lay dreaming,
I was dreaming of a little log cabin.
While in there I heard someone call
my name,
And I looked and saw a sweet old
lady,
And it seemed I was a child again.
She put her loving arms around me.
Like she did so many times before.
And then I heard her sing "Rock
of Ages"
And "Silver Threads Among the
Gold".
And then she opened up the
family Bible,
And told me once again of Jesus.
And I knew it was the same sweet
mother,
That had kissed me so many time
before.
And I thank God for letting me
see my ancient mother once again.*

Her Son, Curtis L. Cobb

POSTMASTER

Please send address changes to:

Signs of the Times
202 Carousel Lane
Meadows of Dan, Va 24120-4403

CONTENTS

EDITORIAL	146
Elder J.B. Farmer	
CORRESPONDENCE	148
CHURCH OF OUR FAITH	150
ARTICLES	151
W.G. Chapel	
Elder Thomas Solomon	
VOICES OF THE PAST	159
Elder Silas H. Durand	
Elder Ruston	
MEETINGS	166
CONTRIBUTIONS	167
OBITUARIES	167
Fannie Mae Williams Calhoun	
Sister Erby Dalton	

 EDITORIAL

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



Elder J. B. Farmer

Here is the commandment of God given to the inspired apostle and then to the true minister of the gospel, Timothy. It was also left on record for His people from that day even down to this day. It is a great mystery how the God of heaven and earth revealed His truth to the

apostle and caused it to be received, believed and obeyed by himself and by Timothy and, we hope, ourselves. It is also a great mystery how any of us know anything of the kingdom of God. *“The things of God knoweth no man but the Spirit of God.” “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.”* Therefore, if anyone knows anything of this mystery, it must be revealed to him by the Spirit.

Now, the Spirit says, *“study”*, meaning not to be lax or presumptuous in nature, but to be diligent by the grace of God, *“to shew thyself approved unto God”*, not to show yourself approved unto men, but to show yourself, by His mercy, approved unto God, *“a workman who needeth not to be ashamed”*, not as one who works shamefully as a hireling for a wage, but one who labors honorably in the truth, by grace, desiring all to be to the glory of God and to the comfort of His people, *“rightly dividing”*, not twisting for some kind of cover for wickedness or advantage, but rather by revelation, giving the correct spiritual sense of, *“the word of truth”*, the holy inspired scriptures of truth given by God to His little ones for their instruction and comfort.

How can we know if, when preaching, we are rightly dividing the word of truth? Or, how can any-

one, when reading the scriptures with a desire for understanding be sure he is rightly dividing them? Or how can one, when hearing or reading the word being divided by another, be sure that it is being rightly divided? This is another great mystery and only God is able to make it plain. He has hidden these things from the wise and prudent and has revealed them unto babes. He has given us assurance that He has a people in this world who have been given life in Him by the Spirit and who have had His spiritual law written in their hearts and have had it put in their minds. His Spirit and His holy law is in them. They have been given the mind of Christ by which they judge all things. It is no wonder He said, *"examine yourselves whether you be in the faith"*, and *"try the spirits whether they be of God."* The children of God are made to examine everything they think, say, hear, read, and do. They are constantly standing before the judgment seat of Christ, receiving the things done in the body, whether they be good or evil.

So, in a sense, the little ones are constantly looking to God as little children, asking Him to render judgment about every matter which comes before or in them. They seek not the praise of this world but rather the approval of almighty God. They desire to know the truth even if it is against them. Job said, *"though He slay me, yet will I trust Him."* *They hear the words, "lean not to thine own un-*

derstanding, but in all thy ways acknowledge Him and He will direct thy paths". When they come to a fork in the road of life and know not which way to take, they stop and ask for guidance of the One who knows all and cannot make a mistake. Then, at His direction, they step out in faith with the assurance that God has spoken and that He will go with them and keep them in the way, even when it is contrary to nature. So is it true when the children of God divide the word of truth or hear or read it as it is being divided.

When the true ministers of God are called to rightly divide the word of truth, they are not left to the strength of the flesh to perform this. The holy apostle said, *"how to perform that which is good, I find not,"* and also, *"He that has begun a good work in you shall perform it unto the day of Jesus Christ."* So then, the ministers of God and all the children of God find themselves to be inadequate for the task. They know not how to give the correct sense of it. But God is merciful and gives them to hear a small voice saying, *"if any man lack wisdom, let him ask God who giveth all men liberally and upbraideth not."* In the very hour or moment of need, the God of all power and of compassion appears and supplies all our needs. Therefore, the rightly dividing of the word of truth is the work of God, not the work of men. If we were left to ourselves, we would immediately err and follow nature. And we do err

from time to time as our God teaches us what we are by nature. But if we be the people of God, we are not allowed to altogether follow nature but rather, we are corrected and kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. When the word of truth is rightly divided, it perfectly fits the spiritual mind and heart and renders all praise, honor and glory unto Him unto whom it is due. When it is this way, we have no doubt that it is the true doctrine of God and the true gospel of the grace of God which is given in power of the Holy Spirit.

This is written in love and in hope of eternal life.

Elder J.B. Farmer
12-4-2000

CORRESPONDENCE

April 7, 2001

Dear Elder Terry,

I notice that my renewal to the "Signs" is due.

Enclosed find check for twenty (\$20.00) dollars to cover renewal of my subscription for one year, the remaining ten (\$10.00) dollars to use to send the paper to someone else.

Elder Terry I was touched by your letter to Elder Key. Your grandfather was greatly blessed. How wonderful it is to know that the

Lord's spirit visits His people yet.
With a love for the truth.

Martha C. Lunsford

1217 Dinwiddie Avenue
Richmond, Va 23229-5829
April 11, 2001

My dear Elder Terry,

I have read your article in April Signs again and enjoyed it very much, as I did other writings. Please renew Signs another year for me. I think of many dear ones and do believe the dear Lord continues to cover my sins from those who take my hand or speak kindly to me. As I said to the little ones gathered together at Springfield Church 33 years ago, "I know what I am." Those little ones and other little ones have been kind to me all these years.

May the God be pleased to continue His blessings upon us.

With love I hope,
Reidy Pickral

April 15, 2001

Dear Elder Terry,

Please find enclosed my check in the amount of eighteen dollars for which I wish to renew my subscription for two years. I realize I'm late and the subscription will date retroactive. I apologize for my

tardiness, but do thank you for continuing to send the Signs to me. I would love you equally as well if you had stopped it, but again Thanks!

J. Carroll Williams
1229 McDuffers Road
Rocky Mount, NC 27804

4-10-01

Dear Elder Terry,

I see I'm about to let my subscription run out. I have enclosed a check for \$20.00. Please renew my subscription for 2 years and keep the \$2.00 as a gift to the "Signs". I always look forward to the "Signs", although some of the writings seems to be beyond my understanding.

3-26-01

Elder Wm. Hale Terry,

I have enclosed a check for \$25.00 for a contribution and subscription, however it can be most used. Our family has received "The Signs of the Times" for many years. My husband's grandfather received it many years ago and then his father until his death last May and now I receive it each month. It has been a blessing to us in more ways than one.

May God continue to bless each of you.

In his love,
Opelene Cunningham

The article you wrote last month was so beautiful. I have heard you speak about that experience, and I'm sure its precious to you. How sweet it is when we are blessed to know where these things come from! I have had a few experiences in my life, which has given me a precious "hope" I would not trade for anything. But if I am one of His, the least of all.

With Love I hope,
Mary Janney

CORRECTION

ST. JOHN 15:12-13.

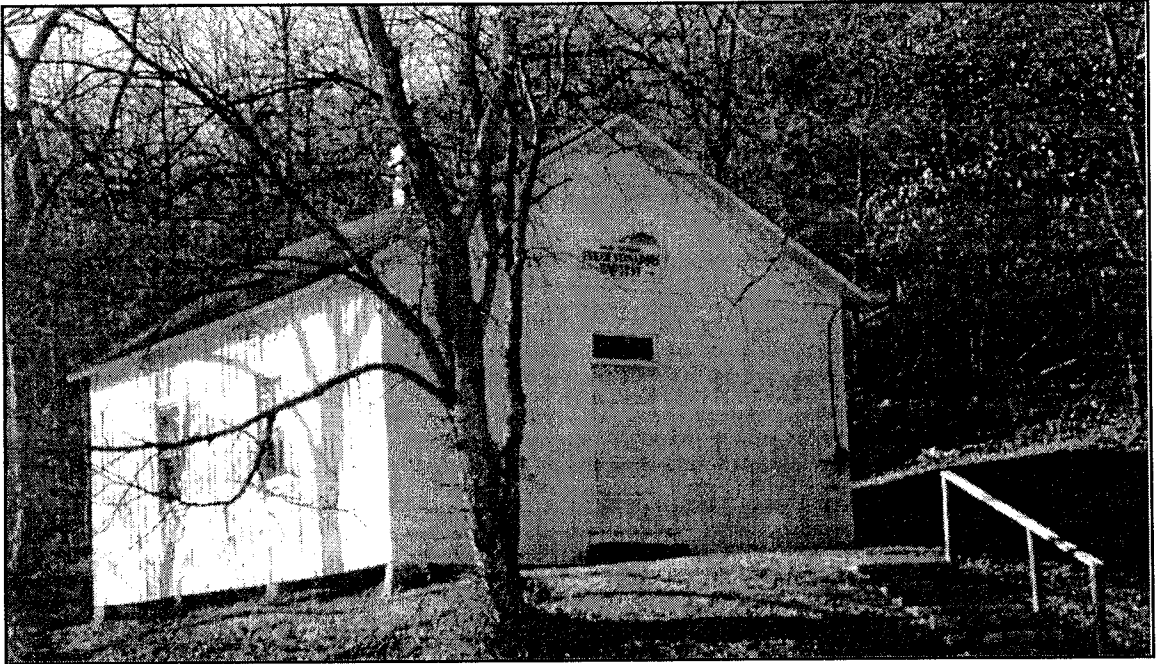
*This is my commandment,
That ye love one another, as I
have loved you.*

*Greater love hath no man
than this, that a man lay down
his life for his friends.*

"Permission of the copyright owners to publish the article, *Experience and Call to the Ministry*, (March 2001, p. 57) was inadvertently omitted. We regret this error and are pleased to make this correction."

The Editors

CHURCH OF OUR FAITH



Above church is home of Elder Farmer and Sister Sherry

THE OLD SCHOOL PREDESTINARIAN BAPTIST CHURCH

The Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church is located 2 miles east of Denton, Carter County, Kentucky on Ky. Route 773. The structure was built in 1940 by then pastor Elder Hiram Rogers. The membership moved from its original location on Lost Creek near Willard, Carter County, Kentucky. The history of the Lost Creek church is unknown. Until the new church was built, the services were held on top of the hill overlooking the present site of this church. Services are held the first Sunday of each month at 10:30 a.m. The Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church belongs to the Little Ole Vine Association of Primi-

tive Baptist Churches.

The beliefs of these Baptists are significant to Kentucky history. The primitive baptist faith has remained virtually unchanged for centuries. The Anabaptist and Waldren of Europe are a few other names of the same faith.

The United Baptists and Regular Baptists are two Baptist groups that broke away from the Primitive Baptist faith in the early 1800's. Some noted Kentucky members of Primitive Baptist churches were Thomas Lincoln and Nancy Hanks, parents of President Abraham Lincoln.

ARTICLES

**THAT IN ALL THINGS HE (CHRIST)
MIGHT HAVE THE PREEMINENCE**

Only in the New Testament do the inspired writers begin in clarity, to show that Christ is the fulfillment of the manifold prophecies laid down in the legal (Mosaic) covenant. Christ is the embodiment, or fulfillment of a new covenant (testament).

Unlike the Old Testament, with its use of types and shadows and figurative language, whereby they spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit, and though they desired to know of what they spoke or, when it would come to pass yet knew it not, see Mat. 13:17, Luk. 10:24, 1 Pet. 1:10-12; yet in the new testament it is spelled out plainly. Here they spoke of the generation of Jesus Christ; they spoke of the beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ) the Son of God: they spoke of the order of the events of the life and death of Jesus Christ and the resurrection; they spoke of how in the beginning was the Word (Christ), and the Word was with God and the Word was God, and all things were made by him; they spoke of all that Jesus began to do and teach; the apostles spoke of themselves as servants and apostles of Jesus Christ. These will all be recognized as the salutations generally set forth in nearly all of the books of the New Testament.

Each setting forth Christ as the central theme and subject of the letters.

In Hebrews 1, the apostle clearly designates his principal, and points out the singularity of Christ, the Son, through whom God speaks to his people. He hath also appointed Christ heir of all things (primarily concerning the church), and in Mat. 28:18, it is seen that, "*All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.*"

It would seem to be beyond the capacity of words to express the greatness and the importance of this person who was the son of man, and is and was God, and was and is the Saviour. Neither can the natural mind comprehend that in the fullness of time God sent forth his Son, in the likeness of sinful flesh, to redeem his people. Rom. 8:3, and Gal. 4:4,5.

The scriptures do not leave us to doubt about the purpose of the Son of God coming into this time world in the likeness of sinful flesh and being made under the law. In the words of Christ) John 6:38-40 "*...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 this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on Him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise*

him up at the last day."

Christ also came into the world to fulfill the law) and He did, to every jot and tittle. He is also the end of the law for righteousness. Mat. 5:17)18 & Rom. 10:4. The law prefigured Christ in it's many forms and ceremonies. When these prefigures were fulfilled in the finished work of Christ they went no further. This was the end of the law, when it was fulfilled.

Prophecy was also to be fulfilled by Christ while he was here in this world, and he did. *"...those things, which God before had shewed by the mouth of all the prophets, that Christ should suffer, he hath so fulfilled."* Acts 3:18. Of His death, *"He was taken from prison and from judgment: and who shall declare his generation? for he was cut off out of the land of the living: for the transgressions of my people was he stricken."* Isa. 53:8. Also, Isa. 53:10, *"Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shall make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hands."* Is not this the work of Christ in fulfilling the salvation of his people that Isaiah saw?

This, then, is the purpose of God, in Christ, in the fullness of time. The Son of man is come to save that which was lost, Mat. 18:11. And He made the captain of their sal-

vation perfect through suffering. Heb. 2:10.

In the finished work of Christ is seen the manyfold aspects of bringing many sons to glory. They are redeemed; their sins are forgiven; they are justified; they are made alive unto Christ and partakers of the divine nature, baptized with the Holy Ghost; and, in fullness, receive the things that accompany salvation.

Although the fullness of the work of Christ, as sketchily here described, is wrought in time, yet they have ever stood complete in the realm of God's eternity. God that inhabits eternity is an unchanging God, see Mal.3:6. *"I am the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty."* Rev.1:8. Thus the apostle, speaking of the everlasting priesthood of Christ, in Heb. 5:6-9, and his sonship, being made perfect through suffering, he became the author of eternal salvation.

While yet in the flesh we see as through a glass darkly, and the finished work of Christ wrought in the fullness of time. Yet, all the work of salvation, by Christ in the flesh, flows from the eternal purpose of the three-in-one God in election; an election that was in eternity (before the foundation of the world); a choosing, by God, based only on His good pleasure. See II Tim. 1:9, 1 Pet. 1:2, Rom. 9:11, Eph. 1:4, Rev. 4:11, ect.

How can mere words express, or compare the meaning of "time", that has a beginning and ending, with eternity that has neither beginning or ending; or, the Son of God, who wrought his work in time, is also God, who in Rev. 1:8, says, "*I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending...*"; the One with whom all time and eternity is an ever present "now". Such, comparison is impossible to the natural mind. Yet, by inspiration, the apostle Paul brings the two together in II Tim. 1:9,10. What God has given his people, in Christ Jesus, before the world began (vs. 9) he has now plainly shown (manifest) by the appearing and work (abolishing death) of our Saviour Jesus Christ, and has brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.

Also, in Eph. 1:4-10 it is pointed out that the purposes of God, before the foundation of the world, are wrought in Christ in time. Specifically, beginning at vs. 9, (God) "*Having made known to us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself: That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him.*"

Considering the greatness of this person, the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and what is accomplished in him, is it any wonder that the "apostle points out in Eph.

1:22,23, concerning Christ, that God "*...hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, Which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all*". Yes, he is all to the church, his bride. She looks to none other for it is in him, her husband, her head, that she lives and moves and has her being.

Preceding the words of Col. 1:18 "*...that in all things he might have the preeminence.*", which are used at the beginning of this writing, the apostle again expresses the greatness of the Lord Jesus Christ. Starting at vs. 16, "*...by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist. And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the first born from the dead; ...*"

It might be said that Christ is to have preeminence concerning my law and the prophets. But these were fulfilled by the finished work of Christ and thus have no eminence at all. Once fulfilled they are laid aside and have no use at all except that we through reading what is written, through patience and the comfort of the scriptures might have hope. See Rom. 15:4. There is no comfort or hope in the law or prophets.

Does not the preeminence of Christ relate to the position he has to?

The church, and his work wrought in time, when compared to the position of the Father and the Holy Spirit? Of course, it in no way takes away from the majesty and glory of the Father, nor the power and divinity of the Holy Spirit. But it is the relationship that should be understood as the relationship of a father and son where the father gives the son the preeminence. No violence is done to the full divine essence of each in the single body of the Trinity; Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

There are numerous scriptures that focus on this relationship of Christ to the church, and how the church should view him, as compared to the Father and the Holy Spirit. Some of them are mentioned here:

Heb. 1:2,3, God, in these last days has spoken to us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; Who being the brightness of his glory, and the expressed image of his persons and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high: The Son is given the preeminence.

Phil. 2:9. Therefore God also hath highly exalted him (Christ), and given him a name which is above every name. Christ is given preeminence.

Mat. 28:17. Jesus words are that *"All power is given unto me in heaven and earth."* In this Christ has the preeminence.

John 14:8. To the answer of Philip when ask to *"show us the Father and it sufficeth us."* Jesus replied, in part, *"he that hath seen me hath seen the Father"*. He has seen the Father in him who has the preeminence. This is a relationship that they did not understand at that time, but O which the church should, in this day, hold precious.

Col. 1:8,9. The apostle warns the church to beware of false doctrine, which he points to in the world, and which is not after Christ. *"For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily."* Although the Godhead is present in it's fulness, it is present in the person of Christ, demonstrating that it is he who has the preeminence.

John 16:13,14. *"Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak; and he will shew you all things to come. He shall glorify me; for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you."* In the words of Christ the Spirit shall not speak of himself. Because Christ has the preeminence the Spirit will show the bride (church) the things of the bridegroom and shall glorify him.

1 Cor. 2:2. *"For I determined not to know anything among*

you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified." This should not be understood to be to the exclusion of the Father or the Holy Spirit. But the theme of the church should be centered on the finished work of Christ, her husband. Though the prayers of the saints are to the Father, from whom flows every good and perfect gift, they are raised in the name of Christ and for his sake, who has the preeminence.

"For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell;" Col. 1:19.

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Memphis, TN.

MY CALLING TO PREACH GOD'S WORD

When I was a young child, Mom would take me to the Primitive Baptist Church at Ridgeway, Va. My Granny was a member there. She would tell me some of her experiences in the Lord from time to time. As a young child I was very interested in the Lord. So, I would listen to my Granny tell of the love she had in the Lord. One day she told me when I was between 9 and 10 years old, that Son you will have to stand before God's people and preach to them about Jesus. I loved my Granny so very much. For many years I kept this in my Heart never telling anyone.

As I became a young Man and got my first car when I was Sixteen years old. Each Sunday I would take my Mother, Sister Meeks, and Sister Thacker to Church each Sunday, because, they had no way to get there. From Sixteen to the time I turned Seventeen years old, I dated several Girls never finding one that would go to Church with me on Sunday. So, I quit going with each one of them, because, they would not go to Church with me. Then the Lord blessed me to meet Mary Louise Manuel at Fuzzy's Barbecue in Madison, N.C. After going to her home and talking to her Dad and Mom we started dating in 1956. The first week we dated I told her that on Sunday I wanted her to go with me to meet my Mother. And, also to go with me and my mother to Church, also, I told her there would be two more going with us. After I told Louise this she said that was what she always wanted to do. She said she hoped that she would meet a guy that would take her to Church each Sunday.

So, after dating Louise from January 1956 to September 1957 we were married on Sept. 7th. We kept going to Church together each Sunday. I thought I would join the Church first, but Louise joined the Church first. In 1960 Louise joined the Primitive Baptist Church in Eden N.C. In 1962 I joined the same Church, Very soon after I joined the Church they ordained me as a Deacon in 1967. Next they appointed me as Church Clerk over the Associa-

tion. Next they appointed me as Trustee over the Church. Each time the different things were asked of me to do for the Church I felt so unworthy in all of these things. Still in the back of my mind I thought many times about what my Granny had told me as a young boy, about, standing before the Church. So, I served the Church at each calling as the Lord led Me. Thinking surely this is the Lord's Will, for my life, so, I went leaning on the Everlasting Arms of Jesus, Praying that his will be done in my life.

After going to church with my wife and mother for many years a sickness came over me, that no Doctors could explain or heal me of. I felt that the Lord was calling me to Preach his word. So, I went on in this condition many years. As the years went by, I had many dreams and visions about my Lord. From time to time he would show me my life from a young age till that present time in my life. I was having the dreams and visions, one night I was shown in a dream or vision the devil. The devil as I saw him in the dream or vision picked me up and carried me into a large and dark hole in a Mountain and as he carried me in his arms holding me very tight to the bottom of the hole in the Mountain. He carried me up to a very large pit of fire and as he came up to the pit to cast me in the fire his arms fell down causing him to drop me just before casting me into Hell's Lake of Fire. As my feet hit the ground I started to run, using the light from the fire,

and as I ran from him I could feel him almost touching my back, as if he had hold of me to take me back to the fire to cast me in. Then the most beautiful door opened up in the mountain with a very bright light shining in my path for me to run in. As I was going to the light running, a double barrel Shotgun was all at once in my hand. I turned and pointed it in his face and pulled both Triggers at the same time, the shots never made a mark on him. This was showing me that we can do nothing of our self. After shooting I kept running into the light, and as I got to the top of the path in the Mountain I came to the door that had opened to me. As I went through the door, the door closed behind me shutting old Satan away from me. After this I went many months in Peace.

Then this sickness I told you about, that had come on me, began to get worse. One day at work as we were making a line change at the Bassett Walker Sewing factory .Me being the Boss over the factory, I was not suppose to help with the moving of the sewing machines, but, to oversee the move. As I was watching the men work a *voice* spoke to me and said go help the men. The first machine I plugged into the 240 volts was wired wrong. The ground was wired to the hot 240 volt side. As I plugged the wire into the transporter with my hand on the Sewing machine and the plug wire in the transporter with my hand on it, 240 volts started running through my body. As the charge of the 240 volts

was running through my body. The Lord began to show me my life from a lad until that day. As he showed me my life I tried to go back and fix everything right, but as I tried to make everything ok I only made things worse. The Lord was showing me that I could do nothing of my own but sin. As the volts were flowing through my body, the pain was very bad and I could hardly stand it. Next my eyes rolled back in my head and my heart stopped. Then I saw myself in a casket in the Funeral Home. Next I saw the people as they come by the casket to view me and I saw all of the Flowers. The next day as my funeral was being preached I saw the people crying and after church service at the grave side as the casket was in the steel vault Louise asked if they would open the casket one more time before lowering it in the ground. She asked the people to sing my favorite song Amazing Grace, and, as they started to sing the Lord showed me a Pulpit in a Church with me standing in it Preaching Jesus. The Lord moved me from out of the casket through the air and in a moment I was standing in front of a Pulpit Preaching Jesus to the Brothers and Sisters in the Lord. A voice spoke to me and said you can not die yet, because, I am not through with you yet. He said feed my Sheep and my Lambs. The next thing I Knew I was in the Hospital at Martinsville Va., where I stayed many days. Later I was told that a Brother who is now a Elder in a Primitive Baptist Church placed a

kick in my chest which knocked me free from the 240 volts on to the floor. The Doctor said he believed the kick that the Brother gave me, started my heart back to beating. From this shock I had burned hands and holes burned below my knee, my feet were split open. My arms and chest were blue and black with bruises. The doctor told me Son you will not have your memory any more because of the shock. The Doctor was wrong, because I have a better memory than before the shock. When the Lord is on your side nothing can go wrong. He had the Brother there to loose me from the 240 volts. He was showing me what he had fixed in my life to do to be Ordained as a Preacher in the Primitive Baptist Church. After getting out of the Hospital it was 3 months before I could walk across the factory at work. After returning to work with pain after the Lord showed me these things. I never told anyone about these things not even my wife. After this I went on trying to live with this being kept in my heart. I had said in my heart many times to myself I cannot do this, so I thought in my heart if I never tell anyone, in time it will go away. As time went on, the words of my Granny would come to my mind. Son, you will have to stand for the Lord and preach his word. After a long period of time, the thing began to burn in my heart each and every day.

Until one morning, on a Saturday, that Elder Goad and I were going Deer Hunting on his farm. As we

left his home going down to the old farmhouse to go hunting for Deer. A voice spoke to me and said, It is time to tell some one and Elder Goad is the one to tell all things that has happened to me in the Lord. After talking for a few hours to Elder Goad telling all. I told him, tell no one of these things. As I left his home I felt much better. Finally relieved some what. To my surprise he called Elder Tench and told him of my experience in the Lord. The next meeting Elder Tench asked me to speak before the Church and being afraid before the Lord, I did. They gave me liberty to speak at the Churches we were in correspondence with. After many months passed by the Church called for me to be ordained as an Elder in the Primitive Baptists in 1985. After being ordained as an Elder, I visited many of our Churches. As I visited these Churches one by one, meeting the Brethren, one of these Churches stood out, because, it was the very same Church with the Pulpit I had seen in my vision. I now Pastor this Church which I saw in my vision. Reedcreek Primitive Baptist Church at Collinsville, VA.

This that my Granny saw when I was between 9 and 10 years old was to be in the Lord. I have been serving Reedcreek and Strawberry Primitive Baptist Church for 16 years. From this that my Granny saw all those years ago, I was blessed to baptize her daughter, which is my Mother. This being the 2001-year, this was written on 3-7-01. This is

my experience in the Lord. I have so much to be thankful for, because, the Lord gave me a wonderful Wife and Son.

The things I saw in the death experience while I was going through the 240 volt shock. I have never been able to tell anyone yet of all things I saw in the Lord.

My Experience in the Lord
Elder Thomas Solomon
Wrote in Torreon Mexico 3-7-01

PSALM 24: 1-7.

The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein.

For he hath founded it upon the seas, and established it upon the floods.

Who shall ascend into the hill of the Lord? or who shall stand in his holy place?

He that hath clean hands, and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn deceitfully.

He shall receive the blessing from the Lord, and righteousness from the God of his salvation.

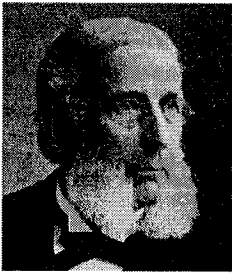
This is the generation of them that seek him, that seek thy face, O Jacob. Selah.

Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in.

VOICES OF THE PAST

**THE LABORING AND
HEAVY LADEN**

"Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." - Matt. xi. 28.



Elder Silas H. Durand

The work on hand must be done; much depends upon its accomplishment. I fully realize the importance of it, but I also am sure of my ability to do and complete the work by the given time, therefore I am not troubled or burdened by it, but am rather animated and pleased as I enter upon the labor enjoying the work itself, and the confident assurance of its fulfillment when required. I am laboring, but am not heavy laden. To those who are well, and strong, and energetic, work is pleasant. It is good to have both the mind and body actively engaged, and a man of this character will of choice work hard, and to the limit of his strength, even though it is not required that he should do so. And though he may find it necessary to urge himself forward, he is not heavy laden. He is able to use his utmost strength, and to do all that is required each day, and so to keep even with the work as it is called for, and is still not heavy laden.

But should this man lose the use of some member of his body, leaving him able to do only half a day's work in a day, while a full day's work is still absolutely necessary and required, he will soon find himself crushed down under a burden of unfinished work. Struggle as he will, and as he must, the burden still increases, until he is rendered utterly helpless.

In the religious world all men seem to be engaged in the service of some God, with the feeling that they must do something to please him in order that they may be happy after death. It seems to be the common sentiment of natural men that they must do some work in order to obtain salvation. If grace is thought necessary to that work, the thought of the natural mind is that grace is to show us what to do and how to do it. But something must be done by the man in order to his salvation; that is the universal belief of all men. It seems also to be unquestioned that the man is able to do that something, whatever it may be. And when one has done that work, and has thus obtained that salvation in his own estimation, he is very likely to be so well assured of his ability that he believes he can be the means of saving others. In the Lord's own good time he will teach his people the truth concerning their salvation, and it will be in such a way that they can say of the dear Savior, He teacheth as never man taught. It is written in the Psalms, *"Blessed is the man whom thou chooseth,*

and causeth to approach unto thee.”-Psalms Ixv. 4. This is where the Lord begins in the salvation of his people. He chooses them, but this choice was before the foundation of the world, and all spiritual blessings were given them in Christ according to that eternal choice. Now he calls them, and causes them to approach unto him. (Eph. i. 4.)

It is this choice, and the manner of it, and the experience of it, and all the incidents attending it, that I love to dwell upon. It is so wonderful, so deep, so great, and yet so simple, and so like the crying and the laughing and the prattle of a little babe. Until there is a new, spiritual birth there are no such experiences and exercises of mind, for there is no life until then. Until there is divine life there is no hungering and thirsting after righteousness. Until then there is no preparation in their hearts for the sweet call of the dear Savior, who says, *“Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.”* These chosen ones are the babes unto whom the Lord reveals these things of the gospel, and unto whom the Son reveals the Father. When one is quickened by divine life then he begins to work in earnest, in order to gain salvation. Soon he finds himself failing here and there in his work. He cannot find anything perfect in whatever he does. His best works do not satisfy his conscience, they get poorer and more faulty every day. His prayers do not suit him; they seem only a chattering noise.

This poor soul seems to himself to be getting farther away from the Lord every day. Instead of that, however, he is getting farther away from himself, farther from any hope in himself, and nearer to the Lord. This is the way that the Lord causes his chosen to approach unto him. They work until they are at the end of the earth before they see the salvation of God. (Isaiah lii. 10.) Now they labor and are heavy laden. Not one thing have they been able to do to lighten the burden of their sins, or to discover any way in which they can be saved from them. And now Jesus calls them, and in that call describes them: *“laboring and heavy laden.”* They cannot stop working any more than a man in the waves can stop struggling. They hear no voice with the natural ear, they see no man, but in the Savior’s own good time they are at rest. They may see their sins yet, but the power has gone from them. They are at peace, yet cannot tell why. They cannot understand it, for the peace of God *“passeth all understanding.”* The light of the sun gets to us before we can see the sun. *“God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.”* It may be some time before we know that Jesus has given us that sweet command, that holy call; long before we know that he has called us to himself. We do not know it because some man or angel

has told us. We know it because we have felt the power of that rest, the power of that sweet, spiritual voice. He himself has told us the holy secret, and we have felt the power of that wonderful voice in our souls, saying, "*It is I.*" And when another in preaching or speaking proclaims the name and power of Jesus, we understand and know that this is Jesus because we have felt his power. The preacher tells us our own experience; he is our witness. Jesus did not say, "*If you will come unto me I will give you rest.*" He who commanded the light to shine out of darkness does not use that form of speech; he does not invite; he speaks and it is done, he commands and it stands fast. We were very tired, worn out with labor, when he called us. We did not, perhaps, at the time think it was Jesus, but the communication was with power. There was no resisting power in our hearts to stand against the power of Jesus' words, "*Come unto me.*" Before we knew he had called, we were there, at his feet, in the bosom of his love, in the palace of the great King. All the infinite blessings of the Father were ours, though we knew it not, when the Son thus revealed the Father unto us, and the Holy Spirit took of the things of Jesus and showed them unto us. Oh, how much was shown to us in that wonderful time! How could a babe understand such great and marvelous things? Some of us have been hearing most wonderful things out of that first revelation of Jesus ever since that time. It

is the power of that life, which is in the babe as well as in the greatest prophet.

No, not an invitation, that would not be consistent with the infinite character and holy prerogatives of Jesus, our Savior and King. In our experience we do not find anything which the dear Savior says to us that we feel we are to take into our minds, and look over, as an invitation, and decide whether we will accept it or not. These wonderful things are taught us in our souls; through them we grow up into Jesus. The mystery is, "*Christ in you, the hope of glory.*" That mystery was hid from past ages, as it is now revealed unto his people. They grow from within, like the palm tree.

And still our thoughts go on, over and over again, and always finding something new. Jesus has told of the revelation of these precious things to babes, while they are hid from worldly wisdom and no reason for it except that it seemed good in the sight of the Father, and of the revelation of the Father by the Son to whomsoever he will. And now we have been considering the most wonderful way in which this revelation is made. For this is that sweet and holy revelation of the Father, when the dear Savior said, "*Come unto me,*" to all that were laboring and heavy laden. We took no journey, we did not start out east or west, we did not reach upward toward heaven or go searching into the depths, as we had done many times before, but right by us, in our

hearts, there was the dear Savior, and the Father was there. We felt his presence, yet not in the natural way of thinking. His love was in our souls. The power of the Father was there, and yet we were not afraid, but could throw ourselves at his feet and leave our all with him. How little we knew then, and yet as we look over the sacred ground after more than fifty years, how much we knew. How soon the Bible began to talk to us.

We can understand in a measure the spiritual meaning and power of the things we felt at that time, and how it was that we came to Jesus from the ends of the earth. The words, though familiar to me, appeared wonderfully new: *"Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness."* The thought in my mind was, *"Perhaps I am one of those for whom Jesus died."* It had the force of certainty, and was as though the sun rose at midnight, and for the first time in my life I could feel and know true gladness. More than fifty years have passed since then, but I feel something of that power and gladness in those wonderful words today, though greatly tempered by the sorrows and tribulations I have come through.

Now as I look back I can at times see evidences that Jesus at that time said to my soul, *"Come unto me,"* *"and I will give you rest,"* so that I felt the power of them, though they were not in my mind just at that time. I had labored up to the last moment, trying to find out

what I could do to obtain salvation, and had given up the hope that I could do anything. Then, unexpectedly, I was at rest and full of gladness, with the words I have mentioned on my mind, and their power in my heart. It was some days before the words of my text, *"Come unto me,"* &c., were given to me, but when they were brought to my mind, and were with me nearly all of one night, I felt that I knew them. The sunshine must be upon us before we can know there is a sun. In his light only can we see light. So by the words of the dear Savior, the Sun of Righteousness, alone can we know him, and be assured that he has risen upon us. Who would take a candle, or any earthly light, by which to see the sun and show it to others? We delight in the sweet words of the psalmist: *"For with thee is the fountain of life: in thy light shall we see light."*-*Psalms xxxvi. 9.*

What different kinds of burdens we have borne in our journey so far; what various kinds of trouble and affliction we have been brought through. How many times we have said, *"This sorrow is too heavy to be borne, I must certainly fail."* But whenever any of the Lord's dear children have come to the end of the earth, laboring and heavy laden, they shall each and all of them find the Lord's promise equal to the occasion and it will never fail them. He said, *"Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden."* He said it once

for all, and it will not fail to reach everyone of them just at the right time. He did not say you that are *"weary."* Better than that, a weary man may lie down and rest. But these are all laboring, hard at work; no time to rest even for a moment; always laboring, and still heavy laden; burdened in body and mind and heart, and borne down with grief and sorrow and tribulation. To these afflicted ones, to all of them, without one exception, the dear Savior says, *"Come."* He who said, *"Let there be light,"* says, *"Come."* He who commanded the light to shine out of darkness has shined in the heart of every laboring and heavy laden one, saying, *"Come."* He in whose hand is the king's heart, to turn whithersoever he will, as the rivers of water, has said, and still always says: *"Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."*

Elder Silas H. Durand
MARCH, 1915.

ECCLESIASTES X. 19

"A feast is made for laughter, and wine maketh merry: but money answereth all things."

It has been requested that we write upon the above Scripture, particularly the latter part, which we will do with whatever light the Lord may grant unto us. We shall not dwell upon worldly feasting, nor the laughter of fools, which is compared to the crackling of thorns un-

der a pot. Neither is it our intention to dwell upon natural wine, nor money, the love of which is the root of all evil. Rather we shall try to present what is our understanding of the above text. Wherever God, the Holy Ghost, begins a work of grace in the heart of man there will be trouble and distress, a state very different from what today is called getting religion, which when one has, he feels happy, and often openly declares that he is all right with God. Such religion at best is a lie and is not of God. The work of the Spirit is to convince of sin, therefore there is sure to be a burden of sin, more or less, and a mourning over sin. Wherever there is a religion that began without a burden of sin, distress and sorrow, it is not the work of the Spirit, but proceeds from the flesh. To the one who is in soul-trouble it will seem as though God has found him out and has set a mark upon him. So full and complete will the teaching of the Spirit be, that the soul will confess through dire necessity that, *"Salvation is of the Lord."* Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, is the only one who can do them good, and the Spirit takes of the Word and they hear it. *"Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."* Thus such an one is encouraged through the Holy Spirit taking the word of his grace, and they are made to look to the Lord and hope in him. This world will be a wilderness of woe from which the redeemed of the Lord would flee. By the Spirit's guid-

ance they seek a city that hath foundations, which is Zion, the city of God, the mountain of his holiness.

It will be the discontented, the distressed and those who are in debt that the Spirit will lead, for he has said, *"They shall come with weeping, and with supplications will I lead them."* There the glorious Lord will turn their mourning into joy and will comfort them and make them rejoice. This comfort comes by the Spirit directing their hearts into love of God the Father, who, while they were yet sinners sent his beloved Son into the world to save sinners. He also shows them that though they fear hell and damnation God in his love has freely given them heaven and salvation. Therefore it is written- *"And in this mountain shall the Lord of hosts make unto all people [Jew and Gentile] a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined."* Then their mouth is filled with laughter and their tongue with singing. Thus the ransomed of the Lord are set in safety from him that puffeth at them. While feasting on God's love and mercy they can laugh the enemy of their souls to scorn and despise him, and in the confidence of faith they can laugh also at the folly of their doubts and fears. *"A feast is made for laughter, and wine maketh merry."* This is a feast of fat things, a feast of wine. The word of God which holy men of old wrote

as they were moved by the Holy Ghost was like water clear as crystal, very pure, but by the presence and power of Jesus this water is made wine to his people. Their doubts and fears subside and they are completely blessed. When the brethren of old feasted with Joseph they were merry with him, and how can saints today help but make merry when they taste of the love of their heavenly Joseph, which, like the blood of the ripened grape, is sweet to their taste. It maketh glad the heart of man. Thus those who hunger and thirst after righteousness are filled and they forget their poverty; but it has pleased the Lord in his divine plan that it will not be always a feast, laughter, wine and making merry. It would not do always to be feasting on heavenly bounties and enjoying the felt presence of the Savior, there must be a walking by faith and not by sight.

"Money answereth all things." After feasting if there is no money one would lapse back into the condition of poverty in which he was prior to the feast; in fact, money is necessary for feasting. Worldly men and women could do but little feasting and drinking of wine without money, it answereth all things. Just as there is a currency in all lands, so in the kingdom of heaven faith can truly be called the money of the kingdom; with that in hand the thing desired is obtained. There could have been no feasting on heavenly bounties or drinking of

wine from the true Vine without faith; this precious money is absolutely necessary, and without it, it is imposible to please God. Every man who went into the vineyard received his penny a day. By this currency the Elders obtained a good report. It enabled them to embrace the promises, walk in the fiery furnace, stop the mouths of lions, open prison gates, subdue kingdoms and receive their dead again to life. It *"answereth all things."* Now, just as in all lands there is the true coin and counterfeit, so there is true faith and faith (so-called) that is counterfeit. True faith must come from the heavenly mint, and is the gift of God. Each of the redeemed family receives from their heavenly Father just as much (and no more) as he has willed they shall have. Each in the vineyard received at the end of the day a penny, and whatever the day may have been they each will receive the amount the Master determines. If it be a day of sorrow, or of darkness, or sin-sickness and self-loathing, yet at the end faith is increased by the Master's good will. For unto him that hath shall be given. Just as money is needed for necessities of life, so where faith is, the trial will not harden the one under it, but soften and humble him, causing him to look to the Hand from whence it comes, and in all prayer, praise, sorrow (godly sorrow), repentance, believing, receiving, glorying and resting, faith, the currency of heaven, must be in con-

stant use. It is the possession of this money that keeps every heir of heaven from legal bondage and death. Of Abraham it is written that being not weak in the faith he considered not his body now dead, neither the deadness of Sarah's womb; he staggered not at the promise through unbelief, but was strong in faith, giving glory to God, being persuaded that what he had promised he was able to perform. Thus faith answers all things. It is the only currency that will *"buy the truth, and sell it not; also wisdom, instruction, and understanding."* Sin-sick, laboring souls need food and healing. Jesus said, "Believe ye that I am able to do this?" The answer was, *"Yea, Lord."* He replied, "According to your faith be it unto you." They need the bread of life; faith procures it. When the brethren go to our spiritual Joseph for bread because the famine is sore in the land, they go with money in their hands, which is returned in their sacks' mouths, from which we see that faith is increased in the using thereof. Now the money of any country is known by the image and superscription it bears. Just as the Roman coin handed to Jesus bore the image and superscription of Caesar, so this heavenly money bears the image of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the embodiment of love. Its superscription is *"The faith of God's elect."* It will not pass in the devil's domains. It will meet with persecution and rough usage there, but in the

kingdom of God it will answer all things.

G.R.

(The above was an editorial by Elder Ruston published August 1, 1924. We republish it because we enjoyed reading it again, and because he was not disposed to write at this time. - J. D. W.)

Romans 8:14-20.

For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.

For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father.

The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God :

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.

For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us.

For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God.

For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope,

MEETINGS

GLENWOOD CHURCH

Glenwood Church, Princeton, WV, announces a Saturday meeting, July 28, 2001, starting at 10:00. Those coming by way of I-77 take exit 9. Turn left onto 460W. Go 5 miles, turn right onto 19N, then immediately left on Glenwood Park Road (Old Bluefield Road), 1 1/2 miles to the church on the left. Those coming by way of 460, follow the same directions from the I- 77/ 460 intersection.

Sister Marilyn Shaw, Clerk

PIGG RIVER ASSOCIATION

Directions to the Pigg River Association to be held; the Lord willing; the first Sunday in August, Friday and Saturday before. August 3, 4, and 5. The meeting will be held on the grounds of Chestnut Church in Franklin County Virginia.

Those coming from North 220, turn left on 724 (Goose Dam Road) go 2 1/2 miles to church. From the south on 220- you go approx. 13 miles past Bassett Forks - turn right on No. 724 (Goose Dam Road) 2 1/2 miles to church.

We welcome and invite all ministers of our faith and order; our brethren and friends to be with us.

Jamie E. Cooper, Clerk

STAUNTON RIVER ASSOCIATION

The 2001 Staunton River Association will convene the Lord willing, at Weatherford Church meeting house. The host church is Canaan Primitive Baptist Church for this our one hundred sixtieth session. Services will begin at 10:00 a.m. Saturday July 7th and on Sunday July 8th.

Weatherford Church is located about five miles from Gretna, VA. in Pittsylvania County at the intersection of highways 760 and 763.

We invite visitors and correspondents to attend this meeting with us.

Burnell B. Williams, Asso. Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR APRIL 2001

Grace E. Manly, AL	2.00
Ocie Hollandsworth, VA	7.00
Priddy Shaw, VA	2.00
Opelene Cunningham, AL	7.00
J. J. Merrill, AL	7.00
Ora Nichols, VA	2.00
Ted McDaniel, VA	32.00
A.U. Hocutt, GA	2.00
John Swilley, AR	7.00
Otis Freeman, AL	5.00
H. B. Rhoades, TX	2.00
G. R Slate, VA	2.00
Mary Poff, VA	2.00
Eld. Clarence Stone, VA	2.00
Minnie Ledlow, AL	4.00
Martha Lunsford, VA	10.00
Billie Dunn, LA	7.00
Mary Janney, Va.	2.00
Reidy Pickral, VA	25.00
Victor Laws, MD	7.00

OBITUARIES

FANNIE MAE WILLIAMS CALHOUN

Fannie Mae Williams Calhoun, born August 17, 1911 and died January 15, 2001 at the age of 89, was a loving member of Pleasant Hill Primitive Baptist Church, Edgecombe County, North Carolina.

She was gentle, kind, of a loving nature and a faithful member to her church as long as she was able to attend. Her health deteriorated and she spent her last six years in a nursing home.

Having not married at an early age, she later in life married Brother Walter Calhoun who was a respected deacon of her church. She enjoyed a short marriage to him, but during that time she enjoyed the fulfillment of entertaining the brethren in their home. It was always a joy to be there.

Extending a helping hand seemed to be her life. Living her early life a single individual, and becoming a widow not many years after her marriage, she was always in demand to care for someone who was aged or ill. She gained many acquaintances and made many friends through her caring disposition as she attended the infirmed.

She was reared in a foster home by her Aunt and Uncle, Sister Nora Lancaster and Mr. Thad Lancaster, and knew nothing but kindness as she grew up.

All of her biological brothers and sisters preceded her in death but she is survived by one with whom she was reared and knew her only as a sister, Sister Lessie Lancaster. In addition to that sister she had extended family and friends who faithfully and kindly took care of her needs as she spent her last days afflicted.

Her funeral was conducted by Elder Michael Neikirk (nephew in-law) who was blessed to paint a beautiful picture of her life while here on earth. She was laid to rest in Pineview Cemetery, Rocky Mount, N.C.

The church at Pleasant Hill mourns her departure with selfishness, feeling a good hope that she has been called home by the Master where no more pain or frustrations are known.

Written at the request of Pleasant Hill Primitive Baptist Church in conference on February 24, 2001 by one who loved and respected her as a true "Old Baptist"

J. Carroll Williams

ROMANS 8:21-22.

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.

SISTER ERBY DALTON

We're traveling home one by one across death's river our friends are gone. Our friend and dear sister, Erby Dalton has crossed over death's river. She was called home March 5, 2001. She had been afflicted with arthritis for a long time and was bedridden over a year. We feel to be thankful that God released her from these earthly sorrows, toils and pain. Our pastor said at her funeral and we certainly agree, that she was meek and as humble as a child. Jesus said "*Except you become as little children, you shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.*" Sister Dalton joined Malmaison Primitive Baptist Church Nov. 1960, and was a faithful member. Attending her meetings as long as her health permitted. Survivors include 1 daughter, Joyce Compton, 2 sisters, 2 grandchildren, 4 great-grandchildren and 1 great-great-grandchild.

Her pastor, Elder Julian Williams conducted the funeral at the Dalton Family Cemetery, in Keeling, Va. Where she was laid to rest to await the glorious resurrection of the saints of God. May we be given to say "*Thou will be done.*"

Humbly submitted,
Peggy Wells

PSALMS 26:7-9.

Save thy people, and bless thine inheritance: feed them also, and lift them up for ever.

Signs of the Times

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES

202 Carousel Lane, Meadows of Dan, Va. 24120-4403

SONG

*Wait, O my soul, thy Maker's will;
Tumultuous passions, all be still!
Nor let a murmuring thought arise;
His ways are just, his counsels wise.*

*He in the thickest darkness dwells,
Performs his work, the cause con-
ceals;*

*But, though his methods are un-
known,
Judgment and truth support his
throne.*

*In heaven, and earth, and air, and
seas*

*He executes his firm decrees;
And by his saints it stands confest,
That what he does is ever best.*

*Wait then, my soul, submissive wait,
Prostrate before his awful seat'
And, midst the terrors of his rod,
Trust in a wise and gracious God.*

POSTMASTER

Please send address changes to:

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202 Carousel Lane
Meadows of Dan, Va 24120-4403

CONTENTS

EDITORIAL	170
Elder R.H. Campbell	
CORRESPONDENCE	176
VOICES OF THE PAST	177
Elder Silas H. Durand	
Elder W.D. Griffin	
Elder Gilbert Beebe	
Elder E.J. Lambert	
MEETINGS	192
CONTRIBUTIONS	192

ROMANS 8:6.

For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace.

EDITORIAL**TEMPTATION**

Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: but every man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death.



Elder R.H. Campbell

The above scriptures seems to be very candid about the position of God, in relation to sin. It states that God does not tempt man with evil which leads man to sin, or in other words he is not involved in being the author or the instigator of sin. Man is a sinner from his mother's womb, and will be all the days of his life, unless God restrains him from his normal sinful pursuits, and channels the results of the evil actions of man in accordance with his own will and purpose, and this he does when these devices of men would not conform with his own determinate counsel and foreknowledge, if they were allowed to proceed to their evil intended conclusion.

(Psa. 76, vs. 10) says, "Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain." This is not from a daily determination or decision that is made; all of these acts were in the original plan, but the responsibility or origin of sin rests in the weakness of man, because that is his very nature, to act according to the vain fantasies of his own self serving agenda. It does not say that the wrath of man is of God, but what the prophet is saying is that even the wrath, evil devices or rebellion of man, praises him. The scriptures declare that the devices of man are

many and evil, however the counsel of the Lord shall stand.

Man sins because he is tempted by his own vain and lustful desires, and he is enticed because of his desire to possess all that he surveys. The fact that he, the man, through the weakness of the flesh, succumbs to these desires is when and where the sin originates. He is tempted when he is drawn away by lust, and the above scripture says that God did not tempt the man with evil; but man is tempted when he is drawn away by lust, which is a fleshly characteristic and then when lust conceives, he is enticed, and therefore the results is sin on the part of man. Now, how can anyone charge that God is the author of sin, when James, writing under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, says so plainly that he is not. God is not involved in the temptation of man, for he says he is not, and since it is temptation that precedes the lust; lust's conceiving precedes the enticement, and then the enticement precedes the commission of sin and all of these steps are the fruits of the evil mind of man, and the above scripture declares that God did not start this ball rolling. It is as a row of dominoes when placed in a row, on end, tip one and they all fall, each one falls because the one preceding it falls knocking it down, and in the illustration above, God says that he did not cause the temptation which was the cause of that which follows, resulting in sin.

(Gen. Chap 6, vs. 5) "And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." Sin is the end result of this wickedness that God beheld in man, and is the normal culmination of the above chain of actions and reactions which have been the nature of man since the beginning. when he was originally tempted by the serpent and tasted of the forbidden fruit, in the garden of Eden.

The original sin was because of the temptation presented by the serpent, when he beguiled Eve, and caused her to partake of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil; and this would therefore make the serpent or the devil the tempter in at least this incident, why not in all cases? His enmity with the seed of the woman has been manifested since man was driven from the garden and his temptation of man has been an unending endeavor to beguile the Lord's children and lead them in the paths of sin. So why do some men believe, and others say that we believe, that God is the author of sin, and not the serpent? Man commits all sin for the same reason that he did in this case; because it is pleasing to him, as was the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, it was good for food, pleasant to the sight and a tree to be desired to make one wise; so, he was tempted from his desire for

anything which he does not possess, and he will do anything to get it.

(II Pet Chap 1, vs. 20-21) "Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost." and again, *(2 Tim Chap 3, vs 14)* "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." These same truths apply to all of those who were inspired to write the scriptures of both the old and the new testaments, and surely the above scripture is covered by this same authenticity. They are inspired by the Holy Ghost, are profitable for doctrine, correction and instruction in righteousness, and they are true; they are not open to private interpretation by individuals to make them suit their own particular beliefs. As, Elder Griffin, used to say, the scriptures say what they mean, and mean what they say, and the above scripture plainly says that God does not tempt man with evil, or cause him to sin. Sin is a characteristic of man, in the flesh, and he needs no outside assistance or urging in the matter: he is as prone to sin, as the sparks are to fly upward.

If God does not tempt the man with evil, and temptation is the beginning of the above chain of events; then all of the other steps follow, each one because of the preceding action, and its effect upon man, so where is God to be charged with the end results. Where did he step in and become the author of that which followed when each action was a reaction of that which preceded it, and the first action was not of God. Some men will say, you mean that there is something that God is not the cause or author of, well, he is not the author of confusion, and this is as abominable as sin to Him, and he is not the tempter of the sinner, so how and where does he become involved with it. God's ways are as much higher than man's ways as the heavens are higher than the earth and his thought higher than man's thoughts, and since all in that originates or exists in that higher kingdom are God's ways and are good, and since sin is characteristic of that lower kingdom in which the devil rules and reigns, and where man lives in this world of sin and sorrow, subject to a great many temptations every day of his life, why would anyone need to charge any outside force of causing him to sin.

God made man, and made him subject to vanity, put him in the garden to dress and keep it and told him, *(Gen. Chap 2 vs. 16-17)* "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."

and the first recorded independent act of man, was to do that which God told him not to do. This was indeed sin on the part of Adam, but from the standpoint of God it was for good, because its final result was to bring about the salvation of that portion of his creation that were his chosen possession: now, where does the sin lie and where does that which was good originate? It is as in the case of Joseph and his brethren, that which was done by his brethren was evil (sin) on their part, but it (the same act) was for good, in the plan of God, to bring about many people alive, the nation of Israel, so how is God in any way responsible for the evil; when the same act, that was sin as far as Joseph's older brothers were concerned, was good in the sight of God. Who is to judge actions good or evil, sinful or righteous, God or man? If that which occurs is good in the eyes of God, but proceeds from evil in the heart of man who does it to fulfill the lustful desires of the creature, how does that make God the author of the evil contained therein.

It is even as the pillar that stood between the Israelites and the Egyptians, it was life unto one, but the same cloud was death to the other; the same cloud that was a pillar of cloud by day, and a pillar of fire by night to separate and protect Israel from the Egyptians, prevented the

Egyptians from overtaking and bringing Israel back into captivity; the same phenomenon but viewed completely different from the perspective of the two peoples involved. There is a saying that beauty is in the eye of the beholder, could we not say that good or evil is as it is viewed by the individuals, from God's perspective all things work together for good to them that love God, but from man's side all things are from a motive of greed, lust and selfish desire which makes them sin? We must ask, if the deed is for good in the mind of God, but in nature proceeds from the evil motive in the mind of man, where does the fault lie. From God's perspective it is very good, but man's intentions are not, they are from an evil heart of vanity and lust, and sin is always the results of man's being enticed by the desire for self gratification, and this will be his response in every situation. He will always strive for that which the flesh desires, regardless of the law or the commandments of God, if left to his own devices and not restrained.

As in the case of Saul, when Samuel told him, by inspiration, to go and destroy all of the Amalekites, kill Agag the king and all of the men, women, children and all of the cattle that were theirs, and save nothing alive. The instructions were simple, easy to understand and must be obeyed completely, or, it would be as God told Cain, (*Gen. Chap 4, vs 7*) *"If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou*

doest not well sin lieth at the door." Normally, it is sin to commit murder, but here Saul's sin was that he did not murder all of them as God commanded, but rather saved the king Agag alive, and the best of the cattle to offer as a sacrifice unto God. The judgement declared on this occasion was, (*1 Sam Chap 15, vs. 22*) "*And Samuel said, Hath the Lord as great delight in burned offerings and sacrifices, as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams.*" Any sacrifice or a burnt offering made by man in any other way or manner than in obedience to the will of God is not acceptable. Aaron's sons offered strange fire on the alter and they were slain, even though one of their duties as priests was to make offerings by fire unto God on the alter, but it only applied to those offerings made in the prescribed manner and according to the commandment of God. Any offering made by man in the flesh, that is not in the prescribed manner as commanded, is an abomination unto God and sin on the part of the man.

Sin is always in the motive behind the action, not the action itself, and the motive behind that which is good must be charity (love) as Paul wrote to the church at Corinth and anything else is sin. For he says, even though man spoke with the tongue of men and of angels, though he had the gift of prophecy, understood all the mystery, and had all

knowledge, had all faith, bestowed all his goods to feed the poor, or even gave his body to be burned, and had not charity as his motive, it was nothing, and profitable for nothing. Anything that is not motivated by faith, or is not in obedience to the commands or revelations of God is sin, and the responsibility for those decisions made rest squarely in the man, for they have been instructed in the law of that which is good.

(*Eccl. Chap 3, vs. 1*) States that, "*To everything there is a season and a time to every purpose under heaven:*" and then lists 26 events following this declaration, some good and some bad, in the opinion of man, and yet the scripture says they were all beautiful in his (God's) time, or in his eyes, because, good or evil is as it relates to God and not to man. Obedience is always good, in his eyes, and disobedience or rebellion is always evil, because it is even as Cain's offering, it is of the flesh or of the earth which God had cursed and therefore not acceptable unto him.

(*Eccl. Chap 3, vs. 11*) "*He hath made everything beautiful in his time, also he hath set the world in their heart, so that no man can find out the work that God maketh from the beginning to the end.*" That which we would call good and that which we would call evil, are both alike good before him with whom we have to do, because they all fulfill the purpose which he had for them. God knows

the reasons for all events, has a purpose in them, and restrains or prevents those actions or desires in the heart of man, which do not conform to His own will and pleasure, and allows those things which do, to occur, even though they may to be performed according to the devices of wicked men.

Sin is in the mind and the actions of all men, in the flesh, when they are not being directed or motivated by the Holy Spirit; as Paul said, (*Rom Chap 7, vs 22-23*) "*For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: but I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members.*" The new creature, in Christ, is never tempted, never lusts, is never enticed nor sins, and delights in the law of God, but the old man in the flesh walks after the flesh and is tempted by his lust for all things that he does not control or possess.

For man to see and know the author of sin, he need not look elsewhere and point the finger of blame, but rather, only go home and look in his own mirror and make an honest sincere and realistic evaluation of himself, his motives and the reasoning for his actions, here in nature. Are they of God, of the flesh or better still, are they the results of the temptations of the devil, the prince of power of darkness, the one who goes up and down in the earth seeking whom he may devour, or cause

to sin. He even tried to tempt Christ, as the head of the body, promising him the glory of all of the kingdoms of the earth, if he would but fall down and worship him, oh, the brazenness of the creature. When the word tempter is used in the scriptures, it usually is referring to the devil, the one who tempted Eve in the garden because of the enmity that exist between himself and the woman and his seed and her seed.

This is his purpose in this world, to wage war against God, and he does it by his tempting of the chosen generation with those things that are pleasing to the flesh, trying to entice them and persuade them to serve him rather than their creator. He can never win in this war, but he will never cease trying until he is finally and totally overcome by the blood of the lamb and cast into the lake of fire.

In bonds of love,
Elder Richard H. Campbell

PSALM 33:18-22.

Behold, the eye of the Lord is upon them that fear him, upon them that hope in his mercy;

To deliver their soul from death, and to keep them alive in famine.

Our soul waiteth for the Lord: he is our help and our shield.

For our heart shall rejoice in him, because we have trusted in his holy name.

Let thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us, according as we hope in thee.

May 31, 2001

CORRESPONDENCE

May 14, 2001

Dear Elder Terry,

Do pray this finds you dear ones well.

We heard you conducted Sis. Annie McCods funeral. We were shocked and sorry of the tragedy. But we also know and believe God knows best in all things.

Eld. Terry I'm sending our belated subscription in for 2 years. Also a new subscription for Bro. Jerald 2 years:

Hatchett; 5329S. Land;
Oklahoma City, OK 73119

Also our 2 year renewal. I'm sending you a check for \$40.00 to cover both.

Give our love to your dear wife.
And come to see us again.

In Christian Love
Eld. C.M. & Bernice Haygood
200 Hollie Cir.
Sulphur Springs, TX 75482

P.S. May the good Lord bless you and keep you.

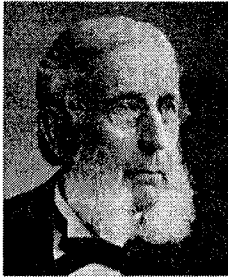
Dear Elder Wm. Hale Terry,

Due to my age and the condition of my health I have problem of keeping my bills paid up as I have always tried to do in my younger years. I am sorry to be late, anyhow due to my over all condition including my eyesight and brain sight. I will send what I owe you which is according to my figures is one year of May 1, 00 so I will send for 2 years which would end May 1, 02, which I want you to stop sending anymore after that date unless I get better and will let you know ahead of time which I don't expect.

To do as I am 87 years June 10th of this year. I have had my day here in this old world of troubles, trials and tribulations. So thank you all for the Signs of the Times. I read them when I was growing up, when my paw took them in the old days of long ago. Thank the Lord for his mercies he has had on a wretch like me its not been easy going, yet it could have been worse.

Thanking you all there,
Hugh Harwell
7946 State Rt. 30
Dittmer, MO, 63023

VOICES OF THE PAST

**GOD NO RESPECTER
OF PERSONS (Acts x. 34.)**


Elder Silas H. Durand

All men naturally think that God is a respecter of persons. No man can think otherwise except by special revelation. It is impossible for our natural minds to conceive of any reason why the Lord should regard any man with favor except as seeing something in his person that causes him to merit that favor. All natural religion is based upon the belief that God is a respecter of persons. If a man would recommend himself to any king or potentate, he must show something in his person, relationship or work deserving his regard. So it is supposed that by some merit of his own, either as the son of a good man, or as having intrinsic or acquired merit in himself, a man must be recommended to the Lord.

Peter thought that God was a respecter of persons even when he preached on the day of Pentecost. Although those who gladly received his word represented all nations, yet they were all Jews or proselytes, and it was his thought that the Lord regarded the person of a Jew or a proselyte above the person of a Gentile, and he was not taught the truth

on this point until he was at the house of Cornelius. When he heard the experience of that Gentile, to whom Jesus was yet unknown, and saw that God had visited him and his house with his salvation, then he could say, *"Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons; but in every nation he that feareth him and worketh righteousness is accepted with him."*

At this time he understood the meaning of the vision that came to him on the housetop a few days before. While in a trance *"he saw heaven opened, and a certain vessel descending unto him, as it had been a great sheet knit at the four corners, and let down to the earth : wherein were all manner of four-footed beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air. And there came a voice to him, Rise, Peter; kill, and eat. And Peter said, Not so, Lord; for I have never eaten anything that is common or unclean. And the voice spake unto him again the second time, What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common. This was done thrice: and the vessel was received up again into heaven."*

What a wonderful vision! Out of heaven came beasts and birds and creeping things of all kinds; wolves and lambs; doves and ravens; the lion as well as the ox; the cow and the bear, and even the loathsome worm; but they were all in the great sheet, which was so knit at the four

corners that none of them could get out; and all this strange and various crowd of living creatures was received up into heaven again. What could it mean? It must have been the subject of wondering thought in Peter's mind all the way down to Caesarea. But all at once, while hearing Cornelius relate his vision, the deep, glorious meaning of "this vision came to Peter; he now understood that all that was in the sheet represented people; for *"he said unto them, Ye know how that it is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to keep company, or come unto one of another nation: but God hath showed me that I should not call any man common or unclean."*

Here, then, is that which represents the everlasting covenant of grace. The sheet was let down three times, to show that salvation is the same in each of the three dispensations. All the animals in the sheet were clean, the wolf as well as the Lamb, the worm as well as the dove. The voice declared to Peter that they were all clean, for God had cleansed them. To Peter the wolf and the raven appeared as unclean as they ever had been, but God's voice declared that God had cleansed them. This was true only of those in the sheet. Out of the sheet they were unclean, but seen in the sheet they were declared by the Lord to have been cleansed.

In their own persons, in the flesh, the Lord's people are sinful and depraved, and they feel it when

the life of Jesus is their light. So Job said, *"I am vile; I abhor myself."* Isaiah said, *"I am a man of unclean lips."* Daniel said, *"When thou spakest unto thy servant my comeliness was turned in me into corruption."* Paul said, *"In me (that is, in my flesh,) there dwelleth no good thing."* What a blessed thing, that God is no respecter of persons, for if he were, no man could stand before him. But it is in the sheet that the creatures of all kinds are regarded as clean. It is in the everlasting covenant, it is in the person of Christ, that poor sinners are respected. He *"is given for a covenant of the people,"* and in him we stand holy and unblamable before God in love. He respects his people not in their own persons, but in the person of Christ.

One has been looking over the whole field of his nature, and it is all a desert. He sees in himself no good, but all evil. When he would do good, evil is present with him. He cries out, *"I am a worm and no man."* Then the Lord gives him a glimpse of the everlasting covenant; lets him look for a moment into the sheet that was let down from heaven in the sight of Peter, and behold, there is a crawling worm, and he hears a voice from heaven saying, *"Fear not, thou worm Jacob, and ye men of Israel; I will help thee, saith the Lord, and thy Redeemer, the holy One of Israel."* What a glad surprise to the poor soul when this revelation of Jesus as his righteousness and salvation breaks in upon

his soul, and he is made to rejoice in believing that he is accepted with him.

Truly the coming of Jesus in his power, as the one who ruleth over men in justice and in the fear of God, *"is as the light of the morning when the sun ariseth; even a morning without clouds: as the tender grass springing out of the earth by clear shining after rain."* How glad Peter was to proclaim that in every nation the fear of the Lord *in the heart*, which is to hate evil, and the working of righteousness, are sure evidences that such are accepted with God; accepted with Jesus. The fear of the Lord is put into the heart by our God, who says, *"I will put my fear in their hearts that they shall not depart from me."* The working of righteousness is the effect of the work of grace in the heart. He who lies helpless on the bed is as capable of working righteousness as one who is well and strong. It is in the heart; it is heart-work. *"As a man thinketh so is he."* It is the tree of righteousness planted by the Lord which bears the fruit of righteousness. *"The work of righteousness shall be peace, and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance forever."* Only by faith in Jesus can any righteous work be done. So Peter was glad to know and to proclaim that wherever there was one in any nation who had the fear of God in his heart, and that faith by which one is enabled to walk in the good works of Jesus, that one is

thus manifested as accepted with Jesus, the only wise God and our Savior.

We do not read, *"shall be accepted by him,"* but *"is accepted with him."* All of the Lord's people were in Jesus in a legal and mystical sense when he died, and they were "raised up together with him," and they were accepted with him in the acceptable day of the Lord, when the gates lifted up their heads that the King of glory might come in. The beasts and birds and creeping things were in the sheet when it came down from the open heaven, to show that the righteousness and salvation of all the Lord's people are from heaven. The sinner does not come down from heaven, but his righteousness does. As a saved sinner he is God's *"workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that he should walk in them."* He did not put himself into the great sheet, into the covenant of grace, nor can he get out of it. He did not cleanse himself from sin. The word is, *"What God hath cleansed that call not thou common."* Poor, troubled soul. You look to yourself like a sinner, black as the raven, wicked as the wolf, vile as the worm, but God hath cleansed you, and now you are waiting for the full manifestation of the blessed work, *"The earnest expectation of the creature [the new creature in Christ] waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God."* And this creature *"shall be deliv-*

ered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God."

And during this time of waiting and earnest expectation there are seasons of comfort and rejoicing. The dying of the Lord Jesus is borne about in our body, but the life also of Jesus is manifested in our body. The tribulation continues on account of felt depravity in the flesh, but we rejoice in the tribulation because it worketh patience, and experience, and hope which maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts. *"As the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ."* We cannot rejoice in ourselves, but we do at times rejoice in the Lord, for he is rich unto us in mercy, and goodness, and grace, and loving-kindness, and his blessed name has been unto us a strong tower, in which we have found safety. We cannot but be glad and rejoice in the precious hope that we are represented in that great sheet that was let down from heaven to the earth, and that the Lord remembers us in the *"everlasting covenant which is ordered in all things and sure."*

November, 1903
Elder Silas H. Durand

PSALM 34:7.

The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them.

CIRCULAR LETTER

(Written by Elder W. D. Griffin)

Once more the wheels of time have rolled around to the time of our annual meeting of the Salisbury Old School Baptist Association; and as it has been our custom through the years to write what is called the Circular Letter, we attempt it with fear and trembling; we hope realizing that we cannot write in any way comforting to the household of faith except the God of all grace and mercy sees fit to guide our minds and trembling hand.

Therefore, as we attempt to write, we humbly pray that our eternal God, who has been pleased to lead his people, though in a mysterious way, will be pleased to guide us that this letter may be to the comfort and edification of the saints of our God; of which we hope to be a part. As we have been led to believe by the mighty hand of God in the words of Moses when he said to Israel, *"The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms,"* (Deuteronomy 33:27) we feel that it is a wonderful blessing to be given a mind to realize that there is a power that is above all other powers, that is watching over his little children here in the vain world, keeping them under his watchful eye and his ever shielding arm.

We believe that God's chosen people, his heirs of salvation according to promise, are led in ways they know not, through many storms

of life, to teach them that they cannot direct their steps, and to show them their need of our Heavenly Father to keep and sustain them in that pathway that Job spoke of when he said, *"There is a path which no fowl knoweth, and which the vulture's eye hath not seen."* (Job 28:7) Thus we feel that the natural mind of man cannot understand the things of God, neither has, or ever will, walk that heavenward journey by his natural mind, for we are told by the Apostle Paul, *"The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them because they are spiritually discerned."* (1 Cor. 2:14) We believe that man is born in this world with a natural mind, and he keeps it as long as he stays here on these mortal shores; but we also believe that our eternal God gives his chosen people another mind, a spiritual mind to see things that the natural mind cannot see, for the natural mind never sees the vanity of its being.

We feel that God has and still does throughout the world, in his own time and place, bring his chosen ones out of the darkness in which they were born, into the light and knowledge of the truth which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Darkness has always preceded light, for in the beginning the evening and the morning was the first day, and so on. Therefore, if we are what we hope to be, we are traveling in newness of life, viewing things that we did not

view at one time; viewing from day to day our weakness in the flesh, and thus hoping in the mercies of our eternal God and not in our own works; for Solomon said, *"There is not a just man upon the earth, that doeth good and sinneth not."* (Eccl. 7:20)

We believe that God knew his people before the beginning of time, and loved them with an everlasting love; that he chose them in his Son for as Eve was in Adam, so was the church in Christ: he being the foundation of that building not made with hands, for we are told in God's holy word, *"For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ."* (1 Cor. 3:12)

As we journey here, though, we are made to wonder, and to say with the poet,

*" 'Tis a point I long to know;
Oft it gives me anxious thoughts;
Do I love the Lord or no?
Am I his, or am I not."*

We do not believe that anyone knows that he or she is one of God's chosen people, but we do believe that God works in the hearts of his people in such a way as to show them the vileness of their nature, and to cause them to hope in his mercies, and to realize that it is not by our own strength, but by the grace of God we are what we are. Hannah said, *"For by strength shall no man prevail."* (1 Samuel 2:9)

We do feel that God has a people in every nation, kindred and tongue, and that they are all taught of the Lord. It may be that some have never heard the audible voice of man speak the wonderful truth which is in Christ Jesus our Lord, but we feel they are all taught of the Lord, though in a mysterious way; for, as the poet has said:

*“God moves in a mysterious way
His wonders to perform;
He plants his footsteps in the
sea, And rides upon the storm.”*

We are also told in God’s holy word, *“For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.”* (Isaiah 55:9)

Dear Brethren, as we have been gathered here in this association, we feel a desire in our hearts that the Lord may be pleased to bless us with love for one another; that our hearts may be joined together as one; and that we may have all things in common. May it please the Lord, if it be his holy will, that we may be blessed to sit and feast on the gospel truths, and be made to rejoice together in the Lord; for the Apostle Paul said, *“Rejoice in the Lord always; and again I say rejoice.”* (Phil. 4:4) Amen

Elder D. V. Spangler, Moderator
Maude T. Laws, Hon. Clerk
William Adkins, Clerk
W. A. Davis, Asst. Clerk

THE JUDGMENT

The Scriptures assure us that God will judge the world in righteousness at the last day, by that Man whom he hath appointed. Paul testifies that that judgment shall be according to his gospel.

By the term judgment, in a scriptural sense, and when used in reference to God’s judgment, we are not to understand a court of investigation, for the purpose of ascertaining the guilt or innocence of those who are to be judged. A trial, according to law, examination of witnesses, and an investigation of circumstances, is indispensable before a finite court, in order to convict the guilty or justify the innocent. But God, the Judge of all, is infinite. All things are naked and open to his omnipotent eye, so that he needs not to be informed of the state and condition, prospect or destiny of any of his creatures. The ungodly are condemned already, and the wrath of God abideth on them. Judgment has already come upon them to condemnation, and under that condemnation they are even now held, under chains of darkness, reserved unto the day of judgment, (not to be tried,) but to be punished for the guilt of which they are already convicted. This guilt has been found upon all the posterity of Adam; all have sinned and come short of the glory of God; and, as evidence of this, death has passed upon all men. Even the subjects of grace and salvation were by nature children of

wrath, even as others. There is nothing in their nature or practice, as the children of the earthly Adam, to distinguish them from the rest of the fallen family of mankind. The judgment of the last day, as we have said, shall be according to Paul's gospel; and as we read the gospel preached by Paul, we understand that God, from the beginning, has chosen his people unto salvation through sanctification of the spirit and belief of the truth. This choice, Paul says, was anterior to the foundation of the world. *"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ, according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love."* Eph. i. 3, 4. The salvation to which God has chosen his people is from sin and wrath, and the accomplishment of it is by their full, free, perfect and eternal redemption, which is in Christ Jesus, in whom they are chosen. Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ unto himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace wherein he hath made us accepted in the Beloved, in whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins according to the riches of his grace. (Eph. i. 5-7). By virtue of this election, wherein God hath chosen his people to salvation, a ransom was provided, and they are

redeemed from sin and wrath, and made acceptable unto God in the Beloved, in whom they have redemption, and they are freely justified through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. *"There is therefore now no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."* Rom. viii. 1. This is as the waters of Noah unto the Lord: for as he has sworn that the waters of Noah shall no more go over the earth, so has he sworn that he will no more be wroth with his people, nor rebuke them; for the mountains shall depart and the hills be removed, but his kindness shall not depart from them, neither shall the covenant of his peace be removed, saith the Lord that has mercy on them. (Isaiah liv. 9, 10.)

The sins of God's people were open, going beforehand to judgment. They were carefully reckoned up, and in all their magnitude of number and turpitude, they were all laid upon him who was made sin for them, that they might be made the righteousness of God in him. In laying upon him the iniquities of us all, (that is of all whose sins he bore in his own body on the cross,) their sins necessarily went beforehand to judgment. Also, in an experimental sense, when the sinner is quickened and made sensible of his lost and helpless condition, his sins are set in order before him, and he sees, feels and acknowledges his guilt, and the dreadful sentence of the law of God in his condemnation; not

until the precious Savior is revealed to him, and an evidence that he has canceled the law's demands on his behalf, can he see how God's justice can be sustained in his damnation. But in the revelation of Christ, he is enabled to say, "*Surely he hath borne our grieves and carried our sorrows; he was wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities, the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed.*" The saints of God are already judged, condemned and executed in their Head and legal representative. They are crucified with Christ. (Gal. ii. 2.) Baptized unto Jesus Christ, baptized into his death, buried with him by baptism into death, that like as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. (Rom. vi. 3, 4.) They are redeemed, justified and cleansed by the washing of regeneration, and shall never again come into condemnation for they are passed from death unto life. Their sins can never be brought in judgment against them again, neither in time nor in eternity, for God has promised to remember them no more. As a thick cloud he has blotted them out. They have therefore nothing to fear in regard to a judgment to come. This matter is forever settled from the following considerations:

First. Their judgment has already past, as we have shown by the

foregoing arguments and testimony.

Second. Sin is a transgression of the law, and where there is no law there is no transgression; and the saints are no more under the law but under grace. The sting of death is sin, and the strength of sin is the law; but thanks be unto God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Third. The church is the mystical body of him who is the Judge, by whom the world is to be judged in righteousness at the last day; and in that body, the church, Christ will preside in the final judgment, and all his members will perfectly acquiesce.

Fourth. Their sins are covered by the expiatory sacrifice of the Lord Jesus Christ, and God has made a solemn and everlasting covenant with them, that he will remember their sins and iniquities no more.

Fifth. Because as soon as Christ the Judge shall appear, they shall see him as he is, and shall be like him. He is himself their Wisdom, Righteousness, Sanctification and Redemption. No examination will be required to demonstrate the perfection of their righteousness, for Christ as their righteousness cannot be impeached. Their maker is their Husband, the Lord of Hosts is his name, and their Redeemer is the Holy One of Israel, the God of the whole earth shall he be called. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord.

The judgment of the last day, therefore, so far as the saints are concerned, is but the execution of what we are assured in Paul's gospel shall be accomplished. The Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, and the voice of the archangel and the trumpet of God, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and the saints shall be caught up, shall meet their Savior in the air, and so shall they be forever with the Lord. The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, for the Lord knoweth them that are his. Here, then, let your faith rest upon the promise which God, that cannot lie, made before the world began. The judgment of the ungodly, so far as we understand testimony, will not rest upon disclosures then and there made, but it will embrace the execution of the decision already made; for, as we have proved, they are already tried, found guilty, and they are condemned already, and the wrath of God abideth on them.

We might greatly extend our remarks upon this subject, and shall, probably, at some future time, if spared, show how many portions of Scripture, which relate to the present organization and government of the church of God, have been misapplied, and used as though they had been spoken in reference to the final judgment of the last day. The Lord shall judge his people. He does now judge them. His judgment-seat is in Zion, and all his disciples are amenable to that

judgment-seat for every idle word, and for every vain and foolish thought. But they are judged under the law of the kingdom of Christ, and not by that law which is the administration of death. If they forsake the law of Christ, under which they are brought, and keep not his commandments, he will visit their sins with a rod, and their transgressions with stripes; but his loving-kindness he will not take utterly away, nor suffer his faithfulness to fail. The saints are dead to the law, by the body of Christ, and are quickened together with Christ, raised up together, and made to set together in heavenly places; and they are married unto him that is risen from the dead, that they may bring forth fruit unto God.

One great, though somewhat common mistake, which has tended to involve the subject, much to the depression of the children of God, has been in supposing that Christ will not occupy his judgment-seat until he shall come in the last day to raise the dead and judge the world. But divine revelation assures us that *"The Lord is our Judge; the Lord is our Lawgiver; the Lord is our King; he will save us."*— *Isaiah xxxiii. 22.* As Judge, his decisions are as final now as they shall be when he shall present his spotless bride before the throne of his Father, and turn the wicked into hell, with all the nations that forget God.

Carnal professors, and graceless legalists, may require the terrors and thunder of Mt. Sinai, and

the fearful apprehension of a judgment to come, to whip them into an unwilling subjection to what they call holiness, piety and religion; their highest motives being selfish, the hope of heaven and the fear of hell; but those whom the Son has made free, have received not the spirit of bondage again to fear, but the spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The mind and Spirit of Christ is in them, holiness is their element; they love God, love holiness, and hate sin.

*“Immortal principles forbid
The sons of God to sin.”*

They are born of God, and his seed abides within them, and they cannot sin, because they are born of God; and the sin which is in their flesh, they loathe and hate; for it is at war with the Spirit of life which is within them, and it makes them groan, being burdened, and long and sigh for the day when mortality shall be swallowed up of life, and they delivered from the body of this death.

Elder Gilbert Beebe

Middletown, N.Y., June 15, 1856.

JAMES 4:14.

Whereas ye know not what shall be on the morrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapour, that appeareth for a little time, and then vanisheth away.

“WHAT IS YOUR LIFE”

James 4:14 APRIL, 1954

YOUR NATURAL life is “a vapour that appeareth for a little time and then vanisheth away.” You cannot say with assurance that you will be living tomorrow. As vapour only appears within certain circumstances and conditions upon which the vapour has no control, so is your life. When these circumstances and conditions are changed your life vanishes as the vapour. The flowing of the blood, the functioning of the mind, and the movement of the muscles are evidences of natural life. This life is given upon the volition of the will of God and it is taken at His appointed time. When the mind ceases to function, the muscles to move, and the blood to flow; a person is pronounced naturally dead. This natural life is timely. It has its beginning and it has its ending.

It is a true Biblical saying that “*Life is in the blood.*” The expression in Leviticus 17:11 says, “*the life of the flesh is in the blood.*” The flow of the blood stimulates the muscles and mind. When there is a change in the flow of the blood there is a change in the functioning of the mind and movement of the muscles. Heart stimulants affect mind and muscle. When one is under the influence of alcohol, which stimulates the flow of blood, it is often truly said, He is not himself.” His actions and conversation are changed.

The Lord willing, we desire to meditate upon the functioning of the natural mind before comparing and contrasting natural and spiritual life. We want to say to the reader who is wondering what our object is in this treatise that we desire to prove a true and experienced state of life that exists in the regenerated child of God; why that regeneration is necessary; how that Jesus is our life; and, define eternal life.

The nature of the natural mind is to function within a natural realm. This nature would have to be changed before it could act within the spiritual realm. We reason according to our understanding. When we have only natural understanding our reasoning is according to natural wisdom. Our affections by nature are carnal, earthly, and sensual-bent on gratifying self. The approval or disapproval of the natural mind is based on a natural conscience which is forever changing with the changes of social customs and ideas. The will of the natural mind chooses that which is evil, indulges in the lusts of the flesh, and chooses to please self. This is the mind of natural life.

What is your life? Have you been elevated above that which is natural to such an extent that you are never bothered with this old nature, conscience, will, understanding, or affections? Have you been wrought upon in such a way that you are living a pure, holy, spiritual life, void of fleshly inclinations? Is your life so holy that you never have a

doubt concerning your future abode? I must answer, "no", to all these questions. My experience proves that I possess a darkened understanding, an unregenerated will, and earthly affections. That which is born of the flesh is flesh and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. There is a natural life and there is a spiritual life. I maintain that God's children who have been born again and are yet living in this natural world are characters who possess dual lives. This conforms to the expression of the prophet Isaiah, 38;20, All the days of *our life*. "Our life" is an expression that is inconsistent with the proper usage of language unless it could mean two characters in one person. There is the Spirit of God and there is the spirit of man. As long as we live in this natural tabernacle we will be beset at times with this old depraved nature, hardened conscience, darkened understanding, *unregenerated will*, and earthly affections.

God infuses eternal life into one of His children by His Spirit in enacting the new birth. When this is done the one being born again is given a new nature, an enlightened understanding, a new conscience, a renewed will, and heavenly affections. This act of God does not do away with his natural birth nor his natural life. To the regenerated, born again, child of God may I ask, "*What is your life?*"

May I answer as God will direct? God has *added* His life to your life. You are not only born of the flesh

but of the Spirit. Yes, you are given a new nature by which you are enabled to see the depravity of your old nature. Your understanding is enlightened that you may realize the darkness of your natural understanding. You are given a will toward God and godliness that proves to you that your natural will is to choose evil rather than good. These heavenly affections that God has implanted in you shows how selfish and earthly are your natural affections. Has your life been changed? Yes, as a person. You do not esteem yourself as highly as you once did. This experience has humbled you and caused you to realize your dependence. You find that whereas you were in peace with yourself there is now a warfare. The flesh is lusting against the Spirit and the Spirit against the flesh. These are contrary one to the other so that you cannot do the things you would. Neither time nor space would permit treating upon the extent of the change. May I ask another question?

Has your flesh been purified, renovated, refined, or made better? No. Your experience is as Paul wrote to the Romans concerning himself, even though he had been graced by this new life being added to him. He expresses in Romans 7:19, "*For the good that I would, I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I do.*" If you read his experience you will find that when he would do good evil was present with him. You will find that sin was mixed with all he

did. He realized that he served the law of sin with his flesh. He considered himself as chief of sinners, less than the least of saints, and a wretched man who needed and prayed for deliverance. He possessed the thorn of the flesh which was a messenger of Satan to buffet him about lest he be exalted above measure. He rejoiced in physical pains and personal persecutions but the indwelling workings of sin in his carnal mind, the opposition of his depraved nature to the grace of God, caused him to cry out concerning his wretched condition. You will find that Peter possessed his old nature after being so wonderfully blessed with such special divine gifts. His regenerated will was to follow Jesus to the extent of death but there was another characteristic abiding with him that resulted in his denying any knowledge of Christ, not just once but three times, confirming with an oath, cursing and swearing. Job abhorred himself. An old prophet considered himself as being a man of unclean lips. Many wonderfully gifted characters, whose experience is recorded in the Book of books, were affected with the same evil tendencies as you are. May I ask again, "*What is your life?*"

Your life is a mixture of joys and sorrows. Sometimes you are on the mountain top rejoicing in the grace and love of God but so much of the time you are in the valley of woe. Sometimes your hope of eternal abode in heaven is so little that you

wonder, *“Do I have a hope?”* And sometimes it is an anchor to the soul both sure and steadfast that entereth within the veil. Sometimes you doubt you have grace; at other times you are convinced of His gracious care for you. Probably much of the time the Bible is a sealed book to you; but, sometimes it is as God speaking to you. Sometimes you want to talk of God’s love for His people; but, much of the time you are shut up and have no desire to meet one who believes in God. Sometimes the minister preaches directly to you with comfort and edification; but much of the time, though you try to listen, you are cold and lifeless. Why am I thus tossed and have this cross?

You would depend upon the goodness of your own life were it not for this tossing to and fro that you experience. You must be given to know the vileness of your life, the weakness of your understanding, the deceit of your heart, the evil of your will, and the carnality of your affections before you can obey the command of Jesus to *deny yourself*. You must possess this cross of flesh against the Spirit before you can obey the command of Jesus, *“Take up your cross.”* You must realize the vileness of your own life before you can be made submissive to Jesus’ command, *“Follow me.”* You must realize these infirmities through the remaining part of your life, else you would not pray for salvation from sin, look to God for grace, depend upon Jesus for your

merits, or hope to be finally delivered from evil into the glorious liberty of the children of God. What is your life?

Your natural life is in evidence when the flow of the blood stimulates the activity of the natural mind and the movement of the muscles. Your spiritual life is in evidence when the flow of the Spirit of God stimulates the spiritual mind (or heart) resulting in a godly walk and conversation. When the blood flows and the mind functions there is action of the muscles. When the Spirit flows, and the godly mind functions, there is action consisting of good works. These good works are done only by the stimulation of the Spirit of God. Thus it is by the grace of God that we are what we are.

What is your life? *“For ye are dead and your life is hid with Christ in God; when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory”* (Col. 3 :3,4). We have a foretaste of Christ appearing here in time which is glorious. These experiences last only for fleeting moments; but, the glory of them encourages us to press on with renewed hope and a strengthened faith. Christ is our life because we have been made to depend upon His righteousness. Christ is our life because He suffered the penalty of death, blotting out our sins by dying, that we might live. He is the Author of our spiritual life; the Fountain from whence flows the water of life; the Root of our godly life; and,

He is our Head which stimulates a godly walk and conversation. ***"Your life is hid with Christ in God."***

Yes, your life is hid from the world. You cannot make known to the world the precious things of this life. You cannot cause the wise and the prudent to see it. It is *hid* from them. Jesus thanked God that He had hid these things from the wise and the prudent and revealed them unto babes. Your life is hid from the law in Christ. The law can have no dominion over you. Your sins are hid from God by the blood of Christ for it is impossible for Him to see your sins through the blood of His Son. Those who would destroy your hope and faith cannot because your life is hid with Christ. Is it not true that your eternal life is hid from you much of the time? Two of the three things that abides *now*, according to Paul's letter to the Church at Corinth, proves that your eternal life is hid from you. ***"Now abideth faith, hope, and charity" (1 Cor. 13:13)***. ***"Faith is the substance of things hoped for; the evidence of things not seen."*** If a thing is not seen it is hid. Paul said, ***"We are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it" (Rom. 8:24,25)***. If we see not that which is hoped for it is hid. If then, we are saved by hope, surely our life is hid with Christ. Take courage, brethren, and may God comfort you with the thought

that now we see, through a glass, *darkly*; but then face to face." (1 Cor. 13:12). Sometimes His smiles are hidden from us. We grope about in darkness. Our minds are taken up with the vain things of this world so that we are made to realize,

*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.
What is your life?*

You are a stranger to yourself. Your life is so hid that you are fearful that you are not born again. When He ***"shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory."*** These foretastes of His appearing here in time renews our hopes and strengthens our faith. We wonder so much of the time, is He coming again? Our faith and hope is that when He appears we shall appear with Him in glory. We look forward to that grand appearing when He shall take us into that glorious home where we shall live and abide with Him eternally. What is *eternal life*?

The word *eternal* indicates that this life under consideration is endless. It shall never cease but persevere without a break into an endless eternity. Those who possess this life shall never perish. They shall live forever without any danger of dying. No power is able to destroy it for this life is in Christ. ***"He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life" (1 John 5:12)***. This eternal life is

interlinked in the golden chain of eternal life and includes therein all of God's chosen people for we read, ***"I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may be made perfect in one"*** (John 17:23). The Father is in His Son, His Son is in His chosen. His chosen is in the Son and His Son is in the Father. This interlinking is why Jesus could say, ***"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"*** (St. John 10:28,29). The children of God are so interlinked in the Father and Son that it would be just as possible for God to be dethroned as for one of them to perish or lose that life! It would be denying the power of God and blaspheming His Son to proclaim that any who have this eternal life shall ever be severed from it so that the second or eternal death shall have power over them! What is eternal life? ***"And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent"*** (John 17:3).

If you know God and know His Son, you have eternal life. If He has seen fit to reveal Himself to you, then you know Him. Peter had eternal life as was manifested in his answer to Jesus, recorded in *Matt. 16:16*, ***"Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God."*** This answer of Peter was given, not be-

cause he had learned it from flesh and blood, but because he had been divinely favored by a direct revelation from God as you shall see in reading the statement of Jesus following this answer. It takes the life of God imputed to an individual by the direct operation of the Holy Spirit to enable one to know God or Jesus Christ. ***"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"*** (John 5:24). The revelation of God unto His people causes them to cease to believe in themselves, placing their trust in Him. This life of God imputed to you makes you lose confidence in yourself. This eternal life has saved the soul in regeneration and we are confident that the same spirit will save the body in the resurrection. The work of salvation that has been begun in us experimentally will surely be performed and perfected unto the deliverance of our bodies from sin and death. As this life immortalized the soul in regeneration, this life will immortalize the body in the resurrection. As we now have the first-fruits, being a foretaste, we shall come into full fruition in heaven. We shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberties of the children of God. What will be your life then?

Your life will then be free from imperfections, warfares, tribulations, doubts, fears, persecutions, thirst, hunger and confusions. You

shall have uninterrupted joy, peace and happiness forevermore. There will be no dying as experienced daily in this life, but you shall live, live! LIVE! What a wonderful and glorious life is *eternal life!*

Elder E.J. Lambert

MEETINGS

SMITH RIVER ASSOCIATION

The 2001 Smith River Association will convene the Lord willing at Knob Primitive Baptist Church in Franklin County, a short distance from Henry, Va. Services will begin on Fri. Aug. 31, and continue Sat. Sept. 1 and Sun. Sept. 2, 2001.

Knob Church is located about 5 miles west of Henry, Va. Those traveling north on #220 turn left on #605 (Henry Rd.) and those traveling south on #220 turn right on #605 (Henry Rd.)

Go over the R.R. tracks in Henry and proceed 2 miles to # 798 (Knob Church Rd.) turn left and follow this road to the Church about 3 miles on the left at top of hill. Those traveling west on #40 (Franklin St.) go about 5 miles west of Ferrum College and turn left on #605 (Henry Rd.) and those traveling east on #40 turn right on #605 (Henry Rd.) Go about 6 1/4 miles to #798 (Knob Church Rd.) turn right and follow to church as stated above.

We invite all ministers of our faith and order, our correspondents, Visitors and friends to meet with us at this meeting.

Wilford G. Parsons - Clerk

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION

The West Country Line Union will convene with Moon's Creek Church the fifth Sunday in July. The church is located about 1/2 mile east of highway 86 between Danville and Yanceyville on Park Springs Road.

Elder Kenneth R. Key, Moderator
Sue Blalock, Clerk

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FOR MAY 2001

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E.R. Graves, AL	2.00
Allene Gallimore, NC	2.00
Ralph Dale, NC	2.00
Wilma Cox, MS	7.00
Connie Fowler, TX	2.00
M.L. Richardson, FL	2.00
Anita Hash, VA	2.00
Joel Alexander, AL	7.00
Connie Page, NC	5.00
James Pugh, AL	7.00
Louise Stanley, NC	2.00
Eld. G.R. Smith, LA	1.00
Betty Turner, LA	2.00
Eld. C.M. Haygood, TX	4.00

Signs of the Times

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES

202 Carousel Lane, Meadows of Dan, Va. 24120-4403

SONG

*"The Lord has been so good to me
I want to praise His name
His mercy long has been my plea
His grace I would proclaim.*

*Yea though of sinner I'm the worst
Still I desire to praise
The gracious God who loved me first
To Him my voice I'll raise.*

*I pray the Lord that I might see
Myself released from sin.
It's burden long has harassed me,
How sore a plague is sin!*

*I long to leave this world of woe
And with my Savior reign
Where self no longer is my foe
And I am free from pain."*

*Composed by Joyce Pittman
Sent in by her mother,
Sister Mae Williams*

POSTMASTER

Please send address changes to:

Signs of the Times
202 Carousel Lane
Meadows of Dan, Va 24120-4403

CONTENTS

EDITORIAL	194
Elder C.C. Wilbanks	
CORRESPONDENCE	197
ARTICLES	199
Buford R. Thornton	
Elder Cleo D. Robertson	
VOICES OF THE PAST	205
Elder Silas H. Durand	
J.T. Barnes	
Elder J.C. Philpot	
MEETINGS	212
CONTRIBUTIONS	214
OBITUARIES	214
Pattie B. Krewatch	
Opie Jane Phillips	
Elder J.T. Prescott, Sr.	

 EDITORIAL

MEDIATOR



Elder C.C. Wilbanks

This is a subject that has been upon my mind for quite some time and I desire to write a few lines upon it, hoping that God will direct my thoughts to his praise and glory and to the comfort and edification of his blessed children.

Jesus Christ the man is our mediator, the mediator of the new and better covenant, which was established upon better promises. For had the first covenant been fault-

less, then should no place have been sought for the second. *Heb. 8:6-7. "It was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator. Now a mediator is not a mediator of one, but God is one."* Jesus Christ is in many scriptures called the Word of God. The Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost, these three are one. 1 Jn. 5:7. *"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him, and without him was not any thing made that was made."* John 1:1-3. Jesus Christ has been the mediator from the beginning. His own words were, *"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."* Prov. 8:22-23. In verses 30-31, *"I was one by him, as one brought up with him: 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."* These are the words of Christ himself, and they were obviously spoken thousands of years before his conception and birth by the virgin Mary. These scriptures (and there are many others) should prove without any doubt that Christ the Son of God existed before the earth was ever spoken into existence. If he then had no existence, how could we have been chosen in

him before the foundation of the world? "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." Eph. 1:3-4.

Before I proceed, I will give my views on the word "man." When God made man he made him from the dust of the earth, and he was only flesh, blood and bones until God breathed the breath of life into him and he became a living soul. Without a soul man is nothing and can do absolutely nothing, and when the soul leaves a man his flesh soon returns to the dust. The soul activates the brain, causing it to make decisions, rational or otherwise. Then the brain sends signals to all members of the body moving them into actions.

Finite man can never comprehend the existence of an infinite, invisible God, nor his being "three in one." There are many, very many, who believe there are three individual persons of the Godhead, all with equal divine power. But the Scriptures quoted above should definitely prove to anyone with an unbiased mind that this is false. There are many more scriptures to prove this to be a false belief, but I must forbear because of time and space. However, the Son of God did

exist in eternity, but not in a flesh and blood body. As the Son of God he had a divine nature and a human nature. The divinity of the Son of God is the MIGHTY GOD, who never was begotten, but was the EVER-LASTING FATHER; and his human nature was the begotten Son of God. Christ said, "*I will declare the decree: the LORD hath said unto me, Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee.*" *Ps. 2:7.* Both of these whole and distinct natures, being in one person, he is both God and man, both Father and Son. As man, he was the visible form of the invisible God. Man can see God only in the face of Jesus Christ. When Philip asked Jesus to shew us the Father, Jesus said, "*—he that hath seen me hath seen the Father.*" And, "*I am in the Father, and the Father is in me.*" In another place he said, "*I and my Father are one.*" *John 14: 9&11.* And *John 10: 30.* We know that Jesus was a flesh and blood man at that time, yet he did appear as man on earth thousands of years before he was born of the virgin Mary. There are many, very many, who will deny this vigorously, but there are many scriptures to prove the truth of this. To be brief I will mention only a few. *Gen. 18:1,* "*And the LORD appeared unto him (Abraham) in the plains of Mamre. —and he lifted up his eyes and looked, and, lo three men stood by him: and when he saw them he ran to meet them.*" He saw them with his

eyes, and bowed to the ground, and said *"My Lord"* without being rebuked for it. It was at this place that the Lord promised Abraham a son by his wife Sarah, and said, *"I will return unto thee, according to the time of life, and Sarah shall have a son."* Sarah did bear the promised son Isaac, and in Abraham and Isaac were all the promises of the new covenant given by God, the mediator of it. *"Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to thy seeds, as of many; but as of one, and to thy seed, which is Christ. Now this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of none effect."* Since the covenant of promise was confirmed before of God in Christ four hundred and thirty years before the law was given, does this not prove that Christ the Son of God then existed?

In the book of Daniel, Chap. 3, we find that the Son of God appeared again. Nebuchadnezzar had caused three Hebrew children to be thrown into a fiery furnace, but when he looked into the furnace he saw four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they had no hurt, and he said, *"and the form of the fourth is like unto the Son of God."*

Jesus Christ, who is rightly called both the Son of God and the Son of man, appeared unto John in

the Isle of Patmos and a vivid description of him was given in the 1st. chapter of Revelations, Vs. 13-16. And John said, *"And when I saw him, I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not, I am the first and the last: I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive forever more, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death."* Vs. 17-18. I would suggest that you read the whole chapter for more descriptions of Jesus Christ when he appeared to John. If Christ had not appeared in human form John could not have seen him with his natural eyes for a Spirit cannot be seen.

If the Scriptures quoted above, and my poor comments on them, do not prove to you that Jesus Christ, the Son of God, the mediator of the new covenant, appeared on earth in human form before his birth by the virgin Mary I would suggest that you study the scriptures with an open mind, and pray that God will reveal his truth to you by his Holy Spirit. All that I have done is present my views, and I hope and trust they have been given to me from above.

Any one who has been born again, and taught by the Holy Spirit, who is the Spirit of truth, knows that in his flesh he is a sinner. *"But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin. If we say that*

we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us." 1 Jn. 1: 7-10. As sons of the first Adam we are sinners, and will continue to sin as long as we live in this world. The new birth did not change our carnal mind, which is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. (Rom. 8:7). John tells us, "*And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: and he is the propitiation for all our sins.*" Forgiveness of our sins is for this time world only and has nothing to do with our justification before God: only the death, blood and resurrection of Jesus Christ our saviour has accomplished that. Because we were in Christ, he being the head and we being his body, our sins were never imputed unto us, but unto him; and God the Father has ever viewed us as holy and just in him. Those who were not in him shall never be justified. When Jesus was crucified he prayed for the soldiers who crucified him and cast lots for his raiment, saying, "*Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do.*" There was a time when I believed that this prayer justified them: and I feel sure there are those who believe as I did. Yet for-

givenness, as I stated above, does not absolve any one from guilt. Yet if we, his little children, sin we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, and he is the propitiation for our sins. (See 1 John 2:1-2). The words advocate and mediator means the same thing, and serves the same purpose. Counselor is one of the names belonging unto him, and as such he stands between us and the Father as our advocate or mediator, and it is through him that we approach the Father in prayer, asking, yea begging, for forgiveness for our sins.

There is no end to this treatise, but I must close. May God bless the truth and pardon all errors. I have written with no thought of provoking controversy, but only to present my views in my feeble way.

Eld. C.C. Wilbanks

CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Brother Terry,

I enjoy the Times so much. I'm in bad health. I don't get to the church often but I enjoy the Signs. I took them long years ago, and have the most of them. I'm going over and reading them again. It is such good news for me now.

Hope to see you some time,
Hallie Griswald

June 21, 2001

Elder Terry;

Hope I am not too late with my subscription; I know it is out in July. You will find a check enclosed for two more years for the Signs. We always look forward to receiving each issue. We enjoy the articles and experiences of the writers. They are treasured by us.

C.H. Elledge
Rt. 1, Box 317
Scroggins, TX 75480

209-3105 S. Main St.
Pentecton, B.C.
Canada, USA 7HI

Dear Elder Terry;

Thank you for the reminder that it was time to renew the Signs.

In this dry and thirsty land (spiritually) it is a blessing to receive the Signs every month. A sister in the church at Yakima Wash., gave me some papers of years gone by after the church ceased on the death of Elder Ben Preston, which I am thankful for.

The only fellowship my wife and I have, are the Signs and Remnant and tapes of Elder Preston and from the eastern states.

We remain thankful for our blessed hope in Christ Jesus know-

ing He has kept us onto this day and will on to the end and in glory.

Thank you,
Donald S. Ferguson

Dear Brother Key;

To start with let me say I am a firm believer of Salvation by Grace and Predestination of all things. I am sending two articles for publication however you can use them as you need.

These two articles tell a truth that actually happened to me recently and since the happening, I have been made to utter Praise to his holy name a number of times "*How Firm A Foundation*" just wanted to share this happening with others of like faith.

In a precious hope,
Buford R. Thornton

July 9, 2001

Dear Elder Terry,

I had hoped to be at the association on Saturday to pay you for my Signs, it runs out in August. Enclosed you will find a \$20.00 check for 2 yrs. If its any left keep it.

Elder King's sermon was so good. Keep the paper going for us old people setting at home to read.

May God continue to Bless each and every one of you.

Your Sister In Hope,
Lera Vasser

ARTICLES

About a year ago, my doctor told me that I needed a chest X-ray. I was given the X-ray and there were no problems found. Then one morning about two weeks later, I found myself unable to get out of bed. After dialing 911, I was taken by ambulance to a local hospital. I was given a number of X-rays.

On my second day in the hospital, a nurse told me that I was in need of more x-rays, as well as, a needle biopsy. When this procedure was explained to me I was laying face down on a cot. I was to receive a sharp needle stick in my back.

I was set for the procedure when suddenly everything came to a halt and everyone got quiet. Then, felt the doctor's hand on my shoulder. He said, "Mr. Thornton, something has happened that I can not explain. I have pictures that show you have lung cancer, but in the more recent pictures there is not a sign of it. I don't know what to say, but you are cured". Our wonderful, omnipotent God had once again worked his sovereign will.

In 1985, I was sent by my doctor to have a kidney X-ray. There was a concern that I might have prostatitis.

When I finally learned that I needed the X-ray, some of my friends began to tell me about the difficult experience I was about to go through. A dye was to be inject-

ed into my body that would pass through my kidneys. I was told that this would produce great discomfort.

As I was seated and waiting to be called for the X-ray, I was extremely nervous and could hardly sit still. Thoughts of what I believed concerning our God came to my mind. If I really believed what I said I believed, then what did I have to fear? These thoughts were followed by a great calm. I became completely relaxed and was blessed with the sweet peace.

I was called to the table by two technicians.

They explained the test too, and what I could expect. I was told that I would indeed experience discomfort with the procedure.

The test began with one of the technicians administering the dye and the other monitoring the test. As the test progressed, I was continuously asked how I felt. I experienced no discomfort throughout the test.

The technicians felt that they were doing the procedure wrong, since I should have been experiencing discomfort and yet was not.

The monitor indicated that the X-ray was correctly done, even though I felt fine throughout the procedure.

Praise be to our wonderful Lord for making an unpleasant situation more than bearable.

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THE RAINBOW

We all, at some time, have seen a rainbow in the sky. We have marvelled at the brilliance of its colors and joked about a pot of gold at the end of it. But, have we seriously considered what is manifested both naturally and spiritually by the rainbow?

On our journey home from the church in Salisbury, Maryland, several years ago, my wife and I passed through Virginia Beach immediately after a storm. There appeared the most beautiful rainbow I had ever seen. The colors were so radiant and they all seemed to be so gloriously displayed. I felt to be close enough to just reach out and touch it. My thoughts were upon it for a number of days and weeks and, finally, I was given to speak concerning it.

Genesis 9:8-17, "And God spake unto Noah, and to his sons with him, saying, And I, behold, I establish my covenant with you, and with your seed after you; And with every living creature that is with you, of the fowl, of the cattle, and of every beast of the earth with you; from all that go out of the ark, to every beast of the earth. And I will establish my covenant with you; neither shall all flesh be cut off any more by the waters of a flood; neither shall there any more be a flood to destroy the earth. And God said, This is the token of the covenant which I make between me and you and

every living creature that is with you, for perpetual generations; I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth. And it shall come to pass, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the bow shall be seen in the cloud; And I will remember my covenant, which is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh. And the bow shall be in the cloud; and I will look upon it that I may remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is upon the earth. And God said unto Noah, This is the token of the covenant, which I have established between me and all flesh that is upon the earth."

Because of the exceeding sinfulness of man, God destroyed the earth and all flesh upon it, except for the eight souls of Noah and his family, by the great flood. God had commanded Noah to build an ark into which he had commanded them to come and God shut them in that they would not be destroyed. The ark was a type of Christ and bore the wrath of God that was poured out. Though tossed to and fro, Noah and his family were safe and secure. When the storm was over and the waters receded, they came forth from the ark and worshipped God through their burnt offerings on the altar. Then, God made a covenant between him-

self and all the earth that the earth would never again be destroyed by the waters of a flood. As a token of his covenant, God set the rainbow in the cloud.

The rainbow has seven colors. Seven is a perfect, complete number. There are many scriptures in both the Old and New Testaments concerning the number seven. Joshua had seven priests blow seven trumpets as the Israelites marched around Jericho for seven days. On the seventh day, the people marched around the city seven times, the priests blew with the trumpets, the people shouted, and the walls of the city fell down. The Apostle John wrote to the seven churches in Asia and he saw seven candlesticks and seven stars. Christ is the fulfillment of the number seven. He is perfect and complete and the church in him is perfect and complete.

The colors of the rainbow are violet, indigo, blue, green, yellow, orange, and red which are the same colors that are in the sun. The primary colors are red, blue and green from which are produced the other four colors. The three primary colors set forth the three persons of the one God. As the Apostle John writes, *"For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one."* When the three primary colors are combined, they produce one color, white. Then we see the righteousness, holiness and perfection of

God manifested. Also, the three primary colors set forth Christ as the way, the truth and the life.

Red manifests the blood of Christ and sets him forth as the way. Our precious redeemer shed his blood to cleanse his people from their sins; to pay the price demanded by God's divine justice; to redeem them from the curse of the law. He is the way and not just a way. There is no other way for a lost sinner to be saved and to hear that blessed proclamation, *"Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."* O, dear child of God, have you tried all the ways of the world and found that they only lead to despair and death? Then, to hear a small, still voice speak with such authority and peace, *"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."*

Blue sets forth Christ as the truth. The color blue was in the curtains of the tabernacle, in the veil, in the hanging for the door of the tent, and in the garment that Aaron wore. As we look up, we see the blue sky and are reminded that truth came down from the climes of glory. The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. The world knows not the truth because it knows not Christ. You know the truth because Christ dwells in you, the Hope of Glory. The Father has revealed his son to you and you can proclaim with Peter, *"Thou art the Christ, the Son of*

the living God." The truth sets you free from the ignorance of unbelief.

Green signifies life. When the grass and leaves turn brown, we say they are dead. But, when we see them turn green, we know there is life. Winter is over and spring has come. David wrote that "*He maketh me to lie down in green pastures.*" Not just any pastures, but green pastures. There would have been no comfort, no rest, no nourishment except in green pastures. God provides the green pastures of his gospel for his sheep. He maketh you to lie down (rest) in the green pastures and there, he feeds you. There can be no works of the flesh because it is of grace. There is life, not death, in his green pastures.

Violet is purple and signifies royalty. Kings wore purple to show that they were royalty. Mark wrote that when Christ was brought before Pilate, they clothed him with purple and put a crown of thorns on him and said, "*Hail, King of the Jews.*" They mocked him. They did not understand that this man was truly the King of kings and Lord of lords. Indeed, royalty such as they never knew stood before them. This king has subjects who love and worship him. They follow him, and another they will not follow. His kingdom is not of this world. No man or army can overthrow him or take his kingdom. He has all power and none can stand before him. Even King Nebuchadnezzar confessed, "*And all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing: and he*

doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, what doest thou?" Not even Solomon in all his splendor can be compared to our king.

Indigo is deep, dark blue and sets forth his sorrows and sufferings. He was despised and rejected of men. He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, being beaten and mocked, but never opening his mouth. In the garden, Christ was withdrawn from his disciples about a stone's cast signifying his death. Under the law, those who committed certain transgressions were stoned to death. Though Christ had committed no transgressions, he was to bear the transgressions of his people on the cross. He went a stone's cast farther than his disciples or anyone else could go. There, in the garden, he prayed "*Father, if thou be willing, remove this cup from me: Nevertheless not my will, but thine, be done.*" There was never any doubt that he would drink of that cup, for it is written, "*Then said I, Lo, I come, (in the volume of the book it is written of me,) to do thy will, O God.*" And again he said, "For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. In the garden, an angel from heaven appeared unto him, strengthening him. Christ was in an agony because he knew exactly what he was about to suffer. No man has ever suffered to the extent our Lord suf-

ferred as he bore your sins and I hope mine. He endured all that suffering as well as the crucifixion on the cross because of his great love for his people. As he was verily the Son of God and therefore, royalty; so also, was he the Son of man who must suffer and die.

Yellow, as gold, signifies the richness of his love for his people whereby he laid down his own life to pay the debt of their sins and to redeem them from the curse of the law. *“Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends.”* His love is pure and unconditional. As John wrote, “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.” We love God because he first loved us. The Apostle Paul said *“And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory, even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles.”* By nature, we all were children of wrath. However, the Apostle recorded for our comfort and edification, *“But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) and hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ.”* *“Faith*

worketh by love” wrote Paul to the Galatians.

Orange is a symbol of power. Jesus said, *“All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.”* He also said that he had power to lay down his life and he had power to take it again. No man takes his life from him. *“Where the word of a king is, there is power.”* By the effectual working of his power in you, he quickened or made alive you who were following after the course of this sinful world, taking pleasure in all the ways of the world, and were dead in trespasses and sins. A change occurred within you that no man could bring about. You saw everything differently. The eyes of your understanding were enlightened. You saw yourself as wretched and lost without any hope of eternal life. By his power and grace, he lifted you up out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay and set your feet upon a rock (which is Christ), and established your goings. And he put a new song in your mouth, even praise unto our God.

The natural rainbow is for the natural man. Man in the flesh can see it with his natural eyes and know with the natural mind that the storm has passed and the earth has not been destroyed. He knows that it takes drops of moisture and rays of the sun to produce the rainbow. But, man in the flesh cannot see and understand any more than that.

To a little child of God, the rainbow is more than just a natural phe-

nomena. When the storms come that try you so severely, you cannot behold the rainbow. As Job said, *“Behold, I go forward, but he is not there; and backward, but I cannot perceive him: On the left hand, where he doth work, but I cannot behold him: he hideth himself on the right hand, that I cannot see him.”* There seems only darkness and the fearful thunderings and lightnings. You feel so helpless and alone. Yet, dear child of the Heavenly King, you have been given faith to believe that in the end, all will be well. For you believe in a God who rules and reigns and has promised that none can pluck his little ones from his hand. As with Job, *“Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him.”* As surely as he has given you faith, it is being tried. But, when he hath tried you, you shall come forth as gold. When the storm passes, you see the beautiful rainbow and know that all is well. When the trial or sorrow passes, you see that Christ was with you the whole time, but you just couldn’t see him. Now, you behold his beauty that far surpasses that of the natural rainbow. A beauty of holiness that includes his love, grace and mercy. You then understand that you were put into the cliff of the rock with his hand over you so that you could not see his face. But, you now see his hinderparts.

What is the face of God? God is a spirit which no man can see as the scripture says that Christ was the

image of the invisible God. God doesn’t have a form as we do. He knows all things and has seen the end from the beginning. There is nothing new to him and there is no past or future with God, but only the present. As Christ said, *“Before Abraham was, I am.”* To me, the face of God sets forth all that he sees and knows. He knows and has seen that which is to come because he has purposed it. That includes all the wrath that will be poured out and the evil that is to come; all the severe trials as well as death that we will endure; the ones who are elected to eternal life and will hear that blessed summons, *“Come, ye blessed of my father and inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world”*; and those whose names are not written in the lamb’s Book of Life who hear those dreadful words, *“Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels.”* Is it any wonder, then, that he said no man can see my face and live? We could not withstand such knowledge. It would indeed destroy us in the flesh. We see his hinderparts-where he has been and what he has brought to pass.

His covenant of grace is not with all flesh, but with those that he chose before the foundation of the world and predestinated to be conformed to the image of his son. This covenant says that he will put his laws into their minds and write them

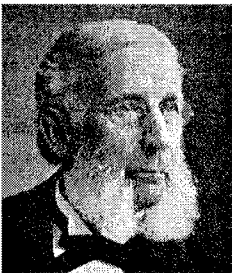
in their hearts. Their sins and iniquities he will remember no more. He will be to them a God and they shall be to him a people. They shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, know the Lord: for all shall know him, from the least to the greatest. He will be merciful to their unrighteousness. When we behold Christ, we can say, regardless of the outcome of the storm, all is well.

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VOICES OF THE PAST

HOW THEY GROW

“Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow.”



Elder Silas H. Durand

To his disciples the Savior thus taught precious things concerning his people, how they are manifested, how they are provided for, how they are clothed in beauty and purity by no power of their own, and how their confidence and trust must be alone in the Lord.

The church is called a lily by her heavenly Husband, and is distinguished from all other religious organizations *“as the lily among thorns.”*

The Lord says of Israel that he shall grow as the lily. Therefore we are sure that when we consider how the lilies of the field grow we shall be considering in this beautiful and striking figure that peculiar experience and doctrine of the Lord’s people which distinguish them as *“a peculiar people.”*

Growth in vegetable or animal is a great mystery. We cannot fully understand why things grow, for it is a part of the unsearchable mystery of life; but we can consider, and in some measure understand, how they grow. Growth cannot be regarded as an act, for that would imply that it depended upon an exercise of will. It is not an act of the thing growing, but it is a movement which is a necessary consequent of life. The will of the person or thing growing has nothing to do with the growth. It is an experience. The plant grows because of the life that is in it, not because it wills to grow. If that growth is to be increased it must be by the work of the one attending it in enriching and stirring the soil and giving it water and light and warmth. A man may affect his own natural growth, under certain circumstances, by attention to food and drink, while the principle of life that causes growth remains beyond the possible power of his will or his understanding.

In the figure of the lily in the text, and in similar figures throughout the Scriptures, the subject of God’s spiritual work is regarded as a plant or tree, moved and controlled and

exercised by the power of the life within, but not exercising in the least degree any power over that life.

When a poor sinner, "*who knows the plague of his own heart,*" considers the lilies of the field, so white, so pure, so beautiful, and then looks into his own heart, so sinful, so full of evil, how can he think of himself as one of those whom the dear Savior would represent by the lily? With what grief and consternation he sees the absolute contrast between the lily in its unspeakable loveliness, and himself. Where can he see in himself any principle or feature which can answer to the purity of the lily? In every respect they seem to him to be "contrary the one to the other." The poor soul cannot realize at such a time that only by the power of the Spirit can he see and feel the evil of the flesh. The natural man does not receive the truth that he is sinful and depraved; that is one of those things which can only be known by the revelation of the Spirit of God. That sad knowledge is an evidence of life, but the Spirit alone can make the poor soul see that evidence. "*In him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.*"- *John i. 4, 5.* "*All things that are reprov'd are made manifest by the light: for whatsoever doth make manifest is light.*"-*Eph. v. 13.*

But let us consider how the lilies grow. The first work in order to the growth of a plant is the prepara-

tion of the soil. This is the work of the gardener. The first movement made by the seed after it has been put into the soil prepared for it is to send roots downward. The roots will be working and extending into the ground for several days before the plant appears. This order in the work of growing, both in natural plants and in the Lord's plants which grow in the garden of grace, is recognized in the words of the Lord by Isaiah: "*And the remnant that is escaped of the house of Judah shall again take root downward, and bear fruit upward.*"

The soil for plants generally must be broken up and rendered soft and fine, so that the roots can easily work into it. The soil for lilies of some kinds needs much softening by water, and in some kinds to be covered by it. There are a great many things of a most obnoxious kind that need to be gotten together to make a good rich soil for the lily. We speak of the soil as "good," and "rich," but put some of it out of place, on the face or on a white garment, and we pronounce it vile and loathsome.

What a sad, dark, fearful time that is for the poor soul when his thoughts are engaged day and night in searching his own vile heart and finding nothing but evil there. He cannot tell how he first came to see himself so sinful, cannot tell how his thoughts first began to be engaged in such a doleful search, in which he finds no good, but deeper and darker depths of evil.

This broken heart, this depraved and sinful nature, this mass of corruption felt in the soul, is the soil which the Lord has prepared. It is he, the heavenly Husbandman, who has broken up the heart, who has made its corruption appear to our startled view, who has made us sick of sin, and sick of self because of sin.

Into this vile soil our thoughts are working downward, like roots from a good seed which the Lord has planted. This vile nature, this corrupt heart, is the "good ground" into which the good seed has fallen. It is "good ground" because it is well broken up and pulverized and made soft and tender. It is not the corruption, the sinfulness, which makes it good ground, but the knowledge of that corruption and sin, and the hatred of it. All men are corrupt and sinful, but until the law of God enters into the heart no one can know and feel it, and until that knowledge of one's just condemnation comes to him by the quickening power of God his heart is hard like the rock, the wayside or the thorny ground.

When the thoughts are working down in the darkness of our heart, and observing the sinfulness of all our life, trying if they can find some good thing there, what terrible anxiety and distress we feel. We cannot give up the search for something to give us hope, some good thing to relieve our anguish, some way of escape from the sin and evil that everywhere so afflict us. But we can find no relief, no way of escape from

evil, for we seem to be all evil. Think of the roots that are working downward and abroad in the depth of the earth; what hopelessness we may imagine is theirs as they work in the darkness, the mass of fine, minute rootlets struggling, pushing themselves down into the soil, which grows more and more mellow, creeping and forcing themselves outward, to find they know not what. But they are doing the work appointed for them, and it is through the work done by them that the tender blade finally appears in sight.

It is through the work done by the thoughts down in the broken soil of the heart that finally the tender hope appears. The thoughts have been working downward, but the hope is reaching upward. In proportion to the thoroughness of that search downward is the strength and beauty of that blade looking upward. The search must be exhaustive and in vain. Again and again we must learn the sad truth: no light, no hope, no good thing down there in the earth; in the flesh no good thing. That must be learned deeply again and again.

But the tender roots with their mysterious, delicate life-power are taking up something from that dark, obnoxious soil which will be conveyed by the miraculous processes of nature upward and cause the appearance of the blade, the flower and the fruit. So the thoughts have gathered the sad assurance that there is nothing but evil in us, and because there is left no question of that truth,

and because we are cut off from all hope in ourselves, we are prepared to wonder and adore when a blessed hope is given unto us reaching upward instead of downward. What a glorious surprise when the hope in Jesus appears to us! What thanksgiving and praise fill our poor hearts!

So the lilies grow, and the corn and the vine. *"They shall revive as the corn, and grow as the vine."* *"I will be as the dew unto Israel; he shall grow as the lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon."*- *Hosea xiv. 5, 7.*

When at any time the roots cease to be sent forth downward and outward in the soil, then the plant or the tree will cease to grow. When the thoughts cease to work in the soil of a sinful, broken heart, then the growth in grace ceases. When we lose sight of our sinfulness in any degree, and begin to feel some contentment and satisfaction with our own condition, then we may think that we have attained to some excellent growth. But we have truly not grown at all in a spiritual sense; we have really diminished. *"Whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord."*

So from time to time the Lord sends a winter time upon us, when we can only send roots downward; when we can only think of our vileness; when our life looks to us utterly unworthy; when we can hardly see anything in our heart and life in which to take any comfort. The things that we have been enabled to

do in obedience to the Lord we are thankful to him for, but we have still to think of our own unprofitableness as servants. All that was of ourselves in every work seems to display our own weakness and sinfulness. We feel a tender thankfulness to the Lord for his goodness in leading us in the paths of righteousness, but we feel also that *"the sins of one most righteous day might sink us in despair."*

How many a time I have seemed to be at the point of giving up, assured that my hope was not good, because for days I could seem to think of nothing but my own sinfulness and depravity. It was not long ago that while in this dark state of mind, my thoughts active, but active in a downward direction, all at once I saw them as the roots of a plant working downward that the plant might grow upward. What a sweet comfort that was.

Think of the pure, white flower of the lily looking downward at the black mud out of which it has grown! Think of the Spirit contrasted with the flesh. In the same person the flesh is felt lusting *"against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would."* No wonder that the Lord's people feel conflicts within themselves. There must be a warfare where there are two contrary principles. None but quickened souls can feel that warfare.

The lilies, how wonderfully beautiful they are. Do they know of their beauty? Do they not feel ashamed as they look down at that black, uncomely soil where they live? Could they grow otherwise or elsewhere than they do? Could they transfer themselves to some whiter, cleaner ground? Can they by exerting some power of their own grow more rapidly, or by neglect can they cease to grow? Can they cause themselves to be more or less pure and fair and lovely? Consider them, how they grow, and then you will see how the Lord's children grow in grace. It is by no effort or power of their own, and yet they are constantly, when exercised by the Spirit, anxious to grow, and feeling that something depends upon them, and are chiding and condemning themselves for their lack of growth. But all their efforts are vain, and only show them how helpless they are, how unable to make themselves any more worthy in the sight of God. Then they come again to the knowledge that all their goodness and power are in Jesus; that he is their righteousness. Then they truly grow, not in themselves, but in Jesus. Then they grow, not in their own works, but in grace. Then it can be said of them:

*Blessed are you when you strive
in vain,
And all your works no comfort
yield;
For when you cease to toil and
spin,
You are as lilies of the field.*

*And he who richly clothes the
flower,
Which passes almost as a
breath,
Will show his richer grace and
power*

In you, O ye of little faith.

The plants in nature grow in the night. I have measured the growth of corn. Once from six at night to six in the morning it grew thirteen inches, and only an inch during the following day. It is authoritatively said that corn will sometimes, under most favorable circumstances, grow sixteen inches in one night. It is in the night time of sorrow and affliction that the Lord's plants grow in the knowledge and grace of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is while under a distressing sense of their own weakness that they grow in the knowledge of Jesus as their Strength. It is through an especially dark and oppressive experience of their own sinfulness and depravity that they grow in the knowledge of Jesus as their Righteousness. When their thoughts have long been working and groping, like the roots of plants, in the dark depths of their earthly nature, and have found no good thing dwelling there, but only evil, then with what glad surprise they see the same thoughts reaching upward and coming beautifully into flower, and rejoicing in the pure light of the Sun of Righteousness. Then they learn that all their sad and weary night work has not been in vain. Those creeping, searching roots, those struggling, groping

thoughts, have brought up into the soul something that was necessary to the real growth of the true plant of grace. Their work down there in the darkness has caused the growth to be away from the earth, away from self-confidence, and has caused the blade to reach upward, and the flower to bloom in the sunlit atmosphere of grace. The poor souls can now see that by the faith and hope and love that are at last blooming in their hearts, and filling them with the beauty and perfume of Jesus' blessed name, they are even more gloriously clothed than are the lilies of the field.

Silas H. Durand
December 10, 1904.

Touchet, Wash., June 12, 1910.

Dear Brother Chick: -- After sometime silence with my pen, but not in mind, I find myself once more trying to express to you the course or travel of my mind during this long silence. After many week's work for the necessities of this life I was permitted to meet a few of the saints at this place, and to spend a few moments in trying to praise God, from whom all blessings flow. I am now at home, and all quiet, and I picked up the SIGNS for June 15th, and read your editorial, and I felt to thank our Father for such food, and then came the desire to tell you some of the wonders of grace, so you might know that while you live

in the eastern part of these United States, and I live in the extreme west, and while we natural creatures are limited, as the bounds of our habitations are set so that we cannot go beyond them, still the word of God is not bound, and neither can it be. This is the Word which by the gospel is preached unto you, as said the apostle. I have felt to be one with the apostle when he said, O the depth of the wisdom of God; how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out.

It so seemed, dear brother, as you so beautifully applied those types of the potter and the clay, that the antitype answered as face to face. How sweet and comforting it is to the poor, broken heart of one who realizes that he can do nothing of himself, and who has had to do with self, as did Peter when he denied his Lord, for faith to make manifest to him the dear Father above, who pities his children, the clay of his own molding.

This faith shows a fullness in Jesus; it shows that grace was treasured up in him for all our necessities, for all our denials and all our disappointments, and many of these things have been in my life.

For thirty years my life has been one of disappointments. The first of note was that I had my mind set for heaven from the first of my recollections but there came a time when a knowledge of my sins blighted all these prospects and

hopes, and then my mind was thoroughly set to believe banishment forever from God was my lot, though much against my desire, and then at an unexpected time and in an unexpected way my mind was made to feel that I would no more be beset with disappointments. But how soon again was I made to drink the cup with Peter and John when in prison. Then I felt, Woe is me, and then the Lord looked with mercy upon the clay in his own hands, and I was made to weep with sorrow that I had denied my Lord, and to weep for joy that he was faithful and had not denied me. Then my mind was fixed to always be ready to give a reason of the hope that was given me, but in this, too, I have been disappointed.

But my mind has led me away from my intent I merely wanted to tell you how much I enjoyed this editorial, and in fact all the Signs. I do so love to hear or read after one who can take the prophecies and apply them experimentally, and show the faithfulness of God to his rebellious people, but when they are taken up under the law, and it is declared that the blessings depend upon the obedience of the creature, then I am left out, for I surely am the clay and God the Potter, and all blessings must come from him for time and eternity. And I long to see the day when he will loose me from the things of this life and allow me to spend the few days of my allotted time with his

dear saints. May he grant this for Jesus' sake. May God bless you, with all his saints, is my prayer.

Yours in love,
J.T. Barnes

"My soul fainteth for thy salvation: but I hope in thy word."
— *Psalm cxix. 81.*

How difficult, for the most part, it is, and we may add, how rare to be able to realise for ourselves, with any degree of abiding permanency, a sweet experimental sense of, and an assured interest in those spiritual blessings with which, so far as we are believers in the Son of God, we are blessed in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. Glimpses, glances, transient views, sips and tastes, drops and crumbs sweet beyond expression whilst they last, but rarely given and soon gone, are, generally speaking, all we seem to get after much hard labour, many cries, earnest entreaties, and vehement longings before the Lord, as he presents himself to our faith, seated on the throne of his grace. How many there are who are daily and sometimes almost hourly crying out, if not in the exact words, yet in the substance of them:

*"O come, thou much-expected guest
Lord Jesus, quickly come!"*

And yet how long he seems to delay his coming! How continually are they looking upward till eyes and heart seem alike to fail, waiting for his appearing more than they that watch for the morning; how willing

to make any sacrifice, to do anything, be anything, or bear anything, if he would but manifest himself to their souls. How often are they searching and examining their hearts, lips, and lives, to see if there be any evil way in them which makes him hide his lovely face, and not drop one word into their longing breasts, whereby they might had sweet communion with him! How they desire to be blessed with real contrition of heart, and godly sorrow for their sins, and be melted and dissolved at his feet under a sight and sense of his bleeding, dying love!

But whence spring all these longing looks and waiting expectations? Do not all those earnest desires and vehement longings shew that those in when they so continually are found are begotten again to a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead? It is divine life in their souls which is the spring and source of these inward breathings, lookings, and longings; and this divine life arises out of a new and spiritual birth, which is itself the fruit of the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. It is not the still-born child that cries; it is the cry of the living child which so goes to the heart of the mother. Thus the cries of which we have spoken shew that there is life. But with life there is hope; for why should a man be ever crying after, waiting for, and anxiously expecting a blessing which he has no hope ever to obtain? If, then, these had no living hope, would they cry? There are no

cries in a dead hope. It is because the grace of hope in their breasts is, like every other grace of the Spirit, alive unto God, that it acts in union with faith and love, to bring them and keep them earnest, sincere, and unwearied before the throne, expecting and anticipating what God has promised to bestow on those who wait upon him.

Elder J.C. Philpot

MEETINGS

CONTENTNEA ASSOCIATION

The Lord willing, the one hundred seventy first session of the Contentnea Association will be held with the Goose Creek Island Primitive Baptist Church, Lowland, N.C. on Saturday and Sunday, October 13-14, 2001. Service to begin at 10:30 on Saturday. Traveling from the west, take NC-33 to Hobucken, cross the high rise bridge, go one half mile, turn left on Lowland Road, go three miles and turn right on Middle Prong Road and the Church is a short distance on the right. From the south, take NC-55 from New Bern to Bayboro and NC-304 to Hobucken, then follow the above directions.

We invite all believers of the truth to come and be with us during this meeting.

Gene Lupton, Association Clerk

EASTERN KEHUKEE ASSOCIATION

The 2001 Eastern Kehukee Association will convene the Lord willing, with Flat Swamp Church. Services will begin at 10:30 am on Saturday, October 6 and Sunday, October 7.

Directions to the church are as follows: from Raleigh, NC take US 64 East approximately 75 miles. Turn off at Exit 496. At the stop sign, turn right and go to Bethel. Continue straight through the stoplight and go three blocks. Turn left on Package Craft Road. Travel about 6 miles and the church sits on the left.

We invite visitors and correspondents to attend this meeting.

Naomi Coker
Association Clerk

**NEW DAN RIVER
PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH**

New Dan River Primitive Baptist Church at Vesta, Virginia, Patrick County, plans to hold a fifth Saturday (Only) meeting on September 29, 2001. Singing will begin at 9:30 a.m.

The church is located 1/4 mile off U.S. Route 58, on state shed road (Route 636). We welcome all believers of Sovereign Grace to this all day meeting.

SOUTH OUACHITA ASSOCIATION

The South Ouachita Association will be held, the Lord willing, on Saturday and Sunday, September 22 & 23, 2001.

Union Church, Located about five miles Southeast of Manion, Louisiana, will host the Association. All lovers of the truth are invited to come and be with us.

Ned Barron
Association Clerk
(318) 778-4217

SULPHUR FORK ASSOCIATION

The One Hundred Fifty-Six session of the Sulphur Fork Association will be held, the Lord willing, with Prospect Church on Saturday and Sunday, October 6 & 7, 2001.

Prospect Church is located on the North side of Highway 67, about three (3) miles east of Simms, Tx. (Look for sign). All lovers of the truth are invited to come and be with us.

Miles Bird
Association Clerk
(318) 687-6775

Thank you very much.

Miles Bird
2209 Cynthia Ln.
Shreveport, LA 71118

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR JUNE 2001

Walter Griffith, NC	2.00
Rachel Smith, NC	2.00
Mrs. N. H. Conner, VA	10.00
Rlee Houchins, VA	5.00
Cleo Underwood, VA.....	5.00
C.H. Jones, TN	2.00
Eld. Barnabas Brammer, MD ...	2.00
Edward Hodnett, VA.....	2.00
Grady Putman, AR.....	12.00
Jim Mosley, MI	4.95
Jesse Ray, NC.....	2.00
James Shelor, VA	5.00
Donald Ferguson, BC	32.00

OBITUARIES

PATTIE B. KREWATCH

Sister Pattie B. Krewatch was born June 20, 1905, and departed this life on March 28, 2001, making her mortal journey 95 years. She was the daughter of Robert and Nora Bailey of Sussex Co., Delaware. She was preceeded in death by her parents, sisters Elah Hearne, Leticia Russell, Grace Yohans, Susie Brumbley and Hilda Bradley; and brothers Homer and Robert Bailey; and her son Kenneth K. Krewatch.

Sister Pattie is survived by her husband of 72 years (married August 18, 1928) Albert V. Krewatch, daughter Joann B. Fletcher, a daughter in law, four grandchildren, six great-grandchildren, a sister in law, and several nieces and nephews, and many Old School Baptist members and friends.

Sister Pattie and her husband traveled in many countries in connection with Al's work with the University of Maryland. Her friends extended across the boundaries of several countries and through many whom she served as a registered nurse for many years.

Pattie was a devoted member of the Little Creek Primitive Baptist Church of Sussex Co., Delaware. She remembered clearly her father's hitching up the horse to a wagon and driving his family to Little Creek for meetings. It had been a home to Sister Pattie since childhood. She was baptised by Elder H.C. Ker and Elder Harold Bennett in July, 1942. Her service to her church and to the many visiting ministers and their wives and families and other brethren will long be remembered. In her declining months, Sister Pattie was brought to church by her loving husband and daughter in a wheel chair. She sat attentively to hear the joyful sound of the gospel and to sing from heart many hymns which had been a part of her life since childhood.

Her funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder C.B. Davis on

March 31, 2001, and she was laid to rest in the Little Creek Church Cemetery among her parents, her son, and other relatives and a host of brethren who had preceeded her in death. Her life was a testimony of devotion to her Heavenly Father. Her conversation was of His loving kindness and faithfulness to His people.

She bore with patience her afflictions and longed to be released from this world of sorrow; yet she still maintained concern for her church and the congregation of believers. We who remain behind feel assured that Sister Pattie walks in a new life, in a new land, singing praises to her Savior for all eternity.

Respectfully submitted,
Joann Fletcher
Elbert Robbins

OPIE JANE PHILLIPS

Valley View Church has lost a lovely Sister Opie Jane Phillips. She was born on May 16, 1916, the daughter of Perry and Arizona Phillips. Her mother was also a member of Valley View Church. Her Grandfather was a Primitive Baptist Minister John M. Phillips. She was married to Ertie Fleming Phillips on March 24, 1937. Sister Opie was preceded in death by her husband, a son Rollie Clarence Phillips, and a granddaughter.

She is survived by two daughters and son in law Sylvia and Alva Mcpeak, Woolwine, Va., Margaret P.

Hamilton, Salem, Va.; one brother and wife Oden and Diane Phillips, Hampton, Va.; three sisters, Lillie P. Lester, Vinton, Va., Carrie P. Lester, Roanoke, Va., Goldie L. Phillips, Louisville, Ky.; Daugher-in- law Jo Ann Phillips, Riner, Va.; 7 Grandchildren; 10 great grandchildren.

Sister Opie joined Valley View March 16, 1997, baptized by Elder Raymond Goad, June 15, 1997. She was a firm believer in salvation by grace and attended church as long as she was able.

The funeral service was held at Mabery Chapel April 10, 2001 by her Pastor Elder Raymond Goad and she was laid to rest at Jacksonville Cemetery, Floyd, Va. beside her husband. Asleep in Jesus awaiting the second coming. May the Lord reconcile us to his Will and realize our loss is her eternal gain.

Written at the request of Valley View Church by Lena Duncan, clerk.
Raymond Goad, Moderator

PSALM 33:5-9.

He loveth righteousness and judgment: the earth is full of the goodness of the LORD.

By the word of the LORD were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth.

He gathereth the waters of the sea together as an heap: he layeth up the depth in storehouses.

Let all the earth fear the LORD: let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him.

For he spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast.

ELDER J. T. PRESCOTT, SR.

Elder J. T. Prescott departed this vale of sin and sorrow on March 13, 2001. He now awaits the triumphant coming of his Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, having run the course and after fighting the good fight which had been ordained for him from before the foundation of the world. In his last years, marked with many trials and tribulations, he never once wavered in his faith, not did he ever complain. He stood and preached Jesus as long as he was able. Then he sat and preached Jesus. In the latter days, he preached Jesus from his bed of affliction. Regardless of his condition, he always preached Jesus, the author and finisher of his faith.

He was 82 years of age, and was married for 62 years to Mary Rogers Prescott, who survives him in grief but also in hope. Two sons, Josiah Thomas Prescott, Jr. and wife Carol of Emerald Isle, and Donald Ray Prescott and wife Melva survive. Also, two daughters, Sylvia Prescott Adams and husband Gray, of Cape Carteret and Diana Prescott Carroll and husband Peter of Raleigh survive their father as well. A brother, Irvin of Winston Salem and a sister, Leola Prescott Bright of Kinston are also left to mourn. Elder Prescott had sixteen grandchildren and four great grandchildren.

Elder Prescott served Primitive Baptist churches in both the Kehukee and Contentnea Associa-

tions for many decades. He was Pastor of the Hadnot Creek Church and Cedar Island Church until his death. His travels took him to churches and associations from Texas to Canada. He was also on the board of the Signs of the Times for many years. Elder Prescott and his dear companion were not forgetful to entertain strangers, knowing that many have entertained angels unawares. It would be difficult indeed to count the visitors that have tasted the hospitality of the Prescott household.

Regardless of the very high esteem in which many held him, Elder Prescott would not accept praise, for he knew that any gifts he had were given him from the Father of lights, and not of his own works. His funeral was conducted by Elders Milton Lupton, Jesse Foreman, Gene Lupton, Marvin Brumfield, and Tom Thompson. He will be missed by those of us who remain. Sleep in peace, dear brother. Praise God. Submitted by the Church at Hadnot Creek

Elder Tom Thompson, Pastor

NOTICE

A couple of errors were made in your August, 2001 issue of the Signs. On page 176 in the first column the name (Sister Annie McCods) should have been Sister Annie McCool. Also in the 17th and 18th lines down in the 2 column the period should have been omitted after (expect.) It should read "expect to do" with no new paragraph.

The Editors

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES

202 Carousel Lane, Meadows of Dan, Va. 24120-4403

A HEARTBEAT FROM HEAVEN

*We are living on the border
Of Eternity each day;
We are just as close to Heaven
As the stars so far away.
And the only thing between us,
Whether we are big or small,
Is a tender, little heartbeat.
Just a heartbeat, that is all.*

*Just a heartbeat from the Glory,
Just a heartbeat, nothing more;
Just a tender, little heartbeat,
Till we walk the Golden shore;
Keep our lamp all
Trimmed and burning,
Let it shine you'll never fall;
Just a heartbeat from the Glory,
Just a heartbeat, that is all.*

*There's a place beyond the river
Where we'll lay our burdens down,
Where we'll meet
Our friends and loved ones,
Where we'll wear a starry crown.
All our troubles will be over,
And no tears shall ever fall;
Just a heartbeat for the Glory,
Just a heartbeat, that is all.*

*by Walt Huntley
submitted by B.G. Pryor*

POSTMASTER

Please send address changes to:

Signs of the Times
202 Carousel Lane
Meadows of Dan, Va 24120-4403

CONTENTS

EDITORIAL	218
Elder J.B. Farmer	
CORRESPONDENCE	221
VOICES OF THE PAST	224
Elder Gilbert Beebe	
Elder J.C. Philpot	
Elder Silas H. Durand	
CONTRIBUTIONS	240
OBITUARIES	240
James W. Brown	
Clara Freeman	
Gentry Dean Williams	

EDITORIAL

“And the Lord caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof; And the rib, which the Lord God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man. And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man.” Genesis 2:21-23.



Elder J. B. Farmer

Here is the account of God making, or creating, Eve, the mother of all living, whom He gave to be the bride and wife of Adam.

This account, no doubt, was given by inspiration to the writer and written and preserved for the benefit of those who are given a heart of understanding. As with all scripture, it is of no private interpretation or is not to be understood with the carnal mind. We believe that no one has the ability in himself to rightly divide this or any other mystery which belongs to God. Rather, we must wait upon God, Who only dwells in the light, hoping that He may be gracious to reveal some of His things unto us.

We are made to believe that this is the true record of the natural formation of the second person ever to breathe the breath of life. Also, that this is a true figure, showing the way which God brought the church, the bride of Christ, into being. From the holy record, it seems apparent that He accomplished this before He made the world. We are taught that the church, or body of Christ, with all her members, was foreknown of God and predestinated unto the adoption of children. Also, that each member's name was written in the Lamb's book of life before the foundation of the world. She was chosen in Him and given grace in Him before the world was, according to

the scriptures. Also, that she was loved with an everlasting love and was created in Christ Jesus unto good works. It seems plain that all this was done before the church ever was manifest in the world.

It appears that Eve's life was the life of Adam, and that his life was her life, since she was made of his very substance. She was bone of his bones and flesh of his flesh naturally. Her life was totally dependent upon his life, even as the life of the church is totally dependent on the life of Christ. Before Eve was made, her dwelling place was in Adam, just as the church dwelt in Christ before she was created. It appears that the church stood in the same relation to Christ spiritually as Eve did unto Adam naturally. *"We are of His body, of His flesh and of His bones"*, spiritually, if we are His, according to the inspired apostle. This being the case, it is no wonder that we are told that, *"In Him we live and move and have our being."* In another place we are assured with these words, *"Lord, thou hast been our dwelling place in all generations."* Psalm 90:1.

The inspired psalmist said, *"Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being imperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them."* Psalm 139:16. I believe that God saw and knew Eve before He brought her

forth from Adam, as He saw and knew His people before He ever created them in Christ Jesus. God knew and loved His people before He ever made them. *"Known unto God are all His works from the beginning of the world."* Acts 15:18. Is this not what it means to be foreknown of God? He saw them, knew them, loved them and determined to keep them as the apple of His eye and purposed finally to redeem them by Christ and bring them to glory. All this was done before they were generated of Him and before He made the world.

"Before the mountains were brought forth, or ever thou hadst formed the earth and the world, even from everlasting, thou art God." Our God is eternal. He had no beginning of days or end of life. But the church had a beginning. Was not her beginning when she was created in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world? Some have spoken of God's people being eternal children, and this may be true, in one sense, if properly understood. But we are taught that only God is eternal. However, if the church is spiritual, which I believe she is, she must have an eternal aspect, for there is no beginning or ending of life in that Eternal Spirit. Then what is it that is eternal about the church? It appears to me, that the church, being formed of the body of Christ, has an eternal aspect by virtue of her eternal union with Him. In other words, the church

dwelt in the Eternal Son prior to her being created. She is one with Him and will ever be one with Him by virtue of His life being her life. The church was formed of His living spiritual body and she is His living spiritual bride. Christ and the church are one flesh spiritually as Adam and Eve were one flesh naturally.

Another thing in the heading scripture seems precious. It shows from which part of Adam's body the rib was taken to form his helpmeet. It was located in his chest, near his heart, the seat of love. Does not this indicate the relationship of the true Bridegroom and His bride? Was not His every thought and action toward His bride in true love and affection and concern for her welfare? And because He first loved her, does not her love return to him in kind? Because of His great love for her, He was willing to lay down His life that she might live and not die. He, who had no sin, was willing to become sin that His bride might be made the righteousness of God in Him. He cleansed her with His own blood that she not have any spot or blemish or wrinkle or any such thing. She is made to be altogether pure and lovely in His sight. He has won the victory over all her foes, even sin, Satan, death, hell and the grave. At the appointed time of the Father, He will come and receive her to Himself for that great wedding feast. Then all will be love, peace and joy unspeakable, even forever.

How wonderful is the picture of the unity of Christ, the mighty Savior and His beloved bride. How safe for her to be continually in Him and under the protection of Him, to whom was given all power in heaven and earth. What boundless love is manifest between the two through all eternity. What a glorious and sure promise of eternal life has been given to His beloved. And what a great and earnest expectation does His pure and holy bride experience as she awaits and anticipates His coming in the fullness of His majesty and power. He is her life, her joy and her strength. He is her love, her hope and her salvation. He is her all in all. *"But of Him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: that, according as it is written, he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord."* 1 Corinthians 1:30-31.

Written in love, I hope.

J.B. Farmer

2-5-2001

PROVERBS 8:10-11.

Receive my instruction, and not silver; and knowledge rather than choice gold.

For wisdom is better than rubies; and all the things that may be desired are not to be compared to it.

CORRESPONDENCE

August 23, 2001

Dear Elder Key,

The enclosed clipping is the setting of the Smith River Association in the year 1943.

With Love For The Truth,
Wm. Hale Terry

**PRIMITIVE BAPTISTS HOLD
ANNUAL ASSOCIATION AT
PAYNE'S CREEK CHURCH**

On September the 3rd, 4th, and 5th, 1943, the old-time Primitive Baptists met at Payne's Creek Church in Floyd county Virginia and held their annual "Association." Many delegates from churches thru out Virginia and surrounding states were present. The association occurs at the same church only once in about nineteen years and is a big event for the Primitive Baptists in each district each year.

Elder Sam Moran, Moderator, Elder Goode Hash, clerk and Elder Sam Koger, assistant clerk presided. An unexpected large crowd attended despite war operations and gas shortage. Friday, seventy-five automobiles brought three hundred seventy-five people; Saturday one hundred seventy-five automobiles

brought nine hundred people; and Sunday, four hundred forty-five automobiles brought two thousand fifty people. Lawrence W. Wilmer, Ranger On the Parkway directed traffic in a most efficient manner - not a single accident occurred.

The people brought a basket lunch and there were many spreads at various places over the grounds and tables filled with delicious meats, pies and cakes and other delicacies. Dinner was served in an orderly hospitable manner and was thoroughly enjoyed by everyone.

Thirty sermons, truly messages of grace, were delivered during the three days meeting by local and visiting preachers. The wisdom and understanding revealed by the old Primitive Baptist ministers of the gospel, were most touching and one felt the mighty truth and the power of God descending upon him and an inflow of his wonderful spirits. One felt his worthiness in this world. It brings before us the truth - what helpless creatures we really are. How really helpless we are without the help of God. Words cannot describe the sermons of those ministers of the gospel. One must hear them to know and feel it.

The Primitive Baptists believe in-predestination -that God only can save people and forgive their sins. They live in faith and hope. *Heb. 10-28. "Now the just shall live in faith." 11-1. "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."* The Primitive Baptist church began

so long ago that we have no date of its beginning. They follow the teachings of John the Baptist in the wilderness. The preachers do not accept or demand a salary for preaching the gospel. The Glory of preaching, of being gospel messengers to their congregation is all the pay they get or seek. The association at Payne's Creek is the old original Primitive Baptist church - not a new order. They worship without instrumental music, but it is indeed a touching scene when they sing the hymns at their departure and shake hands in genuine fellowship. Their faces seem to stand out in a halo of great joy.

August 15, 2001

Greetings to My Brethren and Friends in Christ,

Although I have been absent from you in the flesh over the past months and have missed you, I feel the Lord has blessed me to be with you spiritually, if I am not deceived. As I have felt on some days to have been *"cast into the burning fiery flirnace that was heated seven times more than it was wont to be heated,"* I declare with Job that *"though he slay me, yet will I trust him."*

Today, if it be the Lord's will, I desire to share some treasures from heaven with you. When the Lord first appeared to me nearly thirty-nine years ago sitting on the side of my bed clothed in white, never did I know the path I would have to travel

in this life. Some months after he first made himself known to me, I was given to see myself as a sinner. All my sins everything I had ever said or done-were contained in a scroll that unrolled daily. what was going on with me? I thought I had always tried to be a good moral person but was shown of the Lord that there dwelleth no good thing in the flesh. It is as filthy rags. I pondered these things in my heart. I had never heard of an experience of grace. Finally, after this scroll had unrolled and unrolled for sometime, I was brought so low and begged God for forgiveness of my sins. He put up a fence and threw my sins on the other side of the fence and I felt the burden lifted and my sins forgiven. *"As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us."* If I am not deceived, the Lord has blessed me with many precious experiences over the years, as unworthy as I feel to be; but I must confess that these experiences come through many trials and much affliction-the greater the trial or affliction, the greater the spiritual experience. In 1 Thessalonians 3:3, we read, *"That no man should be moved by these afflictions: for yourselves know that we are appointed thereunto."* Paul wrote to the Philippian brethren, *"For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake." Philippians 1:29.*

I have been much afflicted since the eleventh day of April. I prayed, *"Lord, I know thou can heal my body, if it be thou will; but not my will, but thine be done."* If I am not deceived, I heard a still small voice speak these words, "Daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole." I believe, if not deceived, my Lord gave me faith to tell my family that although I did not know what the outcome of the great trial before me would be, yet in the end, all would be well. I felt a calm and peace going into surgery in spite of how serious the outcome could be. I was given to reflect upon a dream that was given to me many years ago. In the dream, I was in a high, lifted up place, carried to and fro. Beneath me was much water and I could not understand how that I would not fall into that water, but I never did. This has been my experience since April. The outcome of my surgery was serious-Ovarian Cancer which had spread-but the bad news did not move me. The doctors and nurses were overcome with my optimistic and positive attitude. I was trusting in the Great Physician who has all power in heaven and in earth. I believe He has carried me on his wings keeping me from falling and not being consumed. I feel to have been kept by the power of Almighty God.

I must confess that as in the dream, I have been carried to and fro. I felt to be on the mountain top when I was given faith to believe all would be well in the end and felt to witness in some small measure with

Abraham when he said, *"I and the lad will go yonder and worship and come again to you."* Only with faith given from our Lord can we believe in such miracles. It is a higher power of which the world knows nothing.

These many months of enduring chemo since surgery have been very trying. Each treatment becomes more difficult on the body and the chemicals are some of the most powerful to treat advanced aggressive cancer. Each time I face the administering of this five-hour chemo treatment, I think of going into battle. In the scriptures, the Lord's people had to fight many battles. But they did not go into battle unprepared. I too look to the Lord for my help as I go into each battle. The following scriptures have been of great comfort to me: *Ephe- sians 6:10-11; 14-18: "Be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breast-plate of righteousness; and your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace, above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the spirit, which is the word of God. Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the spirit."* When

I am clothed with the whole armour of God, I am blessed to endure the battle. Precious to me are the words recorded in *Phillipians 4:13*, "***I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.***"

Two weeks after my first treatment, every hair on my head became so painful that I could not lay my head on my pillow for several nights. The chemo had killed the hair follicles. What a relief to lose all my hair and be relieved of the pain and discomfort. It didn't even bother me to lose my hair; the Lord makes you willing in the day of his power. All I could think of was the great pain that Christ must have suffered when they put the crown of thorns on his head. Every bone in my body has been affected with the chemo treatments. The past treatment has been the severest of the severe. My feet have been especially affected and conditions relating to the previous blood clot have been disturbed. The chemo damages the covering of the nerves so I am told at Duke. Never have I endured so many body parts in pain at one time. All I can think about is Christ hanging on the cross, feeling pain in his whole body. Oh, the great pain he suffered in our stead that we might have eternal life.

One night was particularly hard and sleep didn't seem to come but in short intervals. Each time I would wake, these words would be with me: "***Rejoice, the Lord is King.***" The next morning after awaking, I mentioned these words to my lov-

ing husband and he said they were contained in Hymn 137 in the Hymn and Tune Book. The hymn was precious to me:

Rejoice, the Lord is King; Your
God and King adore;

Mortals, give thanks and sing,
And triumph ever more!

Lift up the heart, lift up the
voice, Rejoice aloud, ye saints, re-
joice.

His kingdom cannot fail; He
rules o'er earth and heaven;

The keys of death and hell are
to our Jesus given:

Lift up the heart, lift up the
voice, Rejoice aloud, ye saints, re-
joice.

He all his foes shall quell; Shall
all our sins destroy;

And every bosom swell with
pure seraphic joy:

Lift up the heart, lift up the
voice, Rejoice aloud, ye saints, re-
joice.

Rejoice in glorious hope, Jesus
the Judge shall come, And take his
servants up to their eternal home:

We soon shall hear the
Archangel's voice; The trump of God
shall sound, Rejoice.

Thanks be unto God that we
have only one need-and that is
Christ. He is sufficient for each
battle we must go through in this
life. I wish never to complain but
hope that I may be counted worthy

to suffer for Christ sake. I praise God for his grace and mercy to me and thank him for his daily bread which has sustained me.

My last chemo treatment is scheduled for September 4th. I pray if it be the Lord's will, he will make the burden light and give me grace and strength for each day. All things are in God's hands and I give him all the glory and praise. If it were not for the grace of God, I would have fallen into that water; but thanks be unto God, he has kept me thus far. As Job said, "He knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold."

The scripture says, "*The Lord blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning.*" It reads in *1 Corinthians 15:46*, "*Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual.*" The fleshly man is first and is concerned only with those things that satisfy the flesh. But, there comes an appointed time with a child of God that his blind eyes and deaf ears are opened and he is shown what he is by nature and what he must be by the grace of God. When Christ asked his disciples, "*Whom do men say that I the Son of Man am?*" *They responded with various answers. Then, Christ asked Simon Peter, "But whom say ye that I am. And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him,*

Blessed art thou. Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." How blessed are the children of God who have tasted of this love and mercy. The Bethel spots where we have felt the presence of the Lord have made the latter part of our life so rich spiritually. Our affections have been set on things above, not on things on the earth and we can witness with Job that the Lord has blessed the latter end (the spiritual) more than the beginning (the flesh).

I desire to tell you, my brethren, that I feel I love you for Christ sake and appreciate your prayers, visits, calls, cards and love manifested to me. "*We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another.*" The psalmist wrote: "*Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!*"

I look forward to seeing all of you soon, if it be the Lord's will.

Love in Christ,
Jeanette Robertson

MATTHEW 6: 21-22.

For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light.

VOICES OF THE PAST

**"HOW SHOULD MAN BE
JUST WITH GOD?" Job ix. 2.**

NEW VERNON, N.Y., February 4, 1835.

Of all the considerations in which fallen man is interested, there are none of greater magnitude than that presented in the above text. Man, as a fallen sinner, cursed by the holy law, and doomed to a perpetual and eternal death by the inflexible justice of the immutable Jehovah, is deeply concerned in the investigation of this momentous subject. With rapid strides the sons of men are hurrying through this mortal state of existence, at the termination of which we are to launch into the everlasting reality of our final destiny. With earnest solicitude for the knowledge of the truth, and with ardent prayer for light from the sun or Righteousness, whose refulgent beams alone are sufficient to illuminate our depraved, bewildered and perverted understandings, let us seriously enquire into the scriptural ground of a sinner's justification before God.

It would be a reflection on the character of the thrice holy God, to suppose that he would save a sinner in his sins, or without a complete justification, based upon a righteousness commensurate with the utmost demand of law and justice; and as we are by nature destitute of saving faith, and *"he that believ-*

eth not is condemned already, and the wrath of God abideth on him," the question returns, How should man be just with God? That there is indeed a way the scriptures; abundantly demonstrate, and the fact is perhaps universally admitted; but the how presents a mystery into which the angels desire to look, and it can hardly be a matter of surprise that men should entertain various opinions on this sublime subject. Had we access to all the knowledge on this subject of the learned and wise men of this world, it could by no means lead us into the mystery; for the sovereign God has hidden these things from the wise and prudent of our race, because so it has seemed good in his sight. But blessed forever be his name, he has revealed it to babes. Therefore, while human wisdom and knowledge utterly fail, divine revelation unlocks the cabinet of the eternal world. The Lion or the tribe of Judah prevails to look upon the book, to open the seals thereof, and by his Holy Spirit to disclose the sacred contents, in which a full development of the way of a sinner's justification before God is made. Leaving all human speculations on the subject, then, to the book of revelation let us apply, and look alone to the holy oracle to settle the point which ever has, and still does, involve the professing world in conflict and disputation, viz: How should man be just with God? Here from the mouth of God may we be informed whether justification or salvation be of God

or of men; whether of grace or of works; or jointly of men and of God, or by grace connected with works. Whether this mongrel system can be sustained by the bible or not, nothing can be more certain than that it is a very popular doctrine in this our day. That God is the grand or efficient cause of justification, that works are the grand or efficient means, that men are the efficient agents who employ the necessary works or means, and that grace has no more to do in the justification of a sinner than to help man perform his part. Under the impression that this is the plan of life and salvation, we see men setting themselves about the work in great earnest, inventing and trying many projects to move upon God to save sinners, and to induce sinners to consent to be saved, to induce God to lay aside his own, and adopt their plan; we see a number of men engage by agreement to occupy different rooms, but simultaneously to pray for some unregenerated individual on whom they have engaged to bestow their united efforts. Monthly concerts of prayer for specific objects are horns of the same beast; contrivances to prevail on God to do the will of man. Let us not be understood to speak against prayer, or even social prayer meetings, whether monthly, weekly or otherwise; the abomination we wish to detect and expose is that of previously agreeing upon—may we say, an assault upon the throne of God—by covenanting that they will not give the matter up, until the Lord

complies with their requests. Now christians are aware from revelation that they know not how to pray as they ought, but the Spirit helpeth their infirmities, and maketh intercession for them with groanings which they cannot utter. Hence as they know not, they cannot agree beforehand how they will pray, or for whom in particular they will supplicate the throne of grace. When God is graciously pleased to pour out upon them the spirit of grace and of supplication, then they open their mouths wide in prayer, and the Spirit indites their petitions, for the Spirit knoweth what is the mind of God, and maketh supplication for such things as God designs to bestow; even as our Lord has informed us that they who worship the Father, must worship him in spirit and in truth.

To move upon the unconverted or dead sinner, protracted meetings, anxious benches, and a great variety of other machinery have been brought into requisition, but with as little success as their attempts to induce the Holy One to vary from his fixed purpose of grace and salvation. The entire brood that pass among men for benevolent institutions are birds of the same feather, and all respond to the popular creed before mentioned, viz: God is the cause, works are the means, men are the agents, and grace a name for nothing.

But we digress. We proposed to leave the speculations of men, and come directly to the fountain of

truth, the bible, and there ask, How should man be just with God?

And first, we enquire, is justification of God or of men? Let the bible answer "*Who shall lay any thing to the charge or God's elect? It is God that justifieth.*"-Rom. viii. 33. "*That he (God) might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.*"-Rom. iii. 26. "*Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called them he also justified.*"-Rom. viii. 30. Here then our first question is settled forever; it is God that justifieth. "*Neither is there salvation in any other.*"-Acts iv. 12.

We next enquire, Does God justify the sinner by his grace freely, or for and in consideration of their works? To the bible again. "*Being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Jesus Christ.*"-Rom. iii. 24. See also Titus iii.7. Can it be possible for any one to be justified freely by the grace of God, and yet in some sense by works after all? What saith the scripture? "*Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.*"-Gal. ii. 16. "*For if Abraham was justified by works,*

he hath whereof to glory, but not before God. Now to him that worketh (read this, ye workmongers) is the reward not reckoned of grace, but of debt. But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness."-Rom. iv. 2, 5. "*Who hath saved us and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.*"-2 Tim. i. 9. And again, if we could possibly make it appear consistent with scripture that a sinner could be justified by works, his salvation must in that case depend on his evil, not on his good works; for the apostle expressly declares, "*Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy, he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost.*"-Titus lii. 5.

But once more we enquire, May not a sinner's justification depend jointly on works and on grace. I Let the bible answer "*And if by grace, then it is no more of works; otherwise grace is no more grace; but if it be of works, then it is no more grace; otherwise work is no more work.*"-Romans xi. 6.

Seeing, then, that justification is of God and not of men, that it is of grace and not of works, the conclusion is inevitable that all the mod-

ern schemes, plans, efforts, labors, &c., of pious or impious men, are abortive and vain, and that the by ground on which we are at liberty to hope for justification with God, is that which wholly excludes works, and is from the foundation to the top-stone exclusively of grace, which is through the blood and righteousness of our Lord Jesus Christ.

In the stupendous plan of grace which provides for the justification of God's elect, Christ and his people are identified in an indissoluble union. He, as their head, representative and surety, has voluntarily pledged himself in the covenant of life and peace, to present them holy and without blame before his throne at the last day. silence all their responsibility to law and justice devolved on him; all their sins were charged to his account, and are being summed up, were laid on him. Isa. liii. 6. *"And he bare them in his own body on the tree. He was delivered up (to law and justice) for their offences, and raised again for their justification."* Rom. iv. 25. *"By one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified,"* (or set apart to him.)-Heb. x. 14. Thus, as the representative of his people, and their surety to the law, he was numbered with the transgressors, (Isa. liii. 12.) that is, law and justice viewed him in this relation as the debtor, delinquent or transgressor; for on another ground could justice smite the Shepherd. Zech. xiii. 7. But standing here in the law room and place

of his people, his soul was poured out unto death. Isa. liii. And so having fulfilled the divine law in his life, he bore its tremendous penalty of his death, and having paid the utmost farthing, and completely and eternally cancelled all that stood against him, on his people's account, he burst the confines of the tomb, in glorious conquest over sin, death and hell, arose to live forever, and hold the keys of hell and death, and in his resurrection brought life and immortality to light, and by his knowledge justified many, having borne their iniquities. Isa. liii. 11. Thus in his resurrection from the dead, our Lord revealed himself as the way, (John xiv. 6.) and the only way in which it was and is possible for man to be just with God, for he himself is *"God with us."* Matt. i. 23. God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the spirit. 1 Tim. iii. 16. And inasmuch as he who had become sin for us, or who bore our sin, had cancelled the demands of justice, had risen, and was justified in the spirit, by virtue of his obedience, by his blood and righteousness as his people's representative, his people were justified with him, and in him, and by him, and through him. The relation which he bore to his people rendered it impossible that he should be justified alone; his people were justified with him. Hence, as he is God with them, they are just with him; they were crucified with him; (Gal. ii. 20.) dead with him. (Rom. vi. 8.) And as he promised the church, by the mouth of the

prophet, *"Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise,"* (isa. xxv. 19,) they are risen with him, and in every nation they that fear God and work righteousness are accepted with him. Acts x. 35. And it is his will that all that the Father has given him shall be with him where he is, (John xvii. 24,) and he shall see of the travail of his soul and shall be satisfied.

The great question then is answered, and the *only* way that can be just with God is brought to light in the gospel; vain is the help of man.

*"No blood of birds, nor blood of beasts,
Nor hysop branch, nor sprinkling priest,
Nor running brook, nor flood, nor sea,
Could wash our dismal stain away.*

*Jesus, my God, thy blood alone hath power sufficient to atone;
Thy blood can make me white as snow-
No legal works could cleanse me so."*

Elder Gilbert Beebe

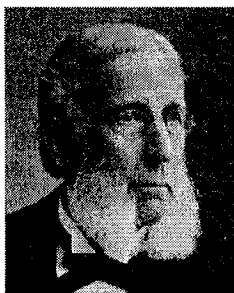
"For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." Romans viii. 18.

What are riches, honours, health, long life? What are the pleasures which the world can offer, sin promise, or the flesh enjoy? What is all that men call good or great? What is everything which the outward eye hath seen, or natural ear heard, or hath entered into the carnal heart of man, put side by side with being saved in the Lord Jesus Christ with an everlasting salvation? For consider what we are saved *from*, as well as what we are saved *unto*. From a burning hell to a blissful heaven; from endless wrath to eternal glory; from the dreadful company of devils and damned spirits, mutually tormenting and tormented, to the blessed companionship of the saints, all perfectly conformed in body and soul to the image of Christ, with thousands and tens of thousands of holy angels, and, above all, to seeing the glorious Son of God as he is, in all the perfection of his beauty, and all the ravishments of his presence and love. To have done for ever with all the sorrows, troubles, and afflictions of this life; all the pains and aches of the present clay tabernacle; all the darkness, bondage, and misery of the body of sin and death; to be perfectly holy in body and soul, being in both without spot, or blemish, or any such thing, and ever to enjoy uninterrupted union and communion with the Father, Son, and blessed Spirit — O what a heaven lies before the believing saints of God as the end of their faith in the salvation of their souls!

Elder J.C. Philpot

WHAT is to be compared with the salvation of the soul?

THE CREATURE MADE SUBJECT
TO VANITY
(Romans viii. 20.)



Elder Silas H. Durand

Who is this creature which *“was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope?”* It is the same creature spoken of in the preceding verse, whose *“earnest expectation waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God,”* and which in the following verse it is said *“shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.”* It belongs to the same spiritual creation referred to in verse 22, which in former dispensations groaned and travailed in pain together, and which now in the gospel day is manifest, as it ever was, by suffering, even in the apostles and early saints, who had the first fruits of the Spirit, *“who groan within themselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of their body.”*

This creature is the same spoken of in 2 Cor. v. 17: *“If any man be in Christ he is a new creature,”* and also in Eph. ii. 10: *“For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.”* This workmanship of God whereby we are created in Christ

Jesus, is experienced by a man, a sinner of Adam’s fallen race. Before that work of God was experienced, this man did not know himself as a sinner, and therefore did not have that kind of suffering which comes from such knowledge. In the first verse of this chapter the apostle speaks of those who are in Christ, and in the ninth verse we learn that to be in Christ, or in the Spirit, is to have the Spirit of God, or of Christ, in him. It is not until we have this experience of Christ in us that we can know that the body, which means the natural or earthy man, is dead because of sin. (Verse 10.) Let it be here noted and remembered that when the body or flesh is spoken of by the apostles in this sense, as dead because of sin, reference is not made merely to the physical body, for that cannot sin, but to the man, who is *“of the earth earthy,”* the man who sinned and was condemned. The sin, the sinfulness, the depravity, are felt by the christian to be in his mind, in his heart, and not in the literal flesh.

The life that is now ours is the Spirit of Christ, *“The Spirit is life because of righteousness.”* *“Christ is our life,”* and that life is all the light we have by which to see the deadness of our body, or the living beauty and glory of Christ, and of the kingdom of God. (Verse 10.) *“In him [the Word] was life, and the life was the light of men.”* — John i. 4. The giving of this divine and ever holy life to the sinner is the creative work of God. It is not that

the divine life or Spirit of Christ was created, nor is it that the Adamic man is new created, or made over again, but the bringing of the man forth in this new life, the causing him to be thus born of the Spirit, the manifesting of *"the life of Jesus in our mortal flesh"* (2 Cor. iv. 11), this is the workmanship of God; this is creating the man in Christ Jesus, and causing him to be a new creature.

This man who has been born again (from above), who has been brought forth in the life of Jesus, was first born of the flesh, brought forth in the life of Adam. In neither birth was any change of nature effected. In the first birth the life and nature of Adam were manifested. In the second birth the life and nature of Jesus were manifested. In being given the life of Jesus the life of the flesh was not changed in its nature, but remained a sinful life. Therefore David says, *"My soul cleaveth to the dust;"* and Job says, *"My soul is weary of life;"* and Paul says, *"The flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh, and these are contrary the one to the other, so that ye cannot do the things that ye would."* And throughout the Scriptures holy men have mourned on account of the felt sinfulness of their own life, and rejoiced in the evidences that the Lord was their life, and such is the experience of saints today. *"Except a man hate his own life,"* Jesus says, *"he cannot be my disciple."* The two natures, the two

lives, the mortal and the immortal, are both in the one person, but the spiritual or immortal is the stronger, and shall control and prevail.

The creature spoken of in the text is not the spiritual life in itself considered, nor the man who has experienced the new birth in himself considered, but it is the spirit or life of Jesus as manifest in the flesh, and it is the man considered as having this divine life, the man as being thus *"in Christ."* The man himself, regarded in his Adamic nature, is a sinful man, and his heart is deceitful above all things, and there is not enough goodness in his nature to cause one throb of sorrow on account of sin, or to excite the least hunger after righteousness; and *the Spirit of Christ, considered separately from the flesh, can have no sorrow or pain. It was in the flesh that Christ suffered. It was for the purpose of suffering that he came in the flesh, and those who have the Spirit of Christ suffer with him. It is this suffering of the people of God with Jesus that the apostle is considering in this connection. He explains to them the cause of their suffering, and enters into the depths and heights of doctrine as he traces the exercises and describes the feelings of the little children, and thus points out and designates the humble followers of Christ.*

The apostle in various places speaks of the one person in his relation both to the flesh and the Spirit.

While there is an essential distinction between the flesh and the Spirit, and this distinction is maintained in all the teachings of the apostles, yet they are both in one person, and there is an experimental sense in which they must be considered as together, though separate. *“That which is born of the flesh is flesh,”* and will remain so until the change shall come, *“and that which is born of the Spirit is Spirit,”* and *“will ever remain in unyielding opposition to the flesh.”* But the christian is possessed of both of these opposing natures, the human and the divine, and the apostle uses the personal pronoun when speaking of both. *“For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh), dwelleth no good thing.”* He speaks of the flesh as “me.” *“That which I do I allow not; but the evil that I would not, that I do.” “I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.” “O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?” “So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin.”*

Thus it is the same I who realizes death in Adam, or in the flesh, and who realizes life in Christ. It is the same I who may at one time be experimentally in Christ, and, sowing to the Spirit, reap life everlasting, and at another time may be living after the flesh and die to spiritual things; may be sowing to the flesh, and of the flesh reap corruption.

But the apostle is considering here the unchanging, unvarying inclinations of the Spirit or life of Christ which is in all his people, and the consequent suffering of the child of God because of the vileness that is thus discovered in us by the light of the Spirit. And he is intent upon declaring and showing the certainty of the glory that shall succeed that suffering in every one who has been born of the Spirit, and who is therefore a partaker of the divine nature. *“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. For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed in us.”* How wonderfully connected the apostle’s argument is. How one thing follows another, just in the order that keeps along with the exercises and travail of the christian. Observe how many of these verses begin with the word “for,” connecting it with what was said before.

“For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the Son of God.” This earnest expectation is entirely of the Spirit. It is the view of faith, looking to things not seen by mortal powers. It is the expectation of things promised in Christ, and revealed to the faith of God’s people. Faith makes no guesses, but sees eternal realities. Concerning these things

it is said, "*Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love him; but God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit.*" Therefore, while there is deep suffering because of the corruptions of the flesh, there is at the same time, down in the depths of the soul, a calm and confident waiting for that which the quickened soul so earnestly desires, to see in ourselves the manifestation of that relationship as sons of God. We cannot see it in ourselves now, but we long for it, hunger for it, have been made to expect it, and quietly wait for it. We are saved by this sweet and sure hope. All this earnest expectation is in the Spirit; not in the Spirit of Christ considered in itself, but in that spirit as given unto us, and as living in our poor-hearts, and as able to turn our thoughts toward heavenly things, and to set our affections on things above.

Now the apostle shows against what great and dire obstacle the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for such a wonderful and holy manifestation. That obstacle is the vanity of our fleshly nature, which he afterward calls the bondage of corruption. This is why we do not see in ourselves evidences of sonship, such as we desire. Though to our faith may come assurances at times that "*we are now the sons of God,*" yet "*it doth not yet appear what we shall be:*" and we are often left to doubt that

we bear such a relationship, because of the vanity of the flesh.

But now the apostle shows us that in the wisdom of God in creating his people in Christ, in giving them the life of his Son, he made them subject to the vanity of this nature. He could have caused them to be at once freed from sin and depravity, and to enter into a holy and sinless state. But it was his will that the new, divine life, the Spirit of Christ in them, should have this opposition to contend with, that this new creature should be subject to this vanity. "*Every man in his best state is altogether vanity.*" "*All the goodness and glory of man is as the flower of the field.*" As soon as the Spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it, it fades away. (Isa. xl. 7.) And because of this the workmanship of God is the more clearly manifest, and the power of the Spirit more clearly displayed, as the enduring quality and value of gold are shown more clearly when it comes in contact with fire.

For our comfort we are told of one thing that we would not have thought of without being told, and yet which we see at once to be true; "*Not willingly.*" The Spirit of Christ is essentially and forever opposed to sin. That life of Christ which is within the poor sinner's heart is just as pure and as much opposed to vanity there as it is in himself; as the sunshine is just as pure when it falls into a polluted atmosphere as when it leaves the sun. We can at times see that there is a principle within

us that is opposed to all the vanity and corruption of our natures, and which makes us long to be perfectly free from it. Thus with our minds we serve the law of God (we have the mind of Christ) while with our flesh we serve the law of sin. (Romans vii. 25.) The apostle had no reference here to evil deeds, against which he would admonish his brethren, but he referred to that corruption of the flesh to which we must always be subject, feeling it as a bondage while we remain in this mortal state.

Not willingly. This is why we suffer in the flesh. This is why we can find no permanent rest in this mortal state. This is why, when we are spiritual, we hate not only evil deeds, but the vanity of even the most exalted and the purest of earthly things. This is why our days on the earth are a shadow, and there is none abiding. This is why we hate our own lives at times, and count this world a wilderness of woe. And it is because the new creature is not willingly subject to vanity, that exhortations and admonitions have a place and power. For this creature is ever seeking the honor of God, and desiring to follow Jesus, and to show forth his praises, but ever feels the hindrances of the vanity of the flesh, and so can never do the good it would do, but is always dissatisfied with even its best works. And no matter how far one may have gone astray, it is always right to exhort, when we can do it in meekness, for though we cannot make the word

of exhortation effectual, the Lord peradventure may give repentance to the acknowledging of the truth.

Then how sweet and comforting the assurance that this subjection of God's gracious work in us to vanity is in hope. We cannot see in ourselves now what we wish to see (verses 24, 25), but we are given good ground to hope for it. For the apostle by inspiration positively asserts that we, the new creature, shall be delivered from this vanity, from this "*bondage of corruption, into the glorious liberty of the children of God.*" This we are given faith to believe shall be. We long for it, and in the Spirit we expect it, and thus we have that hope which saves us from being overcome and brought down to the gates of despair by this vanity. "*For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.*" No child of God can see himself as he wants to be, therefore he can never be pleased or satisfied with himself while in the flesh. He must see himself compassed with infirmities, held down by a bondage of corruption, therefore he cannot see himself as a son of God now, cannot see himself without sin, cannot see in himself, that is, in his flesh, any good thing. Therefore he is not only subject to vanity, but is subject to the temptation with which Satan tempted Jesus, "*If thou be the Son of God.*"

But here comes into view the preciousness, and the saving power of that hope, which the Lord, who subjected the new creature to vanity, has given to light up the darkness, to cheer the heart, and to be *“as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast,”* holding the vessel of mercy securely against all the adverse tides and terrible storms that must be met with on the ocean of time. This good hope is through grace, and does not depend for sustenance upon goodness in ourselves, or in our works, which every child of God longs for but can never see, but upon the revelation of Jesus Christ as *“of God made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.”* At every new revelation of the blessed Savior to our souls, our hope seems to be renewed and strengthened. So we continue to hope for that we see not, for goodness, sinlessness, perfection; for the manifestation of the sons of God; for deliverance from the bondage of corruption, into the glorious liberty of the children of God; for *“the redemption of our body,”* which shall be fashioned like unto the glorious body of Jesus; and for all these blessed things so surely promised and assured unto us, we patiently wait, wait in the enduring and unfailing patience of a living faith in Christ.

Not willingly. Still more and more blessedly does this wonderful expression shine out from the sacred page of inspiration, with as-

surance of hope, and with heavenly comfort, to the afflicted and poor people of God, who are still ever struggling on against barriers which present impossibilities to them, who are daily tried and are daily dying, and yet *“who against hope believe in hope.”* What a comfort it is to see this *“not willingly”* in their own poor hearts. When they have to acknowledge that they do the things they would not, and do not do the things they would, how glad they are at times, in the midst of their infirmities and under the bondage of corruption, to remember that they would not do an evil thing, and that they would do good things.

*“But if indeed I would,
Though I can nothing do,
Yet the desire is something
good,
For which my praise is due.*

*By nature prone to ill,
Till thine appointed hour,
I was destitute of will,
As now I am of power.”*

How comforting to find that the apostles are with us in this experience of infirmities which the Spirit only can help. How glad we are that Paul, as well as we, had to confess, *“The things that I do I allow not.”* Not referring to a course of wrong conduct, but to the fact that sin is mixed with all we do, so that we cannot do the things we would, but feel *“the sentence of death in ourselves,”* tainting all our works,

only as we are given faith to do our works in Christ, to look to him for the goodness, and not to ourselves.

Not willingly. This is the holy Spirit of God from which this "*not willingly*" comes. There is no half way will here, no uncertainty about this will that is ever and eternally against all sin. This is the will of the Father that was done in and by the Son. There is no weakness in this will. It is not even the will of Jesus, as a suffering man, which caused him to cry, "*If it be possible let this cup pass from me,*" but it is the will of the Father which caused and enabled him to say, "*Not my will but thine be done.*" His own will was the will of a pure and sinless man. This will he did not come to do. This will must be crossed, denied, crucified, for it would have turned from suffering. The Father's will was done in and by him, and by that will he was crucified; by that will he gave himself to the smiters, and became obedient unto death. By that will he was raised from the dead, and by that will we are saved. That is the will concerning which that Holy Spirit teaches us to pray, "*Thy will be done in earth as it is in heaven.*" It will be done in the children of God, and through its power and exercise within them they will all eventually be brought into perfect conformity to the image of God's Son by the mighty power and working of his holy Spirit. He works in his people to will and to do of his good pleasure. In his own time, and in his own way, each of them will be

made fully to know his own vanity, his own inability, "*his own sore and his own plague,*" and will then be brought forever away from sin and weakness into the liberty of the sons of God, and will be prepared to give God all the praise of his salvation for time and for eternity.

Those who the apostle says are groaning and travailing in pain together until now, are not the natural creation, for it is not true of either man or beast. He is showing the sufferings of the Lord's people from the beginning. They were distinct from the legal worshipers, though they were among them. They all had faith in every dispensation, and by that faith they saw Christ as their Savior, and we trace them through all the Old Testament Scriptures by their groanings, complaints, self-loathings and bitter self-reproaches, as an afflicted, suffering people, whose sufferings are on account of sin in the flesh. And the apostle joins himself and all the saints under the gospel with the holy men of old, who were as much the creative workmanship of God as we, showing that although the gospel saints had received the first fruits of the Spirit, yet they groaned within themselves, looking for no comfort from the flesh, but looking for the promise of Jesus' coming, when the adoption would be fulfilled in the redemption of our body from corruption, and the inheritance into which we were adopted (using adoption as a legal figure) would be received, which is

to become sons of God. This name, Son of God, Jesus received by inheritance in his resurrection. (Heb. i. 4, 5; Rom. i. 4; Acts xiii. 33.) We are heirs with him of this sonship, and when the manifestation of the sons of God shall be complete in the redemption of our body from corruption, and in the fashioning of it like unto the glorious body of Jesus, then we shall be manifest, not as adopted children, for the purpose of that legal figure is attained when we come into the inheritance, but as the real *“children of God, being the children of the resurrection.”* — *Luke xx. 36.* This inheritance unto which we are begotten again by the resurrection of Christ from the dead, is not a corruptible, defiled and fading inheritance, as was the sonship we inherited from Adam, but it is incorruptible, and undefiled, and it fadeth not away, and it is reserved in heaven for all who have received the Spirit of adoption, for all who feel themselves to be poor, helpless sinners, who hunger and thirst after righteousness, and who long to be like Jesus; and all the heirs of this blessed inheritance are kept by the power of God unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time. (1 Peter i. 3-5.)

Elder Silas H. Durand
July 15, 1901.

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR JULY 2001

- Charlie Fox, AR..... 2.00
Robert Gilbert, VA 5.00

- Richard Lawless, WVA 2.00
Eld. Larry Hollandsworth, VA .. 2.00
In Memory of
Mamie Biggs Cook, TN 15.00
Miles Bird, LA 5.00
Vivian Underwood, VA..... 2.00
Andrew Agee, VA 2.00
Albert Krewatch, DE..... 20.00
Eld. James Howard, AL 7.00
Byron Queen, KY 5.00
E. S. Gingerich, NM 2.00
Alice Gibson, VA 2.00
Larrie Bowler, VA 2.00
Eld. C.B. Davis, VA 2.00
Eld. Joe Sawyers, NC 2.00
J.C. Carroll, NC 7.00
Lera Vasser, VA 2.00
Larry Evans, MS 2.00
Sceney Boyd, VA 2.00
Grover Plybon, VA 2.00
Janie Fanning, AL 2.00

MEETINGS

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION MEETING

The West Country Line Union meeting will be held at Dan River Church on fifth Sunday Sept. 30th. Song service to begin at 10:00 a.m. and preaching at 11:00 a.m.

We invite all lovers of the truth to meet with us, and any ministers of our faith and order is especially invited.

We also meet at 6:00 p.m. on each second Sunday for a one hour song service.

All are invited.

Elder Kenneth R. Key, Mod.
Bro. Allen Carroll, Clerk

OBITUARIES

JAMES W. BROWN

James W. Brown, was born Sept 9, 1901 in Middleton, Tennessee, to Albert and Ellie Brown, and died June 3, 2001, making his earthly pilgrimage ninety-one years and nine months.

He was married to Geneva, McKinney August 19, 1928, and to this union was born three daughters Maxine, Shirley and Donna. He was preceded in death by his wife, and Shirley who died as a young lady in her twenties: Maxine Cardwell and Donna Peeler, survive him.

He was added to the, First Primitive Baptist Church of Memphis, April 28, 1962 and ordained a Deacon August 12, 1962, which calling he served faithfully until his death. He attended his home church until a few months before his death, when he became unable to see well enough to drive to Memphis.

To show the esteem that the Memphis Church, had for Brother Brown, they held their regular services one Sunday in a nursing home where he was confined for a short time, and also one of our Monday night meetings in his home shortly before he passed away. His daughter said he would brighten up considerably when he knew the brethren were coming, and he thoroughly enjoyed the singing and our discussion of the scriptures.

He recovered enough to return to his home, from the nursing home, and with the loving care of his daughters Maxine and Donna, was able to live in his own home until his death.

Brother Brown will be lovingly missed by the Memphis Church, he was a meek and humble brother, but firm in his conviction of the truth as contained in God's word. He was one who could always be depended on to perform the duties of his office of deacon for the church, and was always willing to do anything else that he was asked.

His funeral was conducted by the writer and Elders Wayman Chapell, and Harold Toney. His body was laid to rest in the Porters Creek Cemetery, near his home, Wednesday June 6, 2001, there to await the call of his heavenly Father to rise up and come away and dwell in the climes of glory eternally.

Written at the request of The First Primitive Baptist Church of Memphis, with instructions to send copies to the family and The Signs of The Times, for publication.

In loving memory,
Richard H. Campbell

JOHN 6:35.

And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that come to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.

OBITUARY OF
CLARA FREEMAN

With deep regret for our loss we wish to write the obituary of our Sister in Christ, Clara Harbour Freeman. She was preceded in death by her husband of 58 yrs, Harvey L. Freeman and an infant son. Also her parents George T. and Joan Adams Harbour. Her brothers Grady and Sam Harbour. A sister Mattie Stone all of Patrick Springs, Va. She is survived by a daughter Iris F. Puckett of Stuart, Va.

She joined Liberty Primitive Baptist Church on May 3, 1940. She was baptized by her Pastor, at that time, Elder Sam Koger the first Sunday in June 1940. She was Church Clerk for 32 years. She was very faithful to attend her Church as long as her health permitted. The last two years or more of her life she was not able to always attend. She often said, "that on meeting days - she could all but hear the singing."

She departed this life on November 28, 2000 and was laid to rest on November 30, 2000, At Patrick Memorial Gardens to await the resurrection of her body.

Her funeral was preached by Elders John Wingfield and Bernice Joyce.

Liberty Primitive Baptist Church
By her daughter
Iris Freeman Puckett

GENTRY DEAN WILLIAMS

Sister Gentry Williams was born November 1, 1906 and departed this life July 5, 2001. She was baptized and received into fellowship with the Goose Creek island Primitive Baptist Church in July 1957. Sister Gentry suffered much in this life and unable to attend church the last seven years of her earthly life but we trust she is now at rest with her Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Two sons, D. E. "Bob" Ross and Harold Warren Williams survive Sister Gentry plus numerous grandchildren, great-grandchildren and great-great grandchildren. A son, Gray Williams predeceased her. Blaney Rowe conducted a graveside service on Saturday July 7, 2001 and she was laid to rest in the Lowland Community Cemetery.

Written by request of the Goose Creek Island Primitive Baptist Church in conference on August 25, 2001.

Elder Jesse Foreman, Moderator
Elder Gene Lupton, Clerk

ST. MATTHEW 5:7-9.

Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy.

Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.

Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES

202 Carousel Lane, Meadows of Dan, Va. 24120-4403

SONG

*As the sun's enlivening eye
Shines on ev'ry place the same,
So the Lord is always nigh
To the souls that love his name.*

*When they move at duty's call,
He is with them by the way:
He is ever with them all,
Those who go, and those who stay.*

*For a season called to part,
Let us then ourselves commend
To the gracious eye and heart
Of our ever-present Friend.*

*Jesus, hear our humble prayer!
Tender Shepherd of thy sheep!
Let thy mercy and thy care
All our souls in safety keep.*

*In thy strength may we be strong,
Sweeten every cross and pain;
Give us, if we live, ere long
Here to meet in peace again.*

*Then, if thou thy help afford,
Ebenezers shall be reared,
And our souls shall praise the Lord,
Who our poor petitions heard.*

Newton.

POSTMASTER

Please send address changes to:

Signs of the Times
202 Carousel Lane
Meadows of Dan, Va 24120-4403

CONTENTS

EDITORIAL 242
 Elder Richard H. Campbell

CORRESPONDENCE 247

VOICES OF THE PAST 248
 Elder Silas H. Durand
 Elder E. J. Lambert
 Elder W. D. Griffin
 Elder Chick
 Elder J. C. Philpot

CONTRIBUTIONS 263

OBITUARIES 263
 Sister Iva Lee Souter

EDITORIAL

ABSOLUTE SECURITY

Jude, the servant of Jesus Christ, and brother of James, to them that are sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Christ Jesus, and called: Mercy unto you, and peace, and love, be multiplied.



Elder R. H. Campbell

There is no place on earth, or in heaven, that is safer and more secure than the place that Jude is describing here, and there is no more specific

directions as to the ones to whom Jude is communicating his epistle, than in the above verse. The world says that the bible is an open book, available to anyone that picks it up and reads the invitations contained therein. Well, there are no invitations contained in the scriptures, as claimed by the world, for this would indicate a possibility of their not accepting, and Jesus said, (*John Chap 6, Vs 37*) *“All that the Father giveth me shall come to me, and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out”* and in (*Vs 44*) *“No man can come to me, except the Father which that sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day.”* These are statements of fact, not probabilities or possibilities, they are not based on conditions which are subject to change based on what might occur in the future. The above scriptures, as well as all others, are directed to those who were chosen in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world and to no other, and they all shall come, at the appointed time and in the predetermined manner.

The Bible is not an open message written to the world in general, “whosoever will,” as is universally proclaimed by the natural man. Jude is writing to a very particular people, a people that God set his love upon, according unto his own oath, sworn unto Abraham and it cannot be annulled because it was pledged by Him who cannot lie and who is of one mind and never changes. The number of these people have been

determined and announced in, (*Deut. Chap 32, Vs 8-9*) "*When the most high divided to the nations their inheritance, when he separated the sons of Adam, he set the bounds of the people according to the number of the children of Israel. For the Lord's portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance.*"

Before time began they were ordained to this lot, and all of these scriptures are affirming these eternal truths to the current generation, The truth remains the truth in all ages. it is not changed by time nor circumstances, as is recorded in, (*Eccl. Chap 3, vs 15*) "*That which hath been is now; and that which is to be hath already been; and God requireth that which is past.*" or as Solomon said, (*Eccl. Chap 1, vs 9*) "*The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be; and that which is done is that which shall be done: and there is no new thing under the sun.*"

Jude, then begins by saying that they are Sanctified by God the Father: which means set apart unto a specific purpose, or calling, even as Jeremiah, who was set apart to be a prophet unto the nations, before he was formed in his mother's womb, sent forth to declare unto Israel the words of the Lord. Jeremiah said, I cannot speak for I am but a child, but that did not deter the purpose of God in his life. God told him to not be afraid of their faces for I am with you, and it is recorded that God

put forth his hand and touched his mouth and said, (*Jer. Chap 1, Vs 9-10*) "*Behold I have put my words in thy mouth. See I have this day set thee over the nations and over the kingdoms, to root out, and to pull down, and to destroy, and to throw down, to build, and to plant.*" things which this child could not do, in his own strength, and the same is true of all to whom Jude is writing. They too, have been set apart from the world in their heart and mind, by the indwelling of the Spirit, they no longer feel at home in nature as they once did; there has been a wall of separation placed between them and their fellowman in this time world. They can no longer join in with the pleasures in the flesh, as in former days, and feel this constantly in their association with their peers in this world of nature.

Those whom God sanctifies, he qualifies to fulfill his calling, and this applies to all of the chosen vessels: they are given everything that is needful for them to run the race that he has set before them, and they may not even be aware of what that calling is, as they confess constantly wondering if they indeed have a calling; therefore they must walk by faith and not by sight. When God was telling Moses, how the temple was to be built and the furnishings that were to be used in his service, he said that he had given talents unto certain ones to do the delicate work of making the garments, drappings etc.: the artistic

talent required to make the furnishings of the building that he required. The talent was given even before the calling was sent forth, and the same sanctification is involved in the calling of each and every one of his children. They are not chosen because they have any special talent, but rather are given the special talent because they are his chosen, for a specific purpose and one which requires this talent. It is God working in them both to will and to do of his good pleasure, in their utilization of this talent.

Preserved in Christ Jesus. The ones to whom Jude is addressing this epistle are those who love him because he first loved them and were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, that they should be holy and without blame before him in love, being predestinated unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will. Jesus said, (*John Chap 6, Vs 37-39*) *"All that my 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 at the last day."* I don't know of any plainer sentence that could be uttered to support the statement, preserved in Christ Jesus, for they were given him of the Father before

the foundation of the world, redeemed by his precious blood, in time, and then the promise is, that he would raise them up again at the last day. This preservation covers eternity, all time; past, present and future and it cannot fail.

Called; At the time appointed of the Father, each one's calling from nature's darkness into the marvelous light and liberty of the gospel, is made manifest unto them, and they had no previous knowledge of its existence, and no reason to anticipate it beforehand. Possibly the most dramatic demonstration of this calling occurred on the road from Jerusalem to Damascus. A man who was a blasphemer, injurious to the church, a persecutor with authority received, from man, to destroy the cause of Christ, but who was interrupted in his journey and the call was made known unto him, it was not in the form of an invitation, or request, it was a command. Paul was not even aware of the truth of the gospel, but was just fighting against that which he did not, and could not, understand in nature's darkness. Paul, in relating his experience told it this way, (*Gal. Chap 1, Vs 15-20*) *"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 him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood; neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me; but I went*

into Arabia, and returned again unto Damascus, Then after three years I went up to Jerusalem to see Peter, and abode with him fifteen days. But other of the apostles saw I none, save James the Lord's brother. Now the things which I write unto you, behold before God, I lie not." This is a first hand testimony, with God as his witness, of being called, sanctified and sent upon a mission that was not of his design or desire at the time of his calling. This is a demonstration of the same power that called Moses, Jeremiah, David and all of the redeemed family of God into His service. Not all experiences and callings are the same, but the power demonstrated in them is the same.

Paul, later in remembering this experience, and relating it unto Timothy, as their common calling, said, *(1 Tim. Chap 1, Vs 9) "Who hath saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began."* He departed Jerusalem in his own strength, he thought, but when the time appointed for his calling arrived, this leader of the Jews was struck down, made blind and had to be led of them that were with him to complete his journey to Damascus. Now, that kind of power and action gets your attention, and you will go all of your days, even as Paul did, ascribing all glory and honor unto

him who hath called and quickened you, and made known to you the glory of His kingdom, it becomes the main thrust of your life.

He arrived in Damascus, a preacher of the doctrine and truth that he had sworn to eliminate. This calling was not an invitation, it was not a subject that was debatable; it was a command and carried with it the full power of the godhead. No one can refuse this calling because it is printed on the fleshly tables of the heart and no man can deny, or refute that. Paul said that he obtained mercy because he did it in ignorance and unbelief, so do all, because none if given to see the glory of the kingdom of God would refuse it. All men are in ignorance of the existence of this kingdom of glory until it is shown to them, and this occurs in the calling; they are then made new creatures in Christ and, for the first time, are made aware of their citizenship in this kingdom.

The most beautiful and complete statement of Paul's, calling and it's purpose is recorded as follows, *(Acts Chap 26, vs 16-18) "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 the these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee; delivering thee from the people, and the Gentiles, unto whom I now send thee, to open their eyes, and to turn them*

from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me." These directions the apostle Paul heeded all of the remaining days of his life, yea, and even in his death.

The ones to whom Jude is writing are the same people that were referred to by Peter when he said, (*1st Peter Chap 2, vs 9*) "*For ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light; Which in times past were not a people, but are now the people of God; which had not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy.*" Mercy is something that is always given by the greater to the lesser one, and is always a free gift, not a reward for service rendered, nor for success achieved. They were all in a lost and undone condition, even as the babe described in the sixteenth chapter of Ezekiel. They were born in the same helpless and depraved condition, without strength, unaware of their wretchedness, but, it being the time of love of God the Father toward them, they are washed, suppled, salted, swaddled and told to live, and they became beautiful in his sight. They are made accepted in the beloved, and it is all the results of the sovereign grace and mercy of their heavenly Father being bestowed

upon them, by grace.

Jude, involves the entire godhead as the surety of the facts that he is stating; sanctified by God the Father, (before time began), preserved in Christ Jesus (throughout time and eternity), and called by the Holy Spirit (in time). There is no other salvation, and there are no more certain assurances that could be set forth regarding the preserving of the entire household of faith than these set forth here by Jude, no this epistle is not to "*Whosoever will*". Peter takes the same position regarding those of whom he is speaking; it is stating something that already is fact and is not subject to change or alteration, and it is because God is the originator of these labels, and whatsoever God doeth is forever. As Paul wrote, (*Romans Chap 8, vs. 38-39*) "*For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things to come, Nor height, not depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*" and there is nothing that is not included in this list of things, or any other list, which could separate the household of faith, from the love of God.

Jude, is writing to those of like precious faith, and in love, is warning them to beware of certain men who are crept in unawares, wolves in sheeps clothing, who would wreak havoc in the church; men who are spots in your feast of char-

ity, feeding themselves without fear. clouds without water. These other men are the natural man in the flesh, who were before ordained unto this condemnation, but he is advising them to be forewarned and to deal carefully and cautiously with them. Jude goes on to say in (vs. 19) speaking of these, "*These be they who separate themselves, sensual, having not the spirit.*" This we hear repeated in pulpits all over the world today, just come down, right now, make a decision for Christ and be saved, no fear, no feeling of any unworthiness, just make up your minds, accept him as your savior and follow us.

The scriptures quoted above are food indeed to all of those to whom the above writers are addressing their messages, and are of comfort to none other. They are of very special comfort to those whose hope (earnest expectation) of eternal salvation is in the finished work of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ? Those who fearfully and prayerfully hope to be included in the number of whom Jude is speaking, sanctified by God the father, preserved in Christ Jesus and called.

In bonds of love;
Elder Richard H. Campbell

PROVERBS 8:11.

For wisdom is better than rubies; and all the things that may be desired are not to be compared with it.

CORRESPONDENCE

9-9-01

Signs of the Times:

Just a note to tell you how I love your Signs of the Times.

I am so glad you have added Brother J.B. Farmer, he is our neighbor.

I am enclosing fifteen dollars, five is for contribution. I want you to know this is the only paper I read beside my bible.

I love you in the Lord,
Anna Savage

Elder Terry,

Iwould like like to extend my subscription to "*Signs of the Times*" for one year. Enclosed is a check for ten dollars.

My grandparents took "*Signs of the Times*" way back during my childhood. I would read it. Now, that my grandmother has gone home to be with the Lord; I would like to continue in this reading.

Peacefully,
Debra Davis

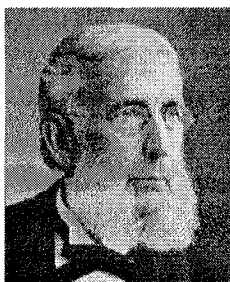
2 CORINTHIANS 4:15.

For all things are for your sakes, that the abundant grace might through the thanksgiving of many redound to the glory of God.

VOICES OF THE PAST

THE NEW TESTAMENT
(Hebrews ix. 16, 27, 28.)

“And as it is appointed unto men once to die.”



Elder Silas H. Durand

The inspired writer is not here merely stating the fact that all men must die; he is not impressing upon the mind the truth that it is appointed unto men to die. The whole force of this sentence is that it is appointed unto men to die once, not twice, not many times, but only once. The apostle has been speaking of the work of Moses and Aaron in the worldly sanctuary in accomplishing the service of God. Without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins; that is, the death of the sinner is necessary to satisfy the claims of justice. The high priest, in this ceremonial service, represented death when he entered into the second tabernacle alone once every year, not without blood. This “was a figure for the time then present.” Of course the high priest could not offer his own blood, for then he could not make another offering the next year. But Christ entered once into the holy place, even into heaven itself, by his own blood. He could not offer himself often, as

the high priest did, *“for then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world [the Jewish world] hath he appeared, to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.”* He could not die often, for it is appointed unto men to die only once.

“And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment.” Here is the first part of a comparison introduced by the word “as,” and intended to illustrate and open up some important thing concerning the sacrifice of Christ and the manifestation of those for whom he died. The second part of this comparison is introduced by the word “so”: - *“So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many: and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.”* The apostle has in this chapter introduced the figure of a man’s will or testament, to illustrate the mediatorial work of Christ, and to show how by means of death he brought the New Testament into force, and secured to them that are called, the promise of eternal inheritance. He says: *“And for this cause he is the Mediator of the New Testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance.”* The next expression proves that the apostle has in view as a figure the will or

testament which a man makes, by which he bequeathes an inheritance. *"For where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. For a testament is of force after men are dead: otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth."*

Now it seems to me that the apostle still has this figure in view in the comparison presented in my text. It is important to consider that a man's testament is of no force while yet he lives. He may say to me, I have made my will, and have given to you ten thousand acres of land, and I have given that will into the custody of a bank, and it is safely locked up, and so you are sure of the property. But I do not own a rod of that land. He may make another will the next day and devise the land to another. Also it is necessary to consider that as soon as a man is dead all that was his now belongs to others. But how shall it be decided who are the heirs? It must be by the judgment of the government under which the man lived and held the title to his possessions. It is in this sense that I understand the apostle to use the expression, *"but after this the judgment."*

We are to keep in mind that the apostle is not merely stating the fact that it is appointed unto men to die once, only once; but he is using this as a comparison. "As"—"so." *"As it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment; so Christ was once offered,"* &c.

Earthly inheritances are greatly sought after by many, and the judgment of the government must be carefully rendered before any one can claim them, but this heavenly inheritance is not desired by any but the true heirs; they do desire it, and earnestly long for it, and seek for evidences that it is theirs.

Now all the blood that was used in the works of the law, *"sprinkling the unclean,"* could not wash away one sin, nor could all that legal work cleanse the conscience of one sinner. But when Christ shed his precious blood he thereby obtained eternal redemption for all his people, and secured unto them the eternal inheritance promised in the New Testament, which is the new and *"everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure."*

"So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many." who are they whose sins he bore? What is the judgment which has been rendered upon this subject? This same Jesus who died to bear the sins of many is now risen again, and is at the right hand of God, and is our Judge, our Lawgiver and our King. He has rendered the judgment: *"Unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation."* The heirs of this spiritual inheritance, then, are those that look for him. This is the judgment concerning the heirs of God by this new testament.

But to know that we are looking for Jesus Christ! O, if we can only be sure of that. But so often we find

our minds and our expectations fixed, apparently, upon worldly things. So often we feel ourselves too depraved, too sinful, too vile, too full of transgressions, to dare to think that we are among those who are looking for him. What right have such as we to look for him to come to us? How dare we say to him, "Come"? yet he has said with divine and loving authority, "*Let him that heareth say, Come.*" And we are sometimes assured that we have heard his voice saying, "*Come unto me.*" We have heard his words of love to the poor and needy, his words of sweet command to those who labor and are heavy laden. We have from time to time received evidences that he has given us rest. We have at times felt "*the peace of God, which passeth all understanding,*" keeping our hearts and minds. His words have at times dropped into our hearts with holy power, and our hearts have been drawn out to him in love and praise. The doctrine that declares the name of the Lord as our only Savior has sometimes dropped upon us like the rain, and has distilled as the dew; "*as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as showers upon the grass.*" Yes, at times we do feel assured that we are looking for him. We can do nothing of ourselves. When we look at ourselves we have to cry, Unclean. We are vile, we abhor ourselves; we have "*the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the*

dead." But we do trust in him, Jesus is our only trust, our only hope, he is our righteousness our life; yes, we look for him. And what is the inheritance we are heirs of? Himself. "Unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation." His appearing so far, and always while we are in the body, has been and shall yet be with sin, as our Sin-bearer, as having borne our sins. In our most exalted moments, while rejoicing in him, we remember him as having borne our griefs, as having suffered for our sins, and we thus know him in measure as having the fellowship of his sufferings, "being made conformable unto his death." We must always while in this mortal state bear "*about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus may be made manifest in our body.*" As the Savior while in the flesh was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, so must his followers be. It is in sorrow, in temptation, in affliction, that we know him while here; it is as having been tempted in all points like unto us that we know him as thus able to succor us who are tempted. But when he appears the second time it will be without sin unto salvation. That salvation, Peter says, is "*ready to be revealed in the last time.*" That second appearing will be with no remembrance of sin; it will be to deliver us "*from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the sons of God.*" It will be the end of mortality

with us. When he appears the second time *"we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is."* He will be admired in all them that love him. Our vile body shall be changed then that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body. We do not know what we shall be, nor do we in the spirit want to know. It is enough to know that we shall be conformed to his image, and shall appear with him in glory.

Elder Silas H. Durand
NOVEMBER 7, 1905.

HOPE
SEPTEMBER, 1946

FOR SOME REASON I am impressed to write a short article on the subject of *hope*. I desire to use Romans 8:24, 25 as a scriptural basis of reasoning. *"For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it."*

Before treating directly on this subject, permit me to state that I believe the Holy Scriptures are to the children of God who have been born of the Spirit of God. Restating in other words—the Bible can be received only by those of God's children who have been born of the Spirit of God. When Paul speaks using the present tense of a verb it is experienced in time by those who

have experienced this call to be saints. When he speaks using future tense it is yet to be experienced. When Jesus said, *"Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted,"* I think he meant that God's children are mourners in this present world after they have received this pure heart, but shall be completely comforted after their sojourn here in time.

According to Webster, hope is a "desired expectation." According to Paul, the things you have experienced is not a hope but a reality. Hope looks to the future. We do not hope for that we are experiencing, but these experiences enliven within us a hope for something that is yet future. Paul reasons that we have the first fruits of the Spirit in this present life. The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness and temperance. All these proceed from the new heart that God has given his children. We yet bear about the body of this death. This pure heart enables us to see the vileness of our sin-polluted bodies. This pure heart reveals to us our awful condition and makes us to cry unto the God of heaven for deliverance from this sinful state. Although we are in possession of the first fruits of the Spirit, the creature itself is yet in the bondage of corruption. It is yet natural and thus subject to sin and death. We expect deliverance from the bondage of corruption solely upon the merits of Jesus in accor-

dance to God 's amazing grace. We desire this deliverance because the new God-given heart has made us to hate sin and love holiness.

Paul said, *"The body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness."* This is our state of being if Christ dwells in us. The creature that sins is the body of death that the child of God bears about in this present world. These sins cause the child of God to groan within himself waiting the adoption, to wit, the redemption of the body. This will be realized when *"the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God."* The word "also" in the above scripture means in addition to that which has ready been experienced by us, to wit, the change of heart. Those who are in possession of God's Spirit are new creatures in Christ but have not realized the redemption of the bodies. He comforts us with this grand hope, *"But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you."* A quickened mortal body would be *immortalized*, thus would never die. I do not think God's children experience this immortalization of the body in this present time. This promise inspires us to patiently await this grand change. Paul did not expect

it in this life as he said, *"If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men must miserable."* So this hope goes beyond this life. He anticipates this change when he says, *"So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory!"*

Death and the grave are things that we cannot converse with triumphantly until the grave has given up its victim, to wit, this body of death. "It doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shalt be like him." This is the reasoning of John and should suffice for us. *"As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness"* (Psalms 17:15). I am not concerned over the question of whether we will know each other there, or any speculation concerning things yet to be experienced beyond that which is written. My only concern is, will I be among the number to enjoy eternal life wherever and whatever it is?

May God grant that we who have this hope implanted in us be enabled, by His grace, to dwell together here in time, in sweet communion and fellowship with and for each other. May He grant us the spirit of forbearance and humility.

May He enable us to strive for peace and edification instead of strife and destruction.

Elder E. J. Lambert

HEBREWS 13:20, 21

“Now 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 you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in your that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.”

Why is it that we always have a benediction at the end of our services? This is not a word that the translators gave us in our version of the Bible, but at the end of each letter (except James) there is a prayer or short benediction. At the end of all Bible prayers there is an amen. This word has meaning that is not easily set aside. In fact, the theologian that would belittle the word, or berate those that use the word, does not have the religion of Jesus Christ. It is a word that He used to verify his veracity, and it is a word that was handed down from the ancient people of God to express a wish. This is why that the end of prayer has the “amen” at the end of it; it is for the purpose expressing a wish, to wit, So be it. The promises

of God are all yea, and all Amen, unto the glory of God by us. (2 Cor. 1:20) There is not a single promise that is nay. They are all yea and amen through Jesus Christ our Saviour. Since all scripture is given by inspiration of God (2 Tim. 3:16), it would be sacrilegious and blasphemous to say that the use of this word is not of the highest importance in our preaching and writing on sacred topics.

“Now the God of peace.” O, dear child of God, what comfort is found in these words. To read that, to hear that he is the God of our peace is indeed rich. It abounds with much promise to him that has known the ravages of war. As far as God the lawgiver, there could never be any peace coming from him to us. If we could have kept all of God’s laws, we would have made peace with him. If this had been true, then this text would not have appeared in the Bible. God has always disproved of sin. I may end up in the housetop alone for saying it, but I’d much rather end up there than live in a house with a brawling woman who would hide behind the purpose of God for their sins. (Prov. 21: 9; Rom. 6:1,2) As long as the sins of God’s people remained unatoned for there could never be any peace. If this does not teach the warlike characteristic of God against sin I do not know what it would take. I have said this: If God is pleased with our sins, he perpetrated the greatest fraud in sending His Son into the world to die for sinners, and yet that He was

pleased with their sins. For me, I know that this is not the truth. God, as our Lawgiver, was at war against all of his people. This war went unabated until it was atoned for. At no time, from the moment of our disobedience in the morning of time, until atoned for, did the wrath of God abate in the least degree. In our efforts to expound the beauty in the text, it is my desire to not leave a stone unturned in bringing out that *"God is our peace."* He had been at war from all eternity against sin. I get lost when I get to exploring in the grandeur of the God-head, but it is lost in holy ecstasy, not in gloomy and dismal swamps.

As long as God has been, he has been the God of wrath, the God of war, the God against sin. If this had not been true, how could God have counselled to send His own Son to die to satisfy the wrath of God and the justice of God and to become the God of peace? Too, we must be just as emphatic that he is the God of peace as that he is the God of wrath or war.

For him to cease being a God of wrath, there had to be somebody to atone for the sins of those with whom God was wroth. This Atonement could not be found among the sons of Adam. If it could have been found there, our text would have said, *"Now the peace which is by Adam, etc."* When the law was given it was given to be kept, not to be defied, not to be despised, not to be nullified by man, not to have any

mercy in it. Manifestly, from the time of its being broken, God has been at war against sin. There could not be any peace without a reconciliation. When man fell, he was deprived from the sole of the feet to the crown of the head. He could not keep from sinning; he could not bring reconciliation, seeing that he could not turn and do good. (Jer. 13:23) This rule has never been abrogated by him that made it. Many people, the majority of the human race, have changed it (so they think) to suit their fancy, but God has not changed it, therefore all of the religion in the world that has come by efforts that the sinner conceived and carried out is not the truth; all the peace that man has brought, whether in the natural realm of existence, in the so-called religious world, even in the church of the Lord Jesus Christ, it is all vain, all useless, all perishable, if it came about by the action of this dead sinning creature.

God moved to bring peace, therefore it is a wonderful text that embraces Him as being the God of peace. What a blessing it is to be given this all prevailing peace in our experience; what a high and exalted calling it is to be called of God, to preach and to write about the peace that passes all understanding, which peace keeps our hearts and minds through Jesus Christ our Lord. (Phil. 4:7) It is not any small wonder that Paul was determined to know nothing among the Corin-

thians save Jesus Christ and him crucified. (1 Cor. 2:2) God raised Him up and sent Him forth from His bosom to bring peace out of chaos. That was the beginning of the peace of God - the peace which God brought. It is presently the work of God's Holy Spirit to keep our hearts and our minds in this peace. If you understand this peace you will attribute it to men; if it passes all understanding, you will attribute it to God.

“That brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus Christ.” It is not a question of not bringing Him from the dead, but how could He fail to bring Him from the dead, seeing that He sent Him forth to redeem them that were under the law. Poor frail human beings will never be able to more than grasp the surface of the love of God in this bringing Him forth from the dead. But we must not get the last things first. Order is heaven's first law, and in no place is it out of place as much as it is expounding the gospel. God sent Him forth to do His will. This will is that all given Christ must be brought into peace with God. God could not be at peace with his own Son had that Son failed in bringing many sons to glory. (Heb. 2:10) I have said, I repeat it here, that if the common idea about the work of Christ was true (that is, that he failed in saving those given him) that he would not have been received into heaven - yea, he would not have been raised from the dead. Here is

that delightful order of heaven:

God sent His Son to redeem the chosen people of God, to reconcile them to God and Him to them; to come as the One and only peace-offering, being named the Wonderful, Counselor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. (Isa. 9:6) While here, He brought peace to His people; and when He died, He brought peace to God and to all the heirs of promise. He did the work that His Father gave Him to do. How peaceful it was with Satan writhing in death, with all the enemies of God as dead men, with the holy and righteous and good law filled to a jot and a tittle. God can not deny himself (Num. 23:19; 2 Tim. 2:13), and, seeing that Christ was the mighty God and the Everlasting Father, *all* of God's power and glory and honor was pledged to raise and bring from the dead His Son and our Saviour.

“That great shepherd of the sheep.” How lovely the scriptures set Him forth in this capacity. This shepherd, this Saviour, was set up from everlasting. (Prov. 8:23) The eyes of wisdom saw His substance from everlasting, and in his book all His members were written, yet they were unperfected, and not manifest, even as Jesus was not yet manifest. But he did not come to become a Savior, not at all; He was born the Saviour. His delights were with the sheep before they were manifest sheep; he rejoiced among the sheepfold and its occupants before

the world had an existence. (Prov. 8:31) Since it is the work of a shepherd to look after his flock, this Shepherd went about doing the work of his Father while it was day, while a Man could work. He did do His Father's work while here and at his departure, sent another Comforter who is continuing on the same line of work, taking the things of Christ and presenting them to the sheep. As the Shepherd, he found them all dead in sin. He gave unto them eternal life according as his Father had given him all power to redeem and to reveal unto them the redemption. (Matt. 11:27; John 10:28; 17:2)

This great Shepherd is often pictured in the saddest of terms. He is often set forth as a hand-wringing shepherd. He is shown (?) unto us as a shepherd that would like to lead the sheep by still waters; that would like to have them lie down in green pastures; that would like to lead the sheep in paths of righteousness; that would like to comfort his people with the rod and the staff; that would like to prepare a table for them; that would like to anoint our head with oil; that would like for our cup to run over, but the sheep just will not let him do this. I do not know which is the most unreasonable and unscriptural doctrine, to not be able to make sheep manifestly, or to be able to make them without their help and then lose control over them after that He makes them sheep. It seems good to me to discard both.

"Through the blood of the ever-

lasting covenant." The translators were not agreed about this word "covenant" some of them thinking that this was the better word, while others thought that the better word was testament. I do not know a word of Greek, but I am inclined to agree with the minority report in this case. The covenant is one thing, but the Testator of that covenant is another. It is true, however, that Moses referred to blood as being the covenant blood; but it would seem, from a careful reading, that this covenant was not the one that is in our text. Too, the writer of Hebrews tells us that sore punishment awaits him that treads under foot the son of God, and counts the blood of the covenant as an unholy thing. (Heb. 10:29) As it was with Moses, and as it seems certain to the writer of Hebrews, they had in mind a figurative sense; so it would seem that way here, to wit, that it is through the blood of Jesus Christ.

We do remember that Jesus is the Testator of a better covenant. Even the first covenant was dedicated with blood. It was the blood of calves and goats used in type for the blood of Jesus. Moses said, This is the blood of the testament which God hath enjoined unto you. (Heb. 9:18, 20) As the types had to die in order for the comers thereto to have blood, just so did Jesus, the Lamb of God, have to die that the comers thereto be made perfect. (Heb. 10:1) A man's testament (will) is not in force as long as he lives. Only after

his death does his will come into force. Thus it behoved Christ to die that his testament benefit his people. When he administered the supper to the disciples he called the wine the blood of the new testament.

“Make you perfect in every good work to do his will.” Whatever the true meaning of the blood of the everlasting covenant, whether understood in a figurative sense, or that Jesus in sum and substance is the covenant himself, it does not lessen the force of the doctrine that is being taught in the text. The perfection prayed for is not of the creature. Whoever heard of praying for that which the creature can do? You haven't heard that? That is the common ignorance of mankind. Every religion except the Absolute Predestinarian Baptists believe that God is dependent on the creature for the success of his venture and church and kingdom building, and yet they pray like hercules to God for help in them doing it. This prayer is from the heart of a poor dependent creature. He knows that he must have grace to perform all the requirements of God; that his present salvation is based on God's saving grace. This prayer of the apostle comes to this: May the God of peace, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will. I do not intend to sell out my pen to anybody, and I will say to my brethren that it is not in evil works that God is to enable us to do his will. We are not doing the will of

God when we do evil works. The writer did not pray for God to enable us to do his will in wickedness. He did not do that. Reason how we may, call our loved ones in the Lord what we may, the Lord does not forbid things in his written word and then influence us by his Spirit to disobey that command. God does his will in heaven and in earth, whether it is by the power of His Spirit in our hearts and minds, or by the wielding of His sword. Of one he is the direct and immediate cause, by the other he is simply taking that which is already wicked and using it as it seems good unto Him. Of one thing I am sure. We will never perfectly do his will until the perfect gift (James 1:17) is given to us. And I am sure that this perfect gift is given his people that they may perfectly do his will in every good work.

“Working in you that which is well-pleasing in his sight.” Let us go to another notable letter of Paul. “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) How often have we heard it said that *“God works the will and the do in you, but you must work it out.”* Only an ignorant one (letter ignorant as well as grace) would make an application like that of the work of God in his people. They either have forgotten

or they never did know, that God works effectually in his subjects. (Eph. 3:7:1 Thes. 2:13) The prayer is seeking for God to make us perfect in every good work. How many good works? I did not say, dear critic. But the prayer of Paul begs for grace from the God of all peace that the children of God be perfected in every good work to do his will; not *just* begging for grace that will work it in the children of God, not that at all, but begging for grace that they be made perfect in every good work to do his will. That is the prayer. That is the prayer of every dependent sinner; but, regardless of the niceties of speech-making to God in prayer, the prayer of others do not mean that they are helpless and dependent. Now link up this prayer with Paul's charge to the Philippians. His charge to them is to work out that which God has wrought in, and this prayer is to the God of peace that he would make them perfect in every good work to do his will, working in them that which is well pleasing in his sight.

The text heretofore has set forth God as doing great wonders through the Lord Jesus Christ. However, have you noticed that it is God the Father that has done all this first for the Son? He sent forth his Son, He sent angels to administer to him; He raised Him from the tomb. This was as the manifest Son of God. This is in keeping with the expression: Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee. (Psalm 2:7) Earlier in

this article it has been noted that the Son was ever with the Father. This being true, He could not have been begotten, but in His relationship with His people it truly can be said that He was begotten of God. Then the writer prays that the wonderful blessings of obedience be given unto the Hebrew brethren. He prays for that which is wellpleasing in the sight of God. He does not ask God to make them perfect in every evil or sinful work, for this could never be wellpleasing in his sight; and that would apply to him working it in them as well as after it is wrought in and by them.

I sometimes hope that I have a calling from God to preach the gospel; to preach Jesus Christ and him crucified. I feel in my heart and mind that I have told you the whole truth in what hope that it was the God of peace that visited me more than forty years ago, breaking down my opposition to His rule over me, and reconciling God to me through my blessed Lord. The answer to this prayer was predicated upon the will of God being executed through the Saviour Jesus Christ. My will was not consulted in the outset, and thus I am not a sharer in glory with him there. Since that day, if this was the day of the Lord with me, I have been willing to follow him, to count it a joy in tribulations, to submit to all the indignities that are heaped upon me; to know that our God is still the God of all vengeance as well as the God of peace, and that whatever it

is, He will carry all of his pleasure out; and that now, and forever and forever, all glory belongs to Him.

As the shadows lengthen out and the end of day approaches, I would to God that I die with a hearty Amen upon my dying lips to all that his providence and grace has brought to me; that he has ruled over (not overruled) all his creation to where not a shaft has hit me to ruin, but rather for good; that He has supplied my needs, both natural and spiritual, that He has enabled me to say, "*Though he slay me, yet will I trust him,*" and that, As I have received good at his hand, I expect to receive the same kind of evil that Job did, and that whatever comes, whether good or evil, whether in giving or in taking, that His name is blessed forever more.

Elder W. D. Griffin

GENESIS VI. 6; NUMBERS XXIII. 19.

Dear Brother: — If not asking too much, will you please give your views upon Genesis vi. 6, which reads, "*And it repented the Lord that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart.*" I also find in Numbers xxiii. 19, this language, "*God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent; hath he said, and shall he not do it? Or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?*" In hope of knowledge I ask

your views upon these Scriptures.

From the least of all saints, if one at all,

N.C. Pennington.
Lanham, W. Va., Dec. 21, 1909.

Upon the former subject we have written more than before, and the last time was not, as we remember, very long ago, but still there can be nothing out of place in saying a few things again about it. We do not for a moment suppose that brother Pennington thinks that the holy Scriptures in any way contradict themselves. This would not be so, and leave us any confidence in the word of God as being infallibly true. For many years it has been our mind that if we found portions of the word which to us seemed contradictory, we must at once believe that the fault was in our finite understanding, and not in the statements of the Bible. It is the part of any humble-minded believer to rather choose to deny his own reasoning than the Scriptures. The testimony of our own ears, eyes or hearts may be a lie, but not the testimony of the word of God. In the Bible we have a sure word of prophecy, whereunto we do well that we take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place. This word of God is more sure than any experiences or thoughts that we may have. Let us remember the power of the words, "*Let God be true, but every man a liar.*" Christians themselves can be sure their travel is a christian travel only as they find it in agreement with what they read in the Bible. We are fal-

lible in all things, the church is fallible also, but the word of God, who cannot lie, must be true. It is well if we start out upon the investigation of the Scriptures with the conviction in our heart, first, that it is all true, and that if anything in it seems to us to contradict even our senses, then our senses lie, and not the word of God. We doubt not that our brother believes this, and that he feels sure there is no real contradiction in the two Scriptures which he has quoted. How can, then, the statement, "*It repented the Lord that he had made man,*" be reconciled with the Bible doctrine of the unchangeable purpose of God? To us repentance is always accompanied with sorrow, and so also we read in the text that the Lord was grieved, as well as that he repented. But it will not do for us to think for a moment that our God feels human passions, such as grief, hate, sorrow, regret, &c. It is declared too often that he is unchangeable. His hatred of sin is an unchangeable thing; his love of holiness is also equally unchangeable. His love to his people, whom he has chosen, cannot be lessened or quenched at any time or because of any circumstances. When he pronounces judgment upon the disobedient, these judgments shall surely befall them; they have no way to escape them. It is concerning this especially that the text in Numbers referred to by our brother, treats; that is, we mean that the text in Numbers expressly de-

clares that the favor of God to his people shall never change. Even Balaam had come to see this, and so he could not curse Israel. God had blessed them, and they should be blessed. He will not turn away from his people and cease to do them good. On the other hand his judgments against that which is evil will surely fall. He can never love that which is evil; he can never hate that which is good. More than this, he is one mind, and none can turn him; his will is one, forever and ever. His knowledge can never increase, and it can never decrease; there can be no change here. He is perfect, and perfect at all times, and to all eternity. He is at all times perfect in holiness, in wisdom, in knowledge and in purpose. Change in anything implies imperfection in that thing; imperfection either before or after the change. If perfect before, then change must bring imperfection. But God was and is perfect, and therefore not the subject of change in anything. This one truth compels us to believe that all things, all events, must be fixed. Predestination no more fixes all things beyond the possibility of a failure to come to pass than does this unchangeable knowledge of God. There is then no change in our God, and it follows, therefore, that all the changes must be in creatures, and change is written upon all animate and inanimate things that we know anything about. There was change in our first parents when they listened to the

tempter and fell. Man was made upright, but man sought out many inventions, and they were all evil. Man became the enemy of God. In the work of redemption through Christ it is not God that is reconciled to man, but man to God; the change is in man, wrought there by the Holy Spirit. So, on the other hand, transgression changed the attitude of man before God; he was no longer upright. God was upright and holy still, but men became alienated by their wicked works. Our God always loved Jacob and hated Esau. He always loved his people chosen in eternity, and all others were like Esau. God has not changed in his love or hate, but remember that his hatred is not a human passion, and neither is his love after the manner of men's love. But as man became a fallen and sinful being he was by his very state of sin shut out from the Holy One, his own sins forever hinder his access to God, without a sacrifice and a mediator. To man who has come to know his sin the very heavens frown instead of smile upon him. The trees never clap their hands when a sinner feels his condemnation, rather all looks gloomy to him. But when peace and pardon through Christ are spoken to his heart, then indeed even the trees rejoice in his view, and the very hills run and leap for joy; to him the face of God is full of smiles. Our God, then, does not repent in the sense that there has been change wrought in his mind or will, but in the sense that our sins cause us to see a frown

upon him, while in the obedience of Christ we see a smiling face. To us it looks as though the natural sun revolves around the earth, but yet, after all, we know that this is not so, the sun does not change in the heavens, but only seems to do so; it is the earth that changes, not the sun. So our God does not change, but we change, yet as we say the sun rises and sets, so the word of the text under consideration says, "*It repented the Lord that he had made man.*" This has long seemed to us to be what we must understand by the repentance and grief of the Lord in the text in Genesis, and in other places where repentance is attributed to our God.

We trust that this may prove of some satisfaction to our brother, and to others.

Elder Chick

"Be thou in the fear of the Lord all the day long. For surely there is an end; and thine expectation shall not be cut off." — Proverbs xxiii. 17, 18.

The Lord is here addressing himself to a soul labouring under temptation, and passing through peculiar exercises; and this is the exhortation that he gives it: "*Be thou in the fear of the Lord all the day long;*" watching his hand, submitting to his will, committing everything into his care and keeping; not hardening your heart against him, but looking up to him,

and worshipping him with godly fear; *"for surely there is an end;"* and, when the end comes, it will make all plain and clear. This quiet submission, this watching and waiting, a man can never be brought to unless he has seen an end to all perfection; an end of his own strength, wisdom, and righteousness. To sit still is the hardest thing a man can do. To lie passive at God's footstool when all things seem to be against us; to have a rough path to walk in, to be surrounded with difficulties, and yet to be in the fear of the Lord all the day long, watching his hand, desiring to submit to his will, seeking only that wisdom which cometh from above, and trusting that he will make the way straight; not putting our hand to the work, but leaving it all to the Lord — how strange, how mysterious a path! And yet it is the only one that brings solid peace to a Christian; *"for surely there is an end."* Whatever sorrows and troubles a man may have to wade through, there will surely be an end of them. If we try to get ourselves out of perplexities, we are like a person trying to unravel a tangled skein of silk by pulling it forcibly; the more it is pulled, the more entangled it gets, and the faster the knots become. So if we are plunged into any trial, providential or spiritual, and we attempt to extricate ourselves by main force, by kicking and rebelling, we only get more entangled. The Lord, then, to encourage us to wait patiently upon him till he shall appear,

says, *"Surely there is an end."* This is the universal testimony of the Scripture, that the Lord appears and delivers, when there is none shut up or left; and the experience of the saints agrees with the testimony of the written word: *"For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end."*

Elder J.C. Philpot

PSALM 31:23-24.

O love the Lord, all ye his saints: for the Lord preserveth the faithful, and plentifully rewardeth the proud doer.

Be of good courage, and he shall strengthen your heart, all ye that hope in the Lord.

MEETINGS

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The Staunton River Union will convene the Lord willing with Danville Primitive Baptist Church the 5th Sunday and Saturday before in December. Song service begins at 10:00 A.M.

An invitation is extended to all our ministers, brethren and friends.

Irvin Holley, Clerk

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION

The West Country Line Union will convene on the fifth Sunday in December at Greensboro Church.

Take Highway #29 to Highway #6 West (Lee Street) to Tate St. Turn right and go North approximately one mile, the church is on the right at Carr Street.

We especially invite all ministers of our faith and order. Song service begins at 10:00 a.m.

Wayne Edwards, Clerk

PSALM 4:8.

I will both lay me down in peace, and sleep: for thou, Lord, only makest me dwell in safety.

NOTICE OF CORRECTION

In the September Issue of The Signs on page 195 in the right column a word was left out by error. The sentence was written, "*We know that Jesus was a flesh and blood man at that time.*" It should have said. "*We know that Jesus was NOT a flesh and blood man at that time.*" My apology to the readers for this error.

Elder C. C. Wilbanks

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR AUGUST 2001

Hassell Hale, VA	7.00
Levie Goad, VA	7.00
Mary Lou Crissman, NC	2.00
H. B. Rhoades, TX	2.00
Hazel Garland, MD	25.00
James Geisendorfer, WI	2.00
Ala Mae Noviello, TX	3.00
Charlie Wood, VA	7.00
O.C. Parks, LA	2.00
Calvin Vipperman, VA	7.00
William Vick, TN	10.00
Frank Pilgreen, LA	2.00
Loy Rodgers, AR	2.00
Frances Harper,	5.00
William Midkiff, VA	2.00
Samuel Broach, Jr., NC	7.00

OBITUARIES

SISTER IVA LEE SOUTER

God, in His infinite wisdom, called Sister Iva Lee Calk Kohier Souter home to heavenly portals on August 7, 2001. She truly loved the doctrines of election and sovereign grace, and she was received into the fellowship of the church at Hoard's Creek near Coleman, Texas, pastored by Elder C. D. Varnell. Sister Iva Lee later moved her membership to Mt. Olive Church, Stockdale, Texas, pastored by Elder Gerald D. Shipman, now

deceased, and Elder W. M. Burkhalter, where she served as church clerk for many years, and up until the day of her death remained a devoted member with the very same Mt. Olive Church, Boerne, Texas, pastored by Elder David Harrell. A precious memory for me of dear Sister Souter is that she was present the first time I went into the stand; however, one of her last requests of me was to come to Mt. Olive to preach along with her dear pastor, Elder David Harrell, where she might attend and observe communion. How encouraging this was to me to see this dear sister once again! Sister Souter loved her church and was faithful to attend, both at home and away, as long as she was able. When it became a chore for her to get to church, services were held several times in her home. This was just another way she showed her desire to hear the gospel and to fellowship with the brethren.

Born in Farmersville, Louisiana to Thomas and Maud Ila Calk on December 26, 1907, this dear sister in Christ taught school for 27 years beginning in a one room schoolhouse with 40 children, ages 6 to 14. She married her first husband, Alfred A. Kohler, and became a military wife of a major in the U.S. Air Force. Preceding her in death March 18, 1968, his remains lie in Ft. Sam Houston National Cemetery. On

January 1, 1979 she wed her second husband, Lester A. Souter. They welcomed many of the sisters and brethren into their home prior to his death on April 10, 1999. Sister Souter is survived by two daughters and sons-in-law, Kathryn and Ernest Locker, Patricia and John Tindall, all of San Antonio; three granddaughters, Anne Warmoth, Puyallup, Washington, Gay Lynne Zein and Carly Raasch, both of Austin, Texas; six great grandchildren; two brothers and one sister-in-law, Norris and wife, Dora Calk, Coleman, Texas, Roy Lee Calk, Tuscon, Arizona; three sisters-in-law, Tony Calk, Palo Alto, California, Mildred Calk, Coleman, Texas, Clemmie Calk, Boerne, Texas; numerous nieces and nephews; and many friends.

The funeral service for Sister Souter was conducted 11:30 a.m. August 10, 2001 at Porter Loring Chapel in San Antonio, Texas with Tommy Lyons officiating. She was laid to rest in Ft. Sam Houston National Cemetery.

May we be given to say "*Thy will be done*" for Sister Iva Lee Souter is surely cradled in the arms of her dear Savior and Lord today.

Written at the request
of her pastor,
Elder David Harrell, and
written in much love by,
Elder C. M. Haygood

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES

202 Carousel Lane, Meadows of Dan, Va. 24120-4403

SONG

*Give me the wings of faith to rise
Within the veil, and see
The saints above, how great their
joys,
How bright their glories be.*

*Once they were mourning here below,
And wet their couch with tears;
They wrestled hard, as we do now,
With sins, and doubts, and fears.*

*I ask them whence their victory
came?
They, with united breath,
Ascribe their conquest to the Lamb,
Their triumph to his death.*

*Our glorious Leader claims our
praise
For his own pattern given,
While the long cloud of witnesses
Shows the same path to heaven.*

Watts.

POSTMASTER

Please send address changes to:

Signs of the Times
202 Carousel Lane
Meadows of Dan, Va 24120-4403

CONTENTS

EDITORIAL 266
 Elder C.C. Wilbanks

CORRESPONDENCE 270

VOICES OF THE PAST 270
 Elder Silas H. Durand
 Frederick W. Keene
 Mary Johnson Thigpen
 Elder Wm. L. Beebe (1894)

MEETINGS 288

CONTRIBUTIONS 288

EDITORIAL

RESURRECTION



Elder C.C. Wilbanks

There has been many articles written on the subject of the resurrection, and I feel sure there will be many more, for there can be nothing of more importance to a child of God than the resurrection of Jesus Christ, and his hope that he will also be resurrected; for unless Christ did not overcome death and the grave and arise victorious from the tomb we can have no hope. But through his

death and resurrection he destroyed him that had the power of death, that is, the devil. Heb. 2:14. He was the first to be resurrected, for he must have the preeminence in all things. Jesus said to Martha, the sister of Lazarus, *"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."*

I do not believe that any child of grace would deny that the body of Jesus Christ in which he died was raised again to life, which is the first resurrection, but there are many different opinions and beliefs, even among the Old Baptist ministers, concerning the resurrection of God's people. Some of them say that the resurrection occurs at the time of death of each individual, and that the body which returns to the dust from which it was made will never be raised. I will leave that for them to prove by the Scriptures, if they can. There are many who believe, as do I, that we (the elect) will be resurrected at the end of the world when our Saviour shall return to receive his bride. There are many Scriptures to prove this and I will use some of them to show what I believe to be the gospel truth. There are also those who are looking forward to finding their children, kin-folks and good friends in heaven. What did Jesus say to the Sadducees when they asked him who would be the husband of the woman

who had seven husbands? *“Ye do err, not knowing the scriptures, they neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the angels of God in heaven.”* If they be as angels, who would recognize them? Paul said, *“And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.”* If it were possible to recognize them and yet they were not found, would this not cause grievous pain? No such thing shall ever be in heaven. David said in Ps. 17:15, *“As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake in thy likeness.”* This cannot be in his likeness as he appeared on the earth as the Son of Man, but in his glorified body. *“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.”*

There are those who say that our bodies, which shall return to the dust, are not resurrected, for some are deposited in the sea, other cremated and their ashes scattered in the wind, others buried in the earth, etc. But what do the Scriptures say? *“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.” 1 Cor. 15: 13-16. Does it seem impossible to anyone for God to resurrect our bodies regardless of the circumstances? Jesus himself said. *“With God all things are possible.”* Matt. 19:26. I doubt that anyone familiar with the Scriptures would deny that David was a prophet of God, and that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne. (Acts 2:30) Peter spake of him, saying, *“he is both dead and buried, and his sepulcher is with us unto this day.”* And as quoted above David said, *“I shall be satisfied when I awake in thy likeness.”* David is sleeping in the dust, and so will all men unto the day of the resurrection. I have never heard it preached, but have read in the writings of some of the elders of the past that they believed the resurrection is when the sinner is awakened from his dead alienated state in which he was born. This is not the resurrection, but being born again; not of the flesh but of the spirit. Jesus said, *“That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.”* John 3:6-7. This is a mystery which was hid from ages and generations, but is now made manifest to us by God, *“Which is Christ*

in you, the hope of glory.” Col.1: 27. Christ is the way, the truth and the life. He said. “I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish.” John 10:28. Our flesh is not changed in the least when we are born again, and in the flesh we will continue to sin, for John said, “If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.” 1 John 1:8-10. And James tells us, “Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin, and when it is finished, bringeth forth death.”

That the resurrection is in the future, and not at the time of each individual death, I will show by these Scriptures. *“For as the lightning cometh out of the east, and shineth even unto the west; so shall also the coming of the Son of man be.” Matt 24:27.* I cannot believe any one has ever seen this come to pass. When he ascended from his disciples and was received in a cloud out of their sight they were told by two men in white apparel, *“Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing up into heaven? This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen him go into heaven.” Acts 1:11.* This scripture says he will so

come in like manner, not in the body which ascended, *“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: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord.” 1 Thes.4:16-17.* This agrees perfectly with what Jesus said in 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.”* The hour is coming: it is a very specific time, it is in the future, and it is sure. Jesus said, *“But of that day and that hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heaven, neither the Son, but the Father.”*

Paul tells us, *“Behold, I shew you a great mystery; We shall not all sleep, but we shall be changed.”* There are those who say, If it was a mystery to Paul, it must be a mystery to us also. The mystery is not that we will be changed, but in the time it will take for it to be accomplished; *“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." 1 Cor. 15: 51-52. Surely this is a mystery to us, yet we know that Jesus said, "but with God all things are possible." In this same chapter Paul tells us how our bodies are sown. "It is sown in dishonour; it is raised in glory: it is sown in weakness; it is raised in power: It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body."

Beloved brethren, if we be the elect of God, chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, then we shall all be changed, whether in the grave or alive, and we shall rise up to meet our Lord and Saviour in the air and forever be with him. There are those who claim this to be his "Second Coming". I cannot find this scripture in my bible, but I do not desire to argue with any who use it. However I do find several scriptures that show he has appeared on earth more than once, The LORD appeared unto Abraham in the plains of Mamre. (Gen 18:1), he appeared when he was born in Bethlehem, and he appeared unto John in the isle of Patmos. Surely these scriptures show that he has come more than once. And he will surely come again at that last day and we shall rise up to meet him in the air. That is the hope of all of God's elect.

Brethren, I realize that I have only touched the surface of this tremendous subject, for I know that volumns have been written before, yet the half has never been told.

However, if the Lord is in this it is enough for this time. May he bless the truth and pardon all errors. Remember this poor sinner when at the throne of Grace.

Eld. Clifford Wilbanks

Romans 8:23-27.

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.

For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope : for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?

But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.

Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.

And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God.

CORRESPONDENCE

Oct. 4, 2001

Elder William Hale Terry
Circulation Mgr. & Treasurer
Signs of the Times

Dear Elder Terry,

As I read the last copy of my current subscription (Vol. 169, #10). I was deeply moved by the story of the annual association meeting held at Payne's Creek Church, Floyd Co. Virginia in Sept. of 1943, during W.W.II. It made me pause in hope, that God would bless our friends and relatives today, to finally hear the truth as he did then, when their uncertainty was great, and, as it is in today's world.

It is my undying wish, if it be God's will, that he would send a great revival among his children, to reverse the general falling away and, in light of the recent past, to know that we all are in need of his love and mercy. It is my firm conviction that, contrary to the world's popular beliefs, the only truth spoken (preached) today is solely within the confines of Old Baptist tenets.

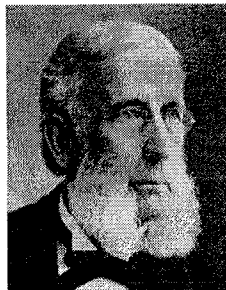
Thank you and all of your blessed associates for the work God led you to do. I treasure each issue of "The Signs" I receive.

Yours in Hope of Christ's
Merciful Blessings,

Don & Sheryl Jackson
Members, Saints Rest Primitive
Baptist Church, in Dallas, TX.

VOICES OF THE PAST

LUKE XVI. 9.



Elder Silas H. Durand

And I say unto you, *Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness; that when ye fail, they may receive you into everlasting habitations.*"

"*And I say unto you.*" Jesus did not speak like other men. The officers that were sent to take him said truly, "*Never man spake like this man.*" He taught not only in a different manner from other men, but upon a different principle. The words of his that are written by the pen of inspiration are not words by which his teaching is to be done, but the words which tell how his teaching has already been done. The written words tell to the enlightened understanding what the spirit and life of those words has already written in the new heart. "*The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life.*" John vi. 65. when he said, "*Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father*

which is in heaven,” he said in words what his Spirit always says within his people. These words do not express a proposition on his part which may or may not be complied with by those to whom they are addressed, but they tell what has been, and is being wrought in them by his creative power. They express the same invincible power by which God commanded the light to shine out of darkness, as he now shines in their hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. (2 Cor. iv. 6.) When Jesus says, *“But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you,”* he did not present a condition to those to whom he spake which they might or might not fulfill, but he declared what he speaks with living power in the hearts of those to whom he gives spiritual life, and which they can, in the Spirit, no more refuse to obey than Adam could refuse to breathe when God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life. This speaking of Jesus is not to the fleshly mind and heart, but to the new heart, and the flesh responds to these living words of Jesus as it is moved upon by the power of spiritual life. These spiritual powers are always inclined to perfect obedience, and when they are in exercise, by the grace of God, then they become effectual weapons of warfare, pulling down the strongholds of fleshly opposition, casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the

knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ. (2 Cor ix. 4.)

“And I say unto you.” Not as one man says something to another which it will be profitable for him to hear and attend to, but as the Creator says to the creature in that creative work by which he is *“created in Christ Jesus unto good works.”* When we come at the true meaning of the words of Jesus which are at the head of this article, we shall find in them not a recommendation of a course that will be for the benefit of his people to follow, but a command which has already been written in their hearts. Here is the difference between the legal character and the subject of gospel grace. Here is the difference in principle and action between the unjust steward, who is a pharisee and is covetous, and who sees in legal things only a chance for self-exaltation and emolument, and the gospel character, who has been given an honest spirit, and who sees in legal things the just requirements of a holy God, whose name must be glorified. Here is the difference between the teaching of this world’s wisdom to *“the children of this world,”* and the teaching of the wisdom which is from above to *“the children of light.”*

The unjust steward made friends with his lord’s goods, or riches, by requiring of his debtors less than they owed; and his lord (not our Lord) commended him, not

for honesty, but for a wise forethought and care to provide for himself against the day of adversity. His wisdom was earthly, sensual, devilish, but it was wisdom in a worldly sense, and looked to his worldly advantage. It pertained only to worldly things, and was eminently selfish, and it was only commended in a worldly sense. It is only as using the wisdom that he thinks will best advance his interests that he is commended by our Savior to the attention of the children of light. They are not directed to do as he did except in one thing, and that is, to pay attention diligently to the dictates of the wisdom which belongs to them, as he diligently attended to the directions of the wisdom of this world. The Savior said, *“Be wise as serpents, but he did not say, “Be wise like serpents.”* The children of this world are compared with the children of light to the disadvantage of the latter in one thing only, and that is, that they are wise in their generation, looking after what will be best for themselves in this world, while the children of light are not wise in their generation, when left to themselves to look after their own interests, but are constantly liable to turn aside from the path of true wisdom, and cannot therefore trust in themselves to guide themselves for one moment, but must be led constantly by the dear Savior.

That point in which they are liable to fail of true wisdom is their tendency to make use of the wisdom

of this world, which constantly holds out allurements to them to follow its lead. And how often they follow the lead of that worldly wisdom, looking for the advantages it promises, until they are led by it into trouble, desolation, famine and death. The true wisdom of the child of God is always to distrust the dictates of earthly wisdom. Therefore from the beginning of his experience he is turned away from the ways of this world, and taught a different way, and a different wisdom. This is indicated here.

“And I say unto you, Make to yourselves friends of the mammon of unrighteousness.” To make friends *with* those riches was to use them unjustly, as the pharisees (the unjust steward) did; to make friends of them is to experience and acknowledge the justice of their claims against us; to honestly own our full indebtedness, and to ask no reduction, even though we have nothing to pay, but must give up our own selves to satisfy the claim. For the mammon of unrighteousness undoubtedly means the things of the law. The word mammon simply means riches, wealth personified. Unrighteousness here does not mean anything evil or wrong, but the lack of righteousness or value. There is no real value in a pattern or in a type, but only a representative of value; there are no riches in an account, but only the representation of riches. The things belonging to the legal dispensation

had no real righteousness in themselves, hut they were important as representing the "true riches" of the gospel dispensation. And these true "riches of righteousness" brought forth in the gospel, which belong to the children of light, are only committed unto them after they have been found faithful in regard to the riches of unrighteousness, or the things of the law in which there is no righteousness, but only a typical representation of righteousness. One has made friends of those legal riches, the commands, ordinances, types, accounts of the legal dispensation, when he has acknowledged the justice of them. Under the law an Israelite had paid the debt when he had given up himself to be sold for it. Then the claim was settled, and in the year of jubilee he went free with no claim against him. No charge could be brought against him, for the law would stand his friend. So the law is the friend of the poor sinner who has acknowledged the justice of its claims against him. The moment he feels that he is justly sold under sin, that he is justly condemned, that moment for him the year of jubilee has come, and he is received by the very law which held such a claim against him, into the everlasting habitations of the gospel.

All of this chapter to the eighteenth verse confirms the view of the text which I have thus briefly suggested. The pharisees were covetous, so is every one who justifies himself before men. These are those

who depend upon the works of the law for salvation. Though they appear to men, and to themselves, to be true servants of the law, yet in their hearts they are covetous, and do not really care for the honor of God, nor seek to magnify his law, but are seeking their own honor and riches. They are not faithful in that unrighteous mammon, or riches, which belonged to another man, and under which they were known as servants, because they had not faith. As soon as one is born of God he has faith to see the true requirements of the law. He feels that its claims against him are just. He can say, "*The law is holy, and the commandment is holy and just and good, but I am carnal, sold under sin.*" Now he wants the law honored. He could not accept deliverance at the expense of the law; it would be no deliverance for him. He is faithful in these riches of the law, though there is no righteousness in them, yet they represent righteousness. There is no real value in the page of the account book which shows the great debt he owes, but it represents the true value, which he knows ought to be paid. It represents true riches. He could not dishonor those riches, that holy law, by accepting any release upon the payment of half or four score. He feels in his soul the truth which he does not yet understand, that every jot and tittle of the law must be fulfilled, that the whole debt must be paid.

That when ye fail. There is a time when every living soul must fail, and that is when he sees the amount of his indebtedness under the law of God, and the justice of it. When that is seen and acknowledged then the time of failure comes. Ten thousand talents in debt, and not a farthing to pay. Then all at once the law ceases to hold us, the soul is delivered, and we are astonished and amazed to find ourselves at liberty, freed from guilt, and rejoicing in a sense of righteousness. In his own time and way Jesus appears as having satisfied the law, and it is the riches of that legal dispensation, the accounts of that law now satisfied, which receive us into the gospel, is now fulfilled, so that nothing can be laid to our charge, and thus the gates of the holy city are opened unto us, never to be shut any more.

November 15, 1901
Elder Silas H. Durand

PSALM 33:1-3.

REJOICE in the LORD, O ye righteous: for praise is comely for the upright.

Praise the LORD with harp: sing unto him with the psaltery and an instrument of ten strings.

Sing unto him a new song; play skilfully with a loud noise.

For the word of the LORD is right; and all his works are done in truth.

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THE LONE PILGRIM
DECEMBER, 1927

ATTACHMENT TO THE ONE BODY

Sometimes in my thoughts I contemplated the whole body of Christ, and feeling some emotions of love for the church whom the beloved Lord Jesus has redeemed from all iniquity by His precious blood, I find fervent longings springing up in my heart for the true prosperity and peace of Zion. At other times my thoughts are engaged concerning this or that member of the body of Christ in particular; and though... absent from them, and perhaps unknown by face; unto them, yet that secret precious bond, that unites all the family of God, binds me, I hope, to them, and produces in my heart a godly solicitude for their welfare in the Kingdom of God.

My heart, also, has felt the preciousness of the truth that the body unto the edifying of itself in love. The members are placed in the body as it pleaseth God, and are all necessary whether it be the eye, the hand or foot. And the members of the body of Christ have gifts differing; all, therefore, have not the same office, but Jehovah gave some apostles and some prophets, and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers for the edifying of the body of Christ.

The following verse comes into mind expressing what I am persuaded of:

“Since Christ is my head, this with joy I remember, His body to which with affection I glow,

Although I’m the most insignificant member,

Can’t be full without one, Ah, never! O, No!”

God’s oath, His covenant, and blood forbid that any of the loved and chosen flock of God should perish. The epistle to the Hebrews, speaks of those who have fled for refuge, to lay hold upon the hope set before them, having a “strong consolation.” This I hope I have many times proved, when in sore need and sunk in disconsolation of soul.

The Holy Spirit, the Comforter, makes very sweet to the souls of the called of God the doctrine of Christ. This doctrine so despised and hated by vast multitudes of people who call themselves and wish to be accounted Christians, they manifest no love to the truth as it is in Jesus and by them *“the way of truth is evil spoken of.”*-2 Peter, 32:2.

Well, shall we make our boast? Yes, but only in the Lord; and then no poor humble sinner will be made sad by us.

If we love and have immutable inheritance in “the truth as it is in Jesus,” it is all of the eternal counsel, and the unfrustrable will and good pleasure of Jehovah the Father, the word and the Holy Ghost,

that we are thus made to differ from others. It is the Lord who puts a difference between the Egyptians and Israel. - Cor. 4:7; Exod. 11:7.

The consideration of the sovereign love of God, as I hope, to me a poor sinner has been with much weight upon my mind for some time past. Who am I, and what am I, that He should love and take delight in me? I often feel it seems unreasonable for me to think so; and truly this is beyond the reach of the uppermost thought of the creature to fathom why the Lord has loved us poor vile transgressors.

When we contemplate the millions of the posterity of Adam that have peopled, and that now inhabit the earth, sunken where they fell, in alienation from God, by wicked works and then among those nations who are styled Christian, how many, it is to be feared, know nothing spiritually of Jesus, the dear lamb of God? Then I question myself and say, *“Is it really true that I am one of the very elect?”* Am I one of the redeemed of the Lord? Does Jehovah love me? What evidences have I?

Thus I find inquiries arising. It is so very wonderful, so infinitely glorious, so eternally momentuous to such a poor sinner like me! I want no decision but that which proceeds from the throne of God and the Lamb. Like our precious Jesus, I have cried, *“Let my sentence come forth from thy presence.”*-Psalm 17:2.

As I have been writing this an incident in my pilgrimage has been recalled in my thoughts, very much as though it were but yesterday; but it was nearly forty years ago. I was in tribulations, both temporal and spiritual. And in the midst of my trials I fell into a barren state, so destitute of the things pertaining to the divine life. For some weeks I was wandering, indeed in a solitary way, so destitute of all meditation upon the things of Christ. I spent the days and weeks very miserably, and many a time in my spirit I cried out, *"O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"*

Accusations from the old serpent, called the devil, and satan assailed me and aggravated my sad condition.

While in this state, one Saturday morning, I started to ride some 30 miles with horse and carriage to an appointment to preach on the following day. While on my way called at my postoffice and among the letters was one from a very dear brother in Christ, an able minister of the new testament, living many miles from me in the state of Georgia. While yet in the postoffice I read what he had written and I felt my heart stirred up within me as I read. I found he was deeply in distress, in poverty and much oppressed. Here are some of his words, *"I have been passing through a severe trial lately, in*

debt, and nothing to pay it off with. It has cast me down very low, but I try to remember Him, who had no where to lay His head; it has given me no relief. Dear tried brother remember me."

I knew that such language from this precious brother had a depth of meaning, my heart flowed out in sympathy for him and all the time, while riding the rest of my journey, my thoughts were swallowed up in thinking of the trouble and distress that I felt persuaded he and his family were in. When I had arrived at my journey's end and had retired to rest, I could find no sleep; but the hours of the night were spent in thinking about this beloved servant of Christ. Oh, how I wish I were able to relieve him! I felt and mourned my helplessness, but I was drawn to look unto the Lord, for these words, as if spoken in me, were raised up in my mind, *"Jesus loves him far better than you do, and is able, if it be his pleasure, to bring him out of his troubles and supply all his needs."*

Though for some weeks past I had felt no spirit of supplication to pray in my own behalf, I felt my heart drawn to pour forth supplications in behalf of this dear brother and faithful minister of Jesus Christ. I felt so satisfied the Lord did indeed love him, but while thinking this the question arose, *"Does the Lord love*

you?" This cast me into a sea of emotions and made my eyes overflow with tears, and I exclaimed, *"How can the Lord love me?"* My past illness arose to my view and I felt to loathe myself in my own sight and I felt if I am so hateful, so loathsome to myself, how can the Holy One of Israel love me? I thought upon the immensity, the infinite majesty and glory of the Holy One that inhabiteth eternity and the more I thought and reasoned the more incredible and unreasonable it appeared that the blessed God could love such a vile, hateful worm like me. Modern, popular religionists may take all the satisfaction they can from what they call *"the reasonableness of the religion of Jesus Christ,"* but the things of Jesus Christ are beyond the grasp of my natural reason, and infinitely exceed my uttermost thought.

There have been times in the past when, with natural powers, I have attempted to solve (as one would a mathematical problem) the mystery of the cross of Christ, the enemy has assailed me with fearful suggestions, and vile insinuations, that as all things belonging to the gospel of Christ are impenetrable, therefore all was a myth and a delusion and there was no God.

This temptation, I have found no trifling thing, but it has caused me much pain, and deliverance I have found only in the power and good-

ness of God to my poor soul. On the night of which I am writing, though I could not see how the Lord could love me, yet O, how I longed and besought the Lord to be merciful and gracious to a poor worm again, to banish the dark clouds from my sky, to keep in subjection my vile nature, to give me again some token of His love to my soul! It was a time of the pouring out of my heart before the Lord and it was not a wonder of wonders that the Lord did not spurn me from His presence, that He did not in His anger cast me away. But I do hope that once more I tasted the blessedness of the man to whom the Lord inputeth not iniquity, whose sins are covered, and who is accepted in the Beloved. And I was comforted in believing that the Lord had thoughts of love to me in Christ Jesus, and His love was shed abroad in my heart by the Holy Ghost. *"He that loveth is born of God and knoweth God,"* and such are passed from death unto life who love the brethren.

I felt to bless and praise the Lord, that He, in His sovereign mercy and grace had made me truly to have fellowship with the Father and with His Son, Jesus Christ, and to love the brethren, the household of God. Oh it is wonderful!

"They wonder Jehovah should single them out, And

cause them to hear His sweet voice;

They wonder sometimes that their hearts are so hard; They wonder, they cannot rejoice.

And sometimes they wonder, they cannot believe And wonder what can be the matter;

And thus they go wondering, day after day, And wonder sometimes they're no better.

But sometimes they wonder that things are no worse, And bless God things are as they are;

"Tis then they can thank Him for wonderful grace, That has brought their poor souls so far.

And then what an endless wonder will be In glory eternal to dwell,

And our wonderful Saviour's face we shall see, And will be eternally well."

Raleigh, N.C.
Frederick W. Keene.

JOHN 6:35.

And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that come to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.

Published in Zion's Landmark
on April 15, 1911.

Tarboro, N. C., Mar. 5, 1911.
Corn Neck Farm.

My Dear Brother Gold:

For the last few days I have been strongly impressed to try to write you a little continuing from where I left off writing to Bro. Monsees. If the dear Lord will guide my pen I will be able to write, otherwise all my efforts are in vain.

Oh! that night! that glorious night when my burden was lifted and my poor fainting soul was made to cry out in praise to the most high God! Who can describe my feelings that night, my poor heart that had been crushed and bleeding under its intolerable weight of sin and guilt, was not only relieved of its weight but seemed filled to over-flow with love and "*Praise God, Praise God*" were the words which came into my mind so forcibly that I could not refrain from uttering them.

My poor heart was so full I felt that it must burst with that joy which is unspeakable, surely tis better felt than told; but it did not burst, no, the new wine was not put in bottles but I feel that all things were made new.

I went before the church at Tarboro Saturday before the first Sunday in November, 1910, as you know, and asked for a home, they received me, notwithstanding all my

unworthiness, and I was baptized next day by Elder M. T. Lawrence.

Only those who have experienced the same can know my feelings that day. Never was I so happy as when I came up out of the water. Oh that feeling is *"inexpressible and full of joy."*

I went on my way rejoicing, surely mortal was never happier than I.

I have been so blessed since then in getting to hear preaching, almost every Sunday the Lord has enabled me to mingle with his dear people and with them to feed and feast upon the truth as it is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Oh! when my thoughts are on Him how my soul rejoices in His glory; He is all in all to me; my way, my life, my end. It is so sweet to hope and have a reason to believe that He is those three things to us. He is our Way from earth to Heaven. He is our Life, our spiritual Life of light and joy, and glory to God! He is our End — our end is in Him. That is when we will need Him the most, when the end of this old mortal life comes, if we have Him then surely death will be swallowed up in victory.

Brother Gold, right after I was relieved of my burden I was sick in bed for a day or two and I felt like my time had come to die. I had a very queer feeling come over *me*. It seemed I was going down, down, down into a very narrow, cold place, and I must go alone. Oh I shuddered

at the thought, it was so cold and dark and worst of all lonely. Yes I must go right by myself and I knew God was on the other side, but I felt to be at peace with Him; what I had such a horror of was passing through this ordeal alone. All at once these words were forced upon me. *"Jesus will go with you-Jesus has been there."* Ah! how great a differ-

ence that made. All was calm and restful then. Not only did I have no more horror of death (for such I felt this to be) but I could say with all my heart, *"Oh! death, where is thy sting; Oh grave, where is thy victory?"* And also, *"Come welcome death, I'll gladly go with thee."* I only hope when I have shuffled off this mortal coil and my tune comes to part with all that is earthly that I may have that sweet assurance of His presence that I had then. Then I can die rejoicing.

But, since that sweet time I've been down in the valley some, a lot it seems - no it's worse than in the valley, I feel like I've been down in the angry deep with the raging billows overhead.

I think sometimes I must sink this time, I feel like the Lord is clean gone forever or else I have never known Him.

"How tedious and tasteless the hours,

Which Jesus no longer I see;
Sweet prospects, sweet birds
and sweet flowers

Have all lost their sweetness to me."

But thanks be unto him though He leaves me for a season He never fails to return. Each time with greater force and sweetness, it seems, if that is possible and are not all things possible with God ?

Brother Gold, I cannot tell you how much I enjoyed your sermon this morning, how gracious God is to give us the hearing ear and the understanding heart.

Brother Stone too, spoke so beautifully that my poor heart which I felt like had been melted down, just run over and I found relief in tears.

There are many of the hymns we sing that I love dearly but I believe my favorite is number 339 "*How Sweet the Name of Jesus Sounds.*"

I was baptized exactly one month from the day I first felt myself a lost and ruined sinner.

Now, Brother Gold, if I have had a Christian experience I thank God for it, and if it is not I thank Him still for giving me such love for Him and such sweet meditations, such love for the brethren and showing Himself to me as the "*chiefest among ten thousand, and the one altogether lovely.*"

That Heaven's rich blessings may rest upon you and yours now and henceforth is my prayer.

Your unworthy little sister,
Mary Johnson Thigpen.

JESUS THE END OF PROPHECY

When the cry, "*It is finished!*" was uttered by the dying Lord of life and glory, that declaration included all that was written in the law and in the inspired testimony of the prophets, and proclaimed the fulfillment of the eternal counsel of God in which he was chosen to be the Savior of his people from their sins. There was no further need that he should be manifest in the flesh as the perfect Servant whom God upheld by his own omnipotence. He had honored every demand of the holy law, and infinite justice could ask no more.

It is important that the saints should ever remember that there is no revelation given in the Scriptures for any other purpose but to testify of Jesus. While there is incidental reference to the affairs of time, as the setting up of empires and their overthrow, it is only as such incidents are used in showing the glory of our Lord in his control of all events for the manifestation of his eternal purpose in the preservation of his elect, spiritual people unto that great salvation to which they were ordained in Christ before the worlds were made. To those carnal Jews who disputed his doctrine he said, "*Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life; and THEY ARE THEY WHICH TESTIFY OF ME.*" - *John v.39.*

So, when John would have worshiped the angel by whom he was

shown the things of Jesus, the angel said unto him, "See thou do it not; I am thy fellow servant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus; worship God; for THE TESTIMONY OF JESUS IS THE SPIRIT OF PROPHECY." - Rev. xi 10. While believers are settled in this truth there is little occasion for them to be troubled by the devices of the adversary, who is ever ready to rob them of their rest in the assurance of faith by ingeniously wresting the words of inspiration. The natural mind esteems the strife of nations as of far more importance than the mourning of a conscious sinner; but in the judgment of God there is not an unuttered groan but that is gathered in the golden vials wherein are preserved before his throne the prayers of all saints. - Rev. v. 8; vi ii. 3. He sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers. He brings princes to nothing, and makes the judges of the earth as vanity. He turns man to destruction, and says, Return, ye children of men. Thus, those things which are highly esteemed among men are accounted nought by our God; and those whom men consider the offscouring of all things are precious in the sight of the Lord, even as his peculiar treasure, and as the jewels of a crown unto him. As he gave the wealth, honor and power of Egypt for the ransom of national Israel, so he has accounted all that is valued among men as vanity in comparison with

that grace which he has bestowed upon his spiritual Israel.

Not even the natural reason of the saints can comprehend this divine mystery of electing love. Constantly they seek in themselves some attraction by which this choice of God was drawn to embrace them; and their wily adversary finds an easy way to annoy them by referring to their conscious destitution of merit as evidence of their delusion in hoping in the grace of God for deliverance from the bondage of corruption. They can never overcome this temptation by reason. In this contest, as in all their experience, they must always confess that it is alone by grace that they are saved. Boasting is excluded by the grace of God which is revealed only through that faith which is the fruit of the Spirit freely given to them by the same eternal love which chose them in Christ before the foundation of the world. By that divine choice it was determined that they should be holy and without blame before God in love. If they were in themselves blameless before the holy law of God there would be nothing more than simple justice in this appointment. They could ascribe no praise to the riches of grace for that which would thus be their just judgment. But the glorious mystery of this divine appointment consists in the fact that it pleased the Lord to choose guilty and condemned sinners in whom was no merit, that they by the blood of Jesus should be

cleansed from all sin, and that they should be holy and without blame before him in love. It must not be forgotten that this complete justification of the justly condemned sinners thus chosen, is infinitely more than the pardon of their sins. By this inconceivable grace the demand of justice is not less fully satisfied than the mercy and love of God. Not only are the subjects of this election freed from the penalty of their sins, they are also fully delivered from the sins by which they were polluted. Now, no more guilt can be found in them than in their sinless Redeemer. In view of this great grace which is revealed in Christ Jesus it is not difficult to understand that he is the first cause and embodiment of all the revelation which God has given in the Scriptures, as well as the Beginning of the creation of God, and the center and object for which all things are and were created.

From the consideration of the infinite character of this salvation which is in Christ, it is not strange that in all the law and the prophets Jesus is the sum of what is recorded. Because it pleased God to hide these things from the wise and prudent, the efforts of men to find out God by searching have always proved vain. Many very learned and elaborate theories have been devised, in which human wisdom has sought to find the fulfillment of prophecy in events which men consider important among the nations of this world; but it is not for the in-

struction of men in natural things that God has given the guidance of his Spirit to prophets and apostles. Not only the written words of prophecy but all the history of the dealing of God with his people under the patriarchal and Mosaic dispensations, must be seen as the testimony of Jesus, or their essential significance is not understood. Hence, all those labored dissertations in which men have claimed to find by study the interpretation of Scripture prophecy, however consistent they may seem to reason, have only served to expose the folly of those who have devised them. It is a common result of these scientific devices to find the whole significance of the prophecies which they study fulfilled in the natural history of the children of Abraham. It is almost universally taught by them that there is yet to be a restoration of the Jews to the land of Palestine, and they are to be established there in the observance of those privileges and ordinances which were given them by Moses. Without attempting to discuss this conclusion, it is sufficient for those who look to Jesus for salvation to consider that this exposition directly controverts the declarations of the Lord himself and his inspired apostle. Jesus says, "*For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John.*" - *Matt. xi. 13.* Peter says, "*To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive*

remission of sins." - Acts x. 43. Hence, if all that was witnessed by the legal and prophetic dispensations was in Jesus fulfilled, it is evident that the establishing of those prophetic observances again would signify that another Messiah must come in their fulfillment. This is certainly a denial that Jesus is the end of the law, and that the salvation which he wrought is perfected in his obedience and offering of himself once for all.

Certainly none who trust in the grace which was revealed in Jesus can look for another Mediator to come from God. Unless that righteousness of God which dwelt in Jesus is sufficient for the justification of those for whom he laid down his life, there can be no hope for any sinner. But the same failure by which his people were forbidden to hope, would also hold the Captain of our salvation under the condemnation of divine justice. Surely this blasphemous suggestion cannot for a moment deceive the tempted believer.

Since man became a transgressor of the holy commandment of his Creator, the enemy of righteousness has ever sought to pervert the truth which God declared in the law as given to man in his primitive innocence. To this end proud reason is directed to search the heights and depths of human wisdom for some understanding of the things which are made, which is different from that given by divine inspiration. Carnal enmity against God is ever ready

to bow down to any idol in which it finds the sinner exalted as holding his destiny in his own power, and in which there is nothing of the humiliating doctrine of salvation exclusively by the grace of God. Man does not object to rendering adoration to such gods as are found in his own imagination; but he has never devised an idol superior to himself. The pride of his heart is flattered by the imagination that his god is altogether such a being as himself, and in worshiping that god he is only ascribing honor and glory to himself. Thus self is the ultimate object of all natural worship, whether it be called, Heathenism, or Catholic, or Protestant Christianity. Man is prone to worship some object, and his pride forbids that he should yield his own conception of that object so long as he is guided by his natural mind. Hence, every thought of God even in the imagination of an enlightened sinner, is entirely out of the way. None can know him but as he is revealed in the heart by his own holy Spirit. Certainly those from whom it has pleased God to hide this knowledge can never attain to it by their own researches.

Since rational men commonly accept the truth that they are practically sinners, and confess that they must be changed in order to be made holy, they are not disposed to reject any doctrine which represents them as having power to avail themselves of the chance to secure

that change at their own will. Thus, in the recent gathering of teachers of all the religions of the world at Chicago, when they compared their doctrines, they found that there was no essential difference between Pagan idolatry and the popular christianity of America. All agreed that the good works of the creature were the essential price to be rendered in securing the favor of God. The professed teachers of christianity were as far as the avowed heathen from understanding that sinners are saved by the blood of Jesus from all sin. Yet they could not perceive the folly of seeking to convert those from whose heathen religion they confessed their inability to discover that their own doctrines materially differed. Even sound natural reason should suffice to detect such absurdity.

In the light of the testimony of inspiration, all the teachings which are consistent with the perverted notions of the depraved mind of man are thereby manifested as utterly false. There could be no occasion for the gift of inspiration to teach that which is within the power of the mind of creatures to attain by study. Not even by the most diligent examination of the inspired Scriptures can man acquire the ability to know that there is salvation in the name of Jesus. Paul says, "*Ye know that ye were Gentiles, carried away unto these dumb idols, even as ye were led; wherefore I give you to understand, that no man*

speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed; and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost." - *1 Cor. xii. 2, 3.* In calling upon him for deliverance from sin every believer does say that Jesus is the Lord. In this confession the witness is given that the Spirit of truth dwells in the helpless suppliant. "*For he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.*" Thus, it is conclusive assurance that a sinner is led by the Spirit of God when he knows that there is salvation nowhere else but in the gracious name of Jesus. His very prayer ascribes omnipotent sovereignty to Jesus as the one Lord of life and glory.

When the pride of man prompts him to seek for knowledge of future events in the record which is given in the Scriptures, there is likely to be more anxiety for selfish honors and the praise of men than desire to see Jesus exalted its the glorious One to whom all the prophets give witness. There have doubtless been cases since John was on the isle that is called Patmos, when the saints have manifested a disposition to worship the messengers by whom they have received the testimony of Jesus. And when walking according to their natural minds the ministers of Christ are not offended by receiving such worship. Certainly their transgression will in every such case bring upon them the rod of sore

chastening; yet the fleshly ambition of men constantly aspires to have the highest place in the estimation of their fellows. When the saints are governed by this carnal mind they cannot see that Jesus is the Sun in the gospel heaven, from whom the whole light of revelation shines in the illumination of prophets and apostles, and he is the great embodiment of all revealed truth, as he is *"Alpha and Omega, the first and the last."* There is no liability of the saints looking for any other fulfillment of any prophecy when they see Jesus. All earthly considerations are forgotten in his heavenly glory, as the light of a dim candle is lost in the full blaze of the noonday sunshine. Jesus is then revealed in his own divine radiance, and from his face the created earth and heaven are fled away; and there is found no place for them. As *"He is before all things, and by him all things consist,"* so he is the one source of all assurance and comfort to his ransomed people. The saints can never be deprived of the spiritual blessings which are treasured in him so long as they can see Jesus in whom all fullness dwells.

(The above was an editorial by Elder Wm. L. Beebe July 18, 1894.)

"It is good for me that I have been afflicted; that I might learn thy statutes." — *Psalm cxix. 71.*

We may have everything naturally that the carnal heart desires, and only be hardened thereby into worldliness and ungodliness. But to be brought down in body and soul, to be weaned and separated from an ungodly world by affliction sanctified and made spiritually profitable, to be brought to feel our need of Christ, and that without an interest in his precious blood our soul must be for ever lost how much better it is really and truly, to be laid on a bed of affliction, with a hope in God's mercy, than to be left to our own carnality and thoughtlessness. Affliction of any kind is very hard to bear, and especially so when we begin to murmur and fret under the weight of the cross; but when the Lord afflicts it is in good earnest; he means to make us feel. Strong measures are required to bring us down; and affliction would not be affliction, unless it were full of grief and sorrow. But when affliction makes us seek the Lord with a deep feeling in the soul that none but himself can save or bless, and we are enabled to look up unto him, with sincerity and earnestness, that he would manifest his love and mercy to our heart, he will appear sooner or later. The Lord, who

searcheth the heart, knoweth all the real desire of the soul, and can and does listen to a sigh, a desire, a breath of supplication within. He knows our state, both of body and soul, and is not a hard taskmaster to require what we cannot give, or lay upon us more than we can bear, but can and does give all that he desires from us. But very often he delays to appear, that he may teach us thereby we have no claim upon him, and that anything granted is of his pure compassion and grace.

Elder J.C. Philpot

REVELATION 7:15-17.

Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them.

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.

MEETINGS

MINUTES OF PRESBYTERY MINISTER

In response to a request by, Mt. Zion church, a presbytery was called for the purpose of examining and if found qualified, the ordination of Brother James Pugh for the full work of the gospel ministry, on this date, Oct. 20, 2001.

Call presbytery together consisting of all ministers and deacons, of our faith and order in good standing.

The presbytery was organized with the election of Elder Richard Campbell as moderator.

Moderator appointed Elder Wayman Chapell Clerk to record the minutes of the presbytery.

Moderator asked the sponsoring church if they were still of a mind to proceed with the ordination of, Brother James Pugh. The church spokesman, R.E. Moore answered in the affirmative and presented the candidate to the presbytery for ordination.

Elder C.M. Haygood requested to open the presbytery with prayer.

Moderator requested Elder Larry Hollandsworth to question

the spokesman regarding the candidates qualifications for the office of a minister of the gospel.

Moderator appointed Elder James Howard to question the candidate, regarding the articles of faith of the church, and his calling. Upon satisfactorily responding and answering any questions of the presbytery, all were satisfied, and agreed to proceed with the ordination.

The laying on of hands was performed by the presbytery during the ordination prayer worded by, Elder Hale Terry .

Elder C.C. Morris appointed to give the charge to the candidate, regarding the duties and responsibilities of the office, and the trials and problems that he would be called on to moderate in the position as a minister of the gospel.

The members of the presbytery were asked if they were satisfied with the work of the presbytery.

The spokesman for the sponsoring church was asked if he was satisfied with the work of the presbytery.

The right hand of fellowship was given to Elder James Pugh by all members of the presbytery.

Being advised that all were agreeable, Elder James Pugh was turned back to the church as a fully ordained minister of the gospel, and recommended him to all churches of our faith and order in good standing. All members of the churches were invited to give the right hand of fellowship to the newly ordained minister;

(INVITE THE SPOUSE OF THE NEWLY ORDAINED MINISTER TO COME AND STAND WITH HER HUSBAND, AS HE RECEIVES THE RIGHT HAND OF FELLOWSHIP OF THE CHURCHES - Children also attended.

Ask the clerk to read the minutes of the presbytery. Ask members for any changes or corrections to the minutes, as read.

Instructed clerk to re-write the minutes, if needed, and have all members to sign the minutes before they leave the assembly.

Instruct the clerk to write the certificate of credentials and get all members of the presbytery to sign the credentials before they leave.

Copy of certificate and credentials to be given to the newly ordained Elder.

Instruct clerk to prepare three copies of the minutes of the presbytery for the Elder, the church and send copy to, The Signs of The Times, for publication.

Ministers present for the ordination.

Edm. Hale Terry
Larry M. Hollander
Arthur
in joy
Howe
H. K. Doney
C. C. Morris
James S. Howard

Deacons present for the ordination.

Fley
Oliver Anders
Dennis Aldridge
Richard Fowler
William Bain
Roy S. Howard
Gladston Newman

Mount Emory
Garman K. Perkins
George W. Dyer
James L. Pitts
A. A. Malone
Kenneth Evans
Richard Hamphill
William Clark

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR SEPTEMBER 2001

Walter G. Craft, W.V.	2.00
Georgia E. Edwards, NC	20.00
Lowell Hopkins, VA	2.00
Eld. Alan Terry, VA	2.00
Nannie Trevathan, NC	2.00
Donald Arne, SD	82.00
John Heppler, AZ	12.00
Phyllis Stroud, VA	7.00
W. H. Norman, NC	7.00
Sallie Hodges, VA	2.00
Marcy Burgin, TX	2.00
Jean Moran, NC	7.00
Anna Savage, KY	5.00
Buford Thornton, W.V	25.00
Lessie Sladky, NC	10.00