

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 129

DANVILLE, VA., JANUARY, 1961

NO. 1

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR SUBSCRIPTION DATE
IS 1/61
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

My cross I will bear, my burdens He'll share,
And I'll walk in the path that He chose.

Della Davis,
1168 High Ave.,
Topeka, Kansas

HE IS A FATHER INDEED

Though I see not a step before me,
God knoweth the way that I take;
And He will both guide and direct me,
And never will leave nor forsake.

He'll lead me all through the dark valley,
No evil shall make me to fear;
His rod and his staff, they shall comfort,
Through all my pilgrimage here.

He'll make me to walk in green pastures,
While the world with evil is rife;
Yea, surely his goodness and mercy,
Have followed me all of my life.

He knows all my cares and my conflicts,
My burdens He'll help me to bear;
He'll smooth the rough places before me,
And all of my sorrows will share.

Though foes may unite to o'erwhelm me,
With Jesus I'll ne'er be afraid;
He'll lead me beside the still waters,
And make me to rest in the shade.

And while the fierce tempests about me,
May rage and unceasingly roar,
And waves of affliction o'erwhelm me,
He'll bring my barque safely to shore.

And even before I may ask Him,
He knows all my wants and my need;
And He who has promised is faithful —
Oh He is a Father, indeed.

In mercy and love He will chaste,
He does it, my soul to refine;
Through sore persecution and trials,
That I in His likeness may shine.

And though He may slay me, I'll trust Him,
Still trust Him for all that's to come;
He'll lead me and guide me and keep me,
He never will leave me alone.

With a heart of thanksgiving I'll praise Him,
For blessings He daily bestows;

Rt. 1,
Ruffin, N. C.

To the Household of Faith;
Dearly Beloved:

I wish I could put on paper some of the things that have come to me this morning. Except I be guided by the spirit of him who said, "Be still and know that I am God", I am a failure. How prone I am to be forgetful of him who has saved us, and called us with an holy calling; not according to our works but according to the good pleasure of his will. I have to be brought down to be enabled to look unto the hills from whence cometh my help.

How dear to me is a little season when I am brought to think about the greatness and goodness of God; and to view some of his work, (His is a perfect work, out of the sight of man), and to feel he has granted me grace sufficient to wait upon him — which is a priceless treasure. When earthly trials and cares seem to have us all but defeated, feeling alone and far away from Him, we are made to cry, "Have mercy, O Lord, have mercy; I am such a sinner."; and we feel Him say, "Be still and know that I am God."

"On him almighty vengeance fell,
That must have sunk a world to hell;
He bore it for his chosen race,
And thus became their hiding place."

How wonderful to feel his promises applied to our case; to feel that all things work together for good to those

who love the Lord, to the called according to his purpose. I love to think that he is a God of purpose: How Ruth gleaned from the fields the handfulls of purpose which were left for her. Could another have gathered this food left that she should glean in the field of her kinsman? No! no! And aren't you glad it is that way? It brings joy to be made to feel that what He has in store for us, we shall receive — anything less or more would not be a perfect work; and, as I have said, "His work is perfect."

How we dread the cold, bleak seasons when we feel winter in our souls; and we can't read with understanding, and can't meditate. Should we try it only scatters away. It makes me feel so full of hypocrisy. I wonder if any of you have to get along as I do: longing for more evidence that I am one of the called, and longing to feel close to my Lord. Yet when dawn appears, we behold the rising of the sun in its beauty.

His ways are higher than our ways, as much so as the heavens are above the earth. May he keep us all in his loving care, and enable us to face whatever changes may occur in our home land; and may he be with all his servants, upholding them and causing them and all who love the truth, not to veer to the right nor to the left, but to hold fast that which is sound doctrine; and to ever declare him only as the true and living God. May he cause us to walk softly before him, and to desire to walk worthy of the vocation wherein we are called. "As many as are led by the Spirit, these are the sons of God." May we be made to feel it is good to be at the feet of our brethren, and to have no confidence in our flesh, or boasting in self, but have a fervent desire to praise God. He has done so much for sinners such as I.

Your little sister,
Mrs. Fred Cobb

CORRESPONDING CIRCULAR LETTER

The Lexington-Roxbury Association

now in session with the First and Second Roxbury Churches, at Halcottsville, Delaware County, New York, Wednesday and Thursday, September 14 and 15, 1960, extend our love and fellowship in the Lord, to our sister churches of like precious faith, in the Lord.

As has been our custom, and is yet, we address our sister churches, at these meetings with a message called a Corresponding Circular Letter, and, when approved by the Association, is printed in the minutes of said meeting, hence going to different parts of our land, enabling other brethren to know a little of our feelings about the goodness and mercy of the blessed Lord to us until the present time.

We, in this part of the land, though small in number, are yet, we trust, walking by the eye of faith; and we feel to thank the blessed Lord, that the hope, we trust, we received many years ago, is yet the same, which we trust has been as an anchor to our soul both sure and steadfast. We of the churches of this Association, and other churches with whom we correspond, fellowship and live, had this hope given to us, (Yes, we will say given to us, for it cannot be bought, nor sold) and it has been as an anchor which has held us steadfast until now from being carried away in any manner.

We have been made able not to tolerate to any degree the free will or works of puny man. We do not understand that religion or salvation for the poor saved sinner has changed in the least since the dear Apostle Paul's day when he had to say, and did say, "By the grace of God, I am what I am". Also, speaking or writing to the Ephesian Brethren, the same concerning their salvation, "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". (Acts 8:35)

It is recorded that Philip preached Jesus unto the eunuch. Dear friends and kindred in Christ, what a wonderful

doctrine to the believer: Such comfort, such food, such rest, that they can rest from their own works as God did from His; Such rich promises in this gospel for the poor, needy, hungry and thirsty souls who feel at times unfit to raise their eyes toward Heaven. But the above words by the Apostle Paul concerning salvation, by the grace of God, and the gift of God, in this gospel tells us that the believer, by the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, hath been made free from the law of sin and death. So when Jesus is preached it is the demonstration of the spirit and the power of God to the believer. Jesus being the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believe.

Oft times, when this gospel is preached, it is the means to those feeling stripped, wounded and half dead, that oil of grace and comfort is poured in their wounds, and their wounds are bound up with the kind words of the gospel of the blessed Son of God. He says, "I wound and I heal, though half dead", sure then there is some life yet. There is hope as long as there is some life. Jesus said, "My words they are spirit and they are life". So when Jesus is preached oft times the one half dead is restored to new life or more life. David said, "He restoreth my soul." Then one has been given new courage and more vigor. That spark of faith which was so small has been fanned to a flame. Though stripped, now has once more been clothed with the garments of salvation, faith, hope and charity. The love of God is now a burning zeal in this one's heart and bosom. This one has had a feast of fat things from the store house of our blessed Lord. He now can press on and on, and upward toward the mark for the prize of the high calling in Christ Jesus our Lord.

We believe that when Philip preached Jesus unto the eunuch, the demonstration of the spirit and the power of God was there. Philip was a man of God, as we understand it, and it was in God's plan and purpose for Philip to take this

message or gospel of the Son of God to this poor inquiring eunuch. We do not understand that Philip had any part in forming or fashioning him into a child of the living God. But that he was one of God's little ones that was in need of attention, and, Philip being a man of God, the Angel directed him to that place. So when Jesus was preached unto him there was a love and an anxious desire to follow the one he had heard preached. "See here is water what doth hinder me to be baptized," said the eunuch. Sounds as though he feared there might be something that could hinder him. But, dear ones, there was nothing to hinder him at that very time from following the one he had heard preached. It was of great interest to him; the same as it is to every believer.

Can we not understand a little how this poor eunuch felt? Did we not at one time wonder what did hinder us from being baptized? But all are made willing in the day of His power. So we feel that this eunuch's eyes had been opened at the preaching of Jesus. He could see Jesus, the way, the truth and the life, and his deaf ears were unstopped that he could hear the joyful sound of the gospel. He could see that being baptized as Jesus was, by immersion, was the right way. So in answer to the eunuch's question about being baptized, Philip said, "If thou believest with all thine heart thou mayest"; and he answered and said, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the son of God." This answer was satisfactory to Philip, and Philip baptized him, not by sprinkling a little water on his head, but the word of God tells us that they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch and he baptized him. As we understand it, he being dead to all works, except the workmanship of Christ, was a fit subject to be buried from his former life, to rise again to walk in newness of life in Christ; and as other believers, he could go on his way rejoicing.

To come back to the words, "And he preached unto him Jesus". To the heaven born soul, when Jesus is preached it

sets forth the greatest of all things to him. It sets forth one that can be a father to the fatherless and a husband to the widow. One that came into this sinful world to seek and to save them that were lost. So if we have ever known anything about being lost to all salvation amidst this sinful world, the flesh and the devil, then sometimes it gives us comfort that Jesus came to save such ones; for it is the living who see their lost condition. The dead in sin know not that they are lost, know not that they are in need of God's saving grace. But the lost sinner, it being made known to him by the Holy Spirit, "that the foxes have holes and the birds of the air have nests," as Jesus said, "but he hath no where to lay his head"; and he cannot enjoy or go along with the world. But at last when Jesus becomes their surety and their all, like the eunuch, when Jesus is preached unto them, they find though they are of themselves clothed with filthy rags, there is one now who has put on them the best robe, or the grace of God.

This gospel sets forth that every thing has been done for the poor lost sinner, for a complete salvation, regardless of kindred, tongue, place or condition. Though this eunuch was black, this blessed gospel of the Son of God could reach him and comfort him. Are not all black with sin as we stand in Adam? But there is set forth in this gospel a complete cure for this terrible condition of death. This poor creature was dead in sin because of our father Adam, we being his children and the fruit of his loins. But what a marvelous work has this mighty God set forth, that Jesus, the second Adam, the Lord from heaven, a quickening spirit, should come and give life to the dead in sin. And after being quickened and made alive from the dead, they have the promise of God, which cannot fail, that such ones will be for ever cared for, and have this love of God shed abroad in their hearts that all things will work together for their good.

This God could control the lion and lock his jaws in the cage in Daniel's day, so there could be no harm done to this man of God. So, much to our comfort, we know that He can control the one, Satan, who like a roaring lion is going up and down through the earth seeking whom he may devour. But our God has said, "thus far shalt thou go and no farther, and there shalt thy proud waves be stayed." In this dark and cloudy day when it appears as though darkness has covered the earth and gross darkness the people, thanks be to God there is yet a few whom we humbly trust have been delivered from the power of this darkness and translated into the glorious kingdom of the Son of God. To such ones the time of coming together, such as these two days of gospel preaching or the preaching of Jesus, the same as Philip preached to the eunuch, is looked forward to as a feast of some crumbs that fall from the Master's table. Our Lord is tongue and utterance to His servants that come laden with the precious gospel from different parts of our land. We feel we need our pure mind stirred up in way of remembrance, that we may remember all the way the blessed Lord has brought us these years, and be in remembrance of His power and promises to continue with the poor and needy in all the future, even in the furnace. If the most severe trials should be their lot, nothing can hinder Jesus from being there, if it is His will. Our God has said, "The flame shall not kindle upon thee." The deep sea or the whale's belly was not beyond the reach of this God.

Dear beloved in the Lord, — this blessed Son of God, a word from Him can calm the sea, and He can say, "To the north give up, and to the south keep not back, bring my sons from afar and my daughters from the ends of the earth, even every one that is called by my name." This Jesus could change the doubting Thomas very quickly that he could own Him as his God. Quickly and plainly was Thomas made to see that

there was nothing for him to do, as he had thought there was something that he must do before he could believe. But when Jesus made himself known to him, and called Thomas by name, there were no works for him to do but to own Him as his God. How true, his sheep hear his voice and they follow him, and own him as their God. We humbly desire to say, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ", which according to His abundant mercy, has begotten us unto a lively hope, (or a living hope,) to an inheritance incorrutable and undefiled and that fadeth not away, we trust, reserved in heaven, where if we are his, we shall see Jesus as He is, and be like Him and be satisfied.

"Now may the God of all grace who hath called us unto his eternal glory, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you."

"To Him be glory and dominion for ever and ever." AMEN.

Amasa J. Slauson, Moderator
Edward K. Adsit, Clerk
Woodrow Bellinger, Ass't. Clerk

CIRCULAR LETTER

To the Salisbury Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Salisbury Church:

Dear Brethren: It is a great blessing that we are brought together in associations when we are prompted by the love of God and the desire to see our brethren. Ministers are favored to meet and to hear each other in these meetings, who otherwise would be deprived of these blessings. In preaching and hearing the gospel in these meetings, the pure heart is often stirred up; and love flows from heart to heart.

There are those who would raise their voices against associations, and charge them with being dictatorial bodies, detrimental to the welfare of God's people. We do not so view them, but by experience have found them to be a medium of correspondence among brethren.

These meetings should be what the name implies — association.

"Not to control the church of God,
Nor rule, or bind her sons;
But to associate below
With Zion's little ones."

Associations among Old School Baptists date back almost to the establishing of the first churches in America. These bodies were not established to rule over the churches. Most of them have articles of faith declaring that every church is independent in matters of discipline; and that no body, or bodies of men have authority to infringe on their sovereignty. The principles should be strictly adhered to, and no organization allowed to impose on a church in such matters.

No association should overly burden themselves with much business. Yet whatever business is required should be attended to faithfully, as we are commanded not to be slothful in business, but fervent in spirit, serving the Lord. The business of an association consists of hearing from the churches and correspondents. Most trouble among brethren arises in the churches, not in associations: whenever these things arise they should be settled where they start — in the churches.

A church can be as orthodox in doctrine and order out of an association, as in one. It is the right of church bodies to decide for themselves. We know of churches that we consider as sound in the faith as any church, which do not belong to any association.

Wherever we find meekness, gentleness, longsuffering, patience, temperance, and brotherly love abounding, together with steadfastness in the faith, we will find a wonderful manifestation of God's love abounding; and whether in associations or churches, we will find peace among brethren. We are commanded to mark them that cause division among us, and when we find one sowing the seeds of discord among brethren, whether it be in attacking associations among us, or any other principle contrary to the things we have

mentioned, we may know that that person is puffed up in the flesh.

May the God of all grace bless us to walk humbly before our God, and his people; to hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; to be kind one to another; and, favored with the spirit of gentleness, forgiving one another; and, confessing our faults one to another, loving one another with that great love wherewith God has loved us. And to also, "Be steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know your labor is not in vain in the Lord."

I have been attending associations for over forty years, and have found the most of them lovely meetings indeed; and my prayer is that God will continue to bless in the future as he has in the past.

"O may we ever walk in him,
And nothing know beside;
Nothing desire, or ought esteem
But Jesus crucified."

(Written by Elder D. V. Spangler, and ordered by the Association to be sent to the Signs for publication.)

CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN DR. HOOPER AND ELDER GOLD

(Continued)

It seems to me, that when you are discussing a question as important as that of a call and qualifications for preaching the unsearchable riches of Christ, that when you can do no better than to get on such a high strain of ridicule, as you did, it betrays your want of anything better. Men are apt to exhibit their best wares on public days. For you to so treat the great Bible teaching, that preaching is a gift of the Holy Spirit, as to hint that if one has that gift and is not perfected in the schools of human learning, he would make the ridiculous mistakes you are stating, only shows your high estimate of human learning, in fitting one to preach, and also what you suppose preaching would be without the learning

of the theological schools.

I might as well here remark, that since you complain that I have willfully made a false statement as to the kind of young men you sent to your theological schools — that is, that if one should rely on your statement — he would conclude that you take young men that do not profess to have grace, and after giving them a certain amount of biblical training, you send them out to preach: If you will examine my article you will see, that after some general discussion of that question, I make this statement: "But you say after one is certainly called to preach, can not the schools polish him," etc. I know not how to make a fairer statement than that one. If I were disposed to state matters falsely, there is so much that to me is objectionable in your teaching, that there is no necessity for it.

But, as to the young man who is impressed to go to the heathen. He is poor, and the question of money comes up. Let us consult the standard authority, the Bible. Surely, it tells us of boards and combinations of men, for raising money to send such preachers to convert the heathen. Surely, you will find plain their instructions to the churches for making regular contributions to send such preachers to the heathen. Surely, as they can not preach except they be sent, you will find in the Bible, precept and example, that justify boards of men in preparing, sending, directing and controlling the movements of these missionaries. But, lo! not a word of such things is found there. One turns to you and asks where this system of converting heathens came from? You tell him that your standard authority, Andrew Fuller, originated it about one hundred years ago, and, "it is admitted that his writings and his actions gave the first impulse to the grand modern movement for the conversion of the world: that by those movements the wilderness and the solitary place have been made to blossom as the rose," etc. The enquirer says, Jesus we know, and Paul we know, but who is Andrew Ful-

ler? You reply, O "he is our standard authority, in preach, both in this country and England, and has been ever since his works appeared."

By the way, in your last articles, why did you not refer more to your standard authority, Mr. Fuller? Weak as you acknowledge my article to be, if it had the effect in any sense of turning you to the Bible, please read this one carefully, and perhaps you will begin to think that your departure from the Bible to follow Andrew Fuller, in his cunningly devised fables, has brought such sad and lamentable divisions into the Baptist ranks, that it would be much better to go back to the old landmarks, and abide steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and ways, where you would be sure of finding peace and fellowship with the whole household of faith.

How, then, shall the young man go to the heathen, if he is not sent? I say he must be sent, but who sends him? Jesus says, "All power is given unto me in heaven and earth. Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you, and lo I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." Matt. 28:18-20. If Jesus has all power, in heaven and earth, no man, nor combination of men, has any power to send men to preach to any one. He never says to any one, he can send somebody else. He commands the person to go himself. When he impresses one, or sends him, he will go with him unto the end of the way. Do you not suppose he will provide some way for him? "And he said unto them, when I sent you without purse or scrip and shoes, lacked ye any thing? And they said, nothing." Luke 22:35. "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you." Matt. 6:33. But, you say these were days of miracles, and such days have passed, which amounts to about this: these are Bible

cases, and therefore they are out of fashion now. Is not the Lord the same Lord now, that he was then? Do not the same miracles, that gave divine proof to the Scriptures then, still support and sanction the Scriptures to us as the same word of God, just as true and mighty now as then? But why do we not have miracles now, as there were then? Because those miracles speak until there is a new dispensation. Just as a foundation once being laid for a house, remains while there is a house on it. So the Scriptures are introduced and founded on miracles, and but one foundation is needed. Every new dispensation must rest on a foundation sufficient to uphold its claims. The miracles that attest the Scriptures to be of God, and the twelve apostles to be sent in the name of Christ, are as sufficient proof today of the divine authority of the Scriptures and the divine commission of the apostles, as they were on the day of their performance. A new dispensation would have to be sustained by miracles. But when the dispensation is once established on miracles properly authenticated, no more miracles are demanded to support it. The gift of tongues was a sign in the days of the apostles, but this was a sign to the unclean or unbelievers, and to speak in a known tongue was better than to speak in an unknown one. In the gospel now, every subject of the kingdom of Christ has had the miracle of grace performed on him, of having his feet taken out of the mire and clay, and put upon a rock, and a new tongue given him with which he makes his confession unto salvation. He also can handle serpents and not be hurt, in the sense that, "the sucking child shall play on the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall lay his hand on the cockatrice's den." Isaiah 11:8.

Because I insist that the Bible is of as full and binding force now as it ever was, is therefore no reason why you should require a performance of miracles by him who comes in the name of Christ. What did the apostles enjoin on

those they taught? Was it to work miracles? No. It was to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints. Jude, 3rd verse, "Behold, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto and exhort you, that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. See II Tim. 3:14-17; also I Tim. 4:16. "Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine, continue in them; for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear thee." What shall be done with those that come contrary to the doctrine of Christ? See Rom. 4:16-17. "Now I beseech you brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned, and avoid them." Again, see II John 10-11 verses. "If there come any unto you and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed. For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds." Then when one comes to us the question is not, can he work a miracle, but it is this: Does he bring the true doctrine, the doctrine of Christ? If he does not, we are not so much as to receive him into our house, much less bid him God speed, by sending him to another's house. For thereby we would become partakers of his evil deeds.

Then it would be necessary to inquire of your young man if he brings the true doctrine, the gospel of Christ, which is the power of God unto salvation.

I should rejoice to see the gospel preached to the heathen in all lands; but my trouble is, that the men you send there do not preach it. Preaching the gospel is such a dispensation that one man cannot commit it to another, nor restrain him from preaching. Woe is me if I preach not the gospel, is its impelling power.

Do you bring that doctrine? Let us consider the company you keep and judge from that. You lay down a broad challenge to any Old Baptist, to find one single sentence in any of the publi-

cations of any of the four orthodox denominations of the world, which denominations are, Methodists, Presbyterians, Episcopalians, and Missionary Baptists, as you say. That is, you affirm, that they are all sound and true, holding the gospel, and you endorse all that they publish, and defy any one to show that any one of them has put forth one sentence that teaches salvation by works. You agree to shut your mouth if it can be shown that any one of them has ever done this. You thus link yourself with them, and are to be regarded as endorsing them. Let us take up the Methodists. In their creed, which ought to teach what they believe, and I suppose does, one can find the teaching that a Christian, one truly born of God, can fall from grace and be forever lost. If that be true, his salvation depends on his works of some sort, and they ought to be good. He must, according to that teaching, keep himself from falling by good works, and if he can fall away and be lost by bad works, that is if the Christian is left in that sense to go to heaven or hell by his own works, I think you stand fairly convicted. Now, suppose your young man comes to us endorsing this doctrine, can we receive him into our house as one bringing the doctrine of Christ? I say not. Well, your Presbyterian brethren hold to the practice of infant sprinkling for baptism, and further hold, that it is the door by which children are introduced into the covenant of grace. This seems like works puts them in the way of being saved, and much as I respect all these people as people, I can not see how they are teaching all things commanded. Do you endorse their sprinkling for baptism? You say that it is not essential to salvation. We say it is essential in order to abide steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship. Take the Episcopalians, who teach that when a child is sprinkled it is born again, or regenerated, and made an heir of Christ's kingdom by that act, and you have a denomination, you call orthodox, that hold and practice that when a

priest sprinkles a child, he thereby procures it the new birth. Is this not performing works to be saved? It is clear that one cannot be saved without regeneration, and this act of the priest procures it, so they say. I can not call the act of sprinkling a baptism at all. But they hold that spurious thing, sprinkling, for baptism, and claim that it can do so much more than scriptural baptism can, that it seems dangerous and shocking enough to me. If your young man comes endorsing this doctrine, or those that do endorse it, "neither receive him into your house nor bid him God speed."

As to your own denomination, it presents a creed which seems to put things together, which are separated. You say, "you hold a doctrine of election not inconsistent with man's free agency;" that is grace that is dependent on works — man is dead in sins, yet can hear the gospel — his carnal mind is enmity to God, and can not be subject to his law, and yet that same mind or will comes to Christ.

You object to my statement, that man's will (the carnal mind) never comes to Christ or wants him by saying that then no man ever comes to Christ "willing." Do you suppose it is the same will which comes to Christ that he speaks of, "And ye will not come to me that ye might have life." John 5:50. By your reasoning, it is the same will that comes to him, that will not come — no change in the man — no new birth. When it is said, "As many as received Christ, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name, which were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." John 1:12-13. If any suppose that the will of man comes unchanged to Christ, I could not receive him. Paul tells us in Rom. 9:16, "So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy." Does the sinner then come to Christ "unwilling?" "Marvel not that I said unto thee, ye must be born again." John

3:7. God gives his people a new will, that desires to come to Christ — that hungers for him and thirsts for him. "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power." Psalms 110:3. David knew a corrupt will, and depraved affection did not, could not, desire Christ. Therefore he says, "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me." Psalms 51:10. Do you say there is no change in the soul of man, when he comes to Christ? The natural man is nothing but a sinner, while "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." I John 3:17. The spirit of a Christian is willing, but the flesh is weak. In me, that is my flesh, dwelleth no good thing, while there is in the Christian a mind to serve God, or with the mind he serves the law of God. See Rom. 7:15-25. The Christian, then, has a mind to serve God, but it does not come from the flesh, for that serves the law of sin, but it comes from God. "For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." Phil. 2:13. They are renewed in the spirit of their mind.

You state that man is dead in sins. — Well if he is dead why are some quickened and not others? You say God saves some of sovereign electing love, and strives by law and gospel to save others; but not overcoming their opposition, leaves them to perish, &c. What is it that saves some and does not save others, if all are equally dead? Would not the power that quickens one sinner and raises him, quicken another? Do you mean that the same power of law and gospel, that strives with some and fails to overcome them, is the same power that saves others? Do you indeed believe the Lord strives to quicken a man and fails? If you strive to do a thing, it is good proof that you wish to do it, and would if you could. Is man stronger than the Lord, and does he defeat the Lord? The Scriptures teach, "that the Son quickeneth whom he will." John 5:21.

The Father gives them to Jesus, and it is not his will that one of them should perish. It is the spirit that quickeneth, and not law nor gospel. I do not think the law is ever spiritually applied, in its killing power, except to God's elect; nor the fullness of the gospel ever revealed except to those slain by this powerful application of the law. Who begins salvation the spirit or the sinner? Do you say the Lord does? Then if the Lord begins it, will he not continue it, unto completion? "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you, will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. Phil. 1:6. In whom does he begin and perform this work? God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth." II Thes. 2:13. Again, "According to his own purpose and grace which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." II Tim. 1:9. "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. 1:4.

Then God chose every one of his people in Christ before the foundation of the world. "But of Him, (God) are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." I Cor. 1:30. Upon what foreseen good work can one be chosen? Oh, but you say, you believe this doctrine of election, as much as I do, and your people rejoice in it as much as I do. Well, I earnestly sought such people, while I was with you, and heartily wish I could have found them. Here and there I found some, but they were greatly in the minority. Those that I found complained bitterly of the general preaching of your denomination, as being rotten and void of comfort to them. How can the doctrine of election be precious to you, from two reasons: One is you think we preach it in "unguarded quantities." If it is so good how can you have too much of it, and if it be so good how can it be dangerous? Secondly, you say you believe

in election as much as we do, yet you impose certain conditions and restrictions on it, which if true, would clog and quite annul it. Hence instead of preaching election, you wish for something else to be preached, and if something else be preached, it is in contradiction to election. The gospel is, yea, yea, and not yea and nay. We do not know that the apostles preached but one gospel, and if you come preaching any other doctrine, or if your young man should come preaching any doctrine, but the doctrine of Christ, we should not receive him.

It is about as hard to reconcile grace and works, predestination and free agency to each other, as it is to reconcile your two texts.

You say that the great difference between us is, that you hold to the use of human means and instrumentalities in carrying into effect God's purposes, while we do not. Then in a few sentences you state the strange position, that God implants in man's heart all the impressions that lead to these human efforts. That is like your creed that holds an election consistent with man's free agency. Now for me to reconcile these conflicting statements, and your standard authority with the Bible, is a task too hard, nor do I believe that you will ever do it. Your human efforts of course are something not of the Bible, but of man, and for you to attempt to shelter them and yourself under cover of the Bible, which does not teach them, is indeed the practice of many. There is no practice so preposterous, that is done in the name of religion, but men claim authority from the word of God for it. That would give it currency. But it seems to me that the Bible plainly teaches all that it requires of man, and in laying down expressly his duty, it positively forbids his doing anything of a different nature, or after a different pattern. Can man originate any scheme of his own, employing human means for executing it, and then claim that God has implanted the impressions leading to it, in his mind? Is it not true

that when the Lord implants any impression on a man's mind, and causes him to carry it out, the conduct resulting from it will be in accord and harmony with God's revealed will in the Bible? Paul says, "If any preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed." Gal. 1:9. When Christians are exhorted to work out their own salvation with fear and trembling, it is "because God works in them both to will and to do of his own good pleasure." Here, then, God works in his people, both to will and to do, and not of their wills nor according to their minds, but of his own good pleasure. I agree with you, that herein a great difference does lie between us. It seems to me, nothing can be true obedience, unless it be from the Holy Spirit, who brings the things of Christ to the saint, revealing Christ to him, enabling him to pray, to repent, working faith in his heart, giving him the adoption of sonship, sealing him as an heir of salvation, opening the Scriptures to him, refreshing him with his visitations, entertaining him with the sweet mysteries of grace, strengthening his feeble spirit, and giving him liberty in the Lord. Any religion that is not of the Holy Spirit is a form of godliness at best, but a denying of the power thereof. Unless one abide in Christ he brings forth no fruit that remains. If we abide in him, the beloved eats his own pleasant fruits in his own garden. If your young man come bringing not this doctrine, how shall we receive him? The Lord's name is called on by all his people. I agree with you, that by anticipation or election, the Lord calls a people that are yet in their sins, for I do not think he calls any other sort. In the proper time he sends the gospel to them. This gospel is foolishness to the Greeks and a stumbling block to the Jews; but unto them that are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ, the wisdom of God and the power of God. The word comes to them (by preaching) in demonstration of the Spirit and of power in the Holy Ghost and much assurance.

Christ has all power and sends his preachers. The Holy Ghost goes with them, and applies the word and waters it and seals the heir of salvation. The word is mixed with faith in them that hear, and with the heart they believe unto righteousness. When the apostles went forth preaching to the Gentiles, "as many as were ordained to eternal life believed." Acts 13:48. Haters of election would have it, as many as believed were ordained to eternal life because they believed, or because it was foreseen that they would believe. Not so, it seems to me. The Lord had set them apart to salvation before the foundation of the world, and now sent his angels, the preachers, to gather them into the gospel net. So to the end of time, he sends his preachers to gather his people into the fold. By nature they are dead in sins. The Spirit quickens them. Then they are ready to perish, and the great gospel trumpet is blown, and they that are ready to perish shall come.

Your impression, I believe, is that the word, or letter of the gospel, conveys the Holy Spirit, while I think the Spirit carries the word. The word is called the sword of the Spirit. Now does man wield his sword or does the sword wield the man? You say man controls his sword. Then does not the Holy Spirit control the sword which is the word of God? "And the sword of the Spirit which is the word of God." Eph. 6:17. The Spirit knows the mind of God and applies the word rightly. That Spirit is in the Lord's people, and abides with them forever and guides them into all truth. Now do you not think that his company and guidance will effectually direct all the Lord's preachers when he sends them to the heathen?

P. D. Gold

(Concluded next month)

A LIGHT TO GUIDE

1320 Aspin Street,
Danville, Va.

Dear Brother Spangler:

It is life to believe our doctrine; life is the cause of believing. It is most glorious to me, but I get so low spirited and feel afraid I have deceived these good people: this is a w f u l to think about. It makes us know that if we had hope in this life only, we would be of all men most miserable. But, in spite of our hard trials and afflictions, we have a hope eternal, of which Christ is the head. His Spirit stands between us and the world. I do believe the Lord our Saviour works his sovereign will, and makes himself known to whomsoever He will; and goes before them, and teaches them.

Once, when my children were babies, my husband's health went bad, and I wanted to go to work. I dreamed of seeing a candle burning in the mill in the part I was experienced in; so I felt at ease to make an effort, and I worked a long time. Then they built a new mill, and I was experienced in that; afterwards I wanted to change, but I couldn't help but meditate on my seeing the candle burning where I was. My work ran short and we had to divide time, so I asked my foreman if I could try the new job, and if I didn't have success, would he take me back; and he said he would. The words were spoken in my breast, and said that the light you saw was in you to guide you whereever you go.

Our Saviour is alive for evermore. I don't feel worthy of the clouds of witnesses with which he deals with us. Once I went to an association, couldn't go much, but went in the evening; and I remember one sermon. I didn't get the brother's name, but he preached to me. He told us these trials were appointed to us; but my flesh tries to think there is no need for them. We just don't know, for we are poor, weak creatures, dependent on an alwise God. We can't

even trust Him! but we beg for grace to trust the Lord in an acceptable way.

S i s t e r Butcher's passing took my strength as much as anything ever did. I believe we really loved each other with a sweet fellowship. We were of one mind, and if we ever differed it didn't seem to bother. She was loved by so many.

I hadn't been well, and I did not think I would be able to go to the association at G r e t n a , but did go each day. I thought it was a wonderful meeting. We do appreciate o u r people visiting our m e e t i n g s . We appreciated Brother Rhodes' interest; and I feel its wonderful to be moved to go a distance, especially such a long distance, to be at these meetings. They are wonderful. I feel that the Lord has wonderfully blessed us with peaceful meetings; and if I know my heart, I feel thankful.

A sister, I hope.
Mary J. Patterson

PASTOR VERY FEEBLE

1168 High Avenue,
Topeka, Kansas

Dear Editors:

I am enclosing three dollars for my subscription to *The Signs of the Times*, and would add a word of gratitude and thanksgiving for the dear paper which comes laden with messages of comfort and encouragement from the dear saints of the Household of Christ scattered abroad. The Editorials are truly a feast to the soul. We here, of the last church of the once Kansas Association, seldom are privileged to meet in church capacity any more, because of the inability of our Pastor, who is also my dear Uncle, Elder L. L. Schenck, to meet with us, as he has been unable to do for over a year. He is very feeble and frail and will have reached the age of ninety-one on the 21st of November. He served us faithfully for many years.

We are blessed to have Elder Winfrey, of Liberal, Kansas, visit us occasionally

who is a very able speaker and much loved among all lovers of the truth.

I am enclosing some thoughts that brought comfort, strength and encouragement in a time of deep distress and trouble when the way before me seemed dark and almost unsurmountable.

In bonds of fellowship and hope,

One of the least if one at all.
Della Davis

THE ARK OF THE COVENANT
(Exodus 37:1)

There are three arks spoken of in the Scriptures, all have a meaning to the Lord's people when they are revealed by His Spirit. "For the Spirit searcheth all things, Yea, the deep things of God." (1) The ark that Noah built, wherein eight Souls were saved from the waters. (2) The Ark of bulrushes where the infant Moses was preserved, and (3) God commanded this same Moses to build the ark of the covenant. It is this ark about which I wish to speak.

First: Let us notice, that it must be just so long, and so wide, and so high; was to be made of shittim wood, except the cover, which was just the size of the chest, and was of pure gold. Four rings were to be cast in the sides of the ark for the staves of shittim wood by which the ark was to be carried. On the lid of pure gold they were to be two cherubims of beaten work. Moses was commanded to send for Bazaleel, for the Lord had said, "I have made him cunning in this work." All the wood was to be overlaid with gold. The ark was made for the purpose of containing the testimony of God. Now all this work was carried out to the letter according to the pattern shown to Moses on the mountain.

I see in this a wonderful picture representing the church collectively (and what applies to the church as a whole is of interest to all those who are members of the mystical body of our Lord). It was by the decree of God in every particular, and for each individual whose sins are covered, and whose

hearts contain the law of God. This ark was to the eye a golden box: the cover of pure gold was to represent the love of God; and the cherubims of beaten work represents the suffering of our Lord Jesus Christ in his humanity for the sins of his people. "There I will commune with thee from above the mercy seat." To this day it is just as plain to those whose sins were covered, as it was in the wilderness over six thousand years ago.

The ark had to be carried about, for it had not the ability of its own to go any place, but was carried. Today the true servant of God must be carried about by the Spirit. The staves will never be removed until we are carried in the Holy of Holies, as was the ark in the temple at Jerusalem in its final resting place. As the ark of Noah had only one light from above, so today the only comfort is at the mercy seat where God communes with us when we are carried by the spirit in communion with God.

There was no object held more sacred by the Jews than the ark of God. Before it the Jordan was divided, and the walls of Jericho fell down flat. It was carried about from place to place. It was taken by the Philistines, but it proved not the same to them; in every house into which it was carried it produced death instead of life. The word of God has no place among them, and they had something on their hands and did not know how to get rid of it. They finally resorted to divination to test whether it was really of God. They took two cows that had never born yoke, with calves by their sides, which they shut up, and they hitched the cows to a new cart, and placed the ark upon it, just to see what the cows would do. According to nature they would not have done anything, but, contrary to nature, they started across the field to the land of Israel. Even though the oxen shook the cart, none could steady it; and they took it safely to where it belonged.

I think now of the many oxen in treading out the corn, leaving their

calves or families at home, lowing along the way, sometimes shaking the ark, often not realizing that they were being carried without scrip; and many times without purse, they went in obedience to the word of the Lord. "Thou shalt go to all that I send thee, and whatsoever I command thee thou shalt speak." Some of the Elders know what I am talking about; and all true believers will know what a glorious type the Lord hath shown us.

In the ark of God we look up and see the pure gold as a covering (gold to be pure must pass through the fire). Above it is the beaten work of one piece, as the one was that was despised and rejected among men, hated by the world, and crucified. Think of the agony He went through in the Garden. "O my Father! if it be possible let this cup pass from me; nevertheless not my will but thine be done."

Soon we that are of the dust of the earth; we poor mortals that have been covered with the righteousness of Jesus; we that have been born of the Spirit, heirs of God, sons of God, members of the body of Christ, we, like the ark, will be carried to the silent city of the dead, as the ark was carried in the Temple at Jerusalem, and the staves will be removed, and we will soon be forgotten by the world. No doubt there will be rejoicing, as precious are the dead that die in the Lord. The world will rejoice in their passing, as they did when they crucified our Lord. Like the ark of the testament there was rejoicing among the Philistines when they saw the word of God leave their camp. When the word of God gets in among the work-system of today it upsets their whole system. They have forgotten grace; and any one can come to Him whether they know him or not. No doubt they would gamble today to get rid of it, as it is unto them foolishness, and a stumbling block. But how the Lord's people do rejoice, when He causes them to sit down together, and they hear the story that never grows old; the story of our dear Saviour who was crucified,

who laid down his life for them, and who leads all the heirs of God into the banqueting house under the banner of love.

Now as the ark was carried about from place to place, like the Son of man, "Having no place to lay his head," was crucified and laid in the tomb: so the ark was carried in the Holy of Holies in the temple, and from there it has disappeared. History accounts of it was lost, or burned, but it is evident to me that God took care of it, as he did Elijah, Enoch, Moses, and Jesus. Now we turn to Revelations 11:19, "And the temple of God was opened in Heaven, and there was seen in his temple the ark of his testament." This shows to the children of God that the type given in the wilderness was safe; and we rest assured, that all it represented here in earth is safe in the hands of God. May the Lord be praised.

Elder George L. Weaver
2802 Marium Terrace
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EDITORIAL

ANOTHER NEW YEAR BEGINS

Under our heading, "Voices of the Past", we are re-publishing a portion of Elder Gilbert Beebe's editorial, "Reflections on Entering the New Year", which was published in the January 1, 1856 issue of the Signs. We do this because of the wonderful thoughts which are presented; and feel that our brethren will find them reflective of their own.

To all those who rejoice in the finished work of Jesus, and love the doctrine of God our Saviour, and who have no confidence in the works of the flesh as a means of salvation, we send Christian greetings at the beginning of the New Year, and of the 129th volume of the Signs of the Times.

We endeavor to publish only those things which are in accord with scrip-

tural teaching, and confirmed in the individual quickening unto the knowledge of the truth of the Lord's people. We know that they are not interested in the various "winds of doctrine", or vain philosophies; and for this reason we do not attempt to pattern after the wisdom of men. We trust that we are not corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ. (2 Cor. 11:3)

From our readings, and from various conversations, however, we know that many do not know this simplicity, and are turned to that which seems plausible to them. It is not difficult to understand that the doctrine of God our Saviour is one thing, and that the doctrines of men are another; for when men attempt to conform the truth of Jesus to their way of thinking, they invariably try to explain away the truth, and give it a meaning conformable to the acceptable opinions of their own.

As an instance of this, we quote some of what we recently read in Ruter's History; in which is given the articles of faith, which, he said, were generally held by Christians:

"The general resurrection of the whole human race, and the distribution of eternal rewards and punishments, according to the respective deserts of each individual, constituted another most important article of belief; 1 Cor. 15:22; Matt. 25:31; since upon this point rests the whole moral obligation of the Christian system."

To the enlightened believer in Jesus as the Saviour of those the Father gave him, there is much in the above that is contrary to the gospel; and, of course, contrary to the teaching of Jesus and his apostles. To such a believer these sentiments would not seem so out of place, had it been an account of some

"system" other than Christian. But, in the light of the gospel of Jesus Christ, (which is left on record as being the doctrine of God our Saviour), it is impossible to reconcile such as being anywhere near the doctrine of the Bible.

The only truth we find in the above, is the resurrection of the whole human race. This is taught in the Bible. But the distribution of eternal rewards and punishments according to the respective deserts of each individual, is positively not taught there. Neither is the moral obligation of Christians based upon a system of rewards and punishments.

If salvation depended upon the works of the creature rather than upon the redemptive work of Jesus, then there might be a distribution of rewards. But no man who has been born again believes any such thing, for he does not find it in his enlightened reading and understanding of the Scriptures, nor in his faith of which Jesus is the author and finisher. The whole tenor of the GOSPEL shows that salvation is by grace, and not by works.

If upon the prospects of reward rests the whole moral obligation of men, then Christ is entirely unnecessary. But the truth is that Christ came to do for his people that which **his people could not do for themselves**, yet which was absolutely necessary to be done in order to salvation. Therefore these have no works for which to receive rewards, Christ having performed it all. God gave his Son to redeem his people from their sins: it is the Son's imputed righteousness which brings his people justified before Him. There is positively no basis for the doctrine of the reward of eternal life for the works of any creature under the gospel "system".

As to punishment, were it not for the redemption of the Lord's people by the Son of God, both the Lord's people and all others would receive the just sentence of death without hope of eternal life. How true it is that **ALL** deserve this! But God himself provided for the salvation of his own beloved through his Son. Where, then, is the reward

that men claim? The doctrine that heaven is for those who deserve it through their works, is not Bible doctrine.

The moral obligation of men is not incited by God's promise of eternal rewards and punishments. The fact is that all were condemned in the fall, and none have redemptive power necessary to reconcile themselves with God. As creatures of God, men owe Him obedience; and acknowledgement that he is their maker. God's laws to men had the purpose of showing the guilt and corruption of men. No man was ever able to keep them, or even a part of them. Men failed in them all! Upon what, then, do they base their claim of reward?

Christians do not need a promise of reward in order to keep up moral obligations. They have a greater incentive than this. How surely is it in the hearts of those who have been brought out of darkness into the marvelous light, to praise and adore him. They have no expectation of being rewarded for such, but are already blessed to love and adore Him because of what he is to them. Their works are the result of the Spirit of Him who dwells in them, as fruits of the Spirit; and certainly not works of the creature with the hope of reward.

We know that most of the so-called Christian world believes in the system of rewards and punishments. So do all other religions. But it is difficult to understand how that men read the Bible, yet cannot determine that salvation is by Jesus Christ, and not by works of men. It would be unbelievable to say that intelligent men are able to read other papers or documents without understanding what is conveyed in the phrases and sentences; yet it is so evident that these same men read the Bible, and make a study of it, without comprehending its meaning. Could it be that Peter was speaking of such when he said concerning the epistles of his beloved brother Paul: "As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard

to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also other scriptures, unto their own destruction." Is it not a fact that the truth is so far above the comprehension of the carnal mind, that men read into the Scriptures what they want there, and dismiss the truth with a, "It just can't mean that"?

We do not mean to be understood that we believe that men should be able to understand the mystery of godliness, and believe spiritual things themselves. We know there must first be a being born again, a quickening, a work of God, before men can see the kingdom of God; or believe that which pertains to this kingdom. But our concern is, How can men profess to be believers in and followers of Jesus, and profess to hold the Bible sacred, and yet deny much of what is taught by them?

Men prefer what seems right to them. Those taught of the Lord will have nothing other than what he has taught them. We may be sure that God is not a compromising God. He is not mocked. Everything contrary to the declarations of God will fail.

J. D. W.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

REFLECTIONS ON ENTERING THE NEW YEAR

The Lord God of Israel changes not, therefore we are not consumed. The bounds of our habitations and number of our days are immutably fixed in his irrevocable decrees. The measure of our happiness in this world and in the world which is to come, depends on his gracious purpose, and infinitely wise administration. His providence governs the revolving seasons of our years, causing the earth to unbosom to us that succor which our earthly nature requires for sustenance and for comfort, in such measure and manner as seems good in

his sight; while from the ample fullness which there is in Christ Jesus our Lord, he, by his Spirit, constantly administers to the spiritual necessities of all those who are born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

It is also consoling to know that the afflictions, trials and conflicts of his children, while in the house of their pilgrimage, do not rise up out of the earth, nor come upon them by chance. An even balance is poised in his hand, and the weight, measure and duration of all the sufferings of his children is proportioned with the most exact and infallible certainty to that amount of grace which he bestows on them, whereby they are not only sustained in their deepest afflictions and trials, but made to realize the greatest profit and benefit from them all. From all their conflicts with the world, the flesh, and the devil, they shall emerge in triumph as more than conquerors through him that loved them and gave himself for them. "These light afflictions," says an inspired apostle, "which are but for a moment, do work for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; while we look not on the things which are seen, but on the things which are not seen; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal." The trials, afflictions, losses and bereavements that we encounter in these vile bodies, are seen, they are visible to the natural sensibilities of the flesh, and therefore our carnal nature writhes under them; and while we look at them, like Peter when he looked on the heaving billows of the sea, we begin to sink; but when our faith looks up to Jesus, and we see his hand outstretched for our deliverance, we glory in that tribulation which afforded opportunity for the cheering revelation.

The raging billows on which we are tossed are seen, but faith that looks to Christ is the evidence of things that are not seen. This is the blessed privilege of all the sons of God, to look on things which are not temporal, but

eternal. Our fleshly powers, including all the powers, mental and physical, which are born of the flesh, and all that we can have without a new birth, are totally blind to all the things of the Spirit of God, and only able to look on things which are temporal; but that life which is born of God, can discern the things of the Spirit of God. How essential it is then to our happiness that we heed the admonition of the apostle, to crucify the old man with his affections and lusts, and that we sow to the Spirit, that of the Spirit we may reap life everlasting.

Our prospect for the future is involved in the things which are not seen. Our God leads his people in paths that they have not known. To him, with the most unwavering confidence, do we desire to unreservedly commit all that we have, and all that we are, and if it be not his good pleasure to make our periodical a medium of comfort, edification and profit to his dear children, we have no desire that its publication should be continued. But from the assurances received from many thousands of our brethren and sisters, and from every perceptible indication of his will, we feel encouraged to move forward in the work.

As to our designs, we intend, as the Lord shall give us ability, to labor for the edification of the saints, the dissemination of the truth as it is in Jesus, and in opposition to heresy, will-worship, superstition, bigotry and idolatry. Nothing affords us more real pleasure than to be employed in waiting upon the bride, the Lamb's wife, with the consciousness that in so doing, we have the authority and approval of him who walks amidst the golden candlesticks, and holds the stars in his right hand. We will spare no labor or reasonable expense to make the forthcoming volume more useful, interesting and edifying, than any of the former volumes. In attempting to carry out this design, we shall rely much on the aid of our brethren and sisters who contribute to our columns. Much will depend on the

character, spirit and temper manifested in their communications, as well as the tone and character of the editorial articles. All subjects vitally connected with the interests of the Redeemer's kingdom may be discussed freely, so long as such discussions can be conducted in a spirit of love and brotherly kindness, and all personal thrusts, gibes or insinuations, which are calculated, in our judgment, to irritate, are avoided. It is not our intention to suffer the paper to be the medium of crimination or recrimination among the brethren, nor a repository in which to record or publish all personal grievances. We shall aim at a higher mark. As we hold no secret or private sentiments in regard to the gospel of the grace of God, we shall candidly, fairly and unreservedly give an expression of our own views on any passage of Scripture, or point of doctrine, and on all subjects relating to the ordinances and order of the house of God, whenever called on to do so, to the very best of our ability. But in doing so we wish to have it distinctly understood that we give only the views of the humble editor of this paper. None are bound to endorse our views any farther than they can see them clearly sustained by the Scriptures of truth. Any of our brethren are at liberty to animadvert upon or controvert any sentiment that we may advance, provided they do so in a kind and brotherly manner.

We are fully satisfied, from many years' experience, it is not discussion or controversy that wounds or disturbs the minds of our readers, but the harsh, unkind and unbrotherly manner in which such controversies have sometimes been conducted. Brethren cannot be too careful to avoid such expressions as are calculated to irritate the feelings of each other, by impugning each other's motives, or insinuating that they are unsound in the faith, while they may honestly differ in their understanding of the import of some Scripture, or the propriety of some particular expressions. The wise man has told us

that "A soft answer turneth away wrath." How important then that Christians should act on that principle while following after the things that make for peace, and things whereby one may edify another.

The world is at this time in a state of general agitation; wars and rumors of wars are current all over the world, to an extent hardly ever before known; and discords are prevalent in our own country, threatening to prostrate our civil, social and political institutions, and to produce anarchy and distress, where freedom has unfurled her joyful banner. It is natural that some difference of opinion should exist among our best and wisest brethren, in regard to those things which agitate the world, and jeopardize our dearest earthly rights. Great care is necessary that we do not wound each other by any rash or premature action or expression in regard to the general tumult. As citizens we have to do with the institutions of our country, and as Christians we may be interested in the final issue. But let us not forget that we are citizens of a kingdom that is not of this world, a kingdom that shall stand forever, and whatever privations, tribulations or distress may await us upon these mortal shores, we shall outlive the storm at last, and that it will not be long before we shall be called to lay aside our armor, and the weapons of our warfare, and pass into that state where the wicked shall cease from troubling, and the weary shall be at rest.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe, January 1, 1856.)

OBITUARIES

HUGH CARPENTER

It has pleased our Heavenly Father to remove from our midst by death our beloved brother Hugh Carpenter. He was born August 16, 1874, in Wayne County, West Virginia, moving with his family to Putnam County, near Hurricane, at the age of three, where he lived the remainder of his days. He had been in poor health for several years, and his eye-

sight nearly gone for two or three years, but he bore his affliction with patience. On July 21, 1960, he fell and broke his hip, then took pneumonia, and passed away August 3, 1960; making his stay on earth nearly 86 years.

About the year 1895 he was united in marriage to Miss Laura Bird, who died in 1931. He is survived by an adopted son, Hartley Carpenter, at home; and a brother Asa Carpenter, of Hurricane, W. Va.; and a host of other relatives and friends. He was a true and faithful member of Harmony Primitive Baptist Church, Huntington, W. Va., since October, 1954. He loved to attend the meetings but was hindered much because of his health. He loved to read the *Signs of the Times* until his eyesight failed.

His life was a life of a subject of grace, always defending the doctrine of salvation by the grace of God; believing in the depravity of man, and that God rules all things according to his own will.

We feel our loss is his eternal gain, that his spirit has returned to God who gave it, and his body returned to dust from whence it came, there to await the resurrection. Funeral services were conducted at the Harmony Primitive Baptist Church by his beloved pastor, Elder J. R. Lane; and his body was laid to rest in the Carpenter Cemetery near his home.

Mildred Stanley

ROSA PRICE BROWN

Sister Brown was born August 25, 1874, departed this life June 17, 1960. She was the daughter of Sydner M. and Venita Stone Price. She united with Springfield Primitive Baptist Church by letter August 8, 1954.

Sister Brown was faithful to fill her seat at her meetings as long as her health permitted. She leaves two daughters, Mrs. O. W. Tucker and Mrs. Courtney Franklin, of Lynchburg, Va.; eleven grandchildren and twenty-one great-grandchildren; and two sisters, Mrs. Mike Moorman and Mrs. Jake Gibson. It can be said of her that she kept the faith, and is entered into the peaceful rest of her Lord, and is now asleep in Jesus, and will hear the voice, "Come enter into the Joy of the Lord." May the Lord reconcile her family and church to say thy will be done. Her funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder O. K. Tench and Elder W. R. Dodd. She was laid to rest in Fort Hill Memorial Park, Lynchburg, Va., beneath a beautiful mound of flowers.

RESOLVED: That a copy be put on our church records, one sent to the family and a copy be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication. Done by order of Springfield Church in conference.

Elder O. K. Tench, Moderator
R. C. Dalton, Clerk

MITCHEL E. FOSHEE

It has pleased our Heavenly Father to remove from our midst our beloved brother, Mitchel E. Foshee, who was born October 12, 1879, at Merryville, La., and passed away May 30, 1960, in Newton County, Texas. His stay on earth was 80 years, 7 months, and 18 days.

Brother Mitch, as he was called, joined New Hope Primitive Baptist Church of the Old School Baptist faith and order, and was baptized June 25, 1955. He leaves three sons to mourn his death: Clarence, Ramsey A., and Willie J. Foshee, all of Newton, Texas; and one daughter, Mrs. Eva A. Honey, Dayton, Texas. Also 17 grandchildren, and a host of other relatives and friends.

His funeral was preached by his pastor, Elder L. L. Dobbs, and his remains were laid to rest in Union (Phelps) Cemetery, Newton County, Texas, to await the glorious call, "Child come home."

We say to the bereaved, grieve not as for one who had no hope: Our loss is his eternal gain. Written by request of New Hope Church, Merryville, La.

Elder L. L. Dobbs, Moderator
J. Paul McMillian, Clerk

ANNIE WARD LOFTIS

"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 . . ."

It has been the will of our heavenly Father to call from among us at Pleasant Grove our beloved sister, Annie E. Loftis, who was 80 years old at her passing. We believe her purpose on earth was fulfilled, and it was the appointed time that she leave us. We shall miss her, but we desire to be submissive to the will of God in all things. He never makes a mistake.

Sister Loftis was born in 1880, and spent most of her life in the Pleasant Grove Community, Caswell County, N. C. She was married to Mr. Charlie H. Loftis when 18 years of age. He preceded her in death 14 years. To this union were born five children, all left to mourn her passing: Mrs. Julius Smith, Reidsville; Lawrence, McLeansville, N. C.; Mrs. Jay T. Boswell; Hildrey, Reidsville; and Andrew, Reidsville; also surviving are 29 grandchildren and 40 great grandchildren. One of her granddaughters, Mrs. Lelia Walker Crumpton, was reared in her home, and loved her as one of her children.

Sister Loftis had been a member at Pleasant Grove since 1936. She fell asleep in Jesus June 3, 1960, to await the final consummation of all things, when Jesus shall own all the redeemed family of God, and present them without spot, blemish, or any such thing: His righteousness being imputed to them.

Her funeral was held at the meeting house by her pastor, Elder J. Harvey Smith, and Mr. G. R. Thomas. She was laid to rest in the church cemetery.

We extend our sympathy to all the family, and desire a copy of this be given them, and a copy be sent to the *Signs of the Times* to be published in our paper. Written at the request of Pleasant Grove Church while in conference at the June, 1960, meeting.

Mrs. Fred Cobb

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

David L. Paschal was born in 1872, and passed away July 18, 1960. He was a native farmer of the New Hope Community. He united with the church in 1915, and was ordained a deacon a few years later.

INASMUCH, as it has pleased God in his divine providence to remove from our midst our beloved brother, Deacon David L. Paschal,

BE IT RESOLVED, That we beg grace to be reconciled to His holy will. Brother Paschal was a faithful and devoted Brother Deacon as long as his health permitted. He loved the church, and filled his seat as a faithful member. In his last years he was confined at home. He was an example of Christian humility. Be it further

RESOLVED, that a copy of these resolutions be spread on the church record; a copy sent to his bereaved family; and a copy be published in the *Signs of the Times*.

Done by order of Pleasant Grove Church, Caswell County, N. C., while in her regular conference September 18, 1960.

Sister Robert Walker
Elder J. Harvey Smith
Robert F. Walker, Clerk

MEMORIAL

WHEREAS, Since we last met together, we have lost one member, Brother Elisha Truitt, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, That we humbly and graciously submit to the providence of our God in calling our dear brother from this world of strife and trouble to a far better land. Also

BE IT RESOLVED, That we, the Salisbury Association, express our sympathy to all those

that mourn, and that we pray our heavenly Father that He will give us all grace to trust him in this hour of bereavement, knowing that His ways are all for the best. And

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That a copy of these resolutions be furnished the *Signs of the Times* for publication, and one copy given the family.

Done by order of the Association, now in session with the Salisbury Church, October 20, 1960.

Elder David V. Spangler, Moderator,
Brother William S. Adkins, Clerk,
Brother Handy B. Truitt, Asst. Clerk

MEMORIAL

WHEREAS, Since our last session, it has pleased our heavenly Father to call our precious brother, Elder R. B. Denson, from his labors, we bow in submission to the God of all grace.

Elder Denson often visited us and was kind in rendering assistance to our elders and churches in supplying on special occasions.

He was ever kind and was easily entreated, which always shows the indwelling of the love of God in our heart. Therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, That this body extend to the widow and children our heartfelt sympathy and understanding in their loss, knowing that he has gone ahead to a better home. And

BE IT RESOLVED, That this be printed in the minutes, a copy sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication, and a copy sent to the family.

Written by order of the association and approved while in session with the Salisbury Church, October 20, 1960.

Elder David V. Spangler, Moderator,
Brother William S. Adkins, Clerk,
Brother Handy B. Truitt, Asst. Clerk

CHURCH NOTICES

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

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

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

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

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

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

H. MATT BROCK, Pastor

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

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

H. MATT BROCK, Pastor

ELAM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, located two miles North of Goshen, Alabama, meets each third Sunday at 11 o'clock.

J. P. MORGAN, Pastor
A. C. CARTER, Clerk
3383 Montezuma Rd.,
Montgomery 6, Ala.

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

H. MATT BROCK, Pastor

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

E. R. SORRELLS, Pastor

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

H. C. MOON, Pastor

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

O. G. GARVER, Pastor

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

W. A. WILLIAMS, Pastor

NEW HOPE OLD SCHOOL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, near Patmos and about ten miles South of Hope, Arkansas, meets each first Sunday at 11 A. M., and Saturday before at 2:30 P. M.

W. A. SPEER, Pastor

REHOBETH OLD SCHOOL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, located five miles North of El Dorado, Arkansas and half-mile West of Highway No. 7, meets second Sunday in

each month and Saturday before at 11 A. M.
 R. W. RHODES, Pastor
 W. A. SPEER, Clerk

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

W. A. SPEER, Pastor

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

T. R. JEFFERSON, Pastor
 WM. ECHOLS, Clerk
 Chowchilla, Cal.

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

WELSH TRACT OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, (the oldest Primitive Baptist Church in the United States), meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M. The meeting house is located one mile south of Newark, Delaware, just off of Highway 896.

W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor

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

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

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

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

ELAM PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, located at Forest Park, Clayton County, Georgia, meets every 3rd Sunday at 11 o'clock.

O. J. CROKER, Pastor
 MALISSIE STEWART, Clerk

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, located at 5th and East Park Street, Weiser, Idaho, meets each 4th Sunday at 11 o'clock, and Saturday before at 2 P. M. Address any communications to Deacon A. L. Turnidge, Weiser, Idaho.

ERNEST J. ATTEBERY, Pastor
 FLOSSIE ATTEBERY, Clerk

PLEASANT VALLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Kingman, Kansas. For infor-

mation please write Mrs. Verda Machesney, 516 E. Avenue C, Kingman, Kansas.

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

H. L. ROGERS, Pastor

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

R. L. BIGGS, Pastor

THE ZION CHURCH OF PRIMITIVE BAPTISTS, Mayfield, Kentucky, meets first Sunday each month at 11 A. M., and Saturday before at 2:30 P. M., on South 7th Street.

O. W. PERKINS, Pastor

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

W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor

BLACK ROCK OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Butler, Maryland, meets each first Sunday afternoon at three o'clock. Butler is on Falls Road about twenty miles north of Baltimore.

JOHN D. WOOD, Pastor

LITTLE FLOCK PREDESTINARIAN BAPTIST CHURCH, Cass County, Missouri, meets on second Sundays in the Memorial Building, Pleasant Hill, Missouri. We invite brethren of our faith and order to visit us.

L. L. SCHENCK, Pastor
 MRS. J. W. TAYLOR, Clerk
 Pleasant Hill, Mo.

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

ARTHUR R. WARREN, Pastor
 LETHA A. BLACKWELL, Clerk

OLIVE AND HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Shokan, N. Y., meets each 2nd Sunday at 1:30 P. M.

A. J. SLAUSON, Pastor
 MRS. NEVA BROOKS, Clerk

The WARWICK OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Warwick, Orange County, New

York, holds monthly services on each fourth Sunday, from March to, and including, the fourth Sunday in November. The meetings are at 10:30 A. M. DST.

THE MIDDLETOWN AND WALLKILL OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Middletown, New York, holds monthly services on each fourth Sunday from April to, and including, the fourth Sunday in November. Meetings are at 2 P. M. DST.

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

THE WILSON PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Wilson, N. C., meets each second Sunday at 3 P. M., and Saturday evening before at 7:30 P. M. The location is on the corner of Green and Jackson Streets.

R. B. DENSON, Pastor

MRS. BETTIE RICHARDSON, Clerk

LITTLE FLOCK OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Altus, Oklahoma, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday afternoon before at 2:30.

W. W. TAYLOR, Pastor
C. E. TURNER, Co-pastor

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

ERNEST ATTEBERY, Pastor

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

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

SIDELING HILL OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Fulton County, Pennsylvania, meets each 5th Sunday from May through September, with two days meeting the 1st Sunday in May; and meets at Needmore, Pa., on 5th Sundays from October through April, with two days meeting the 2nd Sunday in October.

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

THE PREDESTINARIAN BAPTISTS, Memphis, Tennessee, meet in the Primitive Baptist

Church, corner of Getwell and Fizer Streets, on second Sunday in each month at 11 A. M. and Saturday evening before; also on fourth Sundays at 11 A. M.

H. G. BROWN, Pastor
791 Watson Street
L. C. CAMPBELL, Clerk
3347 Tutwiller Street

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

R. L. BIGGS, Pastor

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

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

SHEPHERD FOLD CHURCH, Houston, Texas, meets each first Sunday and Saturday before 10:30 A. M. Church is located on Little York Highway, four miles north of Houston, and one mile east of Highway 76.

W. W. FLEET, Pastor
IRENE WISENBAKER, Clerk

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

E. B. AULT, Pastor
BESSIE CHAMBERS, Clerk

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

W. A. WINFREY, Pastor

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

C. U. LANDERS, Pastor

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

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

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

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

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

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

C. Y. OSTEEN, Pastor

MT. OLIVE CHURCH OF PREDESTINARIAN BAPTISTS, Stockdale, Texas, meets each second Sunday at 10:30, and Saturday night before, at the home of M. J. Culpepper. Lovers of the truth invited.

LELA CULPEPPER, Clerk

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

MAGGIE ELMORE, Clerk

SAINTS REST OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Dallas, Texas, meets each first Sunday at 11 A. M., and Saturday evening before at seven-thirty, at 4614 Sylvester Street.

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

MT. ZION OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Cash, Texas, meets each third Sunday at 11 A. M., and Saturday afternoon at 2:30.

W. W. TAYLOR, Pastor

The churches composing the Virginia Corresponding Meeting meet as follows:

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

ARTHUR L. CARTER, Clerk
Manassas, Va.

NEW VALLEY CHURCH, meets third Sundays at 11 A. M. each second month (February, April, etc.), and is near Luckett's, about eight miles north of Leesburg, Virginia.

and

BROAD RUN CHURCH, Poolesville, Maryland, meets third Sundays at 11 A. M. each second month (January, March, etc.)

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

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

MRS. DAVID FARNIE, Clerk
Leesburg, Va.

There are no meetings of our faith and order held at the present time in Washington,

D. C. We are always glad to have brethren and friends who are visiting in Washington meet with us. For information phone Deacon G. C. Spindle, Lincoln 3-3782.

JOHN D. WOOD, Pastor

NORFOLK PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Norfolk, Virginia, meets each third Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday before at 2:30, Fairmont Park, 2023 Tidewater Drive.

R. B. DENSON, Pastor

RICHMOND PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Richmond, Virginia, meets each fourth Sunday in their new meeting house about ten miles South of Richmond, just off highway 360 South.

R. S. PAYNE, Pastor

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

D. V. SPANGLER, Pastor

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

W. R. DODD, Pastor

LITTLE ZION PREDESTINARIAN BAPTIST CHURCH, Chehalis, Washington, meets in the home of Sister Effie Parke, 1360 First Street, the first Sunday of each month at 11 A. M.

HOWARD EASON, Pastor

BETHEL OLD SCHOOL OR PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, of Riffe, Washington, meets each 3rd Sunday at 11 o'clock, and Saturday before at 7 P. M. For information write the Clerk.

E. J. ATTEBERY, Pastor
MRS. VERNIE SCHOONOVER, Clerk
Box 612, Morton, Wash.

PLEASANT GROVE CHURCH, Naches, Washington, meets at 10:30 A. M. each second Sunday at the home of one of the members living in Naches. Those interested will please contact the clerk.

E. J. ATTEBERY, Pastor
MRS. DASIE BAKER, Clerk
Rt. 1, Naches, Wash.

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

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

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 129

DANVILLE, VA., FEBRUARY, 1961

NO. 2

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 2/61
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

TRUSTING

Dear Lord, my life is not my own —
I dare not plan my way,
For toil and duty claim my time,
And hold me fast each day.

I'm weary, weak, — so dumb and blind
So oft I stray afar;
I find myself completely lost;
And wonder where you are.

Help me to lift mine eyes aloft,
And let my burdens fall;
Yes, give me grace and faith to trust
To thee, each day, my all.

I know not what lies on ahead,
And the past I can't erase;
The present time is all I have:
Help me its problems face.

My lone desire while in this world
Is to do my Father's will,
But should I stumble on the way,
O Lord, be with me still.

Just take my hand, O precious friend,
And may I hear Thee say:
"Be still, my child, be not afraid,
I'll lead thee all the way."

Mrs. Flora Booher
Rt. 1, Shirleysburg, Pa.
(Member Trough Creek Church — Ed.)

THAT WHICH THE LORD HATH PURPOSED SHALL COME TO PASS

Dear Brother Gold and Lester:

From some cause my mind has been much exercised for several days upon the purposes of God. I do not know why I should be so constantly meditating upon this, to me, wonderful, deep

and sublime subject; yet it is so. A kind of irresistible impression seems to impel me to write, notwithstanding my great weakness. I am fully aware of the fact that I am not able of myself to grapple with so deep and sublime a subject. Therefore, it is with much fear and trembling that I approach it. I think it is with a heartfelt desire that the Lord may direct my mind that I may write so as to glorify His name, and thereby edify His saints, believing that when God is honored through our Lord Jesus Christ, the saints rejoice and are edified.

It was the purpose of God to speak the earth into existence. "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." (Gen. 1:1) This proves a purpose to create. In fulfillment of his purpose He made the firmament that his handiwork might be shown. For, "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth his handiwork." That the dry land might appear, it is written, "And God said, Let the waters under the heaven be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear: and it was so." (Gen. 1:9) "And God called the land earth; and the gathering together of the waters called he the seas: and God saw that it was good." (10th verse) Thus his purpose was carried out. Take into consideration the fowls, the beasts, the fishes, the herbs, etc.; then come to man. In his creation we see the plural used, "And God said, Let us make man in our own image, after our likeness, and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth; over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth." (26th verse) "So God created man in his own image; in the

image of God created he them." (27th verse) In their creation the male and the female.

It is said that while they were in this state they were immortal. But God did not say so, and I shall not. It is also said that he was made able to stand, but liable to fall. But God did not say so, so I shall not, for I don't know. That he did transgress and fall is certain. If he had never transgressed and fell, I own that I cannot trace the purpose of God in the perfect work of salvation. For if the man had not fallen, I cannot see for the life of me why God should, from before the world have given any of the fallen race grace in Christ. "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 in Christ Jesus before the world began." (2 Tim. 1:9) This is an affirmation of the apostle, as the preceding verse shows. This grace which was given in Christ Jesus before the world began consequently was before the creation of man. If this was according to God's own purpose before the world began, it seems to me there must of necessity have been a purpose in the fall or transgression of the man, without which he never could have been the recipient of this grace; for none but fallen, depraved sinners stand in need of saving grace. I do not think that it is blasphemy to assert that God purposed grace in Christ Jesus before the world began, that he also purposed that the sinner should stand in need of it.

I am not able to see how the Lord could declare the end from the beginning, and not see and know every event from the beginning. And He by the prophet declares, or commands thus: "Remember the former things of old; for I am God and there is none else, I am God and there is none like me. Declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." (Isa. 46:9, 10) I am not able to

see how He could declare things that are not yet done unless he purposed or predestinated that they should be done. To say that he permitted things to take place that he did not purpose, seems to me to contradict itself, and makes the creator no higher than the creature. Man purposes and plans, but his purposes fail — his plans are frustrated. Not so with God: He purposed, and it comes to pass.

But, to my mind, all things were purposed by the eternal I Am; and his purpose is as sure to be accomplished as it is sure that his throne stands. I cannot see for the life of me, how his honor can be maintained if we teach a probability of the failure of the reign of his grace. Never, to my mind, has one single sinner been quickened to life only by the Spirit of God; and this, it seems to me, is because of the reign of grace; and this grace was given in Christ before the world began. Consequently was bound, in the very nature of things, to have been before there was a man made; and this must of necessity prove that God purposed to save man, and that man would need a Saviour because of his death in sin.

"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! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? Or who hath been his counsellor? Or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory forever. Amen." (Romans 11:33-36)

Now, if in the wisdom of God, all things are for him, it does seem that it is reasonable to conclude that all, and every event that taketh place in the heights above, or the depths beneath, or in the lengths, or breadths, either in earth or hell, are under his control; and that he purposed and foresaw them, and overrules them to his own glory; or else events are not things. Then, taking this view of the wisdom, power, mercy,

and love of God, I feel safe in believing and teaching that the God of salvation is a complete Sovereign; and therefore I live in hope of his mercy, and through the efficacy of the blood and righteousness of His adorable Son, I shall yet praise him who is my wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption. (see 1 Cor. 1:30) Then, God forbid that we should glory save in the Lord.

Dear brethren, I have put these thoughts together under the most trying circumstances, with much fear and trembling, knowing that I am imperfect, ignorant and shortsighted; often wondering can it be that such a creature as I am can be a child of God, — saved by grace. I have written my own imperfect views, without consulting any man for his views; and I alone am responsible for what is here presented. I desire, if it is published, that none will take offense because of it. I hope I have had the honor of God in view, and trust that I have the mind of Christ. My race is nearly run, and I shall soon go hence, and shall soon know the reality of these things. I am looking forward to the time of my departure. When I go I expect and believe that I shall meet a satisfied Saviour. My hope is to see the King in his beauty, and the whole of the purchases of Christ's blood, which will be a train that shall fill the temple — not one left out for whom he atoned. If I am thus blessed, it will be because of His eternal purpose, which he purposed in Christ before the world began. Then I shall be as the glorified saints; and methinks that all the hosts of heaven will be shouting, "Crown him Lord of all." Then I shall be completely happy as I stand with the sanctified family of God.

To his name be all the praise now and in a world which shall never end.

(Elder) John C. Hall,
Gogginsville, Va.

(We re-publish the above at the request of Brother T. R. Plybon, of Bassett, Va. It originally appeared in Zion's Landmark in 1901. Elder Hall was an able minister, of whom we

have often heard those who knew him speak. He died in 1901 — J. D. W.)

CORRESPONDENCE BETWEEN DR. HOOPER AND ELDER GOLD

(Continued)

TO DR. HOOPER

One that comes under the teaching of the Holy Spirit comes in the name of the Lord, because the Lord sends him, and when he comes thus, not sent by any man, and preaches the doctrine of Christ, you may give him as much money as you please, and I suppose it will not be applied amiss, but will be given as unto the Lord if you give it in love. I believe it right and proper and a duty to help such forward on their journey, if we have the means. Paul was a case of this sort. He was a poor man and had such an unmistakable impression that it was his duty to go to the heathen. Some of the churches gave him contributions of money for his necessities, and he commends them for it. At other times, his enemies unwittingly paid his expenses while he was carried a prisoner before gentiles and kings. Though Paul was whipt and imprisoned and stoned for dead, yet he finished his course, and preached to every heathen it was intended he should preach to before his death. When one comes sent of the Lord, we know it by his preaching the doctrine of Christ, and coming in the way the Lord has revealed, not sent by man but sent of the Lord, not directed to his field of labors by a board of men, not depending on them for a support. There is no man appointed to raise his salary, who himself receives a large salary for begging for the missionary. No, the power of God goes with his people. The mind of the Lord is with them, and the Lord makes a way for him, and when his way is so blocked up that he cannot go, he might as well conclude the Lord has not sent him and go home.

You are ready to object, that we have no plan of sending the gospel to the heathen, and I am ready to answer, no.

The word was first spoken by angels and prophets sent by the Lord, then by the Lord himself, and afterwards by those that heard him, and even now it can be preached in truth only by those the Lord sends, and then the power of Israel's God opens a way. You reply, that I desire to follow the Bible too closely for precept and example, while my objection to you is, that you are too far from it.

But you say, the world ridicules us for the rejection of all human means in preaching the gospel, and that the old Baptists are a standing proof of what man says of us, that we have no good works, and are a dead mass of the fossil remains of Pharaoh's lean kine, never doing any good ourselves, nor admitting that anything anybody else does is any good. Other denominations, in comparing themselves with old Baptists are favorable to themselves and claim themselves to be good and the old Baptists bad, yet if you will question them closely as to what is so bad about these people, you will find that it consists in this, that they condemn the ways and teachings of the denominations of men, that are contrary to the Bible. You will not find the old Baptists to be such monsters of vice as one might suppose. I believe that a true Christian has good works that no one else has. Faith without works is dead being alone. A faith that is saving must be a great worker. It must clothe my own naked soul by putting on Christ, it must feed me with the bread of life, it must work by love, and purify my heart, and overcome the world. The great work of faith is, not to give your neighbor bread, but to feed your own perishing soul, by putting on an imputed righteousness. She rejoices, not in the approbation of men, but in the finished work of Jesus. She seeks, not to follow the world, but takes up the cross, denies self and ungodliness, and suffers persecution from the world for doing this, but she performs works that none but the ransomed of the Lord ever perform. In the great day that will try men's works, I believe no

works, no building, will stand, except that which faith builds on Christ. Instead, then, of saying that faith hath no works, I believe it will then appear that none but the true Christian has performed works acceptable to God. I can not see wherein a genuine old Baptist is such an evil doer. He is created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that he should walk in them. His conduct is conformed to the scriptural rule. He is a sober man, not loving this world, is an honest man, paying his debts, not hiding himself behind any provision the law of the land makes, which would involve his violation of his word, which is yea, yea, or nay, nay. He is disposed to labor, working with his own hands, rather than be burdensome to others, and gives of what he has to him that is truly in need. He submits to the lawful authority of the land, but feels that if he is a subject of Christ's kingdom that is enough for him, therefore he cannot unite with any society of men. I think, too, that he prefers to leave his family in the hand of his heavenly Father when he dies, rather than to make provision for them by means of life insurance companies. He wishes to provide things honest in the sight of men, and after faithfully laboring for them, he feels it better to commit them to God after his death rather than to societies of men. He is sensible of his condition as a helpless sinner, and hence is meek and humble, and has the spirit of forgiveness for others. He rejoices in the truth, and gladly receives any that give a reason with meekness and fear of the hope that is in them. He rejoices in the preaching of the gospel, he believes it is to be preached to every creature all over the world, and would gladly see you, and all denominations, preaching the truth as it is in Jesus. I am giving you my own views, not knowing how far others endorse them. If I write falsehood may the Lord have mercy on me, and you need not impute it to the Old School Baptists.

These old Baptists love each other.

But what is their bond of union? They are of one mind and spirit. "He that is joined to the Lord is one spirit." Fellowship in the truth is of heavenly origin, and can be enjoyed only by those that abide in the apostles' doctrine. It implies union. How can you call me dear brother when you make such charges against me, of bearing false witness, of wilful misrepresentation, of bigotry, pride, etc. If you think I am guilty of such things, what fellowship can you have for me? When there is such difference between us on doctrine, what fellowship can there be? If there be no true fellowship, why call me by such an endearing name. Not that I object to being called brother, by the humblest man on earth, if he sees in me any image of Jesus that is dear to him. It gives me a sweet feeling of meekness and joy to receive the fellowship of my dear brethren. But if we are not of one mind and heart, why should we call each other by terms that suppose we are? I could wish that we were together. I feel that the doctrine of the Bible will stand when all man's inventions shall have been swept away as so much rubbish. Grace is the dearest theme known to me, and Jesus is a glorious and all-sufficient Saviour. He is head over all things to the church, and he rules in Zion. No man can stay the ark nor guide its way. Happy is that people who are clothed in the righteousness of Christ and sit at Jesus' feet to learn of him, who see so much beauty in Zion's perfect law that they desire no other, and who live in gospel obedience. Their fellowship is not of this world, their life is hid with Christ in God, and when Christ, who is their life, shall appear, then shall they also appear in glory with him. I do not read that any arminian note will be sung in heaven. There they ascribe salvation unto Him that sitteth upon the throne and unto the Lamb, who loved them and gave himself for them.

They begin this song on earth, when at the Red Sea they find the outstretched arm of the Lord. Would that we all were abiding in peace under Israel's

tents, none molesting us.

To any missionary Baptists that are troubled with the evils of your denomination, I wish to make a quotation, from a book that will be acknowledged as standard authority when this world is known no more. It is found in Revelation xviii: 14: "Come out of her my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues." The mother of harlots has long been making the nations drunk with the wine of her fornication. You are identified with a people that have adopted some of her measures. She is the inventor of boards for sending out missionaries. The Catholics were using them long before Andrew Fuller introduced them into the Baptist church. They pet the Sunday schools even more than your denomination. Money is a grand lever with them, too, in raising the materials upon their building. They have their religious schools of learning, and were the founders of them for engrafting their views on peoples' minds, and for better fitting their preachers to publish their tenets. They gain much admiration from men because they are fine scholars. You are identified with them thus. I verily believe those of your denomination, who so strenuously defend your human measures, would unite even with the Catholics rather than the old Baptists.

Now, you are not idle spectators of this discussion. While I do not blame Dr. Hooper, for I once thought as he now does, yet it vastly concerns you to be in the right. What matters it if the world scoffs. How little can human learning aid you. How little does Dr. Hooper's learning aid in bringing to light the hidden things of the Bible. "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." May the Lord make this discussion a blessing to some of his people.

Respectfully yours to serve,
P. D. Gold

(This concludes the answer to Dr. Hooper by Elder Gold. — Ed.)

CAUSE AND EFFECT

"Father save me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour." (John 12:27); and, "Now thanks be unto God, which always causes us to triumph in Christ, and maketh manifest the Saviour of his knowledge by us in every place." (2 Cor. 12, 14). As we attempt to speak of the cause of all causes; as he causeth His face to shine upon us; as we look at the first cause of all things in the world and the heavens above; as we speak of the great cause that produces all effects, since there cannot be an effect without a cause, let us look to God for guidance.

Life precedes action both natural and spiritual, and every thing has its opposite. We had nothing to do with coming into this world, and surely will have nothing to do with going out. "And we know that all things work together for good, to them that love God, to them that are the called according to His purpose." (Rom. 8:28) "That they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the West, that there is none besides me; I am the Lord, and there is none else. I form the light, and create darkness; I make peace, and create evil, I the Lord do all these things." (Isaiah 45:6-7) Here the redeemed of the Lord begin to see the cause that produces the effect. Our love for Him, is the effect of His love for us, and He loved us before the world began with an everlasting love, and with loving kindness draws us.

No one can receive this saying but those who are born of God. Now let us turn back the pages of time to the beginning. Before there was a here or there or any place or anywhere, God was around, below, and above; unlimited in power and love was the glorious trinity, the Father Son and Holy Ghost (the great causes of all causes) and these three are one. It is recorded that in the beginning God created the heaven and the earth (Gen. 1:1) This one statement is worth more to me than all the writings of uninspired men that

ever lived. GOD has spoken! from nothing all that was not now was, "Darkness was on the face of the deep, and God said let there be light; and there was light." (Gen. 1:3) — God: "Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son, in whom we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins; "Who is the image of the invisible God, the first born of every creature; For by Him were all things created, that are in heaven and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, principalities or powers: all things were created by Him, for Him; and He is before all things, and by Him all things consist." (Col. 1:13)

Now as I sit and ponder over what I have written, I tremble. I feel my own sinfulness, and I know I cannot write, or pray or think of the great power, and the cause that I feel has been laid upon me (the less than the least of all saints) to defend the great cause, and preach Christ crucified even though it be to the Jews a stumbling block, and the Greeks foolishness. This doctrine is not mine: I did not believe it myself at one time, but when it pleased God who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by His grace, straightway, like Paul, I conferred not with flesh and blood. After graduating from the Jonah college in the belly of hell, I learned that salvation was of the Lord, and for over sixty years I have, with the ability that God has given me, preached Christ and him crucified. I have learned obedience by the things that I have suffered. I feel the great cause of all causes is God almighty, and his son Jesus Christ is my Redeemer, and his Holy Spirit is my comforter. May his name be praised.

I cannot but think about the first visible church which was established on that Pentecostal day, God had called the people out of every nation under heaven for that meeting, and they sat humbly until the day was fully come.

Then there came a sound from heaven, and filled the house wherein they were sitting, and they began to speak as the Spirit gave them utterance. The Lord called that meeting together on that day, and He calls them now. When the Lord sets us down, and we hear the sound from heaven, and he feeds the sheep with the feed that he gives, there is comfort. God's love in us is the CAUSE, of our love to Him the EFFECT. May his name be praised. Yours for the truth's sake.

Elder George L. Weaver
2802 Marcus Terrace
Huntington 5, W. Va.

1718 Champasnolle Road,
ElDorado, Ark.

Dear Elders Spangler and Wood:

If the Lord is pleased to guide me, I will endeavor to write a few words of praise and adoration unto His holy name. I realize He gives us our being, and all that we have or do in spiritual desire. He is our upholder and disposer, and our thoughts are known to him. David says, "He knows our thoughts from afar off"; and that he knows our downsittings and uprisings.

At times when I can't sleep, it seems that sweet meditations of his love and wonderful blessings to usward are mine to enjoy for a short time. When we are so low, he often gives us sweet thoughts of his wonderful power, which shines in our hearts and minds through our black curtain of sin; through this awful cloud of sin which we carry about with us as we travel the rugged pathway of life. He, and he alone, gives us the spiritual strength whereby we walk and talk, and are mindful that the things we once loved we now hate, and the things we once hated we now love. These things are imprinted indelibly, and no one is able to remove them.

God's will and good pleasure towards his people is fulfilled in them every moment of their lives here in time. He

says, "I am the Lord and I change not, therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." Whatsoever he doeth he doeth forever.

Men in their natural state have little knowledge or appreciation for their natural blessings, but enjoy the sinfulness in which he was born. But when one is truly furnished with the Spirit of Almighty God, it is then that he sees his unfit and unworthy condition. May Almighty God give us strength, and lead us by his Spirit; give us faith, and be with us through all ages. May he bless us to realize that we are helpless creatures, and that we are in his hands as the clay in the potter's hands. May our declining days be filled with contemplation of heavenly things, and we be drawn away from perishing things. May we, with David, say, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, let all within me bless his holy name." . . .

May that love which passes all understanding be with us.

Yours in hope,
J. J. Davis

Rt. 2,
Toney, Alabama

Dear Elder Spangler:

Your article on Feet Washing was of much interest to me. I feel as you do, the brethren have walked in fellowship and there is no need to put up bars. We as members of the church of Christ should endeavor to be submissive as is required of a church member; to walk with the church — not the church with the member.

. . . I would like some information on the following: "Was the invisible church deceived, or just the visible church, when our mother Eve was deceived?" This is an important question to me. I love the deep mysteries of the doctrine of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and I feel we have been blessed in the past to find comfort in the writings in the *Signs of the Times*. Sister

Luther Campbell's article was so comforting, and all the other writings in the October issue were good.

I have an exercised mind to write at times, but, with pen in hand, all fades away. So all my feeble efforts are in vain, but I hope I trust a God and Saviour who is our all. He is the life, the truth, and the way; and no man can come unto him except the Father which sent Him draw him.

We have just concluded the 146th annual session of the original Flint River Association. All was in peace and one accord; and one trembling child came to the church on Sunday, which was a great joy to us. God is so good and merciful to his children.

Dear writers of the *Signs*, your writings mean so much to the shut-ins and those who love the truth; so continue to write, and bring that joy that abounds in our hearts on reading your good articles. May God bless you Editors and Associate Editors, and all the household of faith.

Your little brother and sister, we hope,

J. J. and Reaner Reece

(See editorial reply)

MY EXPERIENCE OF GRACE

I joined the Missionary Baptist Church when I was about fifteen years of age. I thought it was the right church, and went on feeling all right for about two years. I attended the church most every meeting day; but one day, while the preacher was preaching (I do not remember the scripture he was using), I felt the first condemnation I had ever experienced. From then on I felt to be the vilest sinner that ever lived. I would look at others, and wish I could be like them. I would try to pray, but could not.

Others seemed to be enjoying themselves, and I just couldn't enjoy anything anymore. I felt that I was forever lost, but would still go to church some, seeking comfort; and would read

the Bible hoping to get some relief. I went on this way for three or four years, when one night I saw the devil and his imps walking around in chains in the bottomless pit; and I felt that all I lacked being there was the breath leaving me. Oh, the misery I went through! But it seemed that God always gave me courage to try to press a little further.

There was a protracted meeting going on close by us, so I decided I would go one night and see if I could get any relief. I thought, when they called for sinners to come up for prayer, I would go up, for I could not get in any worse shape than I was. While in prayer, I heard a voice speak to me, saying, "What are you doing here, when you are already saved?" My burden left me that instant, and I raised up and looked around. Oh, what a relief! I rejoiced, and felt that I never would have another burden again. I went back to church next day to see how I felt; and the preacher, after preaching, came back to where I was, and asked if I had received a blessing during meeting, and I answered that I did. I rejoiced, and felt satisfied for a while, but I would soon be in the valley of darkness again, and would wonder: If I were saved, why would I feel my sins all over again; and feel so cast down again?

But now I can see, I believe, that it is all in God's purpose, and for our good (if I can claim that precious gift); and I want to praise his holy name more and more each day.

As time went on, I thought I could see the Sovereignty of God more and more. One day I was reading the Bible where Adam and Eve partook of the forbidden fruit, and I asked my father if God knew that Adam and Eve would eat of the forbidden fruit; and he said, "I think so." It seemed, as I would read, that the Primitive Baptist doctrine kept unfolding; and I would have sweet seasons of rejoicing; and also seasons of sorrow.

How I wish I could write the things I hope I can feel in my soul sometimes, but I am so ignorant to put it in words. I am the least of God's little children, if it be that I am one of them. I have many doubts and fears, and feel so worthless; but He says, "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy." Who can stay His hand?

O Lord, help me to follow thee, and to praise thee more and more. Guide my steps and keep me in the right way, for, Lord, thou art all powerful, and we are such weak worms of the dust, and can do nothing of ourselves.

When I started this, I did not intend to mail it; I just wanted to write it and leave it here, but after some days decided to send it for your disposal. After I married, we moved to Oklahoma, and I united with the conditionalists: I did not understand at that time predestination of all things, as I hope I do now.

May God bless you editors to carry on this good work.

A sister, I hope,
Mrs. A. T. Couch,
Winfield, Alabama

"HOW GOOD A MERCIFUL GOD HAS BEEN . . ."

According to promise, I will try to record some of the mercies I have received from the Lord, — not for vain show, but that it might be known, after I have passed from the earthly sphere, how good a merciful God has been to a poor, undeserving sinner as I feel myself to be.

The first great blessing was when He made me to see myself a sinner in the sight of a just and holy God. How great was the burden until He revealed himself to me by giving me a great desire to follow him: a blessed hope of eternal life. Not long after I became a member of the church, my mother and I attended an association at Goldsberry. Brother Sutton, long since gone to his reward, was preaching, taking for a

text, "Grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ." (2 Peter 3:18) I felt just like I wanted to do that, but, alas, I fear I have fallen far short of my desire.

At another association several years later which mother and I were attending at old Chariton Church, as we were retiring for the night, a great fear came over me, and something seemed to say, "There is something wrong at home." I was terribly worried for sometime. Then I heard a voice say, "All is well." A quietness and peace came over me, and I enjoyed the meeting. On coming home, I watched the family, especially the two that were involved in my fear, but nothing seemed to be wrong.

Time moved on until another great trial came in my life. My heart was so bitter against it, and I was made to ask, "Would I feel so strongly against it if it were God's will for it to be so?" I'm no better, nor half so good, as others who go through as great, or greater than this." Yet I prayed almost day and night for God to remove this trial; and I went in much anguish. One evening I seemed to be more troubled than usual, and the words, "Doubting Thomas", came to me with such force that I got my Bible and began reading where it opened. It was the 11th chapter of Hebrews, where faith is the theme of the whole chapter. Oh the comfort and assurance I received! I felt I never would doubt again but have perfect confidence that nothing would happen to me, only for my good and God's glory. Not so long after that the trial was removed; praise His great name.

In gratitude to him for his great blessings I wanted, in my weak way, to devote my life to his service. I have gone to the dear old church, walking two miles through mud, and wondering why I was going. We had no pastor at the time. I was not going for show, for there would be no one there to see me. Oh no, not for show, but for that great love he had bestowed upon me, and his tender mercies. After trying in my weak

way to hold a little service, singing some hymns, reading a chapter or two, then pouring out my heart in prayer to Him in behalf of our little church; and begging Him to ever keep his eyes turned toward us; then singing another hymn in dismissal. Often I was made to say, "Lord it is good to be here." (Matt. 17:4) Such perfect peace, such blessed assurance of his presence.

We had no pastor, and I would get so hungry to hear a good sermon. Sometimes I would go to the Methodist Church, a half mile from our home, and would come home more hungry than before. All I heard there was all works, no grace. One Sunday evening my husband and I were sitting on our front porch, and I said to him, "I'm so hungry to hear a good sermon. The Bible speaks of a famine of hearing the word of the Lord in the land; I think I must be going through that famine." As I arose to follow my husband into the room, I was filled with spiritual food, and felt I had heard a wonderful sermon; and felt like shouting praises to my God, who had so wonderfully filled my hungry soul with heavenly manna. Words are too weak to express the sweetness of it.

Not so long after this the Lord sent us a good pastor, praise his holy name. Yet, after all his benefits to me, there are times when I am so rebellious. Then at other times I am made to feel a sweet submission to His will; and I can say, "Thy will be done." Proverbs 16:9, says, "A man's heart deviseth his way: but the Lord directs his steps", and I am glad, for if left to myself, I know I would wander in forbidden paths so deep I could never get out. Oh, what a wonderful God is ours!

Clella McAfee
Anabel, Mo.

(The writer of the above, Sister McAfee, died July 31, 1960)

Rt. 1, Box 226
Winona, Miss.

Dear Brother Spangler:

Brother M. M. Richardson gave me a subscription to the *Signs of the Times*, and I want to tell you how much I appreciate it. I find it to be sound; and both the editors and contributors set forth the sovereignty of God as it should be — not mixed with the works of man. How few there are today even among professed Primitive Baptists that really believe sound scriptural teachings.

I have been identified, or a manifest member, of the Old Baptists since 1932, and have been trying to preach for them since 1935; and Paul sets forth a fundamental truth when he says, "By the grace of God I am what I am." It was not only as an apostle of the Lord, but also as an elect vessel of mercy. Whatever the apostle set forth as a teacher and preacher, he ascribed to the grace of God. Is this not the true experience of every one of the people of God today? Separate him from the grace of God (if such a thing were possible), and he would not have anything left. As Joseph stored up grain in the storehouses of Egypt, even so, according to His purpose and grace, all spiritual blessings for his people were stored up in Christ before the world began.

Brother Spangler, I wish you or any other brother would write through the *Signs* on Revelation 13:3. Has this prophecy been fulfilled, or is it yet to be fulfilled?

A servant for Christ's sake,
Elder Louis Stewart

Dear Editors, and all good writers:

Our time is about up, and I do so want the dear paper to keep coming as long as I live on earth; so am enclosing \$5.00 for renewal. They have been in my family since the 1880's, and I don't know how much longer.

If I mistake not, I love the articles

and the editorials which are published, and hope the God of all power and wisdom will enable the editors to keep the paper as firm in doctrine as they have been since Elder Gilbert Beebe founded it in 1832.

I like to read after the old writers, for when I read after them, it causes me to feel we are following after the Old School Baptists, which I hope I love very much. I don't know if I am one of them or not, but I have a little hope.

Elder Dodson was so good to send my dear mother some of the old *Signs* to read in her last days. She passed away in 1954. I hope to read them as long as I am here, which may not be long.

A friend, I hope, to the cause,
Lutie Womack

"LET BROTHERLY LOVE CONTINUE"

The Epistle of Paul the apostle to the Hebrews 13:1: "Let brotherly love continue." We know that it first must be, before it can continue. Brother means son of the same parents. The elect family are begotten of God unto the church which is the Lamb's bride. Brotherly means loving and attached. We think of the sheep, the burden, the storms, the chosen. They come together. Paul also exhorteth to unity. Ephesians 4:1, "I therefore the prisoner of the Lord beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love."

I John 4:7, "Beloved let us love one another, for love is of God, and every one that loveth is born of God and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God, for God is love." Romans 12:10, "Be kindly affectioned one to another with brotherly love, in honor preferring one another."

I see my brethren many times and prefer to be like them. I feel the Lord has shown them what is good. "And

what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy and to walk with thy God." Isaiah 40:1, "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem and cry unto her, that her welfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned, for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins." Romans 6:1, "What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that Grace may abound. God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein, know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death. Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death, that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life."

I Thessalonians 4:9, "But as touching brotherly love ye need not that I write unto you, for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another." I feel, if not deceived, the time came in my life when I could not trust in man, nor make flesh my arm; and I hope by the grace of God I was made to choose to suffer the afflictions of God's children rather than enjoy sin for a season. I hope I was taught something about the meaning of brotherly love and to feel the need thereof.

Proverbs 10:12, "Hatred stirreth up strifes but love covereth all sins." Isn't it wonderful to see the little lambs of God come telling of the mercies of God that has been bestowed upon them. We can see His light reflecting in their face, and we feel that their sins have been forgiven, for love has covered them all. St. John 15:12, "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. Ye are my friends if ye do whatsoever I command you."

St. Luke 17:3, "Take heed to yourselves: if thy brother trespass against thee rebuke him; and if he repent forgive him, and if he trespass against

thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day turn again to thee saying, I repent; thou shalt forgive him." I like to think of the wills and shalls of God, for there is a surety in these words. He has said ye must repent and thou shalt forgive. I feel that repentance and forgiveness are the foundation of brotherly love.

St. Matthew 6:14, "For if ye forgive men their trespasses your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if ye forgive not men their trespasses neither will your Heavenly Father forgive your trespasses."

I know there has been many errors made among our people, but I hope and pray if I could, that by the Grace of God through repentance and forgiveness that brotherly love may continue. II Peter 1:5, "Giving all diligence add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to Godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity. For if these things be in you and abound, thy make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ."

St. Matthew 26:52, "Put up again thy sword into his place, for all they that take the sword shall perish with the sword." "Let brotherly love continue."

Clifton Robertson
Reidsville, N. C.

5 Gregory Street,
Brampton, Ontario, Canada

Dear Elder Spangler:

Am enclosing remittance for subscription for two years. Like many others, I do not like to miss a single copy. So many dear brethren and sisters seem to tell my experience better than I can express myself; and I have a love for them through the medium of the *Signs*.

"The Priesthood of the Son of God", by Elder Bartley, was well worth re-

publishing. After enjoying reading it in the *Signs*, I found a copy of it among my dear mother's books. The articles under "Voices of the Past", are also good; and we have enjoyed the editorials, and feel to thank the dear Lord that you elders have been given the gift to preach and write the truth as it is taught in the Bible.

How often the song

"O for a closer walk with God,
A calm and heavenly frame,
A light to shine upon the road
That leads me to the Lamb."

is in my mind. In the June *Signs* Mrs. F. Cobb mentioned the hymn; her letter was very sweet. Am sure many would enjoy Sister Elsie Loeffel's letter, "Hid in Christ"; it was sweet. Many others I could mention that have been a comfort and a joy to read.

Our Pastor, Elder Ruston, comes to Toronto every fifth Sunday to preach. I live near Toronto, and it is a large city, and we do wonder if there are more of our faith living near here. It is lonely to feel that in the town where I live, I am the only one that I know of our faith; a town of over sixteen thousand.

We often think of you, your wife and family. When we hear of a death or sickness among the Old Baptists, whom we love for the truth's sake, we feel very sorrowful. It seems as if we are related. We do hope that we have that relation, that our dear Redeemer died to save us, and have the love of God and our Saviour Jesus, in our hearts.

May God bless the editors and writers of the *Signs*, and may he see fit to its continuance to uphold the truth. In love and fellowship,

A little sister in the church,
Verna Carscadden

HEAVENLY PLACES

Not long ago I attended a fifth Sunday meeting at one of our churches here in California. It was near a big boule-

vard; and I couldn't help but think of the scripture that says, ". . . and hath raised us up together, and made us to sit together in heavenly places in Christ."

There we were, listening to the good news of salvation, and singing the songs of Zion in a world that knows not God. No matter what the world may boast of, it has nothing like this. The world only has today — it has no tomorrow, for the fashion of this world passeth away. The church has had these heavenly places since time began. David said, "A day in thy courts is better than a thousand." At another time he said, "I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord."

Outside it's not only like a howling wilderness, it's filled with all sorts of sin and vice. Certain men have crept in unawares, who's condemnation of old is foretold. They would deceive the very elect, if possible. Notice, it says "If possible". I think the walls of salvation will keep every child of God safe from these deceivers. It would have been better for them not to have known anything about salvation, than after they have known it, to turn away. I feel that this means to the letter, not the quickening Spirit. Educated men know something about the Bible, but not to any saving value.

These heavenly places are like springs in the desert. The hot, burning sand presents to us the mirage; that is, the world would try to comfort one with what it has, but, like the mirage, its only counterfeit. Nothing can take the place of water to the thirsty soul. At these heavenly places we can drink long; but then we thirst again. But at these springs there is more water.

All this reminds us of the woman at the well, where our Lord was sitting weary from his journey. He told her of this heavenly water: and, in telling her of it, he created in her a desire for it. She knew nothing of the living water until then — I don't think she ever gave it a thought, for, until then, she was

satisfied with herself. After one has seen himself as he really is, he will never again be satisfied with himself: He wants that living water. It takes the Holy Spirit to show one that they are in need of the living water.

I don't know if others have felt as I have, but after attending such places, I've found myself more and more discontented with life here. I often think, If these places are so harmonious, so serene, and suited to the hungry soul, what must it be to be over there where congregations never break up, and sabbaths never end?

There is so much food in these heavenly places. I noticed this in this last meeting I attended. One spoke of the sovereignty of God; another on the love of Christ for his own; another on, ". . . for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him."; and the last one that day spoke on the resurrection. I thought about it afterwards: they began with God, and ended with the resurrection, taking up the various links that lead to Him.

How far have some of us come? It is true we are nearer our heavenly home today than ever before. The nearest thing to that abode, is a heavenly place in Christ. How good of God to set up these places in the desert here! There we are refreshed as we travel on to that City, and we are strengthened, and there is rest also. Jacob dreamed about it, the Apostle Paul visited it, and John saw it; and it was like a huge diamond, sparkling and bright. Another thing that helps us along our journey, is that the redeemed have their names written there.

"I do not look for worldly fame,
Or a fortune large and fair:
One thing I would love to know —
Is my name written there?"

Submitted by,
Myrtle Cross,
1203½ S. Mariposa,
Glendale 5, Calif.

ElDorado, Ark.

Dear Editors of the Signs:

I enclose \$5.00 to renew my subscription to the Signs.

I hope the Lord will bless me to read it the rest of my days here in this unfriendly world. I feel downcast so much of my time, and find myself trying to fix things that were fixed before the foundation of the world. I believe that all things work together for good to them that love the Lord; and I hope I love him. I feel that his mercies have followed me all the days of my life. How I want to be at my brothers' and sisters' feet — but what I would do that I do not. Dark and thorny is the way. Pray for me.

Unworthy of anything,
Mrs. E. M. Cameron

Blackburn, Mo.

Dear Editors:

You will find enclosed \$5.00 for the renewal of my subscription.

We are living, as they say, in a changing world. I pray, and have faith, that the *Signs of the Times* will never change. May you be enabled and sustained to continue, and the others who follow, in publishing the truth we so much believe and trust.

May we all be kept in the faith, and to do and act as we should.

Sincerely,
Mrs. Dosia Deal

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EDITORIAL

REPLY TO QUERY
OF BROTHER REESE

In replying to the question asked by Brother and Sister Reese, "Was the invisible church deceived, or just the visible church, when our mother Eve was deceived?", we will give our understanding of the subject.

The deception of Eve resulted in the whole human family falling into sin, and consequently affected the elect vessels of mercy along with all others of the human race. This made manifest the need of redemption of the Lord's people.

The CHURCH consists of ALL who were chosen in Christ Jesus before the world began; and is the same ALL who were redeemed with the precious blood of Christ. There is, consequently, but one church, whether it is called "invisible", or "visible".

We often hear these expressions used, and have sometimes used them ourself;

and, while they are not Biblical terms, they are good, if it is clear what we mean. Our use of "invisible church" is confined to express the *entire number* of the redeemed of the Lord, without regard to whether some of them have been manifested as children of God to the church as organized in this world.

And our use of "visible church" expresses all those who have been led of the Spirit to be separated from the world into the fellowship of each other as the organized *church in the world*.

We say again that there is but one church, whether visible or invisible. It is composed ONLY of REDEEMED SINNERS; there being no others who could possibly make up the church. We feel, therefore, that as Eve is considered to represent the "bride of the Lamb", or the church, the church was deceived in the sense that each member became sinners in the transgression. We have it from the Apostles Paul to Timothy, "For Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression." (1 Tim. 2:13, 14)

We do not understand, therefore, that there are two kinds who compose the church, those who were deceived, and those who were not, but that all who shall inherit the kingdom prepared from the foundation of the world, were in the deception, becoming thereby sinners. They are all alike REDEEMED SINNERS.

There are two other expressions often used in connection with the church: "the church triumphant", and "the church militant". The triumphant church would be the glorified church after all her members are conformed to the image of Christ, and have inherited the kingdom prepared for them. The militant church would be the church while yet in the world, with her warfare, etc., before receiving her inheritance.

These are our thoughts on the subject, and are submitted for the consid-

eration of Brother and Sister Reese and others.

J. D. W.

THE PAST

If I believed in salvation by works, I do not think that any timely creature would be as miserable as I would be. However, since I do not believe that salvation has been by works, I am taking heart with some degree of hope to write some of my reflections on my past, as well as on that of the church of the Lord Jesus Christ. I hope to be a partaker of the divine nature, and if so, I have a right to talk of my past as to my becoming a professed follower of the Lamb, as to my reasons for being associated with those denominated Old School Baptists. This past is mine, if so be that I am his, and it includes what God has done before the world was, what he has done for me, and if I have done anything for him, I expect to also enumerate my deeds, and to tell in minute detail the manner in which I have been a contributing factor in getting myself this far, and the part that I have had in bringing the church to its present status.

Undoubtedly, the design to save was of God, and is as old as He. "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); "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. 1:9); "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was made manifest in these last times for you." (I Peter 1:18, 20); "And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." (Rev. 13:8; 17:8); and many other passages could be noted that pertain to the design as being before the foundation of the world.

The choice and election of God are synonyms. The two words are both expressing an act of God to his creatures — an act that was performed before time began, an act that was not predicated upon the foreseen merit of the creature, nor in pay for something that he had done or could do. "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and a sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ." (I Pet. 1:2); "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." (Romans 9:11); "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first born among many brethren. Moreover, whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified." (Romans 8:29, 30). These are things that God does, not man. The works of God were known from the beginning of the world (Acts 15:18), thus his electing love, his purpose to save, his predestination of them unto the adoption of children, and to the

image of Jesus, his choice of them, his every determination, and his every move toward the execution of the same, was according to his eternal design before the world began.

It is not wholesome doctrine to set forth the thought of eternal children. Yet, it is not wholesome to set forth God having a design to save something that was not. We must not look for them as being to us before the world began, for we, nor none of the family of God, had a being, as humans, as men and women, as born-again creatures to need the blessings and promises of God. We did not have an actual existence as people, neither were we non-existent to God. He, being eternal, has before him all things as they are to be by development.

One of the greatest disputes among theologians has been how that we got into Christ; how that we became related to him as his brethren; in short, how we were born again. All of the disputants have been engaged in this controversy, all of them being aligned on one side or the other. The most of these learned men have thought that the unborn could, by action on their part, independent of God, be born into the family of God; other men, just as learned in the wisdom of this world, have taught that the Holy Spirit acted upon the creature independently of both it and all other creatures, to bring about the new birth. What each group has taught is of small moment to the one who is sitting at the feet of Jesus. The question with that student is, *What has God said?*

1. Let us notice the remarkable experience of the apostle Paul. It is indeed a wonderful display of the power of God in bringing him before kings and courts to hear his testimony. Each time that he told it he ascribed his being stopped to God and His Christ. Many times, in writing and in preaching, have I gone over this account of his dealing with Paul. For fear I have missed something, bear with me as I

travel with Saul as he journeyed to Damascus. It is well that we go back and look into the purpose of the trip. It is not a man whose heart has been made tender by the Spirit of the Lord, that seeks the help of the authorities in his efforts to prosecute the Lord's believing children; it is not a heart that the dying cries of Stephen had made any influence on. If there is among my readers one man that can show any change in Saul up until the voice and light from heaven stopped him, let them speak up. My stay on this terrestrial globe is far too short for me to be playing with falsity; and, too, the matter is too serious for any to *let* me play with it, without giving me due concern and warning. If there is any scriptural evidence that *anything* had wrought in Saul a change of heart, or if there is any scriptural evidence that he, by the volition of his will, had brought about a difference in his concern or desire towards the church, that evidence will be carefully weighed and considered in a future article. If it is not presented, the evidence is, that nothing like that is taught in the Scriptures.

The apostle tells us in his letter to the Ephesian church that they had been quickened by God the Father. If language means anything, they were not alive until quickened; if good sense is *good sense*, they were not a contributing factor in being quickened; but if good sense is not good sense, and they were a contributing factor, it follows that they were not quickened, never having been dead. Now to use his logic, nay, to use his divine and inspired testimony as it is related to his own quickening, we find that there had not been any change in the manner of his walking and talking prior to the sudden appearing of the light and sounding of the voice. He was "yet" doing what he had been doing all of the time. He had not expressed any desire toward Christ; he had not lessened his drive to exterminate the saints, but rather had intensified it; he had not brought pressure on heaven by prayer that Jesus

come to his rescue. In no sense of the word had he changed from a persecutor of saints to a comforter of them; in no sense of the word had he changed from an independent Saul to a dependent Paul. His being converted, his being born again, his being called to preach, all, all, were the sovereign work of God.

2. Zacharias and Elisabeth were well stricken in years. What would you expect of them? Would you expect them to raise a family? If so, how? Only by the special blessing of God could this woman conceive. Here is the first step in the matter. Only God can, whether it is in the preaching of the gospel or in the begetting of children, give the increase. This is the Bible record, and here I take my position, yet aware of what men will say. In the country round about Herod's kingdom another woman had become with child. How did she become that way? If the scoffers can find a Bible statement of the man that contributed to her condition, I will quit the Old Order of Baptists at once. The Holy Ghost overshadowed her and she became with child. She did not have anything to do with becoming that way; none of those that inhabited that land had a part in it. However, if I have failed to find the book that tells us about the help that she had, then I will, if blessed of God, treat on that, giving particular glory to those that have helped in the matter.

These two women, each of them with child in a manner that the earth could not contribute to, came together as a result of the visit of Mary to see her cousin, Elisabeth. Suppose some one tells me and you that things were in Mary's hand. Let them say on, but, remember that it was the work of God that revealed to Mary the condition of Elisabeth. It was God's work that caused her to seek the company of Elisabeth. She did go, and she did find Elisabeth at home. She did address her, and the news imparted caused the unborn child (John) to leap for joy in his mother's womb. Did the imparting or receiving of the news cause the child to leap for

joy or was the news that caused it? The religion of men is based upon the intellect of men. God can work himself into a lather and unless the intellect of men receives his work, it will prove a failure. What *intellect* leaped for joy? What optimal decision did the unborn child make that caused the leap for joy?

When Jesus came into the world he was rejected by his people as a whole. "He came to his own, and his own received him not, but as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name; which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." (John 1:11, 13) Of the Jews and Gentiles that received him, they all were given power to become the sons of God. We Old Order Baptists must not be found fighting against God in order to fight against false doctrine. That is false within itself, and that fight will be lost. *Each of them were given power to become the sons of God.* If we are unable to find an answer or key to this Scripture, we are going to have a self evident contradiction in this noted passage. It will not do us any good to close our eyes; it will not extricate us from our dilemma by ignoring its existence. Whatever the text means, it means what it says. *He gave them power to become the sons of God.* It would not have been a gift of power unless it enabled them to accomplish, to do the object for which it was given. And the thing to be by this given power is not the same thing under consideration as the birth which was not by their will. The thing that they were to become, to wit, sons, would find them willing to become that, for his people are willing in the day of his power. (Psalms 110:3) This gift of power was a right or privilege (See the Geneva Translation of the Bible; Young's Analytical Concordance), but not the power which made them sons, for, let us read, "Which were born." Let us stop there, for the gainsayer

must be stopped, and hemmed, and circumvented at every turn. The giving of power to become the sons of God was after they had been born. The verb phrase carries us back to a period before the giving of this power. They were already born at that time, that is, they were, unless the meaning of words has under gone a change since they were uttered.

How were these that received him and were given power to become the sons of God, born? If this birth is conditional, the first one is also. If the first is not, then this one is not. If there ever has been a man or a woman that selected their parents, this will be a good time to upset the country rustic's position. Many people would do it *afterwards*, if they could, but that any man or woman *would* before birth, is a matter that, 1st. the Bible forbids us to believe. 2nd. Medical science also forbids such a thought. No man or woman could be the father and mother of a child save he that fathered the child and she that bore it. Even though men and women advocate that a *thing which is not* can have a voice in *what it is* and *when it is*, it is still as far from the truth as the poles are apart. This birth is a singular one; the earth did not have anything to do with it. *Not the least thing did the earth have to do with it.* All of the blood before them, as well as their own blood, did not have any birth essence in it. The blood of Abraham and David and all the ancient saints of God did not play any part in this birth.

The Jews tried to get baptized because of their blood stream. and it would seem today that some people are traveling heavenward because of their blood, but being born again is not of blood in any sense. This birth did not come about by the will of flesh. If the fleshly standing of any man had been conducive to being born again, then, by all means, Paul could have told a story to Agrippa and Festus and Felix that would have saved him stoning and lashing. Instead he condemned the

thought that he or any man had, by his earthly standing, any priority in the kingdom of heaven. The Saviour declares, "Thou hast given him power over *all flesh*, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him." (John 17:2) A gain he says, "Flesh and blood *hath not* revealed it unto thee." (Matthew 16:17) The will of the flesh, which certainly (seeing that Jesus has power over it all) means all flesh, whether Pope John, his cardinals, his priests, Protestantism with all of their archbishops and prelates, or any other *ism* or *ist* that existed then and now or future will ever have anything to do in the birth of these that received Christ, or those that have since then, or those that are yet to be born. These were all born by the will of God.

As I look back at the history of the people of God, I am made to inquire as to the past salvation of individuals and the church collectively. It is a daily cry of mine, Who has required this of you? Am I contending for the truth? Or am I misleading people? I hope and think that I am conscious of my small offerings to God's people by way of the pulpit and the printed page. Yet, I know that the position I am occupying brings me before many people. Am I contending for the truth? When I tell the Lord's people that he hath saved them, am I telling the whole truth? When I say that I am what I am by the grace of God, am I talking of something that the Bible proves?

This is my initial offering for this year. To examine the position of the church, it is needful to deal in dry technicalities at times, but I hope that you will be patient with me and that you will remember me to the King that my writing and my preaching be seasoned with the grace of God.

God willing, in my next, I will deal with *what* has brought us from the infant church to now; with *what* has saved you and I thus far.

W. D. G.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

CIRCULAR LETTER

The Baltimore Old School Baptist Association met with the Church at Black Rock, May 19th, 20th and 21st, 1858, to the Churches connected therewith.

Beloved Brethren: — Permit us to address you on this occasion on the Present State of the Church of Christ. That the Church is at this time surrounded with darkness in a peculiar manner, is generally admitted; it is like the plague of darkness of Egypt, a darkness that may be felt; it is a wintry state of the Church. The sun occasionally shines, but its shining has not that warming, enlivening and cheering influence upon the plants as at other times it has had — and it is soon obscured by cold bleak clouds.

There are clouds rising from the mists of this world, from the various agitations in the world at this time, politically and otherwise, which much darken the hemisphere of the Church and saints, and produce a corresponding chilliness. There is not that liveliness in our love to the brethren, nor to the truth and ordinances of the Gospel, nor that engagedness in religious exercises, and in religious conversation, and meditations, as have at other times been felt.

As in night and wintry seasons beasts of prey crowd round the settlements of men, to raven; so it is with the Church at this time. There are those around the saints and among them, that would persuade or scare the sheep from their fenced folds to ramble with them in the wild ranges of human wisdom, and to repose with them in their dens that they may prey upon them, and no doubt they have bewitched some of the sheep. There are others again who would persuade the children of God that they ought not to follow or receive the light

which God has given for their continual guide, the Scriptures and blessed teachings of the Spirit, but to be guided in their belief and practice by the mixture of light and shade which is found in the writings of eminent men of past ages; and as these are various, so as they are followed they produce differences of views and dissensions among the saints. Again, Satan takes the advantage of this darkness, to assault the saints with temptations. It is an old complaint with the children of God that,

"Temptations every where annoy,
And sins and snares my peace destroy."

How it may be with the brethren generally at this time we know not, but some are peculiarly tried with temptations. Satan so stirs up their passions, appetites, &c., that they think it is altogether themselves. And indeed it is their own vile nature that thus shows itself; and what is a worse annoyance to them, the old man when left to act itself loves as much as ever it did, the indulgence of itself in its corruptions, and hence under this wildness and darkness, or, in other words, not having the spiritual man in lively exercise, we are led on under the influence of our corruptions, till we are on the very brink of acting them out; and were it not for the faithfulness of God who has promised that with the temptations he will make a way for our escape, we should plunge into actual sin. Though the escape is brought about, we know that it is not of ourselves, but that the sin is ours, though we were not left to carry it out; then arises the trying doubts, whether, if we loved God and his cause and believed the declarations of his word, &c., we could be led on thus contrary to his word and to the exposing of his cause to reproach. We are sometimes thus tossed upon the billows of temptations, until like Jonah, we become exceedingly displeased, and angry, and pray the Lord to take away our life, thinking it better for us to die than to live, yea, with Job, our souls, those souls which others tell us are made heavenly in re-

generation, choose strangling and death rather than life. Again, as in wintry seasons, clouds have heretofore at times gathered over the Church, but at this time they appear to be gathering thicker than ever, as though preparing to burst in a storm upon us.

But, brethren, it is with the Church now as it was with Israel during the plague of darkness in Egypt. All the children of Israel had light in their dwellings. So we think the churches of the saints have at this time as clear light in the great truths of the Gospel as in any former period; and it is more distinguishable from every false system then formerly as it makes manifest the darkness without, by being so contrasted with it. The ministers of Christ, although frequently on account of the wintry darkness when going to their appointments, feel more as though they were going on some worldly concern than to deliver a message of grace, yet are enabled generally to preach the gospel with much clearness, to feel, while preaching, the vast weight of their subject, the precious fullness and freeness of the gospel of salvation, and the importance of contending earnestly for the faith, and of preaching Christ as the only way of salvation. Private members are as well established in the truth, and have as clear a discerning spirit to distinguish between truth and error when preached, as at any former period; and whilst complaining of many doubts, fears and temptations, are as well established in the truth that their whole salvation is in Christ Jesus as in any former period, and manifest as much anxiety to know the Scriptures, and to be in all things conformed to them.

The inquiry is frequently made, What can be the reason of the Church's being in this dark wintry state, and whether it is not owing to the unfaithfulness of the Church that this has come upon her? The inquiry is also made whether the Church cannot adopt some course, whether some measures cannot be taken to bring the Church back to more sunny seasons, and whether individuals by

proper efforts, by prayer, &c., cannot deliver themselves from their coldness? Some few have urged the making certain exertions to relieve the Church and saints from this unpleasant situation. Brethren, does not the same God reign in the heavenly kingdom as in the earthly? Does he not reign as supremely in the one as in the other? Does not the declaration of the Lord, "I form the light and create darkness, I make peace and create evil; I the Lord do all these things" apply as fully to the spiritual world and its government as to the natural? Try your powers, brethren, in mid-winter to clear away the storm clouds, to avert the long, dark cold nights and to bring the sun back to his summer solstice, and if ye can do this, then may ye hope by your efforts to hasten on again the period when in reference to the Church ye may sing, "For lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone, the flowers appear on the earth, the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land," and not till then.

We know, brethren, that all this coldness and darkness and the corruptions, that cause us to doubt and fret, and are the materials for Satan's temptations to act upon, are in us. We cannot say with our Lord "The prince of this world cometh and hath nothing in me." No, the evil is all in us, and when we rightly feel, we take all the shame and blame to ourselves. But can we shake off or overcome these evils of ourselves? No, the more we feel the evil of these corruptions and coldness, we feel the more our entire impotency to relieve ourselves from them, we cry for God to interpose his grace or we must fall under them. It is true, that amid the severest colds and storms of winter, if God in his providence provide us with shelter, with fuel and clothing we may keep from perishing, so under all these dark and wintery seasons spiritually, God's grace will be sufficient for his people to secure that their faith fail not. He will keep them by his power through faith unto salvation, though he may

leave them, for more humbling of themselves, and for the trying their faith, to fall into the mire.

The people of God, are likened to sheep. Sheep are feeble, defenseless creatures of themselves, very simple in providing for their defense against their enemies, or in providing for, and protecting themselves and their young from perishing in the wintery storms. They need the constant care of a shepherd to provide food and shelter for them, and to protect them by keeping them embosomed, or by watching over them, or they will wander off, get scattered and devoured. The people of God are equally as dependent upon the care of their Shepherd. But David personating Christ in his body, the Church, says, "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, &c." So that even the souls of the children, get off at times from the simplicity of gospel truth and order and need to be restored by the great Shepherd. This does not look like the souls of saints have been changed into heavenly souls.

As to the reason why the church is in this dark and wintery state; we would say, it is not that the Shepherd is unfaithful to his charge; not because he has not power to preserve his sheep in perfect peace, and to keep them in the constant enjoyment of light; nor because they are left to their own care; but because he has seen it best for the church to be in this state. In a word, because it is so written, and the Scriptures must be fulfilled. The present dark and cold state of the church, will no doubt be more for the glory of God, more for a manifestation of the power and exceeding riches of his grace; more fully display to the admiration of saints and angels, the divine efficacy of the blood of Jesus to cleanse from all sin, and that perfect fullness there is in him to present the vilest sinner without spot or blemish before the throne of God, than would the church's being kept

in the constant exercise of that faith and love and zeal such as characterized the lives of Peter, John and Paul. Because now it appears so manifest that it is all of grace that they are saved and kept, all of Christ in which they will appear with acceptance before God, and shine in glory.

Let us then, Brethren, amidst all the darkness around, rejoice in the power and faithful care of our Shepherd and may we be found walking as children of Light.

S. Trott, Moderator
Jas. Blizzard, Clerk

(The above Circular Letter of the Baltimore Association appeared in the Signs of July 1, 1858.)

OBITUARIES

MRS. SARAH GILLEY HOLLAND

Mrs. Sarah Gilley Holland, daughter of the late Dowell Gilley and Zinnie Hopkins Gilley, was born in Patrick County, Virginia, September 22, 1873; and departed this life January 12, 1960, making her stay with us over eighty-six years. In 1905 she was married to William B. Holland, who passed on several years ago. To this union ten children were born, four of which preceded her in death. Surviving are: three daughters, Mrs. James Pearman, Martinsville, Va.; Mrs. Tom Griffin, and Mrs. Holman Vernon, Reidsville, N. C.; three sons, Robert W., and T. S. of Reidsville, N. C., and George, of Madison, N. C.; also by forty-one grandchildren, forty-six great grandchildren, and two great great grandchildren.

Sister Holland joined Pleasantville Primitive Baptist Church, near Madison, N. C., over thirty-five years ago. Though she suffered the loss of one leg years ago, she was faithful to continue her meetings, and was an example of faith, love and courage. She bore her cross with meekness, and often said that she felt it a little thing to suffer, compared with what the dear Lord had suffered, and compared with what he had prepared above. She was steadfast unto the end in this faith, losing her other leg in the last days of her life.

Before her last illness, she told me a dream, in which she saw Jesus coming in the air and a cloud with him. As it came closer, she saw that the cloud was composed of angels making a train into heaven. She looked, and saw the earth full of people running to and fro. She asked, "What are you running for, (in joy she asked this) that's Jesus coming." So it is our belief that she is at rest with

Jesus; and we witness that, "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints."

She was laid to rest in the church cemetery after the services in the church, which was filled with loved ones and friends. Elder Roy Smith assisted me in the service. Written at the request of Pleasantville Church while in conference.

(Elder) H. W. Wray

ELDER L. T. TUCKER

In memory of a dear friend and an able minister of the gospel that our Heavenly Father has called from the battle-field of duty, Elder L. T. Tucker. He was born June 21, 1876, and died June 23, 1960, making his stay on earth eighty-four years and two days.

Elder Tucker was first married to Lillie Shelton, and to this union were born four children: one daughter, Mrs. Mable Diggs; three sons, H. S., P. A., and W. C. Tucker. After being separated by death, he later married Ella Corns, who also preceded him to the grave. To this union there were also four children: two daughters, Loris and Ruth, and two sons, Isaac and Raymond.

Elder Tucker joined old Stewart's Creek Church, in Surry County, N. C., in 1905. About a year later the church felt a gift in him, and liberated him speak. His gift developed greatly, and in September, 1910, the church at Pilot Mountain required his service, and called for his ordination. He was ordained September 24, 1910. The Presbytery consisted of the following elders: A. M. Denny, Gabriel Denny, G. O. Key, and H. D. Mikey, with deacons S. A. Taylor and William Simmons.

He was ably gifted, deep in doctrine and well informed in the Scriptures, and was uncompromising in his convictions. He suffered many disappointments in his service to his brethren in his long life with them, as well as had many, many pleasant meetings with them. His life was dedicated to the service of his brethren. He is missed much by them, especially by the writer. Many times have I felt my life enriched in his deep and well explained understanding of the inspired word of God. Peace be to his dust, and let us hope the good Lord will give us more such gifts as his. Written by one who loved him.

D. A. O'Bryant

NATHANIEL D. FOSTER

Nathaniel D. Foster, age 47, passed away in June, 1960, in a Greenville hospital, Greenville, Alabama, after a brief illness. He was a native of Greenville.

Survivors include his wife, Mrs. Roberta Ellen Foster; three daughters: Helen, Annette

and Nancy; one son, Robert; four sisters: Mrs. Sam Dean, Mrs. Mack Dunn, Mrs. Noel Cook, all of Greenville, and Mrs. Maxie Kent, Pensacola, Florida; three brothers: J. C. Foster and Felix Foster Jr., both of Greenville, and Ralph Foster, of Baltimore, Maryland.

Funeral services were conducted at Mt. Zion Primitive Baptist Church, June 22nd, with Elder E. D. Gafford, and Mr. Lewis Watkins and Mr. John Vickers officiating.

Brother Foster was experienced in the Textile Field, and was owner and operator of the Foster Manufacturing Company, of Greenville, Alabama, having recently built a new plant in Greenville. He was well known throughout the area.

It was my privilege to know and love him for a number of years. His great delight was to attend the services of the churches of the Old School or Primitive Baptists. He was well established in the doctrine of salvation by grace, and manifested his love for the brethren by attending the meetings, and helping in every way possible in supporting the church. He left evidence that he died in the triumph of that living faith.

He was blessed with a lovely family, and it was my privilege to visit in their home a short time before he was called away.

When the Lord shall come for his people, we believe he will be among that innumerable host that no man can number, who shall awake with the likeness of the Lord Jesus, to join the blood-bought throng in praising Him who is Lord of Lords and King of Kings forever.

D. V. Spangler

Madera, Calif.
October 28, 1960

Dear Editor:

Please publish my husband's obituary; he had many friends among the Old Baptists, and we have been among you kind people at meetings many times.

May God richly bless you good people in your good work. One in hope of eternal life through God's goodness and mercy.

Mrs. Craig Cunningham

CRAIG CUNNINGHAM

From information furnished, we have prepared the following:

Mr. Cunningham, aged 79, was a native of Madera, California, was one of the few remaining Maderans who knew California's real pioneers, being born into an early-day family. His father sluiced for gold in the mountain areas in the 1880's; and his uncle, Capt. R. P. Mace, was owner of the early-day Yosemite Hotel.

Mr. Cunningham, who had been retired for about ten years, had a long career in education and business. He was Superintendent of County Schools from 1911 to 1923, beginning his career in education as a school teacher at Grub Gulch. After this he was in the furniture business, and was active in the Business Men's Association; and was Secretary - Manager of the County Chamber of Commerce for eleven years.

He is survived by his wife, Marie; two daughters, Mrs. Meredith Daulton, of Madera, and Mrs. Paul Ellis, Fresno, Calif.; one step-daughter, Dorothy Scott, Hanford, Calif.; two sisters, Mrs. Alice Pitman and Miss Margaret Cunningham, Madera; two brothers, Henry, of Madera, and Dr. Edgar Cunningham, of Richmond; and by five grandchildren, and two great grandchildren.

MRS. MATTIE SIMMONS JOHNSTON

Death came into the life of our beloved Sister Mattie Johnston on Sunday morning, October 23, 1960, and removed her spirit to be with God.

Sister Johnston was living in Reidsville, North Carolina, at the time of her departure, but had spent most of her life in Caswell County, North Carolina. She united with the church at Bush Arbor in July, 1939, and had lived a faithful life to her church, often attending when her body was so filled with pain that she could hardly endure it, but would say that she couldn't be satisfied not to come.

Sister Johnston leaves to mourn her departure her husband, Mr. Ben M. Johnston; two sisters, Mrs. Edward Terrell and Mrs. Roy Somers both of Route 2, Elon College, North Carolina; four brothers, John, Berry, and Roach Simmons of Route 2, Elon College, North Carolina, and Philip Simmons of Camp Butner Hospital.

Her funeral was conducted at Bush Arbor Church by her pastor, Elder W. C. King, Elder J. W. Gilliam, and Elder J. Harvey Smith. Her body was laid to rest in the church cemetery to await the coming of her Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ to call her from the sleeping tomb.

We do not mourn as those who have no hope. We believe that our loss is her gain. May God's blessings be upon all who feel this loss of loving ties that have bound them together in this world for 76 years. May those who mourn be given a heart to bow humbly to God's will.

RESOLVED, that a copy of this memorial be sent to the family, a copy to be sent to the Signs of the Times for publication, and a copy placed on our record book of Bush Arbor Church.

Done by order of Bush Arbor Church in

conference December 10, 1960.

W. C. King, Moderator
J. D. Simmons, Church Clerk

MRS. MOLLIE MCKINNEY OAKLEY

On August 24, 1960, God saw fit to remove from us the spirit of Sister Oakley. She was born and reared in Caswell County, North Carolina, and had spent her entire life of 74 years in the same community. While she had lived a long and useful life, death came as a shock, having died suddenly from a heart condition.

Sister Oakley leaves to mourn her departure two sons: Dewey C. Oakley, Route 3, Burlington, N. C., and Freddie W. Oakley, Route 1, Yanceyville, N. C.; twelve grandchildren, eight great grandchildren, and a host of other relatives and friends.

Sister Oakley united with the Church at Bush Arbor at her June meeting, 1932, and was a most faithful member, always attending her meetings if possible. We shall miss her, but feeling that she is now resting from all pain, sorrow, and trials of this world, may we all be given to say not our will but God's be done.

Sister Oakley's funeral was largely attended. Her body was laid to rest at Bush Arbor Church Cemetery to await the coming of our Blessed Saviour Jesus Christ, to call her from the dead to arise and come forth to meet Him who saved her and gave her every needed blessing. Her funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder W. C. King, and Elder J. Harvey Smith. May God give to her dear loved ones a heart of submission to his Holy Will, who makes no mistakes.

RESOLVED, that a copy of this memorial be sent to the family, a copy sent to the Signs of the Times for publication and a copy be spread upon the record book of the Church.

Done by order of Bush Arbor Church in her regular conference December 10, 1960.

W. C. King, Moderator
J. D. Simmons, Church Clerk

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

Insomuch as it was the will of our gracious and kind heavenly father to remove from our midst our dear sister, Sister Ella Lee Bonds, we, the church at Skewarky, Williamston, North Carolina, desire to write a few lines in her memory. She was born in the Darden's community of Jamesville Township on October 5, 1889, and died in Martin General Hospital, Williamston, on November 1, 1960, making her stay here 71 years and 27 days.

It was our privilege to have known this dear sister the most of our lives; therefore

we have seen the footsteps she took in her everyday life. We are grateful to say our departed sister was a faithful mother in a natural sense to her children, a most faithful grandmother to her grandchildren, and a kind and tender friend to all who knew her. And what is most comforting to us, the church at Skewarky, is that she was faithful to her God, her brethren and sisters, and her church insofar as we could be blessed to see and understand from the fruits she bore.

The church at Skewarky grieves over their loss, but we hope and feel that our loss is our dear sister's eternal gain. We rejoice in this because she professed a hope in an all wise, all powerful, and merciful God. She was a firm believer in salvation by grace, and was resting in the hope of being taken on the wings of God's love to that celestial city eternal in the heavens whose builder and maker is God. She had a desire to give God all the honor and praise for a finished and complete salvation made by the spilling of the blood of his glorious, ever-to-be adored son, Jesus Christ, on the cross; a salvation complete in the mind and purpose of God before the foundation of the world.

Sister Bonds was received in fellowship with the church at Skewarky in February, 1935, by letter from Morattock Primitive Baptist Church, Washington County, making her stay with us around 25 years and eight months. She was a member of the Primitive Baptist Faith for approximately 50 years. She served the church at Skewarky as housekeeper 25 years and as treasurer and trustee 10 years. She was faithful to the end, bearing much suffering and pain over the years with patience, resigning herself with God's blessings to his will.

She was the wife of the late John Dennis Bonds. To them were born 13 children, 7 boys and six girls. She is survived by 4 sons, 3 daughters, 28 grandchildren, and 11 great grandchildren, to whom we extend our heartfelt sympathy in their distressing hours. May you be comforted by God's love is our prayer for Christ's sake.

Her funeral was conducted in the Skewarky Primitive Baptist Church by her pastor, Elder E. C. Stevenson, assisted by Elders A. B. Ayers and E. O. Harrison. Interment was in the Skewarky Church Cemetery under a mound of beautiful flowers which she loved so much.

RESOLVED, that a copy of this be placed on the church record; a copy for publication; and a copy be sent to the family.

Done by order of conference second Saturday in November, 1960.

Elder E. C. Stevenson, Moderator Committee

Deacon Johnny Ray Gardner
Sister Nancy Daniels

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 129

DANVILLE, VA., MARCH, 1961

NO. 3

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 3/61
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

THE TOUCH OF HIS HAND

When once I was lonely and weary
Trouble encircled me like an iron band,
I remember the kind, loving Saviour,
And sought the "Touch of his Hand".

So unworthy and quietly I asked Him
To help me these trials to stand,
When, softly out of the shadows,
I felt the "Touch of his Hand".

Then quietly but firmly He led me
O'er the rocks and treacherous land,
To a place forever I'm grateful
For the precious "Touch of his Hand".

No more shall the fear of the darkness,
Nor the sting of sharp cutting sand,
Bring me pain, or cause me to falter,
For now he has hold of my hand.

Mrs. Flora Booher,
Rt. 1, Shirleysburg, Pa.
(Member Trough Creek Church — Ed.)

GOD'S FOUNDATION

Other foundation can no man lay:
It was laid long, long ago.
Jesus said, "On this rock I will build";
'Twas by revelation we know.

Other foundations, flimsy and weak,
Are built only on the sand:
They cannot withstand the wind and storm,
For they're foundations of man.

But this one was founded by Jesus,
And can withstand all the gales;
It is the house He built on the rock —
On the rock that never fails.

Their God remembers their sins no more,
Whose hopes upon Him are staid:
They are safe in the cleft of the Rock,
With their sins on Jesus laid.

Willing to suffer in the garden;
Willing all their sins to bear;
Willing to pay that others might live;
Willing, He bore their sins there.

Willing to suffer all the shame
That his people should be free,
He was forever the spotless Lamb,
When He died on Calvary.

He was made sin who knew no sin —
But, Oh, at what a great cost —
That the price of redemption be paid,
He bore their sins on the cross.

Cora Powell,
Salisbury, Md.

HISTORICAL ACCOUNTS OF LEADING CREEK AND VALLEY CHURCHES OF WEST VIRGINIA

"Much of the romance and history of pioneer days is written around and interwoven with the activities of the early churches. One of the first denominations to find a footing West of the Alleghenies was the Primitive or Predestinarian Baptists, commonly known as 'Old School Baptists', and sometimes referred to as 'Hardshells'."

Thus reads the introduction to an account of the Valley Church and the Leading Creek Church of central West Virginia. This history was furnished us by Sister Hester B. Thompson, of Cumberland, Maryland, who is a member of Leading Creek, and a great granddaughter of the first pastor of that church, Elder David P. Murphy.

In the early days of our country the members of the churches often lived many miles from their meeting-houses, and since traveling was over rough roads and trails on horseback or afoot, the brethren often organized other churches and built new houses more

conveniently located. For this reason Leading Creek Church was organized by fourteen members who obtained letters from the Valley Church, in Tygert's Valley, near Elkins, West Virginia; and built their meeting-house at Montrose, West Virginia.

The account given us is a newspaper article written in 1941, and, due to its length, we will have to greatly condense it. The Valley Church was established in 1806, about the time the Indians were making their last raids in that part of the country. It consisted of ten members with ten more added the same month, and included the following family names: Kittle, Canfield, Hixon, Chenoweth, Holder, Moore, Schoonover, Hart, Caplin, Kelly, Skidmore, and Weese. The following Elders served Valley Church as pastors: Thomas Collett, Phinneas Wells, Nathan Everett, Joseph Poe, Ezra P. Hart, S. D. Lewis, John N. Bartlett, and Jonah S. Murphy. About fifteen years ago Valley Church members united with Leading Creek Church, and Valley Church ceased a separate organization.

The newspaper account further states concerning Leading Creek Church, "This offshoot of the original church boasts a record that is unique and perhaps unparalleled in the religious history of the United States. On April 24, 1854, less than a month after the letters of release were issued, Leading Creek Church was constituted — and during the intervening 87 years the church has had but three pastors — a father, a son, and a grandson: Elder David P. Murphy, his son Elder James Murphy, and his grandson Elder Jonah S. Murphy." This was written in 1941, and we must now add that after the death of Elder Jonah Murphy, his grandson, Elder Veldon B. Linn, became pastor, and remains at the present time.

Thus Leading Creek Church is unique as to the continuation of all her four pastors of one family. And she has been blessed of the Lord to have remained firm in the doctrine upon which she was

founded. They, together with Valley Church, refused to be drawn into the errors which appeared in the doctrine of many who retained the name of Baptist. So, while many former sister churches were departed from the faith so long held by gospel churches, the Leading Creek and Valley brethren were monuments of God's mercies, and continued to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints.

The newspaper account gives some of the history of the division among the Baptists, quoting from Hassell's History and from Black Rock Address, which we shall not give here, since all Old School Baptists are acquainted with it. But we do quote as follows: "This action (by the Kehukee Association and the brethren at Black Rock — Ed.) in 1827 and 1832, marked the final parting of the ways for the followers of the Old School and the New School of the Baptist denomination. The Old School, or Hardshell Baptists, as they were dubbed at that time, have, through all the intervening years, stood steadfast in their interpretation of the tenets which they claim were handed down continuously from the days of the Apostles."

Our writer also says, "Followers of a faith, who have stood steadfast as a stone wall against the march of modern methods in matters religious, merit the respect of Christian people, even of different beliefs. Such has been the record of the Murphy family for almost a century, (now more than a century. — Ed.) Elder Jonah Murphy, like his honored grandfather, has never received a salary for his services. He permits no musical instruments to be used in his church. He believes in baptism by immersion, but not in a man-built baptistry. When accessions to the church are made, the congregation gathers on the banks of nearby Leading Creek, regardless of the season of the year, where the rites are administered in the running waters of the stream."

The original fourteen members of

Leading Creek Church who were released to "constitute a church of the same faith and order at Montrose, called Leading Creek Church," were as follows: Daniel Schoonover, Archibald Ferguson, Edith Ferguson, Santha Wilmoth, William Workman, Lucinda Workman, Edmund Wilmoth, July Ann Chenoweth, Polly Wilmoth, Debora Ferguson, Hickman Chenoweth, Mary Wilmoth, Isaac Canfield, and Elizabeth Ferguson.

Though this account is quite brief we believe the generations to follow will find it quite interesting.

J. D. W.

Rt. 1, Box 29
Branch, Arkansas

Dear Editors:

The good Lord willing, I would like some information, as it is not clear to me just what happens to the natural man through regeneration; or what I believe is called the new birth, or spiritual birth.

I understand that man was created equal at the beginning. In other words, he was created upright until the transgression of God's law while in the garden of Eden. The Bible teaches that the natural man is not subject to the laws of God because they are foolish to him; neither can he know them because they are spiritually discerned.

So, what I would like to know: Is there anything changed about the natural man in this operation, only he is made subject to God's will; not willingly but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope. (Romans 8:20) The Bible teaches that at corporal death the body goes back to dust, and the spirit goes back to God who gave it.

If anyone feels led by the Holy Spirit to give further information on the above subject, I would appreciate a reply through the *Signs of the Times*.

Yours in hope of eternal life,
J. A. Turner
(See editorial reply)

DESIRER ELDER RUSTON'S VIEWS

1160 Halifax Road
Danville, Virginia.

My dear Brother Ruston:

How unworthy I do feel to call you my brother. However, I have a desire to write you again this morning to tell you how much joy I received after reading your editorial in the December, 1960, issue of the *Signs of the Times*, meditating upon the truths you set forth pertaining to the House of Judah and the House of Jacob. I believe you brought forth the fruits of the two Houses, with the truth that cannot be disputed. While I was reading I was rejoicing to know I had seen you and had visited in your home, also had heard you preach. I could visualize I was seeing you as I once had.

The dear gracious Lord has given us some good writers and lovely witnesses to His precious Word in these dark days we are travelling in.

How glorious it is to know that we have this freedom, that God's Word can go across the miles to comfort the little thirsty flock who seeks for a drink from the fountain that never runs dry. So many times I have had tears streaming down reading the Word. "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled." If I do know my poor heart, I do thirst after righteousness, I get so hungry at times to hear the gospel word proclaimed. I am deprived very much in convenience of going to meeting. I try to comfort myself down the pathway by reading the Bible, seeking peace to my weary soul and mind. I am comforted with this hymn some of the time.

"Do not I love Thee, O my Lord?
Behold my heart and see," etc.

Now I want to make an apology for not answering the comforting letter you wrote me. I am sorry I did not let you know how very much I did appreciate it, and how very much I enjoyed the editorial you wrote in answer to my re-

quest on the woman taken in adultery.

Now, Brother Ruston, if not asking too much of you, will you please, when your time permits, write on the subject in Genesis 28:21-22. I would like to know your views on the subject of Jacob saying, "So that I come again to my father's house in peace; then shall the Lord be my God; and this stone, which I have set for a pillar, shall be God's house: and all that thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto thee."

Would this tenth be material things? It seems I can't understand it to be the tenth of one's income, as in this day we hear some preachers, not of our faith, preaching that we should give a tenth of our income to the church. They also use the text, Leviticus 27:30, saying the tithe is the Lord's. In my early life I never heard anything preached about the tenth or the tithe from any source. "Except the Lord build the house, they labour in vain that build it, etc." (Psalm 127:1) O, how sinful me does beg to be led in the paths of righteousness. I do know that Jesus told Thomas, "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."

Now I will close with my love to your lovable companion. I am trusting you may be blessed to write many, many more editorials, as I do always look forward to reading them. I thank the Lord for the good editors of the *Signs*. If you can only remember me in your prayers, please do so.

In hope of entering the Father's House with many mansions. (John 14)

Mrs. Nettie A. Evans

(See Elder Ruston's Editorial)

6510 N. Calispel,
Spokane 53, Washington

Signs of the Times:

Please renew my subscription to the *Signs* for one year; and also renew my mother's for one year, for which I en-

close a check.

I've been a subscriber to the *Signs* for only the past year, but, my, how I have enjoyed getting them. I enjoy the articles of experience and the editorials; and I have especially enjoyed Elder Gold's correspondence with Dr. Hooper. I love a good argument in defense of the "Hardshell" Baptist belief.

I wouldn't trade my hope and belief for anything in this world. I only hope and pray it's God-given, and not of myself. I believe in predestination to the fullest. I rejoice in defending God's word as I see and believe it, when He sees fit to aid my defense. But, then, there are so many times when "of myself I can do nothing"; and how helpless I am!

When the dear Lord opens my ears and heart to understand, how glad I am; and when I try to understand of myself, I understand nothing. I have a sister who told me not to lean upon my own understanding, but to go to someone who has studied and read the Bible for years, and who has more reason to know what the real interpretation is. I wrote her that I didn't lean on my understanding, but on the understanding God gives me, if He does; and if He is the "author and finisher of my faith", He also gives me my hope and belief that the understanding I have is the true one. I told her, "Yes, don't lean on your own understanding — lean on some other mortal man's, who probably has been blind and in the ditch a lot longer than you have."

Oh, I get wrought up just thinking about how they believe. They claim they love and teach the truth, and yet it is all of man, not of God. Yet I realize they believe the way they do because God intended that they would; they claim that without God they can do nothing, yet when they talk its the Witnesses who get all the credit.

May God guide and direct you always to print the truth, is my prayer.

Unworthily,
Caroline Martin

PROSPERITY AND ADVERSITY

967 Maxey,
Memphis, Tenn.

Dear Elder Spangler:

I wish to renew my subscription to the *Signs*, so am enclosing check for two years.

I wish to say that we enjoyed your being with us here in Memphis this Fall; and this goes for all the elders and brethren who visit us. It is good when the Lord sees fit to gather his little children together, and make them sit together in Christ. There is their Heavenly Place here in the earth: When they meet and sing hymns of praise, and try to pray and to talk in His name; because there is none other name given among men whereby we must be saved. So we are made to say with the Apostle in the 5th chapter of Romans, "Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God through Jesus Christ." This clearly explains that man is not justified by works, in order to have peace with God. God gives us peace through his only begotten Son, whom he sent into this world to save sinners. He did not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance. The well man needs not a physician, but he that is sick. When, in time past, we were made to hate the things we once loved, and love the things we once hated; and our feet were placed upon the Rock, and our goings established, and a new song placed in our mouth singing praise to His name, how wonderful and how sweet was the season. To all that call upon His name, these seasons are joyful.

In Ecclesiastes 7:13, 14, we find, "Consider the work of God: for who can make that straight, which he hath made crooked? In the day of prosperity be joyful, but in the day of adversity consider: God also hath set the one over against the other, to the end that man should find nothing after him."

Now when we are given faith to look unto Jesus and realize in every sense

of the word that he is the author and finisher of our faith, in which there is the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen, we are joyful in that day and confess that we have no confidence in the flesh. I believe this is part of the prosperity under consideration in the above scriptures; and that it is just as necessary to be in the day of adversity, when we seemingly are left to ourselves. It is then that we are made to consider, wondering if He is gone from us. Don't we then pray for Him to be merciful unto us, as the Publican did?

This is a subject that is given for His children to study and meditate upon: How God has so wonderfully set the one over against the other — prosperity and adversity, for the welfare of his little children, and that man should find nothing after him. Great is the mystery of God's handiwork: "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handiwork. Day unto day uttereth speech, and night unto night sheweth knowledge. There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard." (Psalm 19:1-3) Their voice is heard whereunto he sends it: "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me." We see him with the eye of faith, and hear his voice in the day of prosperity, and are joyful. Not only do we hear but we are led by Him. "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, are sons of God."

In the day of adversity we are led into adversity. We would never have any dark moments in this life if it were left to us, but when we do, we are made to consider the handiwork of God in all things. So we must believe that all things work together for good to them that love Him, to them who are the called according to his purpose. And all that we can think about in the making of all things working together for good to them that love Him, is because He is before all things in the minds of his children. You know that in Isaiah 9:6, we are told the following: "For unto

us a child is born, unto us a Son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, the mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace."

I want to say here that when the new birth comes into our life, then is when I understand is prosperity; then is when we celebrate Christ's birthday — the day of prosperity. The Prophet Isaiah said, "For unto us . . ." This word "us" includes the whole house of Israel — spiritual Israel; and here is a precious gift his children receive: the Son is given to them. No man could do anything in order for Christ to come to him; if he could, it would not be a gift, but would be a reward, wouldn't it?

So, our most precious gift is the hope the Lord has freely given us which we enjoy here in the world; and which reaches beyond this life. If in this life only we had hope in Christ, we would be of all men most miserable. We are saved by hope. Hope that is seen, is not hope; but if we hope for that we see not, then do we wait for it with patience: and it is good to wait upon the Lord. A walking by faith, being led of the Spirit, denotes the day of prosperity, when we praise Him in all things. Do we not believe that the government (church) rests on his shoulder? Where the word of a king is there is power. "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 anything made that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men." (John 1:1-4)

Him being the Prince of Peace, brings joy to the troubled soul — not to the one who has no troubles and trials in this world, but to the ones included in the "us": "Unto us a child is born, a Son is given." This being true, those that are given him, He keeps, and will raise them up again at the last day.

There is no danger that one who is given him will ever be lost, for Christ says, "My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand." Here is power! Just think of what Paul said, "Neither death, nor life, nor any other creature is able to separate us from the love of God."

God is love; and if you have ever loved Him, it is because He first loved you: even when you and I were dead in trespasses and sins, and walked according to the course of this world, according to the Prince of the power of the air: the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience. Isn't it wonderful to think that God loved sinners even when they didn't know him. Here is our Keeper; "He brings us to his banqueting house and his banner over us is love," said Solomon. And David said, "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." I see no difference in the meaning of the words "bring" and "leadeth", as used by Solomon and David: The Spirit calls, brings, sends, and makes His children willing in the day of his power. When His voice is heard speaking unto you, you obey it. We are made to suffer for his name's sake, and in this way we learn obedience; we learn that we need help, and that our help must come from him, for it is in God that we live, move, and have our being. And we are made to realize that without him we can do nothing.

I am glad that God has a people today who preach and believe in Him, not just about him. Of course we desire to be closer and closer unto him in all things. His people are not ashamed of owning and confessing the one in whom is all their trust. We read in 2 Timothy 1:8, 9, "Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God;

Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began."

My dear brethren and sisters in the Lord, do not the above scriptures give us the account of how and why He means so much to all of us — of our being led by the Spirit which teaches us all things. Read I John 2:27: "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." All of God's people are taught of him, and great is their peace. These are the elect of God, who are justified by faith. We read in James 2:5, "Harken my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world, rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?"

Now the will in which your, and I hope my name is included, whatever that estate is, His heirs will, and do receive eternal life, and this life is in the Son of God. We read that whosoever believeth in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life; and we read that God's work is from everlasting to everlasting; and that He declared the end from the beginning. So it is declared of Him in whom we trust, that he controls all things, and upholds all things by the word of his power. There is no power but of him: the powers that be are ordained of Him.

Then why shouldn't He be called the King of Kings, the Lord over all things? Has he not made all things for himself? Surely you and I look unto him who calls, and performs his work in earth and in heaven. Who are the people who truly believe that his will is done in earth and in heaven? They are the ones unto whom He was born, who believe in him, and who talk of his wonderful love that is shed abroad in their

hearts.

I had no thought of writing as I have when I began, but things kept coming into my mind, and it seemed that I couldn't quit. There is so much to thank our God for, and I realize that I know not how. But may He bless his children wherever they are, and keep them in the way, walking by faith. We know that the way of man is not in himself. Man cannot direct his steps. I have experienced this, if not deceived.

May God bless you and all who call upon his name. Elder Spangler, we want you to come back to see us, and for Elder Wood, Elder Griffin, Elder Lambert and Elder Ruston to come when given a mind to do so. Written in love, I trust.

Your brother in hope,
Elder H. R. Prince

LETTER TO ELDER RUSTON

Saragossa, Alabama

Dear Brother Ruston:

When I read your article in the December *Signs*, somehow I felt that I must write to you. I enjoyed reading the things you said regarding the House of Jacob (or Israel) and the House of Judah.

Sometimes in meditation my mind runs in channels that are a comfort to me. So much can be said of the House of Judah, to me a Royal Kingdom appears, over which Jesus reigns supremely. We find this kingdom referred to as a poor and afflicted people and He in the midst of them.

In Jeremiah 23:5-6 read, "Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will raise unto David a Righteous Branch, and a King shall reign and prosper, and shall execute judgment and justice in the earth. In His days Judah shall be saved, and Israel shall dwell safely: and this is His name whereby He shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS."

This kingdom consists of poor afflicted ones, crippled, not able to do things,

but are completely dependent on their King for the sure mercies of David. Here is a little group that are trusting in the finished work of their King. Did He not say on the cross, as He hung between heaven and earth, that, "It is finished." There are some who believe this to be true. The reason that they believe it to be true is because they have been made acquainted with their afflictions. The poor fellow at the pool of Bethesda had to wait for Him. Jesus was in the midst of Israel then, and Israel is God's people. They will be saved and inherit immortal glory. It has not pleased God to make all Israel to see. He has not worked upon them to pay tithes, which, in this day, must be honour and praise, but there are the subjects of the Kingdom, who will be praising Him. It may not be done in a formal way in a church building, it may even be a poor, ragged black-face in the slums of Africa, but wherever it is, it will be pleasing to God.

This Kingdom is GIVEN one, not just something put up to be received or rejected. It is an inheritance, some feel unworthy, in fact, all do, but it is theirs just the same, and it is not given grudgingly, for the Saviour said, "It is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom."

Write on, Brother Ruston, your pieces are good food, we all love to dwell upon the Hope of better things beyond this life, but we know so little of what awaits us after death. Little is told us in the Bible, which makes me think that it is impossible for us in our state here to understand the wonder of Eternity. It is sufficient for us that He has prepared a life for us free from sin, diseases and troubles. When we try to fathom that great mystery, we get lost, but there are so many beautiful Scriptures pointing to His kingdom here, pertaining to the travel of the people of God, and this is food for our souls.

May the Lord keep you and all the

writers of the Signs.

A poor sister,
Ercella Hand

"THERE IS JOY IN OUR HOPE"

We hear people say they know they are saved; they talk of their good works, and are on the straight road to heaven. I have wondered, even wished I knew just how they feel; then I remembered that to know how they feel, I would be as blind as they are, without any knowledge of the work of grace in my heart, and without God and hope. The thought was so horrible, I was frightened: suppose God had never noticed me, and I was still in nature's darkness. I felt, no, I do not want to know their feelings. With all the trials, doubts and fears I have been brought through, I had rather have my (seemingly) little hope than all their assurance of heaven, founded on a sandy foundation.

Perhaps you will ask, "Didn't you know how you felt before you saw your lost condition?" No, I never knew, for if this work has been begun in me, it was when I was a child. I could not see and feel like other children. I heard arminianism all around, people were so happy that they had found Jesus, and were happy all the time following Him. It was a mystery to me; I could not understand it. The preacher would call all, large or small, especially children, to come up and kneel around him and let him pray for them; then ask if they felt that He had blessed them, and they would say, "Yes." I could not understand it, and wondered.

When I was a child, a neighbor girl, younger than I, said, "George, I had rather die and go to heaven, than to live." I could not believe it, for I thought she was talking at random, because I feared death. She is now an old woman, and I have never seen any evidence that she felt what she said. This began to impress me, and became such

a burden I cried. I did not know what the trouble was, but could not keep from crying. Wish I could remember it as it was, but the best I can tell, it seemed I felt a guilty conscience, not for any special reason; and I felt a desire to go to heaven. I could not enjoy the foolishness and worldly fun like other children, without a guilty conscience. I was still a sinner and was as mean as other children when my conscience did not trouble me, sometimes so much so that I would cry.

I began to read Christian experiences in my twelfth year. They fascinated me. I did not know why, for I do not remember feeling any spiritual emotions while reading, but I could not understand doctrinal material, for I could not get any light, and I did not read them. But as time passed, the light was given me to understand a little at a time, until I feel the doctrine of God's complete sovereign rule over all things, is now the sweetest food and drink for hungering souls. Seeing how God brought His people through the fire under a burden of sin, fear, and terror of eternal torment, I knew if I was to be saved I, too, must be brought the same way; and, O, how I dreaded it. The thought of feeling to be lost without the least particle of hope was horrible. Yet I felt to take comfort that when I was brought to this trial, having read so much about it, I would know what it was, and it would not be so hard with me. I did not know that God had different ways of bringing His people into the knowledge of the truth. As time passed, brethren began to talk to me of joining the church. I was shocked. I could never do this in my condition, for I had not been changed, and I could never until this came about; which was many years, and I joined in my 31st year.

The main object in writing this is the joy we get from our hope. The joy of worldly religion is shallow, and soon vanishes. With all their boast of knowing they are safe, they say they can fall away and be lost. Where is comfort for the little, fearful child in this kind

of faith? No matter how low we are brought under a burden of doubts, sin, and sorrow, there is a joy in our hope; let it be ever so little and weak, it is all we have to cling to, though we are disposed to throw it away, it is now at its best strength, and is dearer to us than all the world. It is anchored in a sure place: in Jesus, and is as everlasting as He is, and will never fail. All other joys vanish and are nothing compared to the joy of this hope. I would not give the joy of this hope, be it ever so little and weak, for all the joys, riches, and honor of the world; nor exchange the trials I have endured, for these things. These things grow sweeter as I grow older. I am trusting, I hope, in this little hope.

Geo. W. Jackson
1884 Connally Dr.
East Point, Ga.

3338 McAfee Road
Decatur, Georgia

Dear Brother Spangler:

Christmas day's-end, 1960, and as the happy "tumult and the shouting dies", my thoughts turn to quieter things — the things which happen only in the heart and spirit. From a heart made tender, I hope, by His manifold blessings, I give thanks unto God, the Giver. For His care and keeping in this and all my years, for my many natural blessings, for my family and O let me remember always to give thanks for my frail hope of His mercy, His grace unto salvation.

I deeply and daily feel the need of His keeping for:

I see the right and I admire it too,
Condemn the wrong and yet the wrong pursue.

— Ovid

Or as expressed by St. Paul in Romans 7:18-19, "For I know that in me (that is in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good

I find not. For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do."

When we are given to know the weakness of man, we are also blessed to know the strength of God. There is no religion but that which comes directly from God and is distilled in a man's heart. All the form and ceremony which men take up of themselves and call worship, is folly. The only prayers ever offered have come down from Him into a human heart, to ascend again unto Him as incense unto His glory. The only hearers of those called to feed His sheep are those whose hearts have been anointed with the oil of gladness which His hand alone bestoweth.

All is of Him, from Him, and unto Him. The strength of His arm and His everlasting mercy begin, work out, and finish all salvation. Where, in His all-encompassing purpose, is anything left for the puny strength of man: man who is unable of himself even to desire the love and mercy of God.

Often it seems the vessels of His mercy walk in darkness, through the valleys, crying for light, for assurance. They feel lost, their heads are bowed and they know not how to tread life's pathways as others seem able to do. By the will and purpose of God, they are led this way; and, walking in darkness, they are able to see the far, high light of His power and mercy. And given His grace they stumble toward this light all their days on earth. "Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness and hath no light?" (Isaiah 50:10.) If a man does not walk in darkness he has kindled a light of some kind, a light of his own works to walk by, and he is like those spoken of in the next verse of Isaiah: "Behold all ye that kindle a fire, that compass yourselves about with sparks: walk in the light of your fire and in the sparks that ye have kindled. This shall ye have

of mine hand; ye shall lie down in sorrow."

Surely if a man be given to know that his own light means only blindness, he must trudge onward in darkness toward the only real light, though his eyes discern it but dimly, and it seems distant indeed. O may He keep us in the way, lead us through the darkness toward His marvellous, ever-shining Light!

Dear Elder Spangler, we think of you and feed upon the memory of your short visits with us. Please convey our greeting to dear Sister Spangler and Mildred for us and tell Mildred Mother and I love her for her thought of us at Christmas and wish for her in return blessings in the New Year and always. We look forward to seeing you all again. Please send the *Signs* to my son, Capt. Norman D. Gibson, for one year. His address is: 190 McLeroy Drive, Athens, Georgia.

In love and hope,
Florence A. Gibson

SPECIAL ADDRESS
TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS

The response we are receiving to our appeal for our subscribers to help increase our subscription list, had, indeed, been heart-warming. Some have sent in three new subscriptions, and many two, or one.

We do not want our readers to have the impression that the paper faces a financial crisis of any kind; for we do not. We are not asking for donations, but, of course, appreciate these. Some have sent in small donations which we felt they were not able to send, and these have been returned.

We expect to continue to send the paper to any unable to pay, and do not want them to feel they are a burden in any way; for the brethren and friends continue to help do this. Our main object in asking our subscribers to

help obtain new subscriptions, is to maintain and increase the number so we can publish the paper at a reasonable price, and continue our free list.

We believe that many are acquainted with those who would enjoy reading the paper, and would subscribe if it is mentioned to them.

Many thanks for the response you are giving to our request.

Editors

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(To January 1, 1961)**

J. B. Short, Ala.....	\$ 2.00
Durwood H. Bradley, Tex.....	25.00
John Franklin Lax, Ill.....	2.00
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Mrs. Pearl Lee, Tex.....	1.00
Harry T. Vories, Calif.....	5.00
Mrs. D. S. Reid, N. C.....	2.00
A sister, Penna.....	5.00

**ADDITIONAL
CHURCH NOTICES**

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

HUBERT R. PRINCE, Pastor
967 Maxey, Memphis, Tenn.

J. B. Jones, Clerk
Rt. 1, Martin, Tenn.

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

HUBERT R. PRINCE, Pastor
967 Maxey, Memphis, Tenn.

Hurton Pitts, Clerk,
Sulligent, Ala.

Danville, Virginia March, 1961

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TO
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EDITORIAL

"So that I come again to my father's house in peace: then shall the Lord be my God: and this stone, which I have set for a pillar, shall be God's house: and of all that thou shalt give me, I will surely give the tenth unto thee."
(Genesis 28:21-22)

Jacob, fleeing from his brother Esau, was no doubt humbled and perplexed by the remembrance of the part he had taken in deceiving his blind father Isaac. Rebekah had been given the assurance by God before the children were born, that the elder should serve the younger, but she was fearful that Isaac, in his old age, would give the birthright to Esau. How ashamed Jacob must have felt as he journeyed into the wilderness, how filled with hopes and fears. Perhaps he had been told by Rebekah what had taken place before their birth. We see Jacob asking Esau to sell him the birthright, "And Esau said, Behold, I am at the point to die, and what profit shall

this birthright do to me? And Jacob said, Swear to me this day: and he sware unto him: and he sold his birthright unto Jacob." (Genesis 25:32-33) Rebekah's fear for the son she loved, led her to school her son Jacob so perfectly that Isaac was deceived, but from that day Esau hated Jacob because of the blessing wherewith his father blessed him: and Esau said in his heart, "The days of mourning for my father are at hand, then will I slay my brother Jacob."

Thus it was at his mother's solicitude for his safety that Jacob was sent away. On his leaving home, Isaac blessed him again, mentioning the blessing which God gave to his father Abraham, "And God Almighty bless thee and make thee fruitful and multiply thee, that thou mayest be a multitude of people: and give the blessing of Abraham, to thee, and to thy seed with thee, that thou mayest inherit the land wherein thou art a stranger, which God gave unto Abraham." (Genesis 28:3-4)

Jacob was sent away with not even a servant, he must travel this path alone, a solitary path, friendless, with many solitary miles before him or ever he comes to where he will be able to find rest under an hospitable roof. How small and insignificant he must have felt himself to be. How well that Scriptures fitted him which was spoken to his offspring by Isaiah a thousand years after, "Fear not, thou worm Jacob," for they, as Jacob, ever shall have God to be their guide.

"And he lighted upon a certain place, and tarried there all night, because the sun was set; and he took of the stones of that place, and put them for his pillows, and lay down in that place to sleep." In his dream he saw a way from earth to heaven, it was not a Babel building, no, nor a church building with "its towers that brave the skies." It was a ladder, and the Lord stood above it, which even to us poor mortals seems to show God Almighty's loving care reaching down from high heaven to the desolate regions where His poor afflicted

ones seem to be driven through necessity, and there they are made to REST IN HIS LOVE. God's promises down through the ages, found in a CERTAIN PLACE, are the stones that come from the Rock, and are put where they are, so that His humble poor may have something upon which to rest their heads during the night of time. The first promise was spoken in Genesis 3 after sin had overcome our first parents. God said to Satan that the Woman's SEED would bruise Satan's head. Thus was given, even to them, something they could rest upon.

How precious that spot was MADE to Jacob, because the Lord was there. It is always the House of God where the Lord appears, where he shows to poor sinners, Jesus, the ladder from earth to heaven, and God above, in covenant love, directing every event and sending comfort and reproof and receiving the desires and supplications of His dear children. It is written later on by Moses, the first historian of any value, "For the Lord's portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance. He found him in a desert land and in a waste howling wilderness; he led him about, he instructed him, he kept him as the apple of his eye." (Deuteronomy 32:-9-10) From Jacob's experience we are led to believe that all such must wander in the wilderness of this world and find it a solitary way. They will not always feel it, but the Angel of the Lord is always encamping round about them that fear Him, also God's angels that excel in strength are there to do His commandments, hearkening unto the voice of His word. How true the word was in Jacob's case, "When my father and my mother forsake me, then the Lord will take me up." Coming to that certain place, he had gone as far as he could be guided by natural light, and was now in darkness alone, yet God, Jacob's God and the God of his fathers, was very close and He was there to talk to him as a friend that sticketh closer than a brother. The vision of angels, angels that do always watch the

face of our Heavenly Father and do His bidding, coming and going by the ladder, the only WAY, Jesus, the only name given under heaven among men whereby we must be saved, is indeed precious to us, yes, and what a precious spot that CERTAIN PLACE was to Jacob from that very night. He had there received from the very mouth of God the same blessing that his father had given him as he left his home. How satisfying and settling this was to Jacob's troubled soul, causing his heart to well up with gratitude and thanksgiving and praise which befit such a place and make it the House of God, the pillar and ground of the truth.

Now let us come to our text, yet we would make mention of Jacob's vow. Without doubt he performed his vow when he was brought back in peace with his brother Esau, with gratitude to see that his father was spared to join him in worshipping the God of their lives. How easy it was for him to return the tenth to his God, fulfilling beforehand the command of Moses to his offspring in a later day. Like Jonah he could pay that he had vowed, "Salvation is of the Lord."

It is the first mention of the word in the Scriptures, yet we think that God's word to Abraham is a positive vow when He said, "By Myself have I sworn — that in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed." (Genesis 22:16-18) Now we do not believe that there is any IF about what God in covenant love has vowed that He will do, but Jacob said, "If God will be with me and will keep me in the way that I go, and will give me bread to eat, and raiment to put on, so that I come again to my father's house in peace, then shall the Lord be my God." We cannot think that Jacob had any mistrust or the least desire to suggest a conditional vow, but rather feel that the whole revelation was so wonderful and God's promise to him so stupendously great and he so very small and insignificant, that he could not seek great things for himself, yet it was

great beyond his comprehension, so there was an IF. If God be with me, who am but a worm, fleeing from my brother, who would, if he could, slay me, surely here we see a fellowship with the sufferings of Christ, who said, "I am a worm and no man; a reproach of men, and despised of the people." (Psalm 22:6) Jacob called that place Bethel, the House of God, the Gate of Heaven. The Lord was in that place, and he knew it not and he was afraid. Why should not those who have experienced their Bethels be willing to forsake all aspirations to greatness and be "content and pleased to live unknown till Christ their Lord appear?" "Having food and raiment let us be therewith content." Yes, Jacob had an IF, if God be with me? Paul also had one, "If God be for us who can be against us?" God's children can sing today,

"IF on my face for thy dear name,
Shame and reproaches be,
All hail reproach and welcome shame!
IF Thou remember me."

What can they render unto the Lord for all His benefits unto them? They would ever be in God's House, praising Him, and willing to take the cup of salvation and call upon His name. "And of all that thou shalt give me," that is, the benefits that accrue to God's dear saints, which make their cheerful feet in swift obedience move, "I will SURELY give the TENTH unto Thee."

Here we have the second reference in the Scriptures to tithing, the first was when Abram paid tithes to Melchizedek. (Genesis 14:20) Under the law, tithing was enjoined upon the Israelites by Moses, their lawgiver, in Leviticus 27:20. In Deuteronomy 14:28, we find that it was at the end of every three years that they were to bring forth all the tithes of their increase the same year. The only references to tithes that we have from our Lord was to utter woe upon the Pharisees, whom He called hypocrites, who paid tithes of mint, and anise, and cummin and omitted the weightier matters of the law. The Pharisee told in his prayer, "I fast

twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess."

We believe that tithing was under the law, and Jesus, who came under the law, brought the full tithes of that land into the Gospel Storehouse, the third dispensation, to sustain every one of His servants. He used His apostles as His servants to gather the fruits of His labours, that is, the things concerning Himself, so that there is a sufficiency in the New Testament, that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto all good works. When we bring the tithes into the storehouse, our testimony and experience, to be acceptable unto God, should accord with those of His People who, like Jacob, have come through great tribulation. "And all the tithes of the land, whether of the seed of the land, or of the fruit of the tree, is the Lord's, it is holy unto the Lord." (Leviticus 27:30) That land was typical of a spiritual land flowing with milk and honey. Nowhere in the gospels is literal tithing commanded, for we owe Him our all, "Ye are not your own, for ye are bought with a price." He owns us, and as His own, it becomes us, as obedient children, to seek the good of His cause.

Paul, in his ministry, seems to have been given the one talent of the unjust steward Judas, who carried the bag and was a thief, for Paul carried what brethren gave for needy brethren, (1 Corinthians 16:1-3) but he never suggested that they should give a tenth of their income. Why limit it to a tenth? many give their lives! "We ought to lay down our lives for the brethren." (1 John 3:16) It is well for us to take the Word of God for our guide. "Let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth, that thine alms may be in secret and thy Father, which seeth in secret, Himself shall reward thee openly." Paul told them to give as God had prospered them. That, we hope, is the practice amongst those who love the truth today. Jacob did many things of which we have no doubt he was ashamed, but he, like us, must learn. We see Jacob, when fac-

ed with trouble and perplexity, calling upon the God of his life. "I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth, which thou hast showed unto thy servant." There is much that we must pass over which can be read of Jacob's and Laban's doings, but the Lord so blessed Jacob that in the end Laban and his sons turned against him. God then told him to return to the land of his fathers, and Jacob left unawares to Laban, who pursued him with evil intent, but God was watching over Jacob, and He told Laban in a dream, "Take heed that thou speak not to Jacob either good or bad."

After Laban had departed from him, we find him being visited by angels, God's host. It does seem that the dear man needed pick-me-ups often, and our God can do just that, Esau had an old grudge, which during the intervening years, had not grown less, and before they met, Jacob, alone, wrestled with the angel, and was pronounced to be an overcomer, even though after that encounter he could never walk as he once did.

Esau was seen with four hundred men, but when they met, instead of fighting, he fell upon Jacob's neck and kissed him and they wept together and later parted from one another in peace. Yet his path was not to be easy, for at Shalem, a city of Shechem, Dinah, his daughter, went out to see the daughters of the land, and was defiled. Her brothers were so enraged that they slew Hamor and Shechem and all the males with the edge of the sword and took Dinah out of Shechem's house. Jacob was greatly distressed and feared that the people would gather together against him and destroy him and his house. God appeared again to him in his trouble and said, "Arise, go up to Bethel, and dwell there; and make there an altar unto God." As they journeyed, the terror of God was upon the cities that were round about them and they did not pursue after the sons of Jacob. How can we reach such a wonderful testimony of God's faithfulness to a

worm of the earth without desiring Jacob's God to be our God to guide us, yea, even unto death?

"O God of Bethel! by whose hand thy people still are fed;
Who through this weary pilgrimage hast all our father led;
Our vows, our pray'rs, we now present before
Thy throne of grace:
God of our fathers! be the God of their succeeding race."

May He give true brethren a mind to walk in love, and those who are blessed with evidences of His mercy, a heart to take them to the church of God, where He has recorded His name, that there might today be food in His House, and in so doing they may find themselves supping with Him and He with them.

A closing thought: — The one, out of the ten lepers cleansed, who turned back to glorify God, was a Samaritan, a stranger, Jesus called him. The tenth, a tithe of the Gentiles, came to Jesus' feet, falling down on his face, thanking Him and glorifying God. (Luke 17:11-19)

G. R.

REPLY TO BROTHER TURNER'S INQUIRY

The question broached by Brother Turner is a very important one, for, without the new birth, (being born of the Spirit), no man can see the kingdom of God. Those who are not brought to this birth will ever remain ignorant of the gospel; and will never know anything of the joys of the redeemed.

The word **birth**, or being born, expresses the idea of being made manifest, and refers only to that which has already had an inception. This is as true with the spiritual as it is with the natural birth; as we shall see.

The necessity of birth in nature is apparent before there can be a partaking of the things of nature; and the same holds true of the things of the Spirit: There must be a birth of the Spirit before there can be a partaking of the things of the Spirit. The Apostle had this in mind when he wrote, "For what things knoweth a man, save the

spirit of man that is in him? even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God." (1 Cor. 2:11)

We are not likely to find professing Christians denying the necessity of being born again; but there is much difference among them as to, (1) The source of the New Birth, (2) The extent of the New Birth in the Adam family, and (3) The effect it has upon the one born again. These we shall consider in their order.

1. The source of the new birth implies the question of whether it is of God or of man. That is, whether it is initiated and finished alone of God, or whether it is elective and under the control of the man. We think that the fact that the natural child is entirely passive in its inception, needs no argumentive support; and we must insist that the same is entirely true of the spiritual. Yet we know that this will need proof, due to the contrary views of some professors. But we think this would not be difficult, if all could understand that in their natures all **men are dead in trespasses and sins**; and, in this condition, all have the spirit of man only in them, which is the source of their knowledge of the things of man. There is no record that any man in this condition knows anything of the gospel, or the spiritual kingdom; for, as Brother Turner mentioned in part, "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." (1 Cor. 2:14)

John records that when Christ came into the world, he came unto his own, and they received him not. These were his own according to nationality, the Jews, (who represent all who are born after the flesh). But there were some among these same people who gladly received Christ as the Son of God; and of every one of these it is recorded: "Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." (John 1:12, 13). Which proved that their being born of

the seed or blood of Abraham, had nothing to do with their receiving Christ; nor did the will of their own flesh have anything to do with it; nor, indeed, did the will of any other man have anything to do with their receiving Him. But, because they were born of God, they believed and received Him. No other construction can be put upon this language.

Jesus gave the necessity of being born again, (which is not a re-birth, as we expect to show), when he said, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." This is a necessary thing! No professors are inclined to deny it, yet the method and the effect of being born again, is as impossible and strange to most professors today as it was to Nicodemus. There is a mysterious power and effect about it, which was stated by the Lord himself: "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit."

Now, it surely seems that if the source of being born again were in the hands of men, and under their control, they would know all about it: Indeed, they would have to know all about it in order to bring it about. But actually, the fact that the wind (Spirit) blows where it pleases (for this is the meaning), and only the sound (or effect) is heard by the subject, (who doesn't know whence it comes or where it is going), precludes forever the volition of men in the new birth. So much for the source of the new birth.

2. We now consider the extent of the new birth among the Adam family. From what we have substantiated above, we see that it does not apply to the whole human family; for some did not receive Christ, not being born of God.

Who then, are they who are born again? All the family of God, of course! No others have any necessity of being born again. When Jesus said, "All that the Father giveth me shall come unto

me; and him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out," and, "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," he was speaking of all that were chosen in himself before the world began: He was speaking of all of whom the Apostle wrote to Timothy, "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."

There was not an individual or church spoken of in the New Testament, or written unto by the Apostles, being believers and followers of Jesus, but to whom the things in the above Scriptures directly applied. On the other hand, there was a multitude who did not believe in Jesus, and did not know him; and these Jesus addressed when he said, "But ye believe not because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you." And then added, "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand."

The disciples, including Peter, in answering Jesus, who asked whom men said that He was, said, "Some say that thou art John the Baptist; some Elias; and others Jeremias, or one of the prophets." But, when Jesus asked them, "But whom say ye that I am?" the answer was, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." Then Jesus sets the keynote of gospel revelation: "Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona, for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven."

Thus we can understand that God has his own way of doing everything; and know that at least some of his ways and purposes are revealed in the Scriptures. It would seem that all professors would believe him; but they do not. However, their unbelief does not alter the accomplishment by the unchangeable God of all of his will, to his own perfection. We may therefore plainly

see that the extent of the new birth and the extent of the election of grace, is exactly the same among the family of Adam; which includes all that were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world. They are an innumerable host, but who they are is determined by God's choice.

3. We now come to consider the effect of the new birth upon the man. In God's time, in the life of each of his chosen, He begins a work which leads to the full coming forth in the new birth. We insist that it is God who begins the work, the subject being unable of himself, because he is dead, entirely dead to these things, and does not know his real condition.

It must be remembered that this man is already in possession of the spirit of man, which he obtained in his coming into the natural kingdom; but that he **must be born again**, else he cannot see the kingdom of God. In his nature he cannot see or understand further than the natal spirit has endowed him: He has no perception at all of things spiritual.

We have previously mentioned that birth makes manifest that which has already had its inception; so it is evident that there can be no new birth without the same. Unless God has previously chosen or elected him who is to be born again, and in the wonderful sense **foreknown** him, there will be no birth of the Spirit.

We come now to the time for the beginning of the manifestation in birth; and we give some hints as to the manner in which this is usually accomplished; which varies in individual cases: It is usual that the person is pretty well satisfied with his condition, being full of works which he feels are good, and have a great deal of influence with God. He feels that he has a choice of doing and living, working and being blessed for it. Or, as it is in many cases, he is just not concerned about it.

But, behold, something gets wrong! He does not quite understand it, but he undertakes to right the matter by care-

fulness in all he does. This does not satisfy, however, and his condition gets worse; and continues for varying periods of time in individual cases, until he verily believes he is the worst sinner that ever lived, and that his case is hopeless: He is a lost sinner, and his prayers unto God are not heard.

The Apostle describes it thus: "I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died." (Romans 7:9)

So each is brought to realize his lost and ruined condition; and it is not until this takes place to its fullest, that Jesus is revealed as his Saviour. Then the sinner is brought out of the "horrible pit, and miry clay". The burden and condemnation is gone, and joy is unbounded. For the first time it is realized that grace has reached out, and accomplished what all the works of the creature has utterly failed to do.

The Apostle describes this condition also: "Henceforth know we no man after the flesh: yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more. Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." (2 Cor. 5:17, 18)

Thus is one brought out of the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of light, and he beholds the glory of God in the person of Jesus Christ. There has been a quickening. It is from death unto life; and the kingdom of God is now seen. There is an entering into the joys of salvation; and Jesus is become the glorious Mediator of the New Covenant which God has made. Grace has provided the forgiveness of sins; the justice of God is satisfied. Faith and hope is a very pleasant and satisfying balm. The laws of God are written in the heart, and praise to God is uppermost.

But we find it impossible to put together words to describe the man who has thus been dealt with. If there ever was a complexity, here it is: We have a man who is of the earth earthy, and

subject to death, and is condemned in his flesh by reason of sin; and who has tried every human means, and utterly failed to satisfy the justice of God. But this same man has received a wonderful manifestation of the love and mercy of God, and is made "meet to be partaker of the inheritance of the saints in light", and is "delivered from the power of darkness, and translated into the kingdom of His dear Son." And it is purely by the grace of God that he is now what he is.

But let us consider his complexity further: Solomon wrote, "Return, return, O Shulamite: return, return, that we may look upon thee. What will ye see in the Shulamite? As it were the company of two armies." (S. of S. 6:13)

Here we have the loved one of Solomon, (the name Shulamite is the feminine of Solomon), whom he desires to look upon. And as he does so, he sees in her the company of two armies: There is but one Shulamite, but she is described as **the company of two armies**: One company, but consisting of two armies. To us, this speaks clearly of the state of individuals who have been born again, and are manifestly the redeemed of the Lord, but who are yet in this world. These are they who make up the church. Taken individuality, it is but one man, but he is composed of his identity in Adam, which is described as **the old man**, and also of that which is born of the Spirit, which is described as **the new, or inner man**. This person is both of these, and manifests both natures in the same man, though at different times: Sometimes we find him manifesting that he is after the flesh; then again manifesting the fruit of the Spirit. We cannot but feel that the flesh has "its day" when the Spirit is not pleased to subdue it, for there is no question but that the power of the Spirit subdues the flesh at will.

Thus the same man manifests both the fruit of the flesh and the fruit of the Spirit: both apparently emanating from the same person, though at different times. Just why this is God's way

seems to be plainly answered by the Apostle: "But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God and not of us." and, "That our faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God." And also, because we have not yet attained unto the resurrection of the dead, and "press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

We have somewhat answered the question of Brother Turner, who asked if there was anything changed about the natural man in this operation; and we further reply: There is no change in the inherent disposition of the man. He is not **re-born** in his nature; but rather, is born again of the Spirit into the knowledge and possession of the spiritual kingdom, and is now a discerner of spiritual things. His fleshly nature is not made holy in any sense, so as to be able to live without sin; or to do, in his flesh, that which is pleasing in the sight of God. So, we cannot agree with some, that, after the new birth a man is able to live godly of himself, or able to do those things for which, some say, they are blessed. It must be said therefore that the man is yet a sinner, still having his sinful nature; for that which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit; and he is both.

But this man is made to hate sin and his natural propensities, and cannot live in them with any degree of pleasure. His nature is not changed, but he hates the things of his flesh, and longs to be without them. His nature is not changed, but it is subjected in hope: He is not yet thoroughly furnished for heaven, but has the hope and assurance of it. It must be remembered that it is the sinner who is redeemed: it is the sinner who is saved. His being born of the Spirit is the beginning of the assurance of the completion of his redemption at the coming of Jesus without sin unto salvation; for he is, "Waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our (his) body."

Thus the new birth, makes no basic change in the nature or flesh of men; but it does give evidence and foretaste of the things that God has prepared for them that love him. It is because the new birth is not the actual change from natural to spiritual, of the one who shall later be conformed to the image of Christ in the resurrection, that there is between the time of the new birth and the resurrection, a terrific warfare going on between the flesh and the spirit: "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. 5:17) The battle ground is the poor one who hates sin, and loves godliness; but can't get rid of the one, or fully attain the other. If we read the 7th chapter of Romans, we will find that the Apostle was fully acquainted with this condition, for he writes in part: "For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not . . . I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. 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. O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin."

He who has been blessed with the spiritual birth, knows that this is a deep and sublime subject; and the fact that he is "led about in ways he has not known", and has seen things he had not seen before, causes him to stand in awe that he himself has experienced these things. What a sacred experience it is to be "sealed with the holy spirit of promise", and "receive the earnest of our inheritance"; to be given faith which is the substance of things hoped

for, and hope, which is the anchor of the soul?

We dare say that there is no person who has experienced these joyous things, but who also knows the weakness of his flesh, and knows that he stands always in need of the grace and mercy of the Lord, and the leading of the Spirit to enable him to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith he is called; and to walk in a godly manner all his days. But how well he knows that these things are the fruits of the Spirit, and not the fruits of the flesh.

We know that there are many ways in which the Lord brings his people into the knowledge of the truth, some suddenly, some over a period of time and through deep waters of tribulation. We believe what we have outlined is in keeping with Christian experience, but that the subject will not be fully covered until all are safely in their inheritance. Whatever the experience, if it is of the Lord, they learn the same thing; for they are they "which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh."

They are, "Delivered from the law, that, being dead wherein they were held, they should serve in newness of spirit; and not in the oldness of the letter."

We conclude by saying that the Scriptures prove, as do our experiences, that the flesh is not changed in its proneness to sin; and that the sinner will ever remain a sinner through his natural life. Yet, with all this, he has bright evidences of Christ formed in him the hope of glory; and that, with the poet, sometimes, "Heaven comes down his soul to greet." It would seem that the best evidence that one is born of the Spirit, is that he bears the fruit of the Spirit. He who walks humbly and fearfully, whose conversation is godly, and whose conviction is contrary to the religion of the natural man; and whose conscience is tender when his carnality displays itself, surely is bearing these fruits.

To have "seen" the kingdom of God

through being born again, means one has been chosen in Christ, and is redeemed by him; and that, "He that hath begun a good work in him will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ."

J. D. W.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

ROMANS IX. 22

"What if God, willing to show his wrath?"

It is not strange that men should contemplate the mercy and grace of God with satisfaction, while they dread his awful wrath, for we have all sinned against him, and should he display on us his wrath, as we have displayed our rebellion against him, no flesh could endure the weight of vengeance under which we should be crushed. The greatest Arminians we have met with, seem perfectly willing that God should show his mercy, his long-suffering and kindness to the children of men, while they deny his right, in justice, to show his wrath, but how few consider that eternal justice calls for wrath, and when justice calls for wrath, that justice would be violated, outraged and trampled upon, if mercy should take the place of wrath. Depraved men, in their unregenerated state, find it hard to conceive how the holy God can pour his wrath on them without violation of his justice, especially if he has made any discrimination, and saved some from wrath, and consigned others who are only of equal guilt, to wrath. But quickened sinners, when under his mighty hand, convinced of their own lost and helpless condition, wonder with much greater admiration, how God can be just, and yet the justifier of any of the guilty sons of men.

Whatever, however, may be the views or speculations of men upon this subject, God has on various occasions shown his wrath in his providential government of the world. In bringing the flood upon the ungodly in the days of

Noah, and sweeping the guilty race from his footstool; in the case of Pharaoh, Amalek, Moab, and upon the heathen nations of the earth, and that he has done it demonstrates that he did it willingly, or willed to do it, for he worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. For his pleasure, we are told, the earth and heavens are and were created, and that he doeth his pleasure in the army of heaven and among men, and none can turn him. Had God been unwilling to show his wrath, who could force him to do it against his will? And had he not been willing to show his wrath; when the Son of God hung writhing on the cross, by what door could grace and salvation have entered for any of the guilty sons of men? But, was God willing to show his wrath, and to pour his vengeance upon the suffering, bleeding Lamb who died on Calvary? "It pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief." — Isaiah liii. 10. He spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all. For this very purpose came he into the world. "Then, said I, Lo, I come to do thy will, O God." — Psalm xl. 7, 8; Hebrews x. 7, 10. And when the dreadful hour had arrived for which he came, he was seen crushed with agony in the garden, sweating, as it were, great drops of blood, and praying, "O, my God, if it be possible, let this cup pass."

But no other way was possible. "The Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all." — Isaiah liii. 6. And where iniquity was found, the bolts of justice must fall. The doleful prayer wrung from the agonizing heart of the suffering Savior, fully establishes the doctrine for which we contend. "If it be possible, let this cup pass; nevertheless, not my will, but thy will be done." Could wicked Romans or spiteful Jews; could earth or hell inflict on him one pang beyond what was the will of God? Never, we confidently affirm, from the creation of the world to the great burning day, has wickedness of men or devils been so fearfully developed, never has hell

belched forth so much spite at any time, as when the immaculate Lamb of God, loaded with the iniquity of all his people, stood the victim. Truly against thy holy child, Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel were gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done." — Acts iv. 27, 28. **What if God willing?** Does that make him the author of sin? or does it afford to man a just cause to blaspheme his holy name? God forbid. Because God has power and wisdom to control, restrain, permit, overrule, and even to make use of the wicked acts of men and devils, just as he pleases, does that imply that he is himself a sinner, or that sin flows from, or is compatible with his nature? Absurd and preposterous. Nay, w i c k e d and blasphemous as such conclusions are, the charges are often belched forth from infidel lips, and alas! must we add, that some of God's dear children have thoughtlessly, or carelessly endorsed the horrid blasphemy, by arguing that if he absolutely governs and controls all beings, all worlds, and all events, then he is, or must be the author of sin? But, be entreated, dear child of God, to pause and consider this matter a moment.

Must God lay aside his crown, must he yield some part of his governing power, in order to escape your charge? But you say you admit that he has all power, and that he controls all events and all worlds. But, forget not that he is the infinite God; of one mind, and none can turn him; what he wills to allow today, was his will yesterday, and from everlasting. You cannot believe that he has found out anything new, that he did not have in his mind and will before he made this world. One of two things you must admit, either that Jehovah knew precisely what kind of a world he was about to make, and that he made it just as he intended to, or else that he has been disappointed in his purpose. You dare not deny that this

world with all its vast machinery, is precisely as the omniscient eye of God saw it, before the days of creation: peopled with all its infinite variety of men, and beasts, of birds, of fishes, of serpents and of worms, from the grosser objects down to the myriads of animalcule which people a single drop of water. What part of the history of the world have we a right to believe God did not k n o w from everlasting, and what may we presume he knew, and yet had not in his inscrutable wisdom determined? Is there a sparrow or a worm, by him created, for which he has no use? True, we may not know or comprehend the use of many of his creatures, but we are finite, and have only that measure of intelligence which he has appointed and provided for us, and beyond that measure who can go?

But, once more. **What if God be willing to show his wrath, and to make his power known?** The apostle anticipates the ranking venom of the depraved hearts of men, and says, "Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault; for who hath resisted his will?" In one general sense, every carnal man has and does resist the will of God, they are not reconciled to it; they hate it, and employ all their depraved powers in opposing it, as Stephen charged the persecuting Jews, "Ye do always resist the Holy Ghost, as your fathers did, so do ye." But how vain is their resistance. All the powers of earth and hell combined cannot prevent the execution of his purpose so as to cause a sparrow to fall, or bring even a single hair of our heads prematurely to the ground. But in the sense evidently intended, the apostle does not say that any have or can successfully resist the will of God. Woe to the world, if they could. What then would it avail us to know that it is our Father's good will or pleasure to give us the kingdom, if he were unable to execute his will? But must it be inferred that if God is so infinitely wise and omnipotent, that he executeth his pleasure in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of

the earth, that he has therefore no right to punish men for their wickedness which he overrules for his own glory? This is strange logic for infidels, but stranger still for Christians. "Nay, but O, man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed, say unto him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor? What if God willing to show his wrath, and to make his power known?" Has he not an undoubted right to do so? Are any of his creatures able to give a reason why his will shall not be the supreme rule of his government? If any of us feel that it would be unsafe for us, why do we mock him by praying, "Thy will be done," and then object to his universal control and government of all beings, and of all events, according to his own sovereign will?

But, instead of the frightful images painted in the vain imagination of men, as to the consequences of his wearing the crown, bearing the sceptre, and occupying the eternal throne, let us consider how he shows his wrath, and how he makes his power known on the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction.

If it were his sovereign pleasure to show his wrath and to make his power known upon the vessels of his wrath, by crushing them to atoms, or by such signal displays of his power and wrath as when he destroyed Sodom, or when he deluged the world in the days of Noah, his right to do so could not be contested. But it is his will to show his wrath and display his power in a very different form. By **enduring with much long-suffering the vessels of wrath, fitted to destruction.** By allowing them to pursue their own course, act out the enmity of their own wicked nature, walk in the light of their own eyes, and to fancy themselves the masters of their own destiny. Long has he suffered them to dispute his reigning power, and to call his sovereign government unjust. With much long-suffering

has he spared their lives, afforded them health and strength to fill up their cup of iniquity, by stoning his prophets, killing his messengers, under the old dispensation, and with what endurance and long-suffering has he allowed them to drench the earth with the blood of his saints, and even to stain their guilty hands with the blood of his dear Son. With what forbearance did he wink at the idolatry of the Gentile world before the advent of the Redeemer, and how has he, for purposes of righteous wrath, allowed the anti-Christian powers of iniquity to make drunk the nations of the earth with the wine of Babel's intoxicating cup. Even now, what more awfully retributive judgment of God can we contemplate, than to be suffered to reject and defy his government, and to pursue our own course, the course of this world, under the power of darkness, in the pride and vanity of our own hearts treasuring up wrath against the day of wrath? Why has he suffered the wicked to prosper, or seem to prosper, in their abominable wickedness? Had he no power to restrain them? He had, for he has all power. But it is because in his inscrutable wisdom he saw fit thus to show his wrath, and to make his power known on them.

How, or why is it that unto his chosen, redeemed, regenerated children, it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom, and from all others this knowledge is withheld? Because, in this very way it is his sovereign will to show his wrath and make his power known. Nor is this a matter for his saints to regret or deplore. Having the mind and spirit of Christ, we will rather with him rejoice and thank God that he has hidden these things from the wise and prudent, and revealed them unto babes, because so it seemed good in his sight. If our Lord Jesus Christ rejoiced in spirit at the accomplishment of the sovereign will of his Father, can we possess his Spirit, and yet desire that it should be otherwise? If any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.

We do not say that God could not display his mercy without also making a display of his wrath, for we dare not limit his power and wisdom, but the Scriptures teach us that it is in wrath, that he remembers mercy. (Hebrews iii. 2; Isaiah lxi. 2; lxiii. 1, 6.) The very first intimation of mercy made to fallen man fully expressed this doctrine. The seed of the woman should bruise the head of the serpent. God's people were preserved by the destruction of their enemies. Egypt must suffer the wrath of God, that the Hebrews might be mercifully released from bondage. The same miraculous display of power which wrought the salvation of Israel at the Red Sea, overwhelmed in wrath, and utterly destroyed their pursuing enemies. The everlasting salvation of the church of God, from sin, death and hell, was made manifest by the wrath which her sin-bearing Savior endured, when he carried her sorrows and bore her griefs, when the chastisement of her peace was laid on him, by whose stripes she is healed. And the final triumph which awaits the saints at the resurrection, their bodies will be raised simultaneously with the destruction of the last enemy which is death. What then, we once more inquire, "If God, willing to show his wrath and make his powers known,"

"Shall man reply against his God,
And call his Maker's ways unjust?"
"Shall mortal man presume to be
More holy, just or good, than he?"

Does it not rather become us to be still and know that he is God?

The will of God being the only recognized standard of holiness in heaven, whatever that will dictates, whether of wrath or grace, is right, and just, and harmonious with all the eternal perfections of Jehovah. If then it be his will to launch the fiery bolts of vengeance down upon the ungodly, or even to bruise his only beloved Son, when the guilt of his people was laid on him, or if he choose to redeem from sin, and death, and hell, millions of the chief of sinners, and ultimately to raise them up to crowns and seats at his right hand,

all, all we need to know is, that it is the will of God, and then we know it is all right, for that will is the true standard of righteousness. High as the heavens rise above the earth, are God's ways and thoughts transcending our ways and our thoughts. Therefore, with the apostles, we beseech the saints to be reconciled to God. Our brightest, our only hopes of heaven, rest on the complete and perfect execution of the will of God in all things. If in a single thing it could possibly fail, that failure would shake the very foundation of our hope. It is because he is God, because as God he changeth not, the sons of Jacob are not consumed. O, may we then in sincerity and truth pray, "Thy will be done in earth, as it is done in heaven."

(Editorial of Elder Gilbert Beebe, August 1, 1860.)

OBITUARIES

NANCY JANE SMITH

Sister Nancy Jane Smith departed this life October 12, 1960, at her residence near Monroe, Georgia, where she had resided continuously most of her life. She was the daughter of William and Frances Moore, of Walton County, Georgia, born December 14, 1873. Death came to her in her 87th year.

She was married to John David Smith December 1, 1892. To this union was born five daughters and four sons as follows: Nora, Clara, Ruth, Francis, and Claudine and Grady, Oscar, Otis and Perce, all of whom reached adulthood and have taken their place as well respected and loved citizens of the community. All her children survive her except Mrs. Claudine Hardin, and Mrs. Frances Justice, both of whom were taken from us within recent years. The unmarried daughters Clara and Nora remain at the homeplace; Grady, Oscar, and Otis nearby; and Perce and Mrs. Ruth McCarty in Atlanta.

Sister Smith professed a sweet hope in Christ before the Church at Sorrells Springs near her home August 20, 1898, and was baptized soon thereafter by Elder John Chandler at Tanner's bridge, in the Apalache River. She remained a steadfast and loving member of her church until her death, serving her God, her family, and neighbors with constant faith and heartfelt fidelity. She was truly a mother in Israel, surpassed in virtues by none. Her home was always a welcome place for the brethren and sisters and friends.

Sister Smith was practically an invalid the last nine years of her life but bore every pain

and discomfort with patience and fortitude becoming to her explicit faith in the goodness and righteousness of her Lord. The faithfulness of her children to care for her in her affliction also must have surely added a great comfort to her. O'ershadowed by heavenly love and surrounded by sorrowing hearts, she passed gently over the stream of Death in the morning hours of October 12, 1960, and was returned October 14th to the Sorrells Springs Primitive Baptist Church home in death, to the same place where she had sixty-two years before professed a hope of eternal life, her pastor Elder W. F. Beauford, assisted by Minister Chas. Handley of the Methodist Church, Campton, preached to a good congregation of sorrowing friends and loved ones, to their comfort and hope, assuring them by the Gospel that this sister while dead to this world is alive for evermore in the eternal Kingdom of our God. After which she was tenderly laid to rest in the church cemetery, to await the morning of the Resurrection.

May the Lord continue his richest blessings upon the bereaved sons and daughters, and her 15 grandchildren, and 22 great grandchildren, and her beloved Sister Nora Roberts, the last living one of the Moore Family, a dear sister in the church with us at Sorrells Springs, Walton County, Georgia.

This obituary was prepared by the undersigned deacon of the church, and, being approved while in church conference December 18, 1960, was ordered spread on the church book, and sent to the church papers for publication.

Submitted in Christian love,
J. B. Dunagan

SANK HOPSON CARR

Sank Hopson Carr was born June 7, 1910, and departed this life December 2, 1960. He was united in marriage to Miss Marie Sumner April 11, 1936; and to this union were born four children: Dwight and Johnnie Carr, and Mrs. Marvin Underwood, and Mrs. Earl Calhoun, all of Trigg County, Kentucky. Brother Carr united with Drycreek Primitive Baptist Church the second Sunday in September, 1945, and was soon ordained a deacon; and was a deacon indeed. He love his church, and loved the doctrine of a sovereign God. He was a kind and affectionate husband, a loving father, and a good neighbor. He would have nothing but Christ and him crucified for salvation.

The unworthy writer tried to speak to the comfort of the bereaved family and friends at the funeral home in Cadiz; after which his body was laid to rest in the family cemetery to await the call, "Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

May God bless all that mourn, is our prayer.
(Elder) J. N. Darnall

ELDER E. B. SANDERS

Elder E. B. Sanders was born February 14, 1874, and died November 9, 1960. He married Miss Missouri L. Pate November 15, 1895; and to this union three children were born, two of which preceded him in death: Mrs. Ethel Harding and Hill Sanders.

He and Sister Sanders joined Salem Primitive Baptist Church, Pickens County, Alabama, the first Sunday in August, 1925, and lived faithful members all their days. He was ordained to the ministry July 4, 1943, by Elders O. G. Carver, W. D. Griffin, and H. M. Brock. He esteemed his brethren his superiors, and wanted a back seat, and to be always at their feet; which signifies to me he was one in the higher court. How wonderful indeed to be given this station in life, for we read in James, "Let the brother of low degree rejoice in that he is exalted." Again, Luke says, "He hath put down the mighty from their seats, and exalted them of low degree." It is a great blessing to know that God trims down the camel to fit the eye of the needle.

Brother Sanders contended for the great doctrine of God our Saviour which teaches all His children the way, truth, and life — Jesus the only way man must be saved. Not only did Brother Sanders live it, but departed this life with the same faith God gave him years ago. His body grew weak, and remembrance of earthly things short, but faith grew stronger, and he longed to meet his blessed Saviour. I esteemed him as a father in Israel, as a lamp in my pathway, for many are the times our scriptural conversation was as manna from on high.

His body was laid to rest in the home cemetery, Salem, by the side of his wife who preceded him several years. Ministers who spoke words of comfort were Elders W. L. Norris, J. M. Freeman, and H. M. Brock. Left to mourn his departing are, Mr. and Mrs. Victor Sanders, Mrs. Hill Sanders, four grandchildren, and many other relatives; and his brethren in the Church.

"It is not death to close
The eye long dimmed by tears,
And wake in glorious repose
To spend eternal years.
Clasped in his Saviour's arms
He would forget his breath,
And lose his life amid the charm
Of so divine a death.
He would not live in heaven give
For all the earthly charms.
It is divine this life to live,
And rest in Jesus' arms."

Written by request of the family.

Mrs. Maggie Lee Hayes,
Vernon, Alabama

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 129

DANVILLE, VA., APRIL, 1961

NO. 4

"WHAT I DO THOU KNOWEST NOT NOW;
BUT THOU SHALT KNOW HEREAFTER."

My heart was sad, for sorrow deep had pierced
its inmost core;
Repining then, I turned from all that I had
loved before;
Thus murmurings dark against Him rose, who
is too wise to err,
As though my puny reason could be His in-
terpreter.

And why, I thought, do fairest flowers soonest
fade away?
And human objects best beloved first fall to
death a pray?
While many an aching heart, whose hopes all
lie beyond the tomb,
Is kept awhile to onward toil amid earth's
dreary gloom?

Why doth the heart in silence brood o'er suf-
ferings undressed?
And why are they who strive to rise most
fearfully oppressed?
How is it that some have pleasure strewn
along the path of life,
While others' feet, with briers torn, are bleed-
ing in the strife?

Then through my mind came a sound, soft,
chiding, still and low:
"Frail worm, whate'er thou knowest not now
thou shalt hereafter know."
"Ah, pardon me, great God," I cried, "I fall
before thy throne;
My follies, sins, waywardness, all to thee are
known.

"Nor let me ever more rebel against thy sov-
ereign will;
What e'er thou doest must be right, if good,
or seeming ill;
And for the future let me trust in thee, who
knowest best;
Give me submission to thy will, I'll leave with
thee the rest."

This heart of mine sore chastening needs, or
else I should not care
To seek a bright inheritance that lasting is,
and fair.
God doth not willing afflict: He loves his own
too well;
But this proud heart of mine would rise against
Him and rebel.

I'll wait a little longer here, till Christ shall
call me home,
And I shall hear his welcome voice: "Come,
weary pilgrim, come."
Then in His light, and not my own, these
mysteries I shall see,
And say, "He hath done all things well, who
lived and died for me."

E. Hensler, in Gospel Standard, 1878
(Submitted by Bro. George W. Jackson)

Coeur d'alene, Idaho
P. O. Box 532

Dear Editors of the Signs:

I find that my renewal date has slipped by so I must get this check to you immediately. I do not want to miss one copy. Please renew me for two years more.

I have about finished re-reading the past four year's numbers, or since they started coming to me. I find that I have gleaned a lot more from them than upon first readings and the same applies to re-reading the Scriptures. If not mistaken, this comes thru an enlightened understanding. In St. Luke 24:45 we find — "Then opened He their understanding that they might understand the Scriptures". The many wonderful sermons and inspired writings in the Signs, including letters telling experiences and trials of the Lord's people, are something I find most precious. They fill in what is lacking — there being no one to my knowledge in this large area of Idaho's Panhandle Section, believing as I do, to whom I can talk. The nearest ones are over the line in Spokane, Washington, some 40 miles west.

Now in my retiring years, having lots of time to read and meditate on things natural and spiritual, and of the past and future, my mind goes back so much to the past. Although brought up by Old

Baptist parents who counseled against tying up with worldly Churches, and also having heard Baptist preaching while growing up, my footsteps led me astray, so it seems, against my better judgement, due mostly I suppose, to there being no Old Baptist people or Churches were I lived several years. I took up with and was active in two or three Churches but not as a member. About thirty-five years ago, while fairly active in local Churches, something came over me, causing some concern over my lack of understanding of things spiritual, and a strong feeling was present that in due time I would have to be prepared spiritually before the end of my time on earth. I thought on it and decided that in due time, when not so busy, I would take enough time to figure it all out and read the Bible, attend Church more, and fit myself perfectly for the end, long before it should come. In this state of mind, I drifted on about ten years, seemingly blind to the teachings of my parents and had forgotten all the Baptist preachings.

About twenty years ago, as planned, I took up more intently with a local Methodist Church. After a time, feeling all was well and I was making progress, one night in what seemed not to be a dream, I suddenly found myself in a room where an unseen person was sentencing me to death, saying clearly, "You are going to die". I gave mental assent, then was pricked into action when I thought of my actual state — not yet fully prepared — and I firmly stated — "No, I'm not prepared — I'm not ready to die yet". What seemed to be another voice, spoke up, "The price is paid". I thought on this and was rather puzzled.

Not long afterward, partially at the suggestion of my dear wife, a Methodist member, and my desire to fully prepare myself, I joined that Church. I can well recall the so-called Baptism (sprinkling) and that as far as I could tell, there was no particular change in my feeling. It was just a ceremony there in the front of the Church. I continued actively, ushering in the Church and helping

on programs of various sorts, and felt at ease and believing all was well, and that I was now a full-fledged Christian. I hadn't read my Bible very much as it wasn't understood and didn't seemed to be interesting, but this didn't bother me since I was in the Church and all was right.

About that time, as near as I can place the event, while sitting in our auto one day, a most peculiar feeling came over me, and, all of a sudden, I seemed to have finished up evaluating myself and thought of my good works and good intentions as being sufficient proof of my excellent departure from sin, etc. Then a sudden reversal struck me — it was clearly made known to me in no uncertain terms that I was a vile person and there was not one whit of good in me and I was nothing — even less than nothing — just a sinner of the worst kind. The words flashed in my mind and I do not recall if spoken aloud — "Lord be merciful to me a sinner". I marveled at this after it happened, but didn't fully realize its import, although from then on I found myself repeating those words often.

In 1953, after moving to North Idaho, letters of Church membership were sent here and I continued on actively with them. As time passed, there seemed to be a "falling away" of interest on my part. I sensed that something was lacking. I was not satisfied as before. I noticed that the services were, most of the time, void of actual praising of the Lord for his saving grace and goodness toward man; but rather their attention was given to worldly things. Most of Church time was taken up with ceremony, pomp, formality, musical numbers, etc. Sermons were of few minutes length and mostly in praising man's wisdom, his accomplishments and what good he does for mankind. Finally our minister, a learned man with many years in the pulpit, in his sermon, kept elevating man "up into the skies" so-to-speak, and finally got him above God, by saying "WITHOUT MAN GOD IS HELPLESS". This was too much, it

hurt me, and after closing, I bounced him, telling him he was preaching it backwards. He got my point, but passed it off with some remark about God having to use man to help him. After that I lost interest and became very critical of the Church but attended fairly regularly. As stated in my letter in November, 1957, Signs, my brother, Elder John Hall, Boise, Idaho, started sending me the *Signs*, and I found in them the preaching I liked. Then one night, an unusual dream occurred which I shall never forget. In view of Joseph's statement to Pharaoh's officers, as shown in Genesis 40:8, I am rather reluctant to try and interpret my dreams, for when asked to interpret their dreams, Joseph said unto them — "Do not interpretations belong to the Lord?". However, I will briefly relate this one.

My wife and I were out walking. Very soon, she did not want to go on in the direction I was taking and we decided she would walk as she liked and I headed on alone. Very soon I walked from a timbered area into a clearing, and was stopped by some unseen warning, telling me I was in the area of a deadly enemy. Looking about, I could see part of the house of the enemy just over the brow of a sloping hill, and I sensed I was seen, or my presence known to him. I stood helpless, seemingly unable to move; and then some unseen power took hold of me and laid me gently down, face upward, and the ground came up over me, excepting a small breathing space. I was aware of the enemy coming and standing almost over me, looking and wondering where I had gone; then leaving. I was soon up and running hard to get away, only to realize the enemy was after me. After quite a run, I approached what appeared to be a fair-sized building set hard against a hill, which I entered. I found no one therein to help and no apparent place to hide or to escape, other than some forty feet up where the roof came against the hill was a hole thru which I could escape, but there was no way

to reach it. Standing again helpless and wondering which way to turn, I saw the wall next to the hill, turn into a solid rock, then there plainly appeared hand-holds several inches high also of rock, and notches were also in the rock for feet. I made haste in climbing up and thru the hole in the roof and escaped the enemy for the time being.

I soon was aware of walking on, apparently to finish up my journey; and again I was aware of the unseen enemy being in pursuit. I had never seen him and had no knowledge that he entered the building in his pursuit. Trying again to get away, I started running hard and after quite a distance, I sensed he was close enough to jump and tackle me, when I was given power to rise several feet above the ground and glide quite a distance, gaining a lot thereby. This occurred two or three times before I seemed safe, having eluded him, when I walked into an open space slowly, sensing that this was the end of my travel. No one was in sight, but the voice of an older brother who deceased a year later, began telling about our father's funeral, and the lovely casket in which he was buried. I was not present at his funeral. As my brother was speaking, the casket appeared some feet above the ground in what seemed to be close proximity to a building, and under a roof that extended out several feet. I desired to examine the casket, to feel inside it the beautiful and luxurious lining, and as I reached up to so examine it, I was stopped by the appearance of my father in a fairly visible form, by the casket. He started moving away toward a walled-in area adjoining the building where an entrance appeared. I was drawn toward him; and seeing him entering into that other place, I made for it too; and just as I got to the opening and got a quick glimpse of the beautiful grounds, the door closed, and a voice said, "Not yet for awhile." Turning to leave, a voice again said, "What you have seen was almost a revelation — yes it was a revelation."

I awoke and thought on it for a time, but never figured out what it meant. It still is clear in my memory. If not mistaken, it was to show me that I was to travel a different road to church than my wife, but before I got into the church, I was to be shown the power of the Lord who came and hid me from the enemy on whose grounds I had entered. When I entered there and found myself helpless, and received his divine help, I was given power to get away, to run, and that it was directly to that building, the Baptist Church, in which I found the Rock of salvation. Then after I had been therein, I was possessed with greater power to travel on, even able to almost fly. The finale was the warning that my brother was the next to go; and the appearance of my father at the place where his casket was seen, and leaving there to enter this other area walled off and separated from us, to be entered after death, and not by me or anyone while in this earthly life, was to show that there's life beyond the grave. Other things that have happened during the daytime are hard, indeed, to explain but have their meaning; and I do know that I now find that things that once brought pleasure, now are distasteful. Where I once found it to my liking to go for worship, now I can see they are sadly lacking in the true spirit of praising and glorifying the Father who sent his Son here on earth to die for us that the Father chose before the world was.

In the past three years I have been blessed to attend services in Spokane, where a small group gathers frequently to hear Elder E. J. Attebery, when he comes up from Hermiston, Oregon to preach to us. He has been joined at times by Elder D. C. Davis, Riffe, Washington, and by my brother, Elder John Hall, Boise, Idaho. I was further blessed and privileged to attend the three day meeting of the Old Baptists at Riffe, Washington, where these same three Elders poured forth sermons most spiritual and revealing.

In pulling away from the Methodists, I am somewhat like Elder Gold, whose letters to Dr. Hooper are re-published in the *Signs*. He was inspired to relate the reasons, and to explain them so much better than this poor writer. He took the man-made doctrine, man-made preachers, man-made methods of trying to bring sinful human beings from darkness to light, bring each out into the open and exposing them piece by piece. His words as to the fallacy of the Churches trying to Christianize the world, were timely and true. How very right he was is proven by what we now see ninety years later, after all the frenzied effort and expenditure of many, many millions of dollars by the many worldly Churches, here and abroad, in doing what they call "God's work" saving the sinners and making people good. In my mind, it is a fulfilling of the scriptures and particularly the words of our Christ, who said, "If the blind lead the blind, they both shall surely fall in the ditch." If the worldly people — those unregenerated millions upon millions of humans over the entire world, are not in the ditch at this time, I'm badly mistaken.

I may have written far too much. If so, cut it down as you see fit. Or if you find it of no value, the waste-paper basket will be the proper place for it. In my experiences, I seem to be like one writer in the *Signs* recently, who wrote, "Then, our many experiences are the fruits upon which we feast, giving us a feeling of renewed spirit from day to day." It is something upon which we build our hope. Another aged writer wrote, "I have a sweet hope . . . which is the anchor of my soul." They state my feelings, surely. It is my hope that later on the Old Baptists will afford me a home so I may be numbered with them; and thereby experience the real baptism. I could go on and on telling what I get from the Bible and the *Signs*, and my beliefs on many points of scriptures, but the more able writers seem to fill the *Signs* with better material.

Concluding, I will say that my hope is that the *Signs* will never cease being published. May the good Lord continue his richest blessings on you Editors.

Yours in the Faith, I hope,
Wm. O. Hall

R.F.D. 4,
Bassett, Virginia

Dear Brother Spangler:

Recently someone requested the writing of experiences, and I will now try to write something of what I hope to be the dealings of the Lord with me.

In 1939, I received the news that my twin sister had joined the church at Republican. I thought I should be glad; but I just couldn't be. If she had died a corporeal death, seemingly I couldn't have been hurt any worse. It just seemed that she had left me for good; and there I was, without God and without hope. My cry was day and night, "God be merciful to me a sinner." If ever I felt the need of Jesus, it was then.

I dreaded for the time to come for her baptism; for I felt my weakness so much I knew without God's mercy, I couldn't stand. As the time grew near, these words were given me, "I'll strengthen thee, and help thee, and cause thee to stand." Amazing Grace was given me to sing with such joy as I had never felt before.

When the time came for her baptism, instead of fainting, I felt to join in with the singing; and felt these people were my people. After the baptism, I thought my troubles were all over now; but soon I was in trouble again. I had such a desire to be baptized, but felt I didn't have enough evidence. . . . I asked the Lord to give me more evidence, and if I had a duty to perform, to show me, and prepare the way.

I dreamed of being at my grandfather's home-place; and I was standing in the yard and my brother was on the house top; and as I looked up, I saw the word *Jerusalem* in large letters.

Again once when I was at my mother's home-place, in a dream, I saw white cords hanging down, and the word *Come* was under the cords; and I heard these words in a still small voice, "Christ came to save and redeem his people." Later I heard the same voice say, "I bequeath my garment."

Before I united with the church, I dreamed my Uncle Goode (Elder J. G. L. Hash) baptized me; . . . and I had a stronger desire to be baptized. Just before the time for the meeting I saw my home church in a dream: I was sitting on a bench in the pulpit, and Uncle Goode and my mother, and others were sitting by me. I saw this come true at the next meeting, when I was received into the church.

I was happy for a while and the burden was gone; but soon doubts and fears arose. In a dream again I saw myself dressed in white as a bride adorned for her husband; and in another one, Uncle Goode and I were standing beside a stream of water; and as he opened a book I saw the diagram of my person drawn in ink on the right page, and at the right of my head were two words, "Bride Christ."

. . . I have had many other comforting evidences in dreams: A few years before Uncle Goode passed away, I heard a voice within me, saying, "Yet this body lives." R e m e m b e r us in prayer.

Yours in hope,
Hattie Radford

Snyder, Texas

Dear Editors:

It has come time to renew my subscription to the *Signs*, so am enclosing a check for two years.

The editorials and letters from God's little ones are food and drink to my soul, and help to lift my drooping head from time to time. I trust the dear Lord will continue to bless his little ones to write words of comfort to those who are

seeking and longing to hear the word of truth as it is in our blessed Lord.

The dear Lord has richly blessed the writer, and I long to be able to thank him for each blessing, but it seems that sin is present with me so much of the time that I seldom have a heart to pray. I know our Lord is everywhere at all times, yet most of the time I am seeking to find him and feel his blessed presence. What joy and happiness it brings to my poor soul when I can feel his presence for a brief moment. A long life of worldly pleasure can't begin to compare with one brief moment with our blessed Master. It is a mystery why the Lord so richly blesses me in daily living, but the hope he has given me of life with him in eternal glory, is a much greater one. Surely it is one I wouldn't exchange for all the wealth and pleasures on the earth.

My name and address have changed since my last renewal, from Minnie Lee Williams, Snyder, Texas, to Mrs. J. P. Madding, Rt. 2, Snyder, Texas.

May the God of love comfort the editors and readers of the *Signs*; and may He enable us to love one another, and to pray for each other. A little sister I hope by the grace of God, in whom we live, move, and have our being.

Mrs. J. P. Madding

"BUT IN WORKS THEY DENY HIM"

"Not giving heed to Jewish fables, and commandments of men, that turn from the truth. Unto the pure all things are pure: but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled. They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate." (Titus 1:14-16)

These words of Paul to Titus are as much the word of God in its setting as John 3:16, or the 1st chapter of Ephesians. I cannot believe that one passage

of Scripture contradicts another; whether we understand them or not.

Jesus said, "He that denieth me, him will I deny before my Father which is in heaven; and he that confesseth me, him will I confess before my father." These people that Paul was writing to Titus about, were denying the Saviour; and that because their mind and conscience was defiled. They professed that they knew God, but in works they denied him. I believe that God's people are in good works, because they are created in Christ Jesus unto good works, for God hath before ordained that they should walk in them. Do we believe that His sheep hear his voice and follow him? I am persuaded that they do. When they follow him they walk with him; and they have been baptized with him: "Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection." (Romans 6:4-5)

But those who profess to know God, yet in works deny him, are the ones who preach, teach, profess, and worship the small gods of this world: "Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, and with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." (2 Thes. 2:9-12) Those who believe in the frail, weak, and without-foreknowledge god, are the ones who deny the all wise, all powerful, and invisible God of heaven, earth, and all deep places. "I will not give my glory to another." "Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law; ye are fallen from grace." These are the same

ones under consideration: in works they deny Me. Whenever anyone tells me that he can fall from grace, right then I know he has never been in grace.

God did not choose his church up to just a few steps of him, and then turn them loose to make the last step or so of themselves. "He that hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." Who was it that began a good work in you? it was God himself. "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God that worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." Now God's church is his own choice: certainly they were chosen in his Son before the world began; and surely they were treasured up in the One that finished the work, and went back to sit on the right hand of the Father, to make intercession for the saints. Was this according to man's will? no, but according to the unchangeable will of God: The God who was able and powerful enough to declare the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that were not yet done, saying my counsel shall stand and I will do all my pleasure.

If I understand this matter at all, this takes care of all time and timely things; and, if he declared the end from the beginning, I am persuaded he surely knew all things that would come between the end and the beginning. "I know that, whatsoever God doeth, it shall be forever: nothing can be put to it, nor anything taken from it: and God doeth it that men should fear before him. That which hath been is now; and that which is to be hath already been; and God requireth that which is past." (Eccl. 3:14-15)

It seems to me that just a few profound statements of this kind should tell all the world, that God spoke and it was done, commanded and it stood fast; and that man and his natural wisdom cannot help or hinder God's eternal mind and purpose in saving his church, which is his choice. Those who deny him in works, are the ones that shall make war with the Lamb, and the Lamb shall

overcome them: for he is Lord of Lords, and King of Kings; and they that are with him are called, chosen and faithful. ". . . and they that dwell on the earth shall wonder, whose names were not written in the book of life from the foundation of the world, when they behold the beast that was, and is not, and yet is." (Rev. 17:8)

Dear reader, if you don't understand these things, don't feel alone, for they are deep, deep matters; but don't go to some man made institution, thinking you will learn it there. They shall all worship the beast, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. "If any man have an ear, let him hear what the Spirit sayeth unto the churches." Yes, dear reader, they are denying him ever, and at all times, by accepting the one of their choice. Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord, and the people "whom he would choose if he could". Their God is trying every way, and at all points of the compass, to convert the entire fallen race of Adam; and, I have to say, that in my short stay in this sinful world, it is getting worse as the days come and go.

Now back to the passage: "Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord, and the people whom he hath chosen for his own inheritance." (Psalms 33:12) "You have not chosen me, but I have chosen you." Surely these are the disciples of Christ: the Bible speaks only of two kinds of disciples: the disciples of Christ, and the disciples of Satan. Which reminds us that there are only two kinds of doctrine: true, and false. God's choice, which is his elect — his church, shall travel the strait and narrow way which is to heaven. The broad and crooked way is the road to Hell. God's choice is traveling today; and have been, and shall be with him along the strait and narrow way. Those who are with him, are called, and chosen, and faithful. Others claim they make their own choice. The false prophets and the beasts would deceive the very elect, if it were possible.

These elect were told at one time: "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. The Lord did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people." (Deuteronomy 7:6, 7) We can see that God Almighty had a chosen people among the Jews, and he has chosen people among the Gentiles. "For he is not a Jew which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision in that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God." (Romans 2:28, 29) These make up the church of Christ; the called out. They are God's people by the new birth, and are the ones that are born of the incorruptible seed. "Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands; that at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: but now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ."

Consider the word "blood" here for a moment or so: "Where there is no shedding of blood, there is no remission." No remission of what? No remission of sins! "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." (Acts 20:28) Sometimes it seems plain to me that the ones who purchase themselves by doing good works in order to give their small god a chance to save them, are the same ones mentioned in Titus 1:14-16 (which please read). In works they deny the Lord.

The ones who are in Christ Jesus (the

Christ Jesus I am speaking of), are the ones of whom he said. "At that time Jesus answered and said, 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. All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him. Come unto me, all ye that labour 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 ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light." (Matthew 11:-25-30)

It is to be understood that the people unto whom he spoke the above, hear his voice, and follow him. For they are created in Christ Jesus unto good works, that God hath before ordained that they should walk in them. Walk in what? good works that God had set apart for them to walk in. If they don't do it, tell me why they will not! Again, "My sheep hear my voice and they follow me." Tell me how it is that "my sheep hear my voice, and follow me", if they don't walk in the good works that God hath before ordained that they should walk in. If it is not so, then you have God's people walking along with Satan and the satanic forces of this world.

The same people who hear his voice and follow him, are the same ones who were pricked in their hearts on the day of Pentecost; and asked the question, "What shall we do?" and Peter said unto them, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost, For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." (Acts 2:37-39)

Now, little flock, I think it would be proper to consider the thing that pricked their hearts; It was the same thing that opened their ears to hear, that

made them ask the question, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" "Therefore being by the right hand of God exalted, and having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Ghost, he hath shed forth this, which ye now see and hear." (Acts 2:33) Do you not believe that the ones who were pricked in their hearts, are the ones who saw and heard this? See and hear what? the promise of the Holy Ghost! Surely they did see and hear, for it was the very thing that pricked their hearts; or would some go so far as to say that the people pricked their own hearts! Did they ask the question before they were pricked in their hearts? No! the pricking of their hearts motivated the asking of the question.

We may ask ourselves also, Was this the same thing that shined around and about Paul, brighter than the noon day sun? Should one deny the pricking of the hearts, or the light that felled the apostle, I believe he is manifesting that he is of the class Paul wrote to Titus about: "They profess that they know God, but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate." (Titus 2:16) It is to be remembered that these denied him by their works. Plainly, whenever the creature proclaims his work in order that God can then do the thing he has been waiting to do for so long, but couldn't do it until the creature made up his mind, I am persuaded this is what Paul meant when he said, "In works they deny him." You may recall in John 6:28-29, "Then said they unto him, What shall we do, that we might work the works of God? Jesus answered, and said unto them, this is the work of God that ye believe on him whom he hath sent."

Now let us look at Ephesians 1:18-19, "The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye might know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of the inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of his power to usward who believe, according to the working of his

mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead." etc. If these passages do not mean what they say, tell me what they do mean! I say without fear of contradiction, It just means that it is the work of God that ye believe on him whom he hath sent. In Acts 13:48, we read, "And when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of the Lord. And as many as were ordained to eternal life believed." Were there more who could have believed?

Finally, dear ones, as many as were ordained to eternal life have believed, are believing, and will believe; not any over the number, not any under the number. In Ecclesiastes 3:14, we read, "I know that whatsoever God doeth, it shall be forever; nothing can be put to it, nor anything taken from it; and God doeth it that men should fear before him."

Let us notice Acts 2:39, again: "For the promise is unto you and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." You notice the passage says, "Even as many as the Lord our God shall call". I know those who are on the other side say that God calls, and some won't answer. If such were true, I would have to go along with the free moral agent; for if they are right in their will-worship, God's choice is null and void. But let us look into this so called free-agency situation, for this seems to be the great gulf that is fixed so that the sheep and goats don't mix in spiritual knowledge. On the one hand we have those who "choose God"; and on the other, those whom God chose in his darling Son before the world began. Jeremiah 10:23, says, "O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself; it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps."

God's little children feast upon the doctrine of God's choice, and they thrive upon it; but the world and man made doctrine is foolishness unto them. Where do the free-agents come from? can they stand in Jeremiah 30:23? In Acts 13:41,

we learn, "Behold ye despisers, and wonder and perish, for I work a work in your days, a work in which ye shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you." Now would one tell me that these people are going to believe. Free-agents, so called, say, It is left up to you: You can believe if you will just come to church and sunday-school, etc. This is far from the truth. The passage says, "Ye shall in no wise believe." The free-agent preaches that the gates of hell are prevailing against the heaven born child. The Bible says it is not so. They preach that a man can accept or reject Him: They can accept or reject the one they worship, for they do all this themselves.

"Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it; except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain." Now don't tell me that the Lord built the city, and is trying to get all the fallen race of Adam into it! "To sit on my right hand, or on my left hand, is not mine to give, but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared." "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom for you from the foundation of the world.

Dear readers, I realize the surface has scarcely been scratched. May God's richest blessings be yours, world without end, is my prayer. A sinner saved by grace of an all wise, all powerful, invisible, eternal and self-sustaining God, I hope.

David E. Turner
410 W. Madison
Bastrop, La.

(We regret the delay in publishing the above. It was partly prepared, and laid aside for the time, then overlooked. — J. D. W.)

931 Modoc Ave.,
Norfolk 3, Va.

Signs of the Times:

Enclosed find check for two years'

subscription to the *Signs of the Times*.

I wish to thank you for the book, "Showers of Rain", by Flossie Faulkner, which I received a few days ago. It is impossible to tell you how much I enjoyed it. I've read it over and over again; and I plan to let my friends read it. Each month, when I get the *Signs*, I usually lay aside whatever I am doing, and sit down and read from cover to cover; and often read it the second time. Then I pass it on to my friends so they, too, can enjoy the good writings published.

May God bless you to continue its publication.

Mrs. J. Van Der Hooning

AN INQUIRY

P. O. Box 532,
Coeur d'Alene, Idaho

Dear Editors:

Will you please, at your convenience, explain what is meant in I Corinthians 7:14?: "For the unbelieving husband is lieving wife is sanctified by the husband; else were your children unclean; but now they are holy."

Most of the Scriptures that I have come upon, having apparent contradiction to the accepted "being born again by the Holy Ghost", and "By grace are ye saved", etc., have in time, and through writings in the *Signs*, been cleared up. But this one seems impossible for me to understand. I just can't figure it out how a total unbeliever, be he husband, or be she a wife, can be brought into the grace of God by and through their spouse, who is a child of God by His choice, and through His saving grace.

Thanks for your attention. Yours in hope of eternal life through God's saving grace.

Wm. O. Hall

(See editorial reply)

EMPTY VESSELS ARE OFTEN FILLED

Rt. 3,
Benton, Ky.

Elder D. V. Spangler:

I am enclosing check for my own subscription, and for my niece's . . .

We have just traveled a few days in to the New Year; the first Sunday we were kept away from services at Mayfield, Kentucky, where Elder O. W. Perkins is the Moderator. Snow covered the ground and roads were almost impassable. The second Sunday the services were at Soldier Creek Church, where Elder Paul Poyner is our Moderator. Surely the Lord was there. Elder Poyner talked from I Corinthians 1:4-10. About the time we think we are fairly acquainted with a scripture, someone comes along and reads it as though we had never seen a Bible. "That in everything ye are enriched by him, in all utterance, and in all knowledge; even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you: So that ye come behind in no gift, . . ."

As far as I was concerned, I was an empty vessel; but these words, when read, grew so large, so full and complete, I don't see how that little page held them: Enriched by him in all utterance, and everything you think, (and can't utter except with a groan,) he has *confirmed* it in you, and we are not behind in any gift. And that ninth verse: *How God calls his children unto the fellowship of His Son!*

I'll never say again that I read the Bible — these are not the words to use, but when it starts unfolding to you its beauty: every word a new word, taking on a new meaning, then, maybe, I can say surely these words were wielded by the Spirit of God home to me — even to me. We know that at times when we enter a church-building, we are not hungry; just satisfied in an unconcerned state of being. Sunday I must have been just contented to go where we were supposed to meet to worship; I felt con-

cerned as to whether Elder Poyner could get there, and whether some were coming from Illinois. So when that was settled, all was well; and I was happy as far as all arrangements were made. I had gone about as far as I could, for we can't stir up the pure mind, if we have it. But how often we have to be told again and again that it is not of us to open up our understanding; it is not of us to be able to worship.

Has the grace of God been given us by Christ Jesus? Do we have all things, so that we come behind in no gift; is utterance ours, knowledge ours; is the witness within given us, because He loved us when we were dead in sins? We are often so dead after we have a hope in Him; after we have eaten his flesh and drank his blood, as we hope, that we still cannot go nor come. Right now I am glad that it is so: For if power were mine, all scriptures would look as beautiful as the ones Elder Poyner talked about yesterday.

A beautiful text came to me last week. Maybe I did not get it fully, but I feasted on it for a few days: Isaiah 12:3 — "Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation." My mind ran to the words of Jesus, when he said, ". . . but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." (John 4:14) To me, when we draw from one another, their minds, their thoughts on scriptures, it is because we find joy drawing from the well of water within them. "Wells of salvation" — Ye shall draw! No use saying you wont, for, *ye shall*. What wondrous love is this, Oh my soul. Much fellowship to the household of faith. I will be glad to help in obtaining new subscribers; this one is new and I am giving it to my niece.

Effie Bowden

"THEY MOVE WILLINGLY AND LOVINGLY"

R.F.D. 2,

Ringgold, Virginia

Dear Editors and Household of Faith:

Am sending my renewal to the *Signs*. I find its contents very precious, heavenly food — next to the Bible. The experiences are wonderful, and the editorials are enlightening. It stands for the things I believe, have experienced, and have tasted.

I feel we are living in perilous times, but believe that God is still ruling; and will until the end of time. Lots of things are hurtful to us, but I try not to worry over things I have no control. The Bible foretells all these things coming to pass before the end of time. He has declared the end from the beginning, saying his counsel should stand, and that he would do all his pleasure.

Some say and think that if we fulfill the commandments, we will be saved; but God writes these things in our hearts, and puts them in our minds. His is an irresistible power. He speaks to sinners, and they move willingly and lovingly; and have a great desire to do things God puts in their hearts to do. Only God has power to do this. We are dependent on Him for everything.

I was glad to see Elder Spangler's piece in the last issue of the *Signs* in regard to the wonderful association. Nothing on earth can compare with these good meetings. We have not been well, and have missed many meetings we wanted to attend. Our minds were there with you dear people. We are growing older and more feeble, and our vision is very poor, so we know we cannot attend the meetings regularly; but shouldn't complain, for we have been wonderfully blessed, far more than we deserve. Love to the household of faith.

Sister W. L. Ferguson

“LIKE A VISITOR ENTERING
THE HOME”

Rt. 3, Box 261,
Jasper, Texas

Dear Editors and Writers:

Enclosed you will find money-order to extend my subscription another two years.

I have been reading this good paper for some time now, and would not like to miss a single issue, for it is like a visitor entering the home each time it arrives; and it always brings good news of glad tidings, which is food to the hungry soul. . . . It sets forth a sovereign God, and salvation by grace through the shed blood of Jesus Christ, the Saviour of sinners. It does my heart good to read of others, who, as I, have only a hope; and are laden with many doubts and fears much of the time; and so dependent at all times.

Thanks to each and every one who writes such good articles; and special thanks to the Editors and Associates for their time and efforts in bringing us such good reading. May the God of all power continue to bless you with wisdom and understanding, and health and ability in getting this paper to us. May it ever be kept sound, and continue to come our way, is my prayer. With Christian love and fellowship.

A brother I humbly hope,
Frank Martindale

REQUESTS FOR VIEWS ON SCRIPTURES

(Quite often we receive requests for views on portions of the Scriptures. Were we able we would like to comply with all of them, but this being impossible we will pass them on to our brethren under this heading. As we have space, we will publish such replies as we deem of general interest to our readers. Replies should not be too lengthy, and typed if possible.)

“I would like for someone to write on the 20th chapter of Revelation, if they have a mind to do so.”

Mrs. Agnes Jones,
1550 Portland,
Abilene, Texas

“I should like very much to have some

comment on the following passages of Scripture: Matthew 23rd Chapter; Mark 14:51; and 2 Peter 1:9, 10. There are so many things I don't know. I live in a town of forty-three thousand, yet I have no one to talk to; that is, no one who believes like I do."

Percy A. Loyd,
Box 204,
Salma, Kansas

"I read so much about predestination it would please me very much if you could give me some information on it. What I would like to know is, did God predestinate some things and leave others to accidentals, whether it be good or evil, large or small. I will appreciate some information on this."

J. T. Cobb,
Rt. 2, Box 177,
Greensboro, N. C.

UPPER COUNTRY LINE UNION MEETING

The Upper Country Line Union Meeting is appointed to be held with Prospect Hill Church the fifth Sunday in April, which is April 30th.

The brethren and friends are cordially invited to meet with us.

Hallie O. Griswold, Church Clerk

SPECIAL MEETING AT NORFOLK

Elder D. V. Spangler is expected to preach at the Norfolk Primitive Baptist Church, Norfolk, Virginia, the first Sunday in April at 11 o'clock, and Saturday afternoon before at 2:30 P. M., by special appointment.

DELAWARE ASSOCIATION

The Delaware Association will be held with the Welsh Tract Church, Newark, Delaware, on the 2nd Sunday in May, and Saturday before, the Lord willing.

Brethren and friends are cordially invited to meet with us.

Rees S. Jarmon, Clerk

CHANGE IN TIME AND PLACE OF LOUISIANA DISTRICT MEETING

Dear Editors:

Please publish this notice of the change of time and place of the Louisiana District Meeting of the South Ouachita Primitive Baptist Association. It is to be held with Union Church,

Marion, La., beginning on Friday before the third (3rd) Sunday in July, instead with Concord Church, Bastrop, La., on Friday before the second (2nd) Sunday in July.

L. D. Smith, Clerk Union Church

ANNUAL MEETING

The Annual Meeting of the Harmony Primitive Baptist Church will be held, God willing, all day Saturday and Sunday, April 29 and 30, 1961. Services to begin Saturday at 10:30 A. M., and Sunday at 10:00 A. M.

The meeting house is located one mile East of Huntington, W. Va., city limits, on Cedar-crest Drive, and about one-quarter mile off U. S. Route 60, at Eastern Heights Shopping Center. All lovers of the truth are welcome.

Elder J. R. Lane, Moderator
Mrs. Mildred Stanley, Clerk,
1046 Cedarcrest Drive,
Huntington, W. Va.

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The next session of the Staunton River Primitive Baptist Union, which did not convene in January due to the snowy weather, will meet, the Lord willing, with Canaan Church April 29 and 30, 1961.

Our correspondents and interested friends are invited to meet with us.

W. R. Dodd, Moderator
W. J. Oakes, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE INDIGENT FUND (To February 1st, 1961)

Florance A. Gibson, Ga.	\$ 2.00
Aubrey Cristopher, Texas	1.00
W. Tom Smith, Texas	1.00
Mrs. Maynard Finch, N. Y.	2.00
Mrs. Ellis Hodgins, Canada	5.00
H. L. Knight, N. C.	10.00
Miss Mary A. Johnson, Texas	5.00
Ben F. Preston, Oregon	5.00
Mrs. Ora Cochran, Calif.	5.00
Katie Ragan, Tenn.	2.00
Mrs. C. W. Adams, Va.	1.00
O. D. Bell, Va.	10.00
T. A. Pullig, La.	2.50
Annie L. Cornelius, Texas	1.00
Homer Bailey, Del.	1.00

Danville, Virginia

April, 1961

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

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EDITORIAL

REPLY TO INQUIRY

"For the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband; else were your children unclean; but now they are holy." (I Corinthians 7:14)

No doubt many have been concerned over the meaning of this passage of Scripture, since, as our correspondent points out, there is an apparent contradiction as to the source of "sanctification", to that taught throughout the Bible. So a careful reading of this is necessary in order to understand the

Apostle's expressions as given in the translation.

First we will want to remember that it is an established principle that there can be no knowledge of the truth without personal revelation: no "seeing" of the kingdom of God without being born of the Spirit; and that these things are entirely outside of the sphere of a mortal's accomplishment.

Again, it is to be remembered that none will ever know the truth, and be embraced in its membership, except those who were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world; but that all of these will be embraced, because the choosing, the redeeming, and the calling, are all in the hands of the triune God, and he has willed that his people shall be saved.

So we must notice carefully what the Apostle is presenting. He writes: "If any brother hath a wife that believeth not"; or, if, "the woman (wife) hath an husband that believeth not". He is speaking of a brother or sister, who believes, but whose spouse does not believe. Believes what? Believes the doctrine of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ: Believes that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and that he saved his people from their sins by his death upon the cross; that he arose from the dead, and was received into heaven. One spouse believed this, having been brought into the love and fellowship of these things; while the other did not know anything about it at all. Isn't this often found among the Lord's people?

But the Apostle is saying that this of itself is no reason they should separate: "And if she be pleased to dwell with him, let him not put her away"; or, "If he be pleased to dwell with her, let her not leave him." Which means: If they find nothing repulsive in the other because of his faith, or lack of faith, there is nothing, in the Apostle's opinion, in their living together as husband and wife that would be contrary to church discipline or order; and so they would not be censured for it.

"For," the Apostle continues, "the unbelieving husband is sanctified by the wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified by the husband: else were your children unclean; but now they are holy."

We then want to know the meaning of the word "sanctified" as it is used here. We know that it is sometimes used to show the difference between the manifest works of the flesh, and the works of the Spirit in a person. But it also has the meaning of (in its present tense), "To be set apart for a specific use or purpose." We think it has the latter meaning here. For, after consulting the usage of the word as quoted by several writers, it seems that the Jews often used the word in the sense of "being espoused", or "married to"; which carries out the idea of "being set apart for each other." This is quite different from a personal inference of freedom from sin; or that the marriage relationship imparts the grace of God to bring the unbeliever into the kingdom, as some have thought.

In this light the difficulty is removed as to the apparent contradiction of the whole tenor of the Scriptures as to the source of the faith of all the children of God; which, of course, the Apostle never contradicts; but rather confirms. For, if the believing wife is espoused, or married, to an unbelieving husband; or, if the believing husband is espoused to an unbelieving wife, the Apostle finds nothing contradictory to the order of the church, for each member stands in a *personal* relationship in the church.

Nor is there anything contrary to the recognized law of the land in their marriage. So neither the church nor the government would have any charge against them; and thus it is perfectly right for the Apostle to say that, because of this, "your children are holy"; that is, without ought against them through their parents.

The Apostle further states that if the unbelieving depart, because of the difference, from the brother or sister (hus-

band or wife), let him depart. A brother or sister is not under bondage (censure) of the church in such cases.

There are many of the Lord's people who are married to those who just cannot understand why or how the other can believe as they do; or understand why their faith means so much to them; or why to be with those who believe as they do, is their chief joy. What a blessing it is for husband and wife to see eye to eye in these things! or what a blessing it is, if one's spouse does not believe, but yet has great respect for the other's belief, and put no hindrance in the way for the exercise of the other's worship!

But what a pity it is when we see believers so harrassed by their mates in things religious, that their life is made miserable by personal demands or hinderances, so that meeting with their brethren, which means so much to them, has much of the joy and freedom suppressed by memory of their mate's opposition, or the prospect of a quarrel upon arriving home.

Certainly the believer knows the source of his faith, and should remember this in dealing with an unbelieving spouse in things called religion; and the unbeliever will, if he is not too self-centered and intolerant, have the courtesy to allow the conscientious exercise of the other's faith.

Who knows, (and we know of some cases of it,) but that the Lord may bless the other spouse with the same faith at some time in life; or that the example of the one, of patience and humility, may afterwards be spoken of by the other as used by the Lord as the beginning of the work of grace in his heart. This is what we believe the Apostle had in mind when he wrote: "For what knowest thou, O wife, whether thou shalt save thy husband? Or, how knowest thou O man, whether thou shalt save thy wife?"

This is our understanding of the scripture inquired of by our correspondent, and we submit it for his consid-

eration; as well as to others who may be interested.

J. D. W.

THE PRESERVATION OF THE CHURCH OF CHRIST

If Christ is our Saviour, then I have the scriptural right to title this article in this way; if he is not, then the title is misleading. To talk of its preservation is to suppose that some power other than its own is doing the work; otherwise, we would tell how that she preserves herself.

In our last we were engaged in finding the nucleus of this glorious church, this organized Bride of Christ, this home of the Lord's dear children in this lifetime. Without going over that ground again suffice it is to say that Christ founded this church; that he called to him such as he would have follow him. It is likewise safe to notice that it had not been done until he came and did it; therefore, the design to build, and the building of the same, was entirely the work of God as manifest in the flesh.

One time I picked up a book in the churchhouse at one of my appointments, and was looking through it. A visitor had written this notation, to wit, "I would not mind coming here to church if they did not talk about grace all the time." How truly that is the feeling of those not acquainted with grace; it grows boresome, it has become obsolete, it has outgrown its usefulness, it is a stale subject. To the poor and helpless, it is as sweet and precious today as it was the first time it was heard. I will, if blessed of God, dwell right much on the grace of God as I write. However, I pray, if I pray, that I be blessed to investigate this matter from a scriptural standpoint; if I pray, I will have the answer of prayer, and each time that I find works being the cause of faith I will come right out and boldly say so; each time that I find grace as a virtue of the creature instead of a gift from the Creator, I will give credit as it is due to

that system of doctrines.

On the day of Pentecost the church was already in existence. The Lamb declared, "I will build my church." All of the sophistry of the scoffers, all of the reasoning of the intellect, will never eliminate the three thousand being added to something. These all (both those who were already in the church, as well as the added ones) continued steadfastly in the apostles doctrine, and are recognized from here on as the church. But how did this come about? Is this Peter's design? Is this a product of the minds of the apostles? Is this a great Christian movement to bring the kingdom to greater influence? If it was, then Old Baptists had as well go home; they never had anything to begin with; they were through before they started. But (and I am not ashamed to challenge that authority that would lay any other foundation for Pentecost and what followed), if it were not a well thought out plan of the apostles, then everybody, **really, everybody**, has as well take down their sign, to wit, "We are taking the world for Christ" for they did not contribute one iota to the founding of the kingdom, and they have not contributed any more to its preservation.

It will take but little of your time to read the book of Joel. Begin at the beginning and read down to the 28th verse of the second chapter. Now let us read together: "And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions: and also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit. And I will shew wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the Lord come. And it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call on the name of the Lord shall be delivered: for in Mount Zion and in Jerusalem shall be deliverance, as the Lord hath said, and

in the remnant whom the Lord shall call" (Joel 2:28, 32). Did the One who promised this great blessing falter before that day and need help? If he did, where did he shout it out in his written word, "O creation, your Creator is slipping, my footsteps are faltering, my arm is too short to do all that I have promised, your support is needed at Pentecost"? We know that no such cry has gone forth from his mouth. This pouring out of the spirit of the Lord is not a work of co-ordination nor of co-operation with and from any man. To pour, signifies from a container, and the container is God; only Jesus could take hold of Godliness and pour it out upon his people. In the promise, there was no mention made of a helper in the work; in the fulfillment of that promise there is no helper present.

Who would, as we look and listen at Pentecost, say that this coming together is the work of any man? What a scene is unfolded to our astonished gaze! How men are brought to a complete standstill as the sound from heaven of a mighty rushing wind fills the house! What glory is unfolded as it appeared to them as cloven tongues like as fire, settling upon each of them. Which one of them did this power consult before settling upon him? Not one, and thus the doctrine of God's saving grace is made clear in the carrying on of the church which his Son founded. This being filled with the Holy Ghost caused them to speak in other tongues, as they were given utterance by the Spirit. In this particular place let us notice that Jews were living here, devout men, from every nation under heaven. With God no accidents ever happen; no event is unlooked for; none of his creatures decide on the place that they live. God has made them all that dwell on the face of the earth; he hath (not wanting to, not going to, but) already appointed the times; and he hath set the bounds of their habitation (Acts 17:26). If the Lord had determined to pour his Spirit out upon a man here, and that man was in Europe, his knowledge and determina-

tion would be as weak as the people that think they have the weight of ordering and determining the government of God on their shoulder. They were all there. It is certainly to the point to know the extent of this outpouring. It was not in vain, for the work, as prophesied by Joel, was effectual. Each and every recipient of this outpouring was pricked in his heart, and they all cried out. They had something to say; a work had been done which had not been done. Never before had these bewildered saints had this miracle to happen to them; never before had light and power come in such volume. These people did not say, Men and brethren, what must we do in order to be saved? No sir, these were devout men (Gr., men who were receiving and talking well), and they were in need of instruction. Their query is that which identifies the church of the living God. "What shall we do?"

The outpouring of the Spirit worked on them all. It brought the anxious query, but it also brought the quieting answer.

This Pentecost day is as much in effect now as it was then. It is the day of the gospel; it is the day of the reign of Christ as manifest in the outpouring of his Spirit. The power that was in that mighty blowing wind is still sweeping all before it. It has not blown itself out; it does not need a rekindling of the fire, nor a windmill to put vigor into a declining breeze. This outpouring of God's Spirit sent them all out from there. It sent them out believing in the power that had been wrought in them. It did not come in weak, and is to go out strong; it did not come in strong and to go out weak. It was not to go out before the end of the day; the fire would not flicker, the wind of the Spirit would not abate. The outpouring of this Spirit is the cause of the promulgation of the gospel; it is the cause of those to whom it is sent answering and complying with it. Occasionally I hear a dear brother say, O, I do not believe in encouragement; I do not believe in calling on people to repent; I do not believe in saying

anything to those on the outside about being baptized. How sad, for they are saying that the things caused by the Spirit at Pentecost and left on record for us to follow are worthless. If we have any right to any of Peter's preaching, we are bound to it all.

Paul wrote much on election. Every brand of Old School Baptist is ready to defend that doctrine. They all say in unison, "That God has chosen his people in Christ before the foundation of the world" (Eph. 1:4). Why is it that they will not all defend the doctrine that "we have been blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ?" They come according to the choice; we were blessed with them at the time of the choice. These blessings accompany those elected to the end that they all get home to glory. All blessings are in Christ; and he beginning the good work in us, will bless us with those all things pertaining to life and godliness (2 Pet. 1:3) to finish that which he had started. If this is not true, the Old School Baptists not need do talk about God keeping his church any longer; they do not need (and it was useless and vain for Christ to say it to Peter) God to restrain hell to keep its gates from prevailing against the church; they do not need the Holy Spirit now. If it is true, then all the blood that precious saints have shed; all the sneers and jeers that have been hurled against that sect everywhere spoken against; all the stakes driven and all the fagots lighted have not been done in vain, for Truth is still alive and as long as He lives, even though the body perishes, we shall yet live with him in eternal glory. Not only did Paul write much on election, but his yoke-fellow in tribulation, the apostle Peter, also wrote much on it, and as much and as strong as was his defense of it, it was equally as strong that all things necessary to our overcoming was given in Christ and made manifest in our present lives as a church. As quoted above, all the things that pertain to life and godliness were given us in Christ. Let us read together,

"Grace and peace be multiplied unto you through the knowledge of God, and of Jesus Christ our Lord, according as his divine power hath given unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that hath called us to glory and virtue" (2 Pet. 1:2, 3). Let us analyze: Where is grace and peace to come from? From the creature? What knowledge has he or she got? They do not know their own mind, much less the mind of Almighty God. "To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them" (Isa. 8:20). If language means anything; if the inspiration of God as left on the Bible pages for the Christian's perusal is of primary importance to us, then grace and peace both come from God through His knowledge and the Lord Jesus Christ. This is the only source of grace, the only source of peace. These things being multiplied unto the church in days past has been in just one way; from just one source. It has been, it all has been, according as his divine power has given us all things pertaining to life and godliness, and it has been through the same knowledge, from the same Almighty Being, that gave us grace and peace.

Let us read, "I thank my God always on your behalf, for the grace of God which is given you by Jesus Christ." What a wonderful statement! What power in the Spirit that gave this man, who did not know what to pray for as he ought (Rom. 8:26), to always thank God for the only thing that saves. This grace enriches. It is the only enriching thing spoken about in the Bible. A man can not be enriched by filthy rags (works), but he is made poorer by their accumulation. Regardless of how rich we are in our works (rags); regardless of how much honor and fame and money has been bestowed upon us, it is worthless in the kingdom of heaven. It will not buy the Holy Ghost; it will not buy the love of God; it will not buy sweet fellowship; it will not buy a single blessing. Now look at what grace does.

1. It is as extensive as God, the great Giver; it enriches in everything (I am not writing about wickedness; the fall brought more of that than the child of God desires). There isn't a gift that the church has been blessed with in the past that grace did not give. 2. Especially do I want to note that grace enriches in all utterance. Ah, yes, how it makes what is said lovely, but what is better it makes how it is said lovely, and best of all, it makes the speaker lovely. What a boon to poor sinners, that He has created the fruit of their lips (Isa. 57:19) to where they talk of his wondrous works and his glory and his power (Psa. 119:27; 145: 11). 3. This grace enriched the early church in all knowledge. This was done even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in them. How many was thus enriched? If it began and stopped, when was it stopped? This epistle was (and is) written to all of those at Corinth, as well as all that were sanctified in Christ, all that were called saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ. If we call upon Him now, we have what the church has ever had, to wit, the enriching grace of God. 4. This grace was so enriching that they did not come behind in any gift. Ah, how far behind we feel in our works. They have never enabled us to plead for God's blessing upon them. 5. This being blessed to not come behind lasts from the first confirmation all during the waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. It will not give out. 6. It is the gift which gives us confirmation to the end. It is such a rich gift that it lasts to the end. "This God is our God for ever and ever: he will be our guide even unto death". 7. It is so rich that it will bring us before God blameless in the day of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Dear brethren, is this your experience? Come tell us how you do. As for as I feel about the matter, it is the Lord by his enriching grace that has brought my wandering footsteps to Mount Zion; it was there that he confirmed me in the shed blood of the

Lamb; it is in and through his grace that I have come thus far. This is all of my hope. That which has preserved the church, has, as I humbly hope, preserved me. That which took care of the little church in its infantile state (it hasn't got out of that yet), has been my stay and my guide, for I, too, have not gotten out of my little state.

In my next, God willing, I will deal with the present.

W. D. G.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

Fairfax C. H., Virginia
June 16, 1858

Dear Brother Beebe: — I see in the Signs for June 1, among other requests on me, one from Sister Bagg, for my views on a part of Phillipians iii. 10, "And the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death," &c. In coming to this subject, I will go back a little to notice the drift of the Apostle's argument. He, in verse third, shows that those who are of the true spiritual circumcision, "Worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh." He then proceeds to show, from his own case, how entirely vain are the attempts of men to base the hopes of their salvation or acceptance with God, in whole, or in part, on any thing fleshly, whether birth, religious rites, education or their own attainments. He says, verse four, "If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more." He then goes on, in verses five and six, to state the superior claim he had to fleshly attainments, and, indeed, to what many would consider, religious attainments. In verse seven, he gives the conclusion he had been brought to that, "What things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ." He, in verse eight, further says, "Yea, doubtless I count all things but loss for the

excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord," &c. I will here remark that **gain** and **loss** as used in verse seven, are opposites. Those fleshly attainments Paul once accounted as **gain** or **advantageous** in reference to acceptance with God, he now **found** to be a **loss**, a **hindrance**, a real **obstacle** to his receiving and resting on Christ as the way of salvation. He further adds, "For whom I have suffered the loss of all things and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, and be found in him," &c., verses seven and eight. That **I may win Christ**, that is, that Christ may be my **gain**, or the one object of my trust and delight.

In verse ten, Paul continues the enumeration of what he desires in Christ, and hopes to find in him, "That I may know him and power the of his resurrection." That he might know more and more of him, of his infinite excellency and fulness, enjoy more intimate communion with him. **And the power of his resurrection.** That is, know the power, &c. The power of Christ's resurrection is manifested in several points.

1. In his resurrection he was **declared to be the Son of God with power.** Rom. i. 4. Hence his resurrection was a complete triumph over the demands of the law upon his people and him in his oneness with them — and, therefore, over that bondage which the law held over them and him, subjecting him to endure its penalty in their stead.

2. The power of his resurrection is seen in his being raised for the justification of his people. Hence to know the power of his resurrection, is to know the clearance of all them that believe, from all demands of the law — and, therefore, from all possibility of again being brought into a state of condemnation.

3. The power of his resurrection is manifested in that he **raised up together with himself all for whom he died and made them sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.** Thus to know by faith, the power of Christ's resurrection, tends to make us feel and enjoy our liberty and privileges as children

of God, and not servants. "And the fellowship of his sufferings." Fellowship signifies community or mutual participation. Peter tells us that Christ hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust. Peter's declaration here must imply that as Christ was just in himself, he must have had such a fellowship with his people in their sins, that is, that he was so one with them, that he could justly be made to suffer for their sins. Hence, though just, he righteously suffered for the sins of the **unjust.** Hence his question, "Ought not Christ to suffer these things?" If there was this fellowship of Christ with his people in their sins, so that he could be made to bear them and call them his sins, as in Psalm lxix. 5, then his people must have had an equal fellowship in his sufferings, that is, in that the satisfaction thereby made to the law, was as if it had been received at their hands. Then **he was raised for their justification.** And hence to know our fellowship in his sufferings is to know that we have in Christ rendered to the law all that satisfaction which justice required of us for our sins, and all that obedience which it could demand, so that **Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to us,** (Rom. x. 4) and so that the law can ask no more of us.

But this fellowship and knowledge of it is experimental. When the commandment comes, when God speaks the law to us and shows us its spirituality, we feel the weight of sin laying upon us, and the sentence of **death** as justly standing against us, and we feel a submission to it, though we are led, we know not how, to cry for mercy. It is true we have at this time no idea of fellowship with Christ nor with any other in our condemnation. It is that we feel our own sins, and for ourselves we feel the sentence of death just, whoever else may be saved. We think our case peculiar in guilt. Beyond this we cannot know only by faith our fellowship in the sufferings of Christ. We were bound and laid upon the altar as Isaac was, and the sword of justice was drawn ready to

inflict the fatal blow; but God had himself provided the Lamb for sacrifice which we knew not of. Thence the hand is stayed, and faith given us to behold Christ as the Lamb of God substituted in the sinner's stead. Christ could not have the cup pass from him, could have no substitute, he must pay the penalty; he was the Shepherd, the Husband, the Head, the Life, to whom the law of right looked for satisfaction. When enabled to believe, we see that Christ is the way of acceptance with God, and not our obedience to the law, that Christ has borne the penalty of the law, and that the law is satisfied, and that God is just in pardoning and justifying sinners through Christ. We know that we are sinners, and that Christ died for sinners, and therefore hope for being saved through him. We then knew not for ourselves our oneness with Christ as Husband, Head, &c., and therefore knew not our fellowship with his sufferings, and may not to this day, and therefore, like Paul, desire to know this fellowship. Yet we feel sensibly the effects of this fellowship. The demands and curses of the law are as completely hushed toward us as though we had borne the penalty ourselves; we cannot bring ourselves to feel that they are standing against us; and we are thus justified by faith in that we feel a reliance on Christ's righteousness as sufficient ground for our justification before God, and with confidence plead it, for our acceptance at the throne of grace.

"Being made conformable unto his death." Paul speaks of this as a consideration in his knowing the fellowship of Christ's sufferings. We read in Rom. vi. 10, "For in that he died, he died unto sin once; but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God." In verse 11, Paul thus exhorts the saints, "Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord." There is brought to view a conformity unto Christ's death. This being made conformable unto his death, is an important consideration in our knowing our fellow-

ship in his sufferings; for without this, if we had the assurance that we are pardoned and justified through Christ, Satan and our natural propensities might lead to indulge our corruptions more than we do. The believer is dead to sin so far as relates to its dominion — that is destroyed — but its indwelling continues, the old man is corrupt in his deeds. We almost constantly feel the workings of these corruptions, excepting when under the immediate influence of faith and the love of God. We not only feel the workings of these corruptions within, but also often feel a strong inclination to yield to them, and do too much indulge in them. Yet there is in the believer a principle of holiness, of love to God, which leads him to loathe and abhor all these workings of corruption within him. Thence he, like Paul, desires to be made conformable unto Christ's death. "If by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead." That is, as I understand it, that he might attain to that perfect incorruptibility or freedom from depravity and its workings, in which the bodies of the saints will be raised. See verse 11 compared with verses 12, 13 and 14, as justifying these views.

Sister Bagg also asks whether the fellowship, or Christian fellowship, as spoken of anciently, was limited to contributions, &c. I think not, as spoken of in the Scriptures. I know of but one instance wherein the word occurs in the Scriptures, in which it is applied to the ministering to the wants of the poor saints, viz.: 2 Cor. iii. 4. This contributing to the necessities of the poor saints at Jerusalem was an expression of fellowship, it was an act of participating with them in temporal things. The disciples being together and having all things common, Acts ii. 44 and 45, comes up to the full import of the word fellowship as referring to temporal affairs. But I do not find it used in that case. "Fellowship in the gospel," as found Phil. i. 5, refers evidently to the Phillipian brethren being equally partakers with others of the gospel and its

privileges, graces, &c. The apostles at Jerusalem giving to Barnabas and Paul the right hand that they should go to the heathen, was an impression by which they recognized them, though they were preaching to the heathen, as fellow-laborers in the gospel of Christ; it was called by Paul the right hand of fellowship, Gal. ii. 9. The term fellowship as found in Acts ii. 42, does not, I think, refer directly to contributing or mutually sharing in temporal things, for that is expressly mentioned in verses 44 and 45, as a distinct circumstance. This fellowship as well as the doctrine, is called the Apostles'. The text reads thus:

"And they continued steadfast in the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread," &c. The Apostles stood in the first gospel church and fully represented it in its visible form. Thence verse 41: "And the same day there were added with them about three thousand souls," is the same as though it was said, "They were added to the church," &c. And as they were added as members in particular of the one body, the church, they were received as fellows, or mutual participants in the privileges, duties and persecutions, &c., with the Apostles; that is, with the church as the church, not in the peculiar gifts and station of the Apostles as such. Thus in continuing steadfast in the fellowship, they continued according to their stations or places, in the church, to be mutual participants with the Apostles or church in the labors, toils, self-denials and afflictions incident to being disciples of Christ, as well as the privileges, ordinances, and consolations belonging to it. This is what I understand to be implied by the term church fellowship, as used by O. S. Baptists to this day. And we recognize a fellowship with churches and their members, as being churches of the same faith and order, &c., with us. We may and sometimes do, express fellowship for persons, as believing them to be mutual partakers with us of regeneration, and of the doctrine and hopes of the gospel, whilst we have not

church fellowship with them, because they have not been added to the church to walk in its ordinances and orders. And the terms brother and brethren as used in the New Testament, and correctly by O. S. Baptists, is expressive of fellowship, as we thereby recognize them as children of the same heavenly family.

I have thus given Sister Bagg the above as being my views on the subjects she proposed. She will, of course, test them by the Scriptures before she receives them as her views.

Yours in love,
S. Trott

(From the Signs of the Times of July 1, 1858.)

OBITUARIES

SISTER MOLLIE McCLANAHAN

God in his infinite wisdom has taken from us our dearly beloved and faithful sister, Mollie McClanahan, aged 89, of Lanaham, W. Va. She died after an extended illness at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Bertha Thomas, on October 10, 1960.

She united with Hopewell Primitive Baptist Church, of Kanawha County, W. Va., on October 2, 1949, and was baptized by Elder Harvey Bird. She was blessed with many deep and beautiful experiences in her travels, both before and after uniting with the church. She was faithful in attendance of her home church and those of neighboring communities; and was most happy when visiting those of like faith, where her conversation was ever of the blessed Lord and his Bride, and what He has, and is, doing for his chosen ones; who are saved by his grace alone. That she was a blessed Mother in Israel is our sincere conviction and hope.

She is survived by four daughters and four sons: Mrs. Bertha Thomas, of Lanaham; Mrs. Della Robinson, Mrs. Dorothy McClanahan, and Mrs. Maysel Vance, of Charleston, W. Va.; Brady, Anthony, and James, of Lanaham, and Roy, of Diamond, W. Va. Also by one sister, Mrs. Fanny Turley, Nitro, W. Va.; eighteen grandchildren and twenty-one great grandchildren.

Her funeral was conducted at Hopewell Church by Elders J. C. Hammond and Harvey Bird; and interment was in McClanahan Cemetery by the side of her husband, the late Sam

McClanahan. The many floral offerings were a tribute to the memory of her gracious presence among us. She will be greatly missed by her family and friends, and we of the church. May we be given strength to say, "Thy will be done."

Nanna M. Carney, Clerk Hopewell Church

GERTRUDE WALTON KER

Inasmuch as it pleased our God to take from our midst our dear and beloved sister, Gertrude Walton Ker, on December 19, 1960, at the age of seventy-six, we bow in humble submission to his will.

Sister Ker was born September 27, 1884, the daughter of the late Thomas B. and Harriett Hall Walton, of Pocomoke City, Maryland; and was the widow of the late Elder H. Claude Ker, who died in 1946. After the death of Elder Ker, she, being in bad health, lived with her two sisters, Miss Bertha and Miss Wilhelma A. Walton, and also one brother, B. Fuller Walton, of Pocomoke City; who survive.

She was baptized in the fellowship of the Little Creek Church, of the Salisbury Association, on July 15, 1934, by her late husband; and she remained a faithful member of that church until death. She always accompanied Elder Ker to the meetings; and the writer can see now her pleasant smile when greeting the brethren and her many friends. We feel that she had spent her allotted time here, and believe that our loss is her eternal gain.

Funeral services were conducted by the writer, assisted by Mr. Perry Ellis, Pastor of the New School Baptist Church of Pocomoke City. Interment was made in the Old School Baptist Cemetery at Snow Hill, Maryland.

Arthur R. Warren

ANNIE SMACK

At it pleased our Heavenly Father to take from our midst by death our dear beloved sister, Annie Smack, on January 5, 1961, we bow in humble submission to his holy will.

Sister Smack was born January 17, 1862, the daughter of the late Bassett and Julia A. Payne. She was united in marriage to the late Isaac Smack; and to this union were born two sons: Calvin Smack, Berlin, Md., and James Smack, Houston, Delaware; who survive her. She had made her home with James for many years.

Early in life she was given a hope in Christ, and asked for a home in the Indiantown Church, of the Salisbury Association, and was baptized by the late Elder T. M. Poulsen, and

remained a faithful member until death; but was unable to attend the meetings for many years because of ill health. The writer was privileged to visit her many times in the past few years, and always found her anxious to hear someone speak of the grace and mercies of her eternal God.

Funeral services were conducted by the writer at the Burbage Funeral Home, Berlin, Maryland; and she was laid to rest in the River Side Cemetery, near Berlin.

Arthur R. Warren

JOHN H. MILES

It is with a sad heart that I write a few words in memory of my dear father, John H. Miles, who died suddenly at his home in Lakeland, Florida, November 8, 1960. He was born in Fayette County, Alabama, December 17, 1877, making his age 83 years. He was the son of Robert and Monica Miles; and was married in 1909 to Miss Anna Lee Pass, who died in February, 1924. Six children were born to this union, five of whom survive: Mrs. Ben Cothern, Lakeland; Mrs. Virginia Moseley, Jacksonville; Mrs. John P. Craig, Tampa; J. Holland Miles, Lakeland; and Robert L. Miles, Shreveport, La. One son, William, died in 1925 at the age of seven years. He is survived also by 14 grandchildren and two great grandchildren; and by six sisters.

Papa moved from Alabama to Florida in 1896, with his parents; where he made his home the remainder of his life. He was baptized by the late Elder M. L. Gilbert into the Old Baptist Church in 1902. He lived a faithful life to his convictions of the Old Baptist doctrine of predestination, election and salvation alone by the grace of God. He was ready at all times to give a reason of the hope he had in Christ Jesus as his Saviour; and though he would only say that he had a hope, to those who knew him, there is no doubt he is at rest with his Saviour. He was a loving husband, father and brother, and always ready to help and advise those he loved.

It was sad to have to give him up, and there is an aching void, but we believe God who does all things well, and works all things after the counsel of his own will, fulfilled his purpose with our loved one. He was a firm believer in the resurrection of the body, and I know that in that day when the Lord shall descend in all his glory, that his body will be raised from the tomb, formed and fashioned like unto the glorious body of the Son of God; to ever be with his dear Saviour and the saints of God in that beautiful city prepared from the foundation of the world for the heirs of promise.

Papa was laid to rest in Mt. Tabor cemetery, near Lakeland, by the side of his dear com-

panion. Funeral service was conducted by Elder I. C. Davis, of Plant City, before a large gathering of relatives and friends. The large array of beautiful flowers was an expression of the high esteem in which he was held. He often expressed the desire that he would leave this world suddenly, and his prayer was granted. Though it leaves us with a broken and sad heart, we desire grace to be reconciled, and to say, "Thy will, Oh, God, be done, and not ours."

May the peace and love of God, which alone can come from Jesus, be with his children and loved ones, as they journey through this life, is my prayer for Christ's sake. Amen. Written by his son.

Robert L. Miles

MRS. EUNICE McNEILL

God in his infinite wisdom, love and mercy has seen fit to remove from our midst our beloved wife, Eunice McNeill, of Water Valley, Kentucky. She was born March 28, 1896, and died February 24, 1960, the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. W. L. Morris, of Pilot Oak, Graves County, Kentucky. She was united in marriage to Bernie McNeill April 23, 1922, who, with two daughters, survive: Mrs. La Dean Pryor, Mayfield, Ky., and Mrs. Armacilla McMichael, Arlington, Virginia; and by one granddaughter, three sisters and three brothers.

She united with the Primitive Baptist Church at South Mt. Zion, Graves County, Ky., where she lived a faithful member. She was baptized by Elder O. W. Perkins, of Mayfield, Ky.

By her husband

Sister McNeill was a firm Old Baptist, and enjoyed the fellowship of her brethren and sisters. Brother and Sister McNeill's home was a very pleasant home to visit; they did everything possible to make the Baptists welcome. She will be greatly missed among the Old Baptists by those who knew her; for to know her was to love her.

Sister McNeill died in the Mayfield Hospital, and her funeral was conducted by the writer at Byrns Funeral Home, in Mayfield, in the presence of a large congregation of sorrowing brethren and friends; and she was laid to rest in a new cemetery, Southwest of Mayfield on number 45 highway, there to await the call of her Master to awake from the dead in the image of her Saviour, and see him as he is.

I feel she was a consecrated and faithful soldier of the cross; she fought a good fight,

kept the faith, and received her discharge; and fell asleep in Jesus, where whatever the length may be, it will only be a night of sweet and undisturbed rest. And the same one that gave her hope, will come to call her from the grave, never more to die.

May God in his love and mercy reconcile her husband and two daughters, that their loss is her eternal gain.

O. W. Perkins

MAY MORRIS

On December 22, 1958, after a lengthy illness, our beloved sister, May Morris, was called from her earthly house to her eternal home.

Sister May, daughter of Robert F. and Rosa L. Morris, was born March 5, 1882, in Wicomico County, Maryland, where she lived her entire life. She was never married, and is survived by a brother, John L., and a sister, Ida Morris, both of Salisbury, Maryland; and by a number of nephews and nieces.

Nearly forty years ago, Sister May was blest with a strong conviction that salvation is of the Lord, and a precious faith and hope that the Lord Jesus Christ was delivered for her offences, raised again for her justification, and exalted to the right hand of the Father, there to appear in the presence of God for her. By reason of this, she was made to desire a resting place among the Lord's people here in this world. She made known this desire to the Nassaongo Old School Baptist Church, and was received and baptized on September 30, 1923, by the late Elder J. C. Mellott. Later she moved her membership to the Salisbury Church, where she remained one of its most faithful and devoted members; never missing her meetings unless providentially hindered. She delighted in doing things for the Church, often unknown to anyone. Truly she followed her Saviour's instruction: "Let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth." She once told the writer that her greatest pleasure was in serving her Church.

A final service was held at the Hill and Johnson Funeral Home on December 24, 1958, by Elder W. D. Griffin; who spoke with power, humility, and sweetness of the Saviour she loved and worshiped. Her mortal body was laid away to await the coming again of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, when he shall appear a second time without sin unto salvation to raise the dead in Christ. May we who miss her presence so keenly, be enabled to "comfort one another with these words."

Written at the request of her relatives and pastor, by one who loved her for own and Christ's sake.

Mildred Dykes

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 129

DANVILLE, VA., MAY, 1961

NO. 5

"CHOOSING RATHER"

(Hebrews 11:25, 27)

Choosing rather afflictions with the suffering saints of old,
Than a life of ease and splendor, wealth, and luxury untold;
Than the glittering court of Egypt, all her good and pleasant things;
Than a name renown and honored in the palace of her kings.

Choosing rather as a wanderer in the desert lands of earth,
To forego all promised greatness in the country of his birth:
Looking for a better country, an unfading heavenly crown,
Courted no mortal's favor, feared no earthly monarch's frown.

Choosing rather, in His wisdom, Israel's God his guide to be,
He endured as in His presence whom no mortal eye can see;
Greater wealth by far esteeming the reproach of Christ below,
Than the vast imperial treasurers Pharoah's lordly court could show.

Choosing rather tribulations: Jesus, may such choice be mine,
Knowing 'tis the only pathway which doth heavenward incline.
As a pilgrim and a stranger may I sojourn here below,
Craving earnestly thy favour, seeking thy deep love to know.

Help me by thy gracious Spirit still the narrow way to choose;
Give me strength in all temptations sin's sweet morsals to refuse;
Make me able at thy bidding to endure reproach and shame,
Willing to relinquish all things for the love of thy dear Name.

Choosing rather all thou willest than my own rebellious way;
Knowing that my heart too often in forbidded paths would stray;
Trusting that the highest wisdom doth my portion here assign,
And will all life's bitter waters sweeten still with love divine.

Choosing rather thou should'st lead me than to walk in sin and pride;
Knowing thou abidest faithful to thine own, whate'er betide;
Knowing thou wilt never leave them: thy strong arm will hold them fast
Till thou bring them to thy presence — all their toil and suffering past.

Vera

(Selected from Gospel Standard, 1878)

THREE THOUSAND MILES FROM NEAREST OLD SCHOOL MEETING

Box 53
Okanagan Centre
British Columbia
Canada

Dear Elder Wood:

Ever since I met you and Sister Wood at the June Meeting in Canada in 1956, and heard you preach the unsearchable riches of Jesus Christ our Lord, I have wanted to write to you and tell you how really blessed of God I felt myself to be, that I was enabled to be there and listen to the wonderous word of God expounded in truth and sincerity by yourself, and Brother Warren (now Elder Warren), as well as by our own beloved pastor, Elder Ruston.

I wrote you a letter but did not feel worthy to send it, but I want you to know now that I did enjoy your preaching: the first and only time I've heard you. I made special note of your texts: . . . I was fed and comforted by your sermons, and also stirred up. How good a stirring-up is at times! makes one cast glances inward; and, in my case, shows only the blackness of sin and deceit, and causes a, "Certain fearful looking for of judgment." (Hebrews 10:27)

How far down in doubt and despair

we can get at times; and how much comfort comes to our hearts with the slightest renewal of hope!

It is now more than forty-five years since Elder Durand baptized me in Winnipeg on one of his visits out West; and, contrary to my expectations, I am no better now than at that time. But the little hope I have had, and the love of God's people I have felt for over sixty years, is more precious to me than all the riches of the world. "Intreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee."

How I wish I could remember your sermons, and all the good preaching I have heard in years past; but they are all like good meals: We are refreshed at the time, but soon forget them, and grow hungry again for more good food. Fresh mercies, and comfort, and help, are needed daily: the manna will not keep over.

In 1915 a small church was formed in Winnipeg, and we had meetings for some time, but of the twelve members of that church, three now survive: my wife and I away out here at the West coast, and her brother, Gilbert McColl, still in Winnipeg. There are no meetings near us, and as the Ontario churches are three thousand miles from here, we do not get there very often; though we were able to be at one of their meetings in 1958, when Elder Denson was expected, but through illness, was not able to continue his journey there. So the only preaching we get between these rare occasions, is what we receive regularly each month when the Signs comes to us with good editorials and comforting letters from dear ones who love the truth; and in their writings tell of my own experience and feelings better than I can tell them myself. Often my heart goes out to them in love, and I deeply regret my inability to write these dear ones, to tell them how much good they have done me.

"Voices of the Past", is good reading, and I hope you will be able to continue these good pieces. Elder Gilbert Beebe and Elder W. L. Beebe were both before

my time; but I heard Elder McConnell more than once. Elder Ker and Elder Chick were frequent visitors to our home in my younger days. The editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe, and your own preceding it, were both especially good and timely in these troublesome times the world is passing through. . . . We are admonished to remember that, "All power is of God; the powers that be are ordained of God. Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers." (Romans 13) "Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord." (Exodus 14:13)

It is my prayer that God may bless you, and all the editors of the Signs, and sustain you by his grace, so that our paper may continue to come to us regularly with the sweet messages of truth and love, as in the past. I am enclosing five dollars to renew my subscription, and two dollars to help the Indigent Fund.

I had almost forgotten to tell you that a letter addressed to you from Mr. Gosden, Sussex, England, enquiring of any Old School Baptists in Vancouver, was sent to us by Sister Ruston in 1958. I forwarded the letter to my brother in Vancouver, and he visited with Mr. and Mrs. Gosden on a couple of occasions at the home of their daughter there. They did not visit us here or any one else in Canada that we know of.

A brother in hope,
James W. Black

ETERNAL SOVEREIGNTY

BY
ELDER R. W. RHODES

R. F. D. 3, Box 15
Lillie, La.

Dear and Precious Brethren:

I have a mind to write some on the very solemn, deep and mysterious subject of the Eternal Sovereignty of God in all things, which have been, which are, and which shall be. This is a most glorious subject: It is too high, I cannot

attain unto it. (Psalms 139:6)

To begin, I desire to quote Isaiah 14:24: "The Lord of hosts hath sworn, saying, surely as I have thought so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed so shall it stand." Seemingly most present day religious professors do not have any use for this great passage, nor for the great subject it so wonderfully treats upon; but I desire, if I know my heart, not only to give the full meaning of this great passage upon this subject, but I desire to see, feel and understand, and speak and teach the full meaning of all scripture. 2 Timothy 3:16, says, "All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness." Read also the last verse of the chapter.

We see from the last reference, that all Scriptures are equally important to the man of God. Oh dear brethren, how I do hope I am a man of God in the sense of this passage; and that I may be blessed of the Lord to profitably use and understand the sacred things contained in the Scriptures. The Lord said in Matthew 11:25, "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." Thus showing plainly that it is necessary that these things be revealed unto the Lord's little ones, even though they are written in the Bible.

Now referring to Isaiah 14:24: "The Lord of hosts hath sworn." What was it that the Lord of hosts swore to? "As I have thought so shall it come to pass." Do you think, dear reader, that God thought of all things? If not, then he was ignorant of everything that he did not think of. Could God be all wise, and at the same time be ignorant of anything? He thought, and swore that all things would come to pass just as he thought they would; and that is the way, and the only way, they do come to pass. He could not be all wise if anything came to pass differently to what he thought it would. The way He

thought it would come to pass, is the way that God purposed that it should stand.

Remember, precious brethren, that God thought and purposed everything just as it comes to pass; and just as it stands, He swore to it with an unchangeable oath. It is said that all things are possible with God, and that there is nothing impossible with him, except to lie: If everything does not come to pass as he thought, and as he purposed, then his oath is no good; and he could be tried for perjury, as men are tried. But not so with the holy God of Heaven, who declared the end from the beginning. (Isaiah 46:10; also read Isaiah 48: 3, 5, 7, 16) From all this, does it seem possible that anything ever has, or ever will, come to pass, except that which God thought, or that he had purposed to take place? His holy and all wise oath stands; and so does his eternal and holy purpose stand, just as he hath sworn.

No doubt there are those who would say that all things were not embraced in his oath. But this would imply that He was not all wise in his thought and purpose; then to the extent that he never thought of a thing which does come to pass, his oath is invalid, and his purpose also.

Now the Lord has sworn that as things come to pass, is the way he thought they would; and the way things stand, is the way he purposed them to stand. If his oath is good, that is the way they do come to pass. If they come to pass differently from the way he thought and purposed them to be, there is no dependence in any of his purposes, promises, or thoughts; and his sworn oath is increditable, and there is nothing to any of his teachings in the Bible.

Dear brethren and friends, I desire to show by the Bible that his precious oath has never failed, and that his thoughts are shown innumerable perfect, if we believe the Bible. In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth, and he said, "Let there be light, and there was light." You know,

God thought there would be light, or he could not have said it. It came to pass just as he thought and purposed that it would. "For he spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast." (Psalms 33:9) So then, according to this, just as he spake, commanded, and thought, so it stands. And that was what his holy and unfailing oath was: that as he thought, so should it come to pass; and as he purposed so should it stand.

We find that the Apostle Paul said in Romans 8:28, "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." Paul spoke by inspiration of God, and we have no doubt of its truth; then God must have thought and purposed all things as they have been, are, and shall be. According to the way he thought, and as he purposed them to be, that is the way all things stand: Through the mercy and grace of God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, to all his people. Inspiration in this and many other places in the Bible, includes all things. So there is absolutely nothing that was not covered by his oath; and there is nothing embraced in God's thought which he swore to, but comes to pass. What wonderful hope and consolation there is in his thought, oath, and purpose, to his people!

We find in Hebrews 6:13: "For when God made promise to Abraham, because he could swear by no greater, he sware by himself, saying, Surely blessing I will bless thee, and multiplying I will multiply thee." So we see that God in his holy thoughts, unchangeable purpose, and oath, revealed to Abraham long before it was fulfilled, that he was to have a son. God swore to this long in advance; and it was fulfilled to a jot and tittle. Even though Abraham and Sarah tried to use Hagar, the bond woman, to fulfill this promise, yet the Lord fulfilled it through the conception and birth of Isaac; which shows that it is impossible for humans to help fulfill God's sovereign promises.

We find also that God's oath is also mentioned in Hebrews 6:17, 18, to the precious assurance of the salvation of all his people. Here he is stated to be immutable, or unchangeable in his purpose and counsel, and confirmed it by an oath, (and it is stated that it is impossible for God to lie) that his people might have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before them. And they are given to flee from the vain confidence they have by nature in the works of the creature. So, we see that the salvation of all of God's people is also embraced in the immutable oath of God; and that they will be saved, and housed in heaven and immortal glory.

Not only this, but when Jesus was on earth, he thought and spoke many precious and assuring things concerning those he came to save. He said, "Fear not little flock for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." Then it was not dependent on what they did, or might do of their own volition. It is God the Father's good pleasure to give them the kingdom; it is the gift of God as he purposed it from the foundation of the world. In Matthew 25:34, Jesus says, "Come ye blessed of my Father inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." So it is in accord with his purpose and oath.

We find in Genesis 22:16-18, that the Lord swore to Abraham that his seed should be innumerable. So, as I see it, his seed included every individual who will inherit the kingdom of heaven. God's oath was that they should be innumerable; and, from the Bible, Jesus being a descendant of Abraham, all who are his are included in the wonderful and extensive promise and oath of God Almighty.

We also find that they were not only included in God's oath, and in his purpose, but we find in Matthew 25:34, that the kingdom of heaven was prepared for them from the foundation of the world; that the kingdom was for them who should inherit it, and was not

for any who should not inherit it. God's oath included all his people whom he thought, and promised that he would set them on his right hand; and call them to inherit the kingdom prepared for them from the foundation of the world. They, the sheep, are the only ones who will inherit it: they on his left hand, whom he calls goats, he commands them to depart into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels. (Matthew 25:41) So, here are two places prepared for somebody from the foundation of the world: All that the kingdom of heaven was prepared for will enter in and inherit it; and all who are called goats receive the very place prepared for them; as is completely stated in this reference. Then surely, surely, the Lord of hosts thought it would be that way; and surely his immutable oath is thoroughly fulfilled as he thought, and swore.

We find in Deuteronomy 7:8, that the Lord complied with his oath in the deliverance of the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt. Here he says, "But because the Lord loved you, and because he would keep the oath which he had sworn unto your fathers, hath the Lord brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you out of the house of bondmen, from the hand of Pharaoh, king of Egypt." So the Lord's thought, and his purpose, which he swore hundreds of years before, was completely fulfilled.

The Lord's thought, purpose, and oath designated long years before the children of Israel became bond servants in Egypt, just how long they would dwell in that bondage. It was 430 years. And the Lord sent Moses and powerfully delivered them out of bondage, and his mercy and grace towards them was gloriously manifested in their deliverance through the Red Sea, Israel walking through dry shod; while the Egyptians with their mighty chariots of war, attempting to follow them, were destroyed in the wrath and righteous judgment of God. As the Lord had thought and purposed, and prophesied long before, so he

fulfilled. (Read also Deuteronomy 13:17; 19:8; and 31:7)

We read in Psalms 89:3, "I have made a covenant with my chosen, I have sworn unto David my servant." So it is seen that God is on oath in regard to all things. And unless we charge God with ignorance, and with violation of his solemn oath, everything that has, or will, come to pass, was just as he thought and purposed, and swore; and so shall it stand. It is stated also that God worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, (Ephesians 1:11); so we find that not only did God think, purpose and swear, but in some deep, mysterious way, God works all things after the counsel of his will.

In Isaiah 45:23, it is written, "I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, That unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear." So it is shown that God's oath and thoughts embrace every individual who has ever lived upon this earth, or ever shall live upon it; and God has said that every one of them shall bow before him. He doeth 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?" (Daniel 4:35)

In Amos 8:7, we read: "The Lord hath sworn by the excellency of Jacob, Surely I will never forget any of their works." So it is sure that He will not forget.

In Acts 2:30, on this subject, we find, "Therefore being a prophet, and knowing 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." This shows the certainty of God in all of his thoughts, his purposes, and his oath, in reference to all things.

In Acts 7:17, it says, "But when the time of the promise drew nigh, which God had sworn to Abraham, the people grew and multiplied in Egypt." We can see from this that God's oath had not only embraced the circumstances, but his oath had also set the time for the

deliverance of Israel out of Egypt. It says also in Eccl. 3:1, "To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under heaven: a time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted; a time to kill, and a time to heal," etc., to the 9th verse. So it is seen that there is a set time of the Lord, and none can change the time God sets.

Now no doubt some will think: "How is it that God sets the time to kill?" Yet it is exactly what this above scripture says. God set the time for the crucifixion of his own dear Son; and the mighty ruler, Pilate, was not able to change the time set in God's holy purpose. Judas secured the 30 pieces of silver for the betrayal of the blessed Saviour at exactly the time that God had set; yet it was wickedness on the part of Judas, and of the rulers of the temple, and of Herod, and the Gentiles. Acts 4:27, 28, shows this subject in detail: "For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy hand and counsel determined before hand to be done." We see from this that the wicked crucifixion of Christ was also among the all things which were thought and purposed, and sworn to by the God of heaven — and the money Judas got was to buy the potters field. (Matthew 27:7)

Now God delivered up his Son to be crucified by wicked hands in the law-room and stead of his people; yet the wicked hands had desired in their hearts to kill him from his birth: Herod wanted to kill him, and sent forth and slew all the male children from two years and under, trying to make sure that he got Jesus, the son of Mary. But God knew the wicked heart of King Herod hundreds of years before, so by one of his prophets he told of it, saying, "Out of Egypt have I called my Son." And he stated also that he should be called a Nazarene: and Joseph was afraid of the

son of the dead king, and turned aside into the city, thus fulfilling the prophecy. (Matthew 2:28)

We notice a very remarkable point about the price Judas received for his betrayal of Jesus. Matthew 27:9, shows that the Lord knew, and had a purpose in the price of the betrayal; saying, "Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremy the Prophet, saying, And they took the 30 pieces of silver, the price of him that was valued, whom they of the children of Israel did value; and gave them for the potter's field, as the Lord appointed me." Now, dear reader, think of this: How marvelous it is; the price was thirty pieces of silver, since God thought and purposed it should be; and he also thought and purposed, and swore just what would be done with the thirty pieces: that it would buy the potter's field to bury strangers in. And the Prophet let us know who it was that appointed his prophesy concerning the price and disposal of the money Judas received.

I desire to quote from another prophet of the Lord on this subject, Zachariah 11:12, 13: "And I said unto them, If ye think good, give me my price; and if not, forbear. So they weighed for my price thirty pieces of silver. And the Lord said unto me, Cast it unto the potter: a goodly price that I was prised at of them. And I took the thirty pieces of silver, and cast them unto the potter in the house of the Lord." Now this was all very definite and specific, the prophet not only knew what the price was, but also what was to be done with it: To buy the potter's field. What for? to bury strangers in. And he also knew just where Judas would cast the pieces of silver — in the temple at Jerusalem. "As I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand." Dear reader, have you considered all these things? What a wonderful and glorious display of the Lord's wisdom, power and unchangeable purpose! What can we say? but to acknowledge his glorious and wonderous works in this perfect display of his counsel in all

things; because that is what his oath, thoughts, and purposes included.

Now in Matthew 26:34, Jesus told Peter, after Peter had said, "Though all men shall be offended because of thee, yet will I never be offended", "Verily I say unto thee, that this night, before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice." We believe that Peter was in good faith, and had no intention of denying the Lord; neither did any of the disciples believe they would forsake him. But Peter did deny him the exact number of times that Christ said. Jesus also knew the rooster would crow when he did; and I say that there was not power enough anywhere to intervene to prevent Peter from denying him; neither were there hawks enough to have kept the cock from crowing at the very time, just as Jesus said.

Nevertheless it was wrong and wicked in Peter to deny the Lord, but the Lord did not keep Peter from doing this great sin; however, he did give him a repentant spirit. And Peter went out, when the Lord turned and looked on him at the crowing of the cock, and wept bitterly. Why did Peter do it? Because Peter was not able to keep himself. The Lord saw fit to leave him to temptation, just as he did Job of old. It was for Peter's own good, and for the good and comfort of all the Lord's people; for he was an example to them when they are left to themselves. Jesus said in John 15:5, "For without me ye can do nothing." So the denial by Peter was the way the Lord thought, spoke, and purposed; and the cock fulfilled his part for the same reason.

(Concluded next month)

"EVERY GODLY DUTY: EVERY OBEDIENCE IS BY THE GRACE OF GOD"

"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God; to them who are the called according to his purpose." (Romans 8:28)

"For by him were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him." (Col. 1:16)

"Thou art worthy, O Lord, to receive glory and honor and power: for thou hast created all things; and for thy pleasure they are and were created." (Rev. 4:11)

There is no limit to the things that work for good to them who love God, and who are the called according to his purpose. Forasmuch as he created them for himself, he also created them for the whole family of God.

Sin is not a thing in the sense of creation: sin is the act of the creature in the transgression of the law. "Moreover the law entered that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded grace did much more abound: that as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord." (Romans 5:20, 21)

So we see that God had a purpose for sin entering into the world: That he might get unto himself glory and praise in saving his people from their sins. God is not the cause of sin, but he is permissive and over-ruling; and I believe that he over-rules all the sin that he does not see cause to take place. "Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain." (Psalms 76:10)

"Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man. But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away of his own lust, and enticed." (James 1:13, 14)

"That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ." (I Peter 1:7)

When I was younger, I never thought

that trials would ever be of any comfort to me: I only thought that the times of rejoicing would be worth looking back to for comfort. But the most bitter trial I have ever had proved to be just as precious to me as any part of my experience.

Yes, I rejoice today, knowing that I mourned in my youth; and I believe this mourning was with godly sorrow: And I still mourn much of my time, because I know I am vile; yet I am thankful for the knowledge of being acquainted with my depravity. I do not believe that any man, woman, or child, could possibly know that they are vile unless the light of the glory of God has shined in their hearts, showing them their condition. They are made to know that everything they are, or ever will be in being Christ-like; and every godly duty; and every obedience, is by the grace of God; and that it is God that works in us both to will and to do according to his good pleasure.

"He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord."

Humbly submitted by
(Elder) James R. Hollandsworth
R. F. D. 4, Box 364 C
Bassett, Virginia

Note to the Editors:

With the permission of the author, we present for publication in the Signs, the following explanation of the text, as quoted below.

Signed,
A Subscriber

"He that followeth after righteousness and mercy findest life, righteousness, and honour." (Proverbs 21:21)

The above quotation shows us the end results of him who follows after righteousness and mercy. Yes, there is a promise from God unto him who loves righteousness and mercy. Surely, no one will follow after righteousness and mercy that has no love for it. Then one may say well, He who follows after right-

eousness already has life. Yes, that is true. Dead people neither move nor think. A person who has no natural life does not have any natural thoughts nor perform any natural deeds. Likewise, a person who is dead, spiritually, does not do any spiritual deeds, nor think any spiritual thoughts.

Then, what did Solomon mean by this proverb? Before answering this question, let us consider what righteousness is, and what life is: Righteousness is that which is right; and life is that which animates, has feeling, and endurance.

When a poor sinner is made sensible of his sins and made to realize his ruined condition, he feels the sting of death in his soul; but really he is being made alive. He is awakened to feeling, animation, and understanding; but his soul has not yet experienced the cleansing power of the blood of Jesus Christ. (Experience is proven knowledge.) He has life but not the knowledge of the soul-cleansing blood of Christ.

Now, let us notice that Solomon said, "He who follows after righteousness and mercy." When a poor sinner is made to know something of how sinful he really is, he is also made to know of his helplessness. Therefore, he cries for mercy. Yes, "follows after mercy," feeling the sting of death in his soul; which causes him to beg God to have mercy upon him and allow him to live.

*"Show pity Lord, O Lord forgive,
And let a repenting sinner live."*

Yes, he who follows after righteousness and mercy findeth life. In the mercy of God, life is found by the sinner. He cannot find spiritual life in himself. Neither can he find life in the deeds of the law; but in God's mercy he finds life in Jesus Christ.

The realization of sin and a taste of mercy in Jesus Christ causes the poor sinner to follow further and further after mercy and righteousness. Paul tells us that Christ is made unto us righteousness. Therefore, the poor sinner is following after Jesus Christ when

he is following after righteousness. No one has ever followed after Christ that did not find him.

"No sinner has ever been empty sent back,
Who comes seeking mercy, for Jesus' sake."

Christ tells us that He is the life. Yes, he who finds Christ finds life, righteousness, and honour.

Through the mercy of God, life is found every day in Christ. We all sin, due to the weakness of our flesh; but the abundant mercy of God gives us renewed experience of the atoning blood of Christ, showing us that Christ is our Saviour and makes us whiter than snow in the sight of God.

Oh, how sweet is the experience of life in Jesus Christ to the poor sinner who follows after Jesus Christ! He is the light, the life, righteousness, sanctification, redemption, and our all and in all.

Yes, the day will come yonder, after a while, when the follower after righteousness and mercy will find the sweet experience of eternal life, honor, and glory, on the golden shore of heaven.

Now, may we all, who have been given a sweet hope in Jesus, follow on in faith, looking unto Jesus who is the author and finisher of our faith; praising God as we go: Amen.

(Elder) W. W. Taylor
1216 S. Brighton Ave.
Dallas 8, Texas

522 E. 18th Street
Houston 8, Texas

Dear Editors of the Signs:

I find it is time to renew my subscription to the Signs, so am enclosing money for 2 years renewal. I hope the Lord will bless me to read it the rest of my days, for I enjoy it so much. I feel that it is a blessing to the Lord's people to have the opportunity of reading such sound writing from the little ones. I hope I am one of them; although I feel so unworthy of their love and fellowship. But I believe that the Lord gives his people times of rejoicing in his love:

then, O how sweet it is to our souls.

Dear Brother Wood, I remember so well your and Sister Wood's visit with us and the church at Houston. Everyone enjoyed it so much; and the sweet messages that you and Brother Taylor brought. It just seemed that the house was filled with the Lord's presence; and everyone was rejoicing in this little church.

Oh, for a closer walk with God;
A calm and heavenly frame;
A light to shine upon the road,
That leads me to the Lamb.

May God bless and keep you, is my prayer for Christ's sake.

A little sister in hope,
Rhoda Kelley

THINGS BELIEVED AND THINGS NOT BELIEVED

Box 216
Mesilla Park, New Mexico

Dear Elder Wood:

For many years I have wanted to meet you, as I have read your writings in the Signs of the Times and I hope I have enjoyed them very much. I was in Virginia a few years ago, and thought that you would be at that association; but you were not, and I did not get to see you. I have met brethren Griffin, Lambert and Spangler, and heard them preach. I don't have time to go to meeting very often, as we live several hundred miles from any Old Baptist Church. We attended a meeting in central Texas about a year ago.

I received the Signs this morning. It is about the only preaching that I have the pleasure of having. I am very grateful for the work you brethren are doing with the Signs. It is a sound paper, and I have just finished reading it, and enjoyed the articles very much, and I always look forward to its coming.

There are many views taught by the so called Old Baptists; and even among the Predestinarian Primitive Baptists there is quite a difference on several points of doctrine. When I run into this

it causes me to wonder and doubt as to whether I know anything about any of the teachings of the Scriptures or not. I have been with the Old Baptists about 40 years, and have traveled from one end of the country to the other to hear and witness what the Old Baptist believe. Some believe in eternal children; some believe in the two seed doctrine; some don't believe in the resurrection; some believe that man has something about him that is spiritual that is born again; some believe that it is the whole man that is born again; and there are many views on predestination. As to salvation by grace, we teach and believe this; and most of the Baptists are agreed. I find many times when you hear someone preach and quote scripture, that unless you talk with them directly, we may think we see the scriptures alike.

I will mention some of the things I believe; and some that I don't believe: I believe in the predestination of all things, not just some of them; and I don't believe that this causes God to be the author of sin. I don't believe there is any power except it comes from God. I believe that God created all things for himself and by himself; I believe that Satan is one of those things, and performs according to the purpose of God. I don't believe that Adam and Eve were created sinners, but were weak and subject to all the things they did: they were not condemned until they violated the law of God. I don't believe that they were created with anything about them that was spiritual or eternal: they were natural, and the life they possessed was given them and it was not everlasting but timely.

I don't believe that the Scriptures teach that there are rules laid down in the Scriptures whereby man could or can comply with, and relieve himself of condemnation. I believe that the Old Scriptures teach the coming of Christ, and only the elect were able to see them as such. I don't believe that man eternally existed — only in the mind and purpose of God. I believe all Scriptures were

written by men of old as they were led by the Spirit of God, and they are for our learning, and theirs. I don't believe that Christ eternally existed — only as God: He was with God and was God. I believe that he was verily God and verily man; as God he always existed. Christ was the first born among many brethren, he was as we are, sin excepted. God and man coming together brought about a cross, which we also bear if so be that we have been born from above. I believe he came and was both God and man, and that he lived, died, and arose that he might make perfect the chosen of God.

I believe that salvation is by the grace of God, and is not merited by man, but is a free gift — even as all the things we give our children are without price. I believe all of Adam's race who were ordained to eternal life are quickened into spiritual life and born into the heavenly family. Birth is a deliverance, not a production. The natural child inherits all the things that he is from his parents, and he bears the likeness of both parents, which also is a cross being both parents in one child. God being a spirit quickens whom he will. Quickening, I believe, means the same as conception; in both cases life begins for the thing quickened or conceived. As we convey our life to our children in conception, so do we receive spiritual life when we are quickened or made alive spiritually; and as we have borne the image of the natural man, so shall we bear the image of the heavenly. In the new birth we become two men, the natural and the spiritual, even as He was both natural and spiritual. The heavenly family is all of one, and in the resurrection shall be one, as Christ and his Father are one.

In the new birth we become heirs and joint heirs with Christ; he is our elder Brother. All who were before time ordained to eternal life compose the bride the Lamb's wife, or the church of God: Christ being the Bridegroom. In olden times the husband did not choose his bride, but she was chosen

by the father. "Thine they were, and gavest them me." The bride that was given the Son was natural, and became unclean in all her parts; but this Groom, who loved them, gave himself for their cleansing, making them white as snow. This cleansing was everlasting, and no blemishes shall ever appear against them; for his family is as perfect as He is perfect.

Now we have taken on a new man, which is Christ, while still possessing the old, which is nothing and less than nothing, and altogether vanity; although we have a perfect being and offering standing between us and God. This brings about a strange condition. "Whoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him; and he cannot sin because he is born of God." I will say here that there is no difference in the natural man; but there is a quickening power and birth from above: the one is natural and timely, the other having eternal life. Christ is our perfection, life, hope, resurrection, faith, brotherly love, and all there is to the family of God. Of ourselves we can do nothing. Being two is the cause of our trouble here in this life: On the one hand, we are even as He is; on the other, we are nothing and less than nothing.

The family of God bears his image, also the image of the natural. The image of the heavenly is what we love, and it is this image we have fellowship for. It is the Christ side of us that causes us to pray, and causes us to see ourselves as we are, and to trust in Him for all the blessings that come our way. The Son did not boast of himself, much more do we see our brethren giving God all the honor and glory. Boasting is excluded: even in nature we cannot boast as to what we are, for we know we are what we inherited from our natural parents. We were not consulted in the matter at all.

For a long time I have desired that someone would write on the New Birth, and if you have a mind to write on the subject, I would appreciate it.

The lack of faith, and my unbelief, bother me more than anything else: When things become dark for me, I find myself wanting to feel after Him, but He is not there. But, when least expected, it seems I am filled with that light and truth that men cannot know of themselves. Brother Wood, if I am not deceived, I have had the pleasure of sitting and being filled to overflowing of the good things that were given the preaching brethren to convey to His children. How wonderful this is! I believe at these times His children are nearest to that which we hope for, than any other time in this life. I hope this has been my experience; then again I have doubts and fears that almost overcome me. If it were not that we are kept by the power of God ready to be revealed in the last time, we would sell our birth-right for a mess of pottage. Am I wrong? Don't we often have to say with the apostles, "To whom shall we go?"

I love sinners who confess they are sinners saved by the grace of God. No one knows the darkness, and how vile he is, until the brightness of the Son of God has shined into his very being: This light will show him up. I am a stranger and pilgrim, looking forward to that city whose maker and builder is God.

May the God of all hope bless the Editors of the Signs with love and wisdom to continue to declare the whole counsel of God, to the edifying and strengthening of His children. I remain yours

Whose hope is in Christ the Lord,
James A. Bell

THOUGHTS ON DEATH

"And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them." (Revelation 14:13)

"Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." (Psalms 116:15)

"He shall deliver thee in six troubles: yea, in seven there shall no evil touch thee." (Job 5:19)

"The Lord will strengthen him upon the bed of languishing: Thou wilt make his bed in all his sickness." (Psalms 41:13)

When I was a child I dreaded death, and wanted to live as long as possible, so as to put off that horrible time. In my childish way I tried to pray for a long life. I did not know there were many precious promises of God to those who were precious in his sight; that He had promised to be with them to the end; and that He had gone through the door of death and the grave, and removed the sting and terror. He went before us in all the trials we are to travel through; and is still with us, but we cannot realize it all the time. But when He comes in the person of the Comforter, we can see and feel his presence and love; and can rejoice that "it is good to be afflicted," for without it, we could not rejoice in his presence, and his support in trials. "As our days so shall our strength be," for our strength is in him, and not in ourselves.

Having never passed through death, I do not know what it will be; and what terrors I may feel if Satan is allowed to tempt and harrass me, and I not have the presence of Jesus. I am giving my views according to the teaching of the Scriptures, what I have read of Christian experience, and what I have experienced in afflictions and tribulations: As the saint gets nearer to death, Jesus is dearer to him; and the desire grows to leave this world, to live with Him. When I was suffering, I felt weaned from the world: Felt that I was being drawn from nature, I hoped, towards God and heavenly things. I rejoiced I was not the rich man I had planned to be, but a beggar all my life; learning time and again that I am not

my own keeper; and that if God had not kept me, I long ago would have been doomed to everlasting torment.

These seasons of drawing, and joy in him, were so sweet — above all earthly joys — I wanted to be drawn closer. Worldly things vanished, and I forgot death and its terrors. I look at death as just a door through which we pass from the darkness, sinfulness, cold, trials, etc., of this world, into the light of heaven, and joys of the Lord. I do not mean that we walk through this door. We are carried through. If we walked through, we might have something of which to boast. But Jesus does all the work; and all praise belongs to him. He said, "I in you, you in me, and I in the Father." So he is with us as we pass from this life, and there is nothing to fear. He is the "Way, the Truth, and the Life," then can we not safely say, He is the door? Satan may follow to the door, but no further.

Here is what Mr. Philpot said in 1858: "And more wondrous still, "death", the last enemy, the king of terrors, who makes the strongest tremble and the stoutest heart quake; that too is yours, if you be Christ's. Death is not your enemy, if you are Christ's, but your friend. He may, indeed, in the dim and distant prospect seem to come in the guise of an enemy; you may dread the thought of his approach, and may even sink down with fear how it may be with you in that solemn hour. But, if you are Christ's, death is yours as well as life; for He has abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light. Death, then, cannot harm you, because Christ died for you. Death will merely cause your poor body to drop into the ground, whilst, it will open to your soul the everlasting door through which the King of Glory, the Lord mighty in battle, entered as your forerunner when He went to prepare a place for you."

Mr. Philpot did not here mention the resurrection of the body, but he was a strong believer in this important sub-

ject. If the body is not raised, and the sinner is not conformed to the image of Jesus in the resurrection, where would there be any joy in heaven over the salvation of sinners? The body is buried; the spirit is carried to be with Jesus. This spirit is the Holy Ghost dwelling in us to lead us in the way, the truth, and the life. Jesus said, "I am the way", etc.; then it is he that dwells in us to lead us out of the world, to love and worship him. This spirit that dwells in us is pure, has never sinned, and needs no redemption. It is that which has sinned, and dies, that will be resurrected; and will bear the image of the heavenly. The mortal must put on immortality; being sown in corruption, it will be raised in incorruption. It is sown a natural body; it will be raised a spiritual body. It is the hope and assurance of *the sinner* that he will be conformed to the image of Jesus in the resurrection.

It is needless to try to describe eternity: not one saint, while in the flesh, can do so. Paul could not tell what he saw and felt in the third heaven. But we know by the little glimpses that have been given us to help us over the sorrowful way, that it is far more than we will see in this world; for we cannot see God and live. Dear trembling child, you will not fear death, for Jesus has been there, and will be with you. I felt impressed to write this on hearing a devoted, severely afflicted sister, say she feared death. Grace be multiplied to all Israel.

Hoping in this resurrection,
Geo. W. Jackson
1884 Connally Drive,
East Point, Ga.

1700 Morey Avenue
Hamilton, Ohio

My Dear Brother Spangler:

Enclosed is the obituary of my sister, Mrs. Mellie Z. Wilt, and it is hoped you will print it in the *Signs of the Times*. I am fully aware it is a bit leng-

thy, and much of the content is of local interest and intended for the hearer at the time of Mellie's funeral. It will be appreciated if you can use it as enclosed.

Knowing that all this is an additional cost to the printing of the *Signs*, I am enclosing a check for five dollars to be used as you desire in the name of Mrs. Mellie Z. Wilt.

On my way to my sister's funeral, seventy miles from here, I drove through a graveyard of Old School Baptist Churches. Nine or more just along the route we traveled. Then, back in my home county, Fayette, there were five Old School Baptist Churches in the days of my youth. Indeed, I have preached in each of them. Why was the candlestick removed? Ichabod!

It wasn't their doctrine that destroyed them. The most of them had preachers of more than average ability. I believe I can put my finger on the cause — it was the desire for self aggrandizement and self appointed leadership. What a mess we preachers have made of our stewardship.

My health is not good. I am under the constant care of both my doctor of internal medicine and my surgeon in urology. As I have so often said, "I don't know what the future holds, but I do know *who* holds the future."

In Christian bonds,
Eldon A. Huchison

SENDS THE SIGNS TO THE ELDER

Minco, Oklahoma
R. F. D. 3,

Dear Brethren and Editors:

I am attempting something I have wanted to do for a long time, but have waited, hoping I would be given to know how. In this inability I hope I have been given to feel my unworthiness.

. . . The greatest comfort I have had, was in listening to Elder O. V. Ray, of Homnie, Oklahoma, while he was

preaching the tender mercies of our God. Truly he has been raised up that those who have been taught of the Spirit should be drawn to him. Listening to him in the latter part of his sermons, is like having a letter read from heaven. He is aged, and worn of the trials of this life; and his dear companion is aged too, and has an heart condition.

I want to send the Signs of the Times to them, as I believe it would be a comfort and a joy to them, since they are confined more at home than they have been. We hope the Lord will bless them, and speed her recovery, that they may resume their regular meetings. I am enclosing \$3.00, for which please send the Signs to them.

George B. Loyd

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE
INDIGENT FUND
(To March 1, 1961)

Joe Hamrick, Texas.....	\$ 1.00
Grace Hohan, Conn.....	3.00
Mrs. M. L. Lucas, Ala.....	10.00
Miss Ada Brock, Texas.....	5.00
Mrs. J. J. Minyard, Miss.....	2.00
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Mrs. Bernice P. Bailey, Va.....	5.00

DELAWARE ASSOCIATION

The DELAWARE ASSOCIATION will be held with the Welsh Tract Church, Newark, Delaware, on the 2nd Sunday in May, and Saturday before, the Lord willing.

Brethren and friends are cordially invited to meet with us.

Rees S. Jarmon, Clerk

THE DELAWARE RIVER ASSOCIATION

The DELAWARE RIVER ASSOCIATION is appointed to be held, the Lord willing, with the church at Hopewell, N. J., on June 7 and 8, 1961.

An invitation is extended to those of our faith and order, who are in order at home, to meet with us. All friends will be welcomed.

Letha A. Blackwell, Clerk,
Lafayette Street, Rosa Acres,
Hopewell, N. J.

UPPER COUNTRY LINE
UNION MEETING

The UPPER COUNTRY LINE UNION MEETING is appointed to be held with the church at Prospect Hill the fifth Sunday in May. Those coming from Danville will take Route 86 South to Prospect Hill School, and turn left at the school; from Durham take Route 86 at Hillsboro North to Prospect Hill School, and turn right; from Burlington take Route 49 to Route 86 to the school, and turn right; and from Roxoboro take Route 49 to Prospect Hill, and Route 86 right to the school, and turn right.

Brethren and friends are invited to meet with us.

H. F. Blalock,
Prospect Hill, N. C.

OUR APPRECIATION

We appreciate the continued response we are receiving to our request for new subscribers, and hope the brethren and friends will continue their efforts. We receive new subscriptions each day. The supply of books we were sending to those securing new subscribers are exhausted, but we are keeping a file, and will send them later. Have you mentioned the *Signs* to a friend?

Danville, Virginia

May, 1961

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TO

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 Route 5, Box 332F Danville, Va.

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
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 IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
 IS 5/61
 IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

THE SIGNS ARE NOT ALL EVIL

It is with much pleasure that we are receiving many articles, experiences, etc. for publication. It does us good to see evidences of increasing interest in the things for which the *Signs of the Times* has long stood; and when brethren write of their good meetings, our joy is increased. Surely the signs of the times are not all evil for the children in these days, but that God's mercies and longsufferings are yet in evidence. God did not leave himself without a witness in olden days; nor will he in these days. We believe that the spirit

of prayer and supplication continues to be with us, and that God is "not far from every one of us."

J. D. W.

EDITORIAL

ONE MEDIATOR

"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." (Hebrews 8:6)

"For there is one God, and one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus." (I Timothy 2:5)

The subject of the mediatorship of Jesus is deep and sublime. It involves the grace and mercy of God towards those who have sinned against him, who, consequently, deserve only the judgment and wrath of God. The coming of Jesus into the world was plainly an act of mercy on the part of the Father. For Jesus becoming the Saviour and Redeemer of God's people, and the mediator between Him and these people, was certainly initiated by the Father. The condition of men was such that they could not in any way begin negotiations with God; so, if God had not been pleased to take note of them in mercy, they should have always remained in their state of condemnation and death.

In this writing we are to consider the fact that Jesus is the Mediator — the one Mediator between God and man; and that he is the mediator of a better covenant.

The meaning of the word "mediator" is: One who is a go-between; one who acts with the purpose of bringing agreement between persons at odds; etc. This has its usefulness in many walks of life, such as, between employers and employees; or between friends who have had a misunderstanding. But the most wonderful and far reaching sense of mediatorship is Christ Jesus between God and God's sinning people.

It is easy to understand that a suc-

cessful mediator must necessarily be qualified to meet both sides on equality with them; and he must be thoroughly acquainted with the situation on both sides. How eminently qualified was Jesus! He was **one with the Father**; and, being incarnate, he was **one with the people**. "I and my Father are one." (John 10:30) ". . . in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people." (Hebrews 2:17)

It is evident, since Jesus said that he came to do the will of him that sent him, that everything Jesus came to do — and which he did — was the thought of his Father. In this there was, of course, perfect oneness of purpose and accomplishment, for Jesus and his Father were one. "I have glorified thee on earth: I have finished the work thou gavest me to do." (John 17:4)

To mediate between God and God's people necessitated the achievement of everything which was in the purpose of his coming into the world. Sending his Son into the world indicated not only God's willingness to be a party in the matter, but also his determination that it should be done.

There was a great gulf between God and his people. They had broken God's law, and were under its penalty. This meant that they were alienated from God, shut up in their prison; and, as far as they themselves were concerned, must remain there. For of themselves they had nothing to bargain with, nothing with which to claim leniency — they were miserable guilty, and their condition was helpless and hopeless. God's judgments are inflexible, demanding complete satisfaction; and there was not one among all their number who could make satisfaction, for all were under the same condemnation.

Was there no one to pity? Was there no one who cared?

Yes, there was One who had pity; and cared! Behold, at his time, God

caused it to be proclaimed: "Thou shalt call his name Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins."

But there was much involved in his saving his people from their sins: He must take upon himself the likeness of sinful flesh, (without sin, of course) that he should be capable of obeying the offended law. He must of himself have something to offer, for without the shedding of blood there could be no remission of sins. So he must suffer, he must die, in order to make satisfaction in the nature of his people who had sinned.

The manifestation of God's love towards his people, in that he willed that they should be redeemed, and in that he himself provided the only one who could satisfy the rigid demands of the law, even his own Son, is a most sublime subject for the contemplation and comfort of His people. That Jesus came into the world is not just merely a matter of dogmatic opinion: It is an historical fact. It is not a cunningly devised fable: the disciples were eyewitnesses of his majesty; and each subsequent disciple has the things of Jesus confirmed in his heart. How surely it is established in Christian experience that there is no other way of redemption and salvation.

We are told that Christ is the mediator of a **better covenant** — a new testament, which has positive declarations of mercy and grace towards those with whom it is made. This differs greatly from the former covenant. The former bestowed blessings upon the performances of men. But the record is that men failed in all of their obligations. The better covenant brought to full view the grace which had its moments of view in Biblical history; but it was not until "in these last days" that God was pleased to speak to us by his Son, rather than as he had formerly by the prophets.

The first, (or old) covenant served its purpose of bringing all the works of men into their proper light, and showed the utter inability of men to comply with its requirements. This brought the full force of judgment upon all. (Yet

we must be reminded that this judgment of condemnation is not applied to any in this life except those with whom the **better covenant** is made. Then it is with each as it was with the Apostle, "When the commandment came, sin revived and I died." But none shall escape this condemnation, though with many it will be in that day when there will be a separating of those whom the "sheep" and the "goats" typify.)

This experiencing of "the commandment coming, and sin reviving", is in preparation for the manifesting and applying of the new and better covenant, when Jesus, as the mediator of that covenant, speaks, "I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more."

It is apparent that this new covenant is the gracious work of God to those with whom it is made; and that it entirely supersedes the old. Not that the old is merely discarded in favor of the new, but that the new is given because the eternal will of the Father was that the sins of **his people** should be atoned for by his own Son. Only Jesus, as the one efficacious sacrifice, could satisfy the demands of the law. Thus He, first of all, fulfilled the law perfectly, not just merely destroyed it, by meeting the requirements of perfect obedience to it for each whom the Father gave him; and whom he fully represented. Justice demanded this obedience, and could not be satisfied otherwise.

Jesus accomplished in his coming into the world all that was necessary to completely redeem all of God's elect from all their sins. He was everything for them. He overcame death by his resurrection, and is declared to be the Son of God with power. He glorified the Father on earth in his perfect accomplishment of his mission to earth, and is received back at the right hand of the Father in heaven, to appear in the presence of God for us. He is glorified with the same glory he had before his advent into the world, and in this perfection he makes intercession for us. This means that when one is brought under conviction

through the operation of the Spirit of God, and justice demands condemnation and death, the blessed Saviour intercedes for him. He makes the sinner's cause, his cause. He presents the righteousness and atonement which he wrought for each of his brethren, as having made satisfaction for each. In this way He makes application of that which he wrought for them by his death, since it is a portion of his work as a priest after the order of Melchisedec to make intercession for them.

When a transgressor is brought before the courts of our land, he is represented by counsel; who may present evidence in favor of his client, plead for mercy, or take other actions. But he himself cannot satisfy the law on behalf of his client; and he is powerless to prevent the execution of the judgment of the court. But the condemned sinner has One who is far superior to this counsel; one who pleads no extenuating circumstances for his client, nor asks for mercy. Rather, he interposes: "I represented this man when I was made sin, and when I died the just for the unjust I suffered his penalty. I made complete satisfaction for all charges against him. And having done this, I conquered death by arising from it, showing that the man is completely justified." What a counselor! What a mediator!

He speaks directly with his Father, who is the offended one. He knows the infirmities and needs of his brethren; and having already made complete satisfaction for all demands against them; and as the Mediator of the new covenant which the Father has made, and which was secured by His conforming to all necessary demands to secure the new covenant provisions, Jesus presents all these things in behalf of the elect children; and their sins are remembered against them no more. The Father is satisfied, and the sinner is fully justified before him.

Now we are to consider Jesus as the **One Mediator** between God and man. This precludes any other, either between

God and us, or between our Mediator and us, because Jesus himself alone is between God and man. Who could be a better Mediator than he who has met all demands and completely satisfied the offended Father?

We think that it is the eternal truth that Jesus, as our Saviour, had one great and important work to do. He was to present all the elect "holy and unblameable and unreprovable in his sight." (Colossians 1:22) To this end he lived, and died, and arose from the dead. We are on safe ground when we state that Jesus never lost interest in his assignment, nor in any way lapsed in its performance. We conclude, therefore, that he needs not any to remind him, or any to undertake to influence him, be they mother, priest, saints living or dead, ministers, or any one else. How well the redeemed know that even their worship must be in Spirit and in truth, and that they are dependent upon the grace and mercy of God for all things; and that God works in them both to will and to do of his pleasure. They know that even freedom in prayer is not at their own command. So, what influence could those who need grace have upon the giver of all grace?

How wonderful it is to have one in heaven to represent us as our Intercessor, as our Mediator, as our Advocate with the Father! And especially since we know that we need him at all times. "Seeing then that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our profession." (Hebrews 4:14) There is a coming boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need. It is unto the throne of grace! We cannot go directly unto God of ourselves: It is through Jesus — for his name's sake, for we have nothing of our own to plead. How important, therefore, to every member of the elect family, that they have Him who was once on earth, but now exalted, the man Christ Jesus, as their Mediator, their one and only Mediator, between them and their God.

We have no desire to be critical of anyone's faith, or system of religion. What we do desire, however, is that we may through grace contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints; and to present, as we are enabled, to all interested parties, this faith honestly and plainly, that the name of our God might be praised, and His little ones comforted and built up in the most holy faith. We dare not to enlarge beyond revelation; that would be foolhardy. And we dare not refrain from speaking what we hope we have been taught, for that would be contrary to our calling, if we have one. We dare not go beyond our firm convictions in these matters, to follow others. We hope it is with us, as with the Apostle Paul, "For I will not dare to speak of any of those things which Christ hath not wrought by me, to make the Gentiles obedient, by word and deed." (Romans 15:18)

"For there is one God, and one mediator between God and man, the man Christ Jesus."

J. D. W.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

"DEARLY BELOVED, AVENGE NOT YOURSELVES"

Romans xii. 19

Who that read the solemn admonitions with which the New Testament abounds, do not feel deeply humbled under a sense of their shortcomings, and propensity to err? Were we not in the flesh, and exposed to temptations, we should not require to be thus frequently admonished; but such is our present exposure to the alluring vanities of the world, the corruptions of our own carnal nature and the temptations of Satan, that we need every admonition that is given us in the Scriptures, and we also need abundance of grace to incline and enable us to heed them. Among other trials which are common to the saints of God, their exposure to

unjust injuries in their persons, their reputation, their property, or what is by far more trying to them, in that which brings down on them the unprovoked censure, suspicion and disfellowship of those whom they esteem as the excellent of the earth, among whom is all their delight. This, although more cruel than the grave, is sometimes the lot of the dear children of God, and while called to pass through these bitter waters of Meribah, while chafed and fretted in their feelings, how very apt is their carnal nature to suggest to them the idea of retaliation. Our carnal minds will urge that it is just and right that we should resent the injury done us, and smite those who have wantonly smitten us, and deal to them a just retribution for their wicked assault upon us. Self preservation is said to be among the fixed laws of our nature, and it is sometimes mistaken by even the children of God for a law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus. But we, alas, have found it to be a law of our members, warring against the law of our mind. Under no circumstances are the disciples of Christ to administer retribution to those from whom they have received injuries. "Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves." Your cause is before the Lord, and perfectly under his control. He will judge his people, and avenge his own elect who cry unto him night and day. There are several good reasons why the saints should not attempt to avenge themselves, of which we will call the attention of our readers to a few; and

1. Because we are forbidden to do so, not only in our text, but also in many other portions of the word. This, in the absence of all other considerations, is a sufficient reason. We cannot avenge ourselves, nor attempt to do so, without involving ourselves in an act of disobedience to our Lord and Master. He has, both by precept and example, pointed out to us the better way. By precept he has commanded us to love our enemies, bless them that curse us, and do good to them who despitefully use and perse-

cute us, and if they smite us on one cheek, turn to them the other also; if they violently take away our coat, give them our cloak also. As we reverence him, let us regard his authority. In his example he was meek and lowly; he gave his back to them who scourged him, and his cheek to them who plucked off the hair. When he was reviled, he reviled not again; when he was reproached, insulted, slandered, rudely led away to be crucified, as a lamb is led to the slaughter, and as a sheep is dumb before his shearers, so he opened not his mouth. And when writhing in agony and blood upon the cross of Calvary, condemned as a criminal to die a painful and ignominious death, though he could command the hosts of heaven, and had power to summon all the legions of mighty angels, he called not for vengeance, but he cried, "Father, forgive!" Righteous precept; blessed example. Dearly beloved, let us obey the command, and follow the example of our blessed Savior.

2. Another reason why we should not avenge ourselves, is our incompetency to accurately estimate the amount of injury received, the criminality of the motive of the offender, and the amount of retribution due to the transgressor. Both from the world and from brethren, we are liable to receive injuries. From the world we have no right to expect anything less, and from brethren whom we hold near and dear, we shall sometimes encounter such treatment as is calculated to wound the spirit by which we are sealed, and provoke the corrupt passions of our yet unsubdued and sinful natures. When in conflict with the world, let us remember that our God has said, "Vengeance is mine, I will repay," and leave the matter with him who knows how to deliver the tempted, and to reserve the ungodly to be punished. He will preserve his people from the wicked who are his hand and his sword; or, as the poet has said,

"When men of spite against me join,
They are the sword, the hand is thine."

And when from brethren we are made

to feel the force of the words of the psalmist, "It was not an enemy that reproached me; then could I have borne it; neither was it he that hated me that did magnify himself against me; then I would have hid myself from him; but it was thou, a man, mine equal, my guide, and mine acquaintance. We took sweet counsel together, and walked unto the house of God in company," &c. — Psalms lv. 12-14. While in this world of conflicts, sorrows and afflictions, it is impossible but that offenses will come among the disciples. See Luke xvii. 1. But when offended by a brother or sister, instead of laboring for redress, or for the punishment of the offender, the divine rule is clearly given us, and we are commanded by our Lord Jesus to labor according to the rule to reclaim the offending brother. If he hear thee, well, thou hast gained thy brother; but if unsuccessful in laboring to reclaim him, conclude not that his is an hopeless case, for the failure may be in part, or wholly attributable to thyself; take the second step; take with thee two or three faithful brethren, who are prepared to give wholesome advice, and to judge impartially between you; and let it still be the grand object to gain the erring brother, and if this second step should fail to reclaim him, still presume not to decide the case yourself. You can neither search the heart nor try the reins of the delinquent brother. Do as your Lord directs you, tell it to the church. The Lord is there. God is in his holy temple, and he will judge his people. Let all the saints look to him for counsel, and ask of him, and he will give you that wisdom which comes down from heaven, which is pure, peaceable, gentle and easy to be entreated, without partiality or hypocrisy; such wisdom he will give to his saints, and not upbraid them, and such wisdom we greatly need to direct us in the adjustment of all the difficulties which occur among the saints.

3. We should not avenge ourselves, because to do so would be a usurpation of a prerogative which belongs only to the Lord. It is treason when the sub-

jects of any government usurp the prerogatives of the king or sovereign to whom their obedience is due. None who possess the Spirit of Christ would willingly and understandingly grasp his sceptre, or attempt to seize his crown. But they all, while here in the flesh, possess a fleshly nature, which is full of opposition to that which is good, and it is from that polluted fountain that all our corruptions flow. From whence come wars and fightings? Come they not of your own lusts? The saints have never been afflicted with any conflicts among themselves, which were not attributable to their own fleshly lusts; for that which is born of God cannot commit sin: and if we, as Christians, possessed nothing about us that is not born of God, we should neither be disturbed with sins, trials nor conflicts one with another. Under all these considerations it is exceedingly improper that dearly beloved brethren should avenge themselves.

4. Were we allowed to so avenge ourselves, such are our liabilities to err, we might severely injure those for whom Christ has died, without securing to ourselves anything more than the gratification of a vindictive and revengeful feeling of the flesh, which should rather be denied and crucified. It is greatly to be feared that Christians sometimes mistake their carnal passions which are aroused to resentment of real or supposed injuries, for a justifiable grief of spirit, and their attempts to avenge themselves, for an obedience to the divine rule which requires us to labor to reclaim such as have departed from the order of the house of God. Liable, therefore, as we are to err, it becomes us the more earnestly to take heed to the admonition, "Avenge not yourselves."

5. The relationship in which we stand to each other, as dearly beloved brethren, presents another good reason why we should not avenge ourselves. When Moses saw two of the Hebrews striving together, he reprobated them, saying, "Sirs, ye are brethren, why do ye wrong one to another?" As a fraternity bound

by the most sacred considerations, to keep the unity of the spirit in the bonds of peace, we should rather give place to wrath, than attempt to avenge ourselves. The saints of God are not only brethren, but they are dearly beloved. Dearly beloved of God, for, "God who is rich in mercy, for his great love where-with he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ," &c. Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed on us, that we should be called the sons of God. Such was his love that he spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all. And our Redeemer has also said, when lifting his eyes to heaven and addressing his Father, "That thou hast loved them as thou hast loved me; and, O righteous Father, thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world." As God has so loved them before the world began, and given such incontestable evidences of his love towards them, is it meet that we should attempt to retaliate on them, when we feel confident that they have injured us? As we love the Lord supremely, will we not rather for his sake suffer the wrong for a season, until he is pleased to reclaim the wayward? But the saints are not only dearly beloved of God, but they are dearly beloved one of another, and as we love him who begat them, we also love them that are begotten of him, and his solemn charge and new commandment to them was that they should love one another. How can we obey this new and blessed commandment, if we seek to avenge ourselves?

6. Aside from the wickedness of disobeying this command, if there were no law against it, should the saints attempt the administration of retributive justice, they would make wretched work, cause trouble for the saints, and make a thorny pillow to recline their own heads upon. "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" But what can be more unchristian, or more unpleasant, than for brethren to indulge in hard feelings, and hard sayings, and unkind actions one

towards another?

To the foregoing we might add many other reasons why the saints should not avenge themselves. The whole spirit and letter of the gospel forbids it; the law of Christ written in our hearts forbids it. Then from all these considerations, dearly beloved brethren, let brotherly love continue; let love be without dissimulation, and love one another with a pure heart fervently. Avenge not yourselves. Grieve not the holy Spirit of God whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption. Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice, and be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you. And while in love we admonish one another, and with much long-suffering reprove those who err, let us at the same time remember how much our brethren have to bear from us, and how much our God has forgiven us. We are not to be remiss in faithfully laboring to reclaim the erring, but let it be in meekness, considering that we also are subject to many temptations.

(Editorial of Elder Gilbert Beebe, May 1, 1856.)

NOTICE

The booklets given with new subscriptions will be discontinued on June 1. Send your subscription in now.

OBITUARIES

CHARLES LAWRENCE SAUNDERS

This dear brother, better known as Brother Charlie Saunders, of Lick Fork Church, was born October 10, 1887, and closed his eyes in death November 30, 1960. He was married on December 15, 1917, to Miss Mary Frances Durham, of Rockingham County, N. C.; and to this union were born three children. The first child, Mary Velma, died in infancy. He is survived by his wife, Mrs. Charlie Saunders, Reidsville, N. C.; two sons: Dr. Charles L. Saunders, Burlington, N. C., and Professor Frank Wendell Saunders, Hartsville, S. C.; six grandchildren; two sisters: Mrs. J. L. Butler, Reidsville, N. C., and Mrs. W. L. Buck, Norfolk, Va.; and several nieces and nephews.

He joined the Lick Fork Primitive Baptist

Church in August, 1920, and was ordained Deacon of the church at the December meeting, 1920; and was chosen Church Clerk, in June, 1922, and served faithfully until death. Brother Charlie Saunders was one of the most lovely Primitive Baptists I have known: He was a most humble, kind, and devoted member. His love for the cause of his Master kept his heart warm to all the household of faith. Too much could not be said concerning his loyalty to the Old Baptists, his interest in his Church, and his faithfulness in serving his brethren. His home was a real Old Baptist home, and the welcome and kindness extended to all was a beautiful tribute to him, to his wife and children; and a visit with them could not soon be forgotten.

Brother Saunders was very anxious for the 1960 session of the Upper Country Line Association to be held with Lick Fork Church, where he had been a member for more than forty years. It was in many respects a wonderful association, and our dear Brother Saunders was so thankful and appreciative that the Lord let him live to enjoy one more association at Lick Fork. Brother Charlie seemed to know that his time here was very short; and seemed to be just waiting to hear the call from heaven. And he seemed to be drawn closer and closer to his family and to his loved ones, as the day drew near; trying so hard to leave everything for their comfort and joy. His mind, heart, and soul were cleaving unto the Lord with such tenderness and love, as perhaps he had never realized before. He and I checked and rechecked almost every milestone in our pilgrimage here below. He was a precious brother to me: we had a deep and abiding fellowship for each other; and our families have a sweet and abiding love for each other.

We bow in holy reverence and love to Almighty God, who does all things right, and works all things together for good to them who love the Lord, who are the called according to his purpose. The funeral services were held with Reidsville Primitive Baptist Church, and were conducted by his pastor, Elder Harvey Smith and myself; and his body was laid to rest in Reidlawn Cemetery, Reidsville, N. C.

Our love and sympathy to his Church, his family, and to all who mourn their loss. He is not dead, but sleepeth.

Elder J. W. Gilliam, Former Pastor

W. G. LEWALLEN

This is the obituary of Brother W. G. Lewallen, who died February 6, 1961. This dear brother lived about 7 miles East of El Dorado, Arkansas; and was a chicken and egg, and milk producing farmer. His health had not been

good for a long time.

He is survived by his wife, Mrs. Mae Lewallen; one daughter, Miss Patsy Lewallen; and one son, Ralph Lewallen, St. Louis, Mo. And also by one brother, Ed Lewallen, Shamrock, Texas; and two granddaughters. Brother Lewallen and wife and Sister Patsy joined the Primitive Baptist Church at Rehoboth, near Norphlet, Arkansas, several years ago; and they attended meetings regularly as long as his health was good.

It was my privilege and pleasure to baptize him, and he manifested a great interest in the doctrine. He and Sister Lewallen and Sister Patsy were very kind and generous, freely administering to the needs of the ministry, for which it is my wish to express my thanks; and also to say that they were very much devoted to the doctrine of God our Saviour, his love, mercy and grace.

It is sad to give up loved ones, but it is sweet and comforting to be given to believe and trust in Him who has promised that he would eternally save all his people from their sins; and will house them in heaven and immortal glory when he comes again without sin unto salvation, where they will be with their precious Saviour, be like him, and be satisfied forever.

The writer and a Baptist minister by the name of Travis were in the funeral arrangements which were held at El Dorado, Arkansas. May the Lord bless and comfort the dear bereaved family and friends who were close and greatly devoted to Brother Lewallen and family. May we trust in the Lord, and be given to look forward to his second coming, when all his children shall be delivered from death and the grave, and shall enter heaven and immortal glory to praise and adore Him in that bright City where all is love.

Best wishes to all the family; and in behalf of his dear afflicted wife and daughter, may the Lord bless and comfort you all. Your unworthy brother in hope through the grace and mercy of God.

R. W. Rhodes

MRS. ALPHA BIRD RHODES

The obituary of our dear and precious mother, Mrs. Alpha Bird Rhodes, widow of J. H. Rhodes. Our dear mother was born December 18, 1866, in Union Parish, La., and was the daughter of N. B. Bird, Sr., and Jane Glasco Bird, both of whom have been long deceased.

She was united in marriage to Joseph Hugh Rhodes; and to this union seventeen children were born. Of this number twelve survive: W. B. Rhodes, Junction City, Ark.; myself, R. W. Rhodes, Spearville, La.; A. B. Rhodes,

Lillie, La.; George W. Rhodes, Monroe, La.; Minor M. Rhodes, Lillie, La.; Mrs. Maude Spooner and Mrs. Mamie Upshaw, Junction City, Ark.; Mrs. W. L. Swilley, El Dorado, Ark.; Mrs. Gertrude Patterson and Mrs. B. E. Teagle, Ruston, La.; Mrs. H. A. Patterson, Farmerville, La.; and Mrs. Jim Roberson, Sulphur, La. There are also about 65 grandchildren, 87 great grandchildren, and 14 great great grandchildren; and many other relatives.

Mother was born and reared, and lived most of her life in this vicinity. She was so blessed of the Lord with health and strength and patience that she did as much hard work as anyone I have ever known. We were farmers, reared away back in the country, with no way to live but by hard work. We had to produce nearly everything we used by our own hard work, not having any of the modern improvements, which shows the hardships in rearing, clothing and providing for a large family as we were.

Mother joined New Hope Primitive Baptist Church in 1893, which is in this community, where she was blessed to hold her membership until her death. She manifested a great love, deep devotion, and firm belief and trust in the Lord for all our much needed blessings both for time and eternity. She loved the doctrine of God's sovereign and saving grace, which He so freely bestows upon his people, who in nature deserve nothing but wrath and righteous indignation. She was blessed to look to and trust in the precious and glorious Redeemer, who shed his precious and cleansing blood for his people; and who solemnly and sweetly promised to go to prepare a place for his people, and to come again and receive them unto himself: where there will be peace, joy and everlasting rest for all who are brought to believe and trust in Him who finished the work of redemption.

Elder J. L. Smith and Elder W. A. Speer conducted the funeral at the old church, in the presence of a very large and devoted crowd of children, grandchildren, great grand children, great great grandchildren, and many neighbors, brethren, and friends, which showed the respect and esteem in which she was held, as did the abundance of flowers.

Thanks to the dear preaching brethren for their comforting and scriptural encouragement to those who have a sweet hope in the Lord. Written by her son; may the Lord look in mercy on us all. Yours in a precious and glorious hope in the Lord.

R. W. Rhodes

MRS. BERTIE E. PARSONS

Mrs. Bertie E. Parsons, daughter of Dewitt Jehue Pryor and Josephene Staton Pryor, was

born July 8, 1875; and was married to George H. Parsons December 24, 1902. She is survived by the following children: Walter M. Parsons, Milton Jehue Parsons, Agnes P. Leach, Myrtle P. Chatham, Cora P. Dennis, all of Salisbury, Maryland; and by four grandchildren, and one sister, Agnes Malone.

She passed away January 24, 1960, at the home of her son, Milton J. Parsons, Salisbury, Maryland, where she had been tenderly cared for for two years. She had been an invalid for eleven years. All who knew her will attest that she never complained of her afflictions, which were her lot. The smile that wreathed her face when anyone spoke to her, was an inspiration; and caused one to wonder if he could be so reconciled and humble under the same burdens.

She was not a member of the visible church, but we all feel assured by the evidences shown by her loving, kind, and forgiving disposition, that surely her name is written in the Lamb's book of life. She believed strongly in salvation by grace, and loved the truth that Old Baptists preach and teach. The *Signs of the Times* were one great source of pleasure to her, especially after she became afflicted. She loved visitors, and did so very much appreciate the many visits of the late Elder H. M. Bennett and his wife; and by Elder Arthur Warren and his wife. It was so kind of them to visit her. She felt every kindness, no matter how small, "a crumb from the Master's table".

Her funeral was conducted by Elder Arthur Warren at the Holloway Funeral Home, Salisbury, Maryland; and her body was laid to rest in the Wicomico Memorial Park beside her late husband.

Written by a friend

MRS. BERTHA M. EUNIS

Mrs. Bertha M. Eunis, 75, widow of McCoy Eunis, of Pittsville, Maryland, died Sunday, October 30, 1960, at the home of her son-in-law and daughter, Mr. and Mrs. Robert McCurdy, of Baltimore, Maryland. She was the daughter of the late Joseph and Nancy Ellen Hastings, of Parsonsburg, Maryland.

She is survived by two daughters: Mrs. Robert McCurdy, Baltimore; and Mrs. Denver Rayne, Willards, Maryland; one son: Preston W. Eunis, Delmar, Delaware. Also by five grandchildren, and a sister, Mrs. Virgil Wilkins, Parsonsburg, Maryland.

Funeral service was conducted by Elder Arthur Warren, of the Primitive Baptist Church, at the Holloway Funeral Home, Salisbury; and interment was in the Wicomico Memorial Park, Salisbury, Maryland.

MEMORIAL TO
SISTER ALMA HALL BROOKS

Sister Alma Hall Brooks, the oldest daughter of Joseph H. and Minnie Jones Hall, was born January 2, 1876, and passed from this life on April 10, 1960, at the age of 84 years. She was a granddaughter of the late Elder A. N. Hall. In August, 1895, she married Ruben Phillip Brooks. Eight children were born to them. One son, Joseph, died while very young. The surviving children are: Robert P., Mrs. Inez Savery, Clarisse Brooks, Glynn H., Mrs. Alfred West, Dorothy Brooks, and Mrs. Ben Reade. Also surviving are three brothers: W. H. Hall, Claude T. Hall, and R. L. Hall; one sister, Mrs. B. E. Mitchell; three grandchildren and two great grandchildren.

Having received a precious hope in the Lord, Sister Brooks united with the Shiloh Primitive Baptist Church in July, 1917. She lived the quiet and peaceable life of a true believer among her brethren and in her community. The devotion and respect of her children toward her is a testimony of their love and appreciation for her faithfulness as a mother. Constant in her love and faithful in her responsibilities, she leaves them the shining example of a noble character. Steadfast in the doctrine of salvation by grace, she leaves the members of the Church at Shiloh the inspiration of a consecrated and fruitful life.

Elder W. C. King conducted her funeral at Shiloh Primitive Baptist Church and her body was interred in the church cemetery.

May God grant her family and friends reconciliation to His will, bind up their wounded hearts, and give them strength for days to come.

"We speak of the realms of the blest
That country so bright and so fair,
And oft are its glories confessed,
But what must it be to be there?

Dear Lord, amid sorrows and woe
My spirit for heaven prepare,
That shortly I also may know
And feel what it is to be there."

Having seen the evidences of the wondrous work of the grace in the life of Sister Brooks, we feel that her spirit now knows and feels what it is to be There.

By request,
Catherine M. Copley

MELLIE Z. WILT

Mellie Z. Wilt, oldest child of James Matthew and Frances Yeoman Hutchison was born in the log cabin home of her parents, on the Hutchison-Yeoman Road, near Chaffin's School House, 20 September, 1882.

When she was about ten years of age her parents moved to Madison Mills, and six years later to Oak Grove, a few miles east of Washington C. H. Her school days were spent in the district schools of the communities mentioned, all being in Fayette County, Ohio.

During her twentieth year, while recovering from a critical illness of typhoid fever, she received a hope in Jesus Christ as her Saviour. Several years later, in September, 1909, she confessed that hope, and united with the ancestral church of her parents, viz., the Harmony Old School Baptist Church, near Washington C. H., Ohio being baptized by her great-uncle, the late Elder Walter Yeoman.

On October 19th, 1924, she was united in marriage to Mr. Roy B. Wilt, with whom she found more than eleven happy years, until his death June 20th, 1936.

Following the death of her husband, Mellie lived with her mother at Bloomingburg, Ohio, lovingly devoted to her mother's every wish and desire. After the death of her mother, she made her home with her sister Mrs. Etna R. Coil, Jeffersonville, Ohio.

Mellie's hobby was her flowers and posey garden. Her chief interests in life were her church and the immediate family circle to whom she was devoted. Those who remain of that family circle recall, with tenderness, how through more than three-score years her love was so freely given to others — and so modestly received and deeply appreciated in return.

She loved music, and the good old hymns extolling God's sovereign grace. And, now, that she has been released from the burdens of the flesh, she has found the answer to a hymn sung by those she loved so long ago, when, in an old fashioned parlor a closely knit family gathered around the organ and sang, "What Must It be to be There."

Mellie went home to be with the Lord on the evening of January 10, 1961, aged 78 years. In that moment of transition faith changed to sight, hope to full fruition, prayer to praise, and with those she "loved long since and lost awhile", she knows the eternal joy of what it means to be there.

She leaves to mourn her demise, one sister Mrs. Etna R. Coil, a brother Elder Eldon A. Hutchison, and three nephews Gilbert Coil, Darrell Coil and James P. Hutchison, together with a large circle of other relatives and friends.

Her funeral service was conducted at Washington C. H., Ohio, January 13th by Elder Edgar Aleshire, Springfield, Ohio, and Elder W. G. Bell, Dry Ridge, Kentucky. That which was mortal was laid to rest beneath a mound of floral tributes in the Bloomingburg Cemetery to await the certainty of a glorious resurrection morning.

Eldon A. Hutchison

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 129

DANVILLE, VA., JUNE, 1961

NO. 6

DAVID'S 27TH PSALM

When I'm down in the valley
And my soul is far from calm,
I seek refuge in the Bible —
From David's 27th Psalm.

"The Lord is my light and my salvation, whom
shall I fear?"

I often look toward the mountains,
At the very highest peak,
I watch the sun shining brightly
On the mighty and the meek.

"When Thou saidst, seek ye my face, my heart
said unto Thee,
Thy face Lord will I seek!"

This world has many attractions
Satan beckons "Come on in."
How easy it is to go astray,
Down the highway of sin!

"Hide not thy face from me, neither forsake
me,
Oh! God of my salvation!"

Many times storm clouds gather
And the stars I cannot see,
How I long for the sunlight —
To brighten the path for me!

"Wait on the Lord and He shall strengthen
thine heart,
Wait I say on the Lord!"

Vercie Holly Bolejack
1019 Owen Road
Martinsville, Virginia
November 22, 1960

REJOICE, THE LORD IS KING

There are times when some special passage of Scripture comes to our minds, and stays with us until we feel we must say something about it. It may be as we go about our work, or lying in bed at night: It can come to us anywhere at anytime.

The other day I was listening to some talk about the possibility of another war, and what the Russians might do; and I thought of something Elder Span-

gler once said during a sermon at Welsh Tract: He said that he was not concerned too much about what they would do, because, if it were the Lord's will, the force of an atomic bomb sent our way, could be turned about and fall upon the Russians, as easily as on us. If it is the Lord's will, harm cannot come to us just because an enemy tries to do us harm.

The world claims to be seeking peace, but there can be no peace outside the Prince of Peace. Only when we have this peace, which comes through and by Jesus Christ, can we relax and know it is an everlasting peace. . . Real peace lies in the knowledge of the love of God in the hearts of men. The people of the world claim to have a knowledge of Him, yet worship other gods: their pleasures and good things are here on earth; and they feel that when their time here on earth is up, they will be taken home, and have a place on high: as long as they haven't stolen anything, or murdered any one. But the Lord is King, and as such he rules over all things; there is no half-way service to him. It is all wills and shalls: no ifs, ands, or buts, and no maybes. It is a comfort to me to know that he is an all powerful being, whom none can question.

So many are ashamed to speak the name of Jesus above a whisper, and do not want to admit they have a future to think seriously about. That isn't my thought, nor do I believe it is the thought or feeling of anyone who is a child of God. Haven't you often heard a sermon that gave you such sweet feelings, that you longed to tell the speaker how much you enjoyed it. I have, many times. It seemed every word had been spoken for your comfort and enjoyment; yet you found it hard to find words to

describe your feelings. Often our hearts are full to overflowing with enjoyment at being blessed to be there with the brethren to worship God.

All through the Psalms we find that joy is essential to real worship: quiet, inward joy of the soul. In the 104th Psalm we read, "I will sing unto the Lord as long as I live; I will sing praise to my God while I have my being." And the other Psalms speak mostly of "making a joyful noise unto the Lord"; "rejoicing in the glories of salvation"; "serve the Lord with gladness"; etc. The Lord's people feel free to offer their joy and gladness in worship. I am not ashamed to own my Lord, nor to declare openly what he has done for me: how he has led me and kept me with mercy and loving kindness.

True worship is far more than "duty" so many make it to be: It is, for me, a time of gladness when we can come together and express our love to God for his mercy and goodness towards us. . . . Yet there are times when He is far from our minds, and we think of the good things that come our way; and we are apt to say it was good luck, or take credit ourselves. And this may go on for a time, until the good Lord puts a stop to our self-inflation; when we are taken away from self, and are made to look up and away toward the high hills, lovely mountains, and beautiful valleys, which are all creations of God, and majestic in their stately beauty. When we are thus made to take our eyes from self, and look to Him, we see how very small we are; when we look with open eyes and clear vision at something far greater than ourselves, we give thanks to the Lord that, in creating such great and glorious beauty, he gave a thought to create such a small worm of dust as we feel to be most of the time. Take a little time, and look toward the Lord, who is infinitely greater than we are, and ask why we dare to complain at our lot. He is so precious that my heart sings with joy when I remember that He has given me even a tiny hope of eternal life with him.

When the Lord turns one about, and sets his feet upon the right path, that one feels the desire to tell others what the Lord has done for him; but he cannot put his feelings into words. And unless one has felt the same joy of salvation, he will never understand what is meant: It would be Greek to them. As the Lord's chosen ones go about their daily life, there is a difference in their walk and talk, and a radiation of God's love shining from within, which draws others to them. The Lord has children everywhere, and one day they will all be drawn together in one fold, beneath his sheltering wing, to sing his praise; and nothing else will matter. Isn't that a wonderful thought?

When one finds their joy is in Christ and spiritual things, they feel they would rejoice e v e r m o r e . The early Christians suffered much, leaving families and friends behind; often put into prison, but their faith in God kept them. That same faith has been through the years. Paul and Silas sang hymns in prison at Phillipi; and Paul wrote from his prison in Rome, "Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns, and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord." . . . It is the tendency of the world today to complain, instead of rejoicing and giving thanks. We have so many reasons to be thankful, and to rejoice, because He is king and none can overthrow him. The giver of every good and perfect gift has bestowed upon us unspeakable gifts and great blessings. We should thank Him for all things, good, true and beautiful; the light and the air; for eyes that see the unseen; and ears that hear the heavenly harmony.

We should also thank Him for the trials and tribulations that have come our way; for, if we had not had troubles to try our f a i t h and patience, these might never have been strengthened, and made more sure and steadfast. A good father chastens his children, so, "Thy rod and thy staff they comfort me."

Above all, we give thanks for his

supreme love manifested in human flesh in the person of Christ Jesus. We praise thee, O Lord, for thy loving kindness and tender mercies which we receive daily. Great is thy faithfulness: Teach us to see thy hand in all our lives, and fill our hearts with trust and song. May we be like the little boy who said grace before each meal. Regardless of the weather, his mother noticed that he always said, "We thank you God, for this beautiful day, and for our food." One especially bad day, she asked him why he thanked God for the beautiful day, when it was so bad. (She thought it was because he had been saying it from habit.) And she was surprised when he answered, "Mother, never judge a day by the weather."

Much like Joseph of old; He spoke in later years of how his brothers had sold him into slavery in Egypt; and told them, "Ye thought evil against me, but God meant it for good." Paul learned to be content in prison. He exhorted us to give thanks in (not for) everything. Therefore, rejoice this, and every day. Sometimes our day seems to be darker than at other times: We stumble through the darkness of fears, anxieties, and obstacles of all kinds; and sometimes fall. But when Jesus shines the floodlight of his presence around us, our way is made safe again, and the darkness is gone. We walk again with renewed hope and assurance that all is well. The illuminating power of Christ is God's gift to his children. There is no darkness too deep for his light to penetrate; and no matter how low we are, how deep the miry clay of the world we have sunk, His arm is never too short to reach down, raise us up, and put our feet upon the solid rock, with a song of praise upon our lips: A song of rejoicing that the Lord is King, and will always be, world without end.

When the gospel of Jesus Christ is preached, it isn't history; for history is dead, but Christ is alive. Not history just to be recorded; but alive to be shouted from the house tops far and wide. Some have not yet heard, but in

God's own time, it will be revealed to all his people — line upon line, and precept upon precept.

The waters of life are in tumult all about us; the storms of life are heavy and destructive, but we know that He has it in his power to raise his hand and speak, "Peace be still."; and the water is quiet. As we are enabled to look to him we are safe; but when we look down we become fearful, and feel we are drowning in the world of sin. Then we are made to cry, "Lord save me." "O thou of little faith, wherefore didst thou doubt?" Blessed Saviour, pilot me over these tempestuous seas, and bring my battered ship safely into harbor. Make me to sing, The Lord is King! blessed be his holy name.

Your little sister in hope,
Ruth Lucht
Rt. 3
Chesertown, Md.

**"WITHOUT MONEY —
WITHOUT PRICE"**

113 Park Hurst St.
Bastrop, La.

Dear Readers of the Signs:

"Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price." (Isaiah 55:1)

If the Lord sees fit to enable us, may we be given to meditate and feast upon the beautiful and sweet promises of this Wonderful God. "A word spoken in due season, how good is it." (Proverbs 15:23) When the words of the text are spoken unto our hearts at an acceptable time (a time when we are low in spirits, cast down, etc.), then we rejoice in the goodness of our God to poor sinners as we feel to be.

Isn't heart felt religion wonderful? Furthermore, if we cannot feel anything pertaining to Spiritual things, then something is wrong. If our religion is an outward form of worship, then we

have no true religion. But, if our religion is in the heart, then we have felt and experienced the things that the prophets of old experienced, and we rejoice in reading our feelings and experiences in the Bible.

Now, let us consider the text. Notice that the words of this text are directed to a special class of people. These are the ones who thirst after righteousness, and can see that they are poor sinners. These are the ones whom the Lord has called out of the darkness into His marvelous light. If the Lord will guide us, let us consider the work of God in the hearts of sinners.

In due time, the Lord deals with you, and causes you to hunger and thirst after righteousness. Not when you get ready, but when he gets ready. There is no rushing the Lord. "The Lord was ready to save me: —" (Isaiah 38:20)

When the Lord gets ready, and in due time, he will make himself known to all of his elect. "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." (John 8:32) So the Lord makes the truth known to all his people, and he is not forgetful (as man is) and not one will be left out. "Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, h a v i n g this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his. —" (2 Tim. 2:19)

Isn't it true that you have not always felt and seen the things that you now see and cherish so much? "And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins: Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. 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). (Ephesians 2:1-5)

He loved you even when you were dead in your sins! He loved you before you knew him. What wonderous love is this! Before the Lord dealt with you, then you did not know him. Your mind was upon the things of this world. You may have had an outward form of worship. That being true, we may say that you worshiped the works of your own hands. Also, you were well and healthy, and did not feel the need of a Physician.

You may have fared so well with your own self, that you thought you were in good shape. (Spiritually) In connection with this, let us consider another qualification of this text. "And he that hath no money." This reminds us of the flesh, such as carnal wisdom, carnal works, pride, a haughty spirit, etc. The old Pharisee was in good shape, and he worshiped the works of his own hands; and he was not poor in spirit. "The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess." (Luke 18:11-12) Notice that he was well and did not need a physician; that he had plenty of good (carnal) works, and he had pride, self justification, etc. — and in this sense, we may say that he had money (spiritually speaking). This is the prayer (or form) of the ones who are dead in their sins.

A corpse cannot see, feel, taste, hear, etc. So, a carnal minded person cannot see the things of God. Before the Lord quickened you, then you were dead in your sins. (Notice the scripture we quoted in Eph. 2:1-5.)

"See now that I, even I, am he, and there is no god with me: I kill, and I make alive; I wound, and I heal: neither is there any that can deliver out of my hand." (Deut. 32:39) So, the process of conversion is the work of God. A change happened to you, but no man had anything to do with it. The Lord strips you of your self-righteousness, and makes you poor, and causes you to hunger and thirst after his righteousness, and

causes you to depend upon him for mercy, comfort, guidance, etc.

When the Lord shined his light and blew his spirit upon you, what did you first feel? You experienced soul afflictions. "Behold, I have refined thee, but not with silver; I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction." (Isaiah 48:10) This refining process is hurtful to the flesh. First, you were made to realize your sinful condition, and to see and feel the need of a Saviour. You could not see this beforehand; but when the glory of the Lord appeared unto your soul, you saw your sins before you, as the prophet Isaiah cried out: "Then said I, Woe is me! for I am undone; because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips: for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts." (Isaiah 6:5) Notice especially the last expression: "for mine eyes have seen the King," Isaiah's sins were open before him when the Lord appeared unto him. In other words, you are given to see the Lord when he makes himself known unto you. The Lord draws you by the cords of his love, and calls you out of the darkness unto his marvelous light, and quickens your soul. "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him; and I will raise him up at the last day." (John 6:44) This is proof enough to show that one dead in his sins cannot see nor seek the Lord.

Oh, what a fearful thing it is to fall into the hands of a living God! Doesn't it make you fear and tremble? A natural flower looks beautiful when it is fresh, but it soon fades away. Before, your own works looked so beautiful, but when the Lord shined his light into your soul, then the works of your flesh appeared to you as filthy rags. "The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: because the spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it: surely the people is grass. (Isaiah 40:7) This scripture covers a lot, but let us only consider the flower in connection with our thoughts. Your flower, self righteousness, good works of the flesh, etc., stays fresh until the Lord blows his

spirit unto your soul, and then it fades away. When this happens, you are given to look at your self, and see your sins before you and cry out as the prophet did: "But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousness are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away." (Isaiah 64:6) Justice faced you, and you reached the end of your strength, and saw that you were condemned to destruction.

You saw the darkness in your soul, but did not know that the Lord was dealing with you. This is some sweet evidence that the Lord is shining his light upon you, because you could not see this darkness in your soul beforehand, and in times past you could not see your inability, sins, etc. One must be in the light in order for him to see the darkness in his soul. Yet, we cannot always feel the presence of the Lord, but he never forsakes his little children. "If I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there." (Psalm 139:8)

In this condition you mourn over your sins, and can see the "mess" your own house is in, and you are given to esteem others better than yourself. You have no pleasure in the things of this world, and you are given to set your affections upon things above and to be made to thirst after righteousness. You are sick and poor, because you have been stripped of all your self-righteousness. In this sense, you have no money, and you thirst, and you can see that the text is speaking to your poor, hungry, thirsty soul. As the poet says, "Nothing in my hand I bring." You can see that there is nothing you can do for your condition. You are helpless as a babe and have been made to cry out as the poor publican: "God be merciful to me a sinner." (Luke 18:13)

If you have experienced these things, and know what soul afflictions are, then this is some evidence that you are one of the Lord's chosen people. When you have been made to see your condition, then you have been taught something that the world cannot know nor under-

stand — As Paul said, "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." Don't you believe that this is a pattern for all the children of God? Meaning, that the truth, gospel, etc. must be taught to you by God, or revealed to you by the operation of the Holy Ghost. Now, God uses different means or ways in this. You may be alone or at different places of this world, or you may be at meetings, and God sees fit to reveal this to you through his servants. In short, God works in a mysterious way. See Acts 9:1-19, for the account of the conversion of Saul.

When the words of this text: "Ho, everyone that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye buy and eat; yea, come buy wine, and milk without money and without price," are spoken unto your soul in your helpless condition, then it comes in due session to you, and you are made to rejoice in the mercy of the Lord. And this is the time of Love. (see Ezekiel 16:8) It is not only an acceptable time, but it is a wonderful time; how glorious it is to feel the love and the presence of this Wonderful God!

You had experienced a famine for so long, and you wondered if the Lord had forsaken you, but now the Lord has seen fit to lift you up, and to show these things again to you. You can now see that the Lord is your strength and shield, and the author of your salvation. You can see that the Lord does keep his promises. Notice the sweet words of this scripture that has applied to you: "When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the Lord will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them. I will open rivers in high places, and fountains in the midst of the valleys: I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water." (Isaiah 41:17, 18)

How wonderful it is to feel these

things, and to see and know that salvation is free, and that the blessings of the Lord are free. And, you are given to see that salvation is by the grace of God.

When you experience the joy of deliverance, and the joy of the love of God made manifested into your poor, hungry, thirsty souls, then you feel like praising the Lord for his wonderful love and mercy. "From the rising of the sun unto the going down of the same the Lord's name is to be praised." (Psalm 113:3)

Dear friends, isn't our God a Wonderful God?

Yours in Christian love,

(Elder) Woodrow W. Hudson, Jr.

ETERNAL SOVEREIGNTY

BY

ELDER R. W. RHODES

(Concluded)

We also find (in line with this great subject), in Matthew where his wicked crucifiers and persecutors fulfilled the Scripture which said, "They gave him vinegar mingled with gall, and when he had tasted thereof, he would not drink." Now, whether we like it or not, this was just as much in the arrangements of the eternal purpose of God, as anything is. It was prophesied of long before; and the ones who did it did not know they were fulfilling prophecy. But just as the Lord thought, purposed, and swore, just so it was. And in Matthew 27:35, we find these wicked ones dividing the Lord's garments among themselves; and casting lots for his vesture (robe), that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of by the prophet. Remember, dear reader, that all this was purposed, thought, and sworn to by the God of Heaven; because it came to pass that way, and it stands that it was done that way. Prophecy embraced every detail of Christ in his death, his suffering, and his resurrection.

Another definite item is recorded in

Acts 13:29: "And when they had fulfilled all that was written of him, they took him down from the tree, and laid him in a sepulchre." So we readily see that they did not leave anything undone that had been written in the prophecy concerning it. So God must have thought, purposed, and swore to it, because that is the way it stands, and the way it all came to pass. Many more instances of scriptural predictions, and their respective fulfillment could be mentioned along this line, but it seems that these ought to be sufficient on the subject at present.

Dear brethren, I am sure that you know there isn't any real difference in the meaning of purpose and predestination: The fact that God swore by his holy oath that as he thought, spoke, and purposed, so it comes to pass; and so it stands. So I am inclined to believe that purpose and predestination mean the same thing as to the final destiny of all things. Let us quote Romans 8:29, "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first born among many brethren." Do you believe that God's predestination could be imperfect? Don't you believe that the meaning, finally and ultimately, of predestinate and purpose of the Almighty and unchangeable God will result alike. We find one definition of predestinate given as purpose. Now you and I may purpose many things we cannot do, and are frail enough that we may change from our original purpose; but not so with the perfect and eternal God. He says in Macachi 3:6, "I am God and I change not, therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." So I think that God's predestination is just as extensive as his purpose. We notice also from the 8th chapter of Romans, that God's foreknowledge is co-extensive with his predestination. And then we find in Acts 13:48, that, "When the Gentiles heard this, they were glad, and glorified the word of God: and as many as were ordained to eternal life believed." Here

we have the word ordain, seemingly equal in meaning to purpose and predestinate; to almost conform to the meaning of several similar terms. At least as many, and no more, who were ordained to eternal life, believed. So, all these terms to me mean the same, as was so stated in the original text. "The Lord of hosts hath sworn, saying, surely as I have thought so shall it come to pass, and as I have purposed so shall it stand." To me, the things God thought and purposed, predestinated, or ordained, are just as firmly fixed in the mind and purpose of God, as his throne is fixed and established.

Now, dear ones, I know that many contend that this would make God the author of sin; but let us reason on one of the plainest incidents that I know of in the Bible: The crucifixion and shameful death of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is certainly scripturally already proved that God thought, purposed, ordained, or predestinated that he should die such a death as he did; and that, at the hands of wicked men. Prophecy hundreds of years before Jesus Christ was born into this world, treated so definitely on every phase of the subject; and told of the cruel and wicked punishment he should suffer; the wounds in his hands and side; and described him as a fountain opened for the sins of his people. If God had purpose in this cruel crucifixion and death of our precious Lord, and I say he did, and this did not make him the author of sin, then there is no danger of anything else ever doing it. We know that Jesus was sinless, except for the sins of his people which were laid upon him. Dear ones, how I do hope that yours and mine were laid upon him; as he is the way, the truth, and the life; and the only name given under heaven among men, whereby we must be saved. (Acts 4:12)

Now I want to present Psalms 33:11, 12: "The counsel of the Lord standeth forever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations." I feel that all the thoughts of the Lord, were what He

swores to in our original text: "The Lord of hosts hath sworn, saying, surely as I have thought so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed so shall it stand." The 12th verse of 33rd Psalms, says, "Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord, and the people whom he hath chosen for his own inheritance." The Lord's people are wonderfully, and mercifully, and graciously blessed of the Lord; and this is the way their inheritance comes: It is the free gift of God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Now dear reader, please stop and consider the statement of David, when he said, "The counsel of the Lord standeth forever, the thoughts of the Lord to all generations." We can see from this that his oath in the text (Isaiah 14:24) concerned the thoughts of his heart that he solemnly swore to. His oath, thoughts, purposes, predestination, ordination, and his counsel, all stand forever, even unto all generations; even to the end of the world; and also through eternity.

No wonder David speaks of the wonderfulness of the Almighty God in his thoughts and works to his people: "Many, O Lord my God, are thy wonderful works which thou hast done, and thy thoughts which are to us-ward: they cannot be reckoned up in order unto thee: if I would desire and speak of them, they are more than can be numbered." Truly did David express in this solemn declaration, the greatness of the mighty works and thoughts of God. No wonder he said in another place, "It is too high, I cannot attain unto it."

David also said in Psalms 92:5, O Lord, how great are thy works; and thy thoughts are very deep." They embrace all things, past, present and future; as he hath sworn, and as he purposed, so shall it come to pass, and so shall it stand. If this is not what the Bible consistently teaches, then I have misunderstood the plain wording of the simple language of the Bible altogether.

Isaiah the Prophet plainly assents to this truth when he says, "For my thoughts (speaking of the Lord) 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 thoughts than your thoughts." And the next two verses: "For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth, it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I send it." (Isaiah 55:8-11)

Isaiah says in 66:18, "For I know their works and their thoughts: it shall come, that I will gather all nations and tongues; and they shall come and see my glory." Here he shows that God knows their works and thoughts, even of all nations and tongues. How wonderful and extensive are God's works, thoughts, purposes, counsels, and his perfection in his attributes. He knows the thoughts, words and doings of all nations, tongues, and people, as well as where and when he shall cause them to see his glory.

Jeremiah says on this great subject, "The anger of the Lord shall not return, until he have executed, and till he have performed the thoughts of his heart: in the latter days ye shall consider it perfectly." (Jeremiah 23:20) We see from this that His thoughts were not just to the early and middle times, but they go out and perfectly include and embrace all things; even the latter days they would be plain, and considered perfectly.

Jeremiah also says, "For I know the thoughts that I think towards you, saith the Lord; thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you an expected end." (29:11) This shows that the Lord knows his thoughts of mercy, grace, love, and final glorious deliverance towards his people: They will be delivered, for He will have mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth. (Romans 9:18) So we see that the

Lord's mercy and grace are administered to his people according to his oath, purpose, and counsel, which he has purposed in himself.

In Hebrews 6:17, Paul says, "Wherein God willing more abundantly to show the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath." This is enough to justify us believing that all the counsel and thoughts of God were included in his unfailing oath.

Now I feel that I must come to a halt in this article, although there is no limit to the scriptural evidence of the truth of this great subject. Yet I desire to mention the case of Jonah, whom God called to preach to Ninevah. Jonah felt his unworthiness and unprofitableness, just as all of God's truly called ministers do, and he decided to pay his own way and go to Tarshish. But God had prepared a great fish to swallow Jonah; so, on schedule time, the men in the ship cast lots to see who was causing the great storm; and the lot fell on Jonah, and they cast him overboard. And this great fish that God had prepared swallowed Jonah. (read the first chapter of Jonah) We see that God in his holy, wise and eternal purpose, knew Jonah's rebellious attitude; and he knew also that Jonah would be on his way to Tarshish, and who the lot would fall on, so he prepared the great fish to bring him to shore; and Jonah went and preached to that wicked city; and the inhabitants repented. Thus gloriously proving God's purpose in the whole thing: Jonah's rebellion, the great storm, the lot casting, the great fish, his preaching to the wicked city, and the repentance He gave them at the preaching of Jonah.

We now turn to Revelation 10:6 and 7, "And sware by him that liveth forever and ever, who created heaven, and the things that therein are, and the earth, and the things that therein are, and the sea, and the things that therein are, that there should be time no longer. But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he shall begin to sound, the mystery of God should be finished,

as he hath declared to his servants the prophets." This shows in detail that God's thoughts, his purpose, his counsel, his word and oath, did embrace all things for all time, including the very end; just as he also spoke in the beginning, and it was done.

So, my dearly beloved brethren and friends, I hope you can read this rather lengthy article with the light of the Holy Spirit of God, and if it is the truth, that you may be comforted by its contents. If it is otherwise, I hope you may be given to pray for me, a very unworthy and unprofitable servant, if indeed a servant of God at all. I know this is a very deep and mysterious subject; and so are all the inspired teachings of God's Holy Bible. But, however deep and mysterious it is, it is written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope. (Romans 15:4) Yet we are strictly dependent on the light of his Holy Spirit to reveal these precious things to us. Jesus said in Matthew 11:25, 26, in prayer to his Father, "I thank thee O Father Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them to babes. Even so, Father: for it seemed good in thy sight." So revelation is necessary to the Lord's people; and it is hid from the wise and prudent of this world.

May the Lord in his mercy and grace richly and abundantly bless, keep, preserve, and lead his people through this dark and desert land of great troubles, trials and afflictions, destructions and perplexities, that we are surely witnessing this day and time; which seemingly are growing worse and worse every day. And is scriptural witness of the nearness of the final and glorious second coming of Christ, to gather all his humble, trembling little children home to himself, to heaven above: Where there will be no more trouble, sin, sickness, pain, nor death, but where there will be peace, love, and joy forevermore, with the King of Kings and Lord of Lords; together with all his holy angels, and

all the Lord's children, who are to be like Him, and see him as he is.

Pray for me that I may be given of the Lord to see, feel, and rejoice in the precious, and holy, and comforting Gospel.

Your brother in hope,
(Elder) R. W. Rhodes

Perrin, Texas

Dear Elders and Readers
of the Signs of the Times:

I have read the good old paper for a long time, and I am sure there have not been very many things I could not endorse. Elder Gilbert Beebe was able in all his writings. I sit alone here as far as my belief is concerned, and I don't get to go very much among our people; and I am the only one in our town that believes in the old time doctrine which sets up Christ as a full and complete Saviour.

My age is keeping me down. I am 91 years old, and I forget things; I had not noticed that my subscription is several days past due, please forgive me. I am sending \$3.00 to re-new another year. I surely do enjoy the Signs — it puts new life in me when I read them. Elder Wood your piece was fine. You started with what the Lord began with you. The Apostle Paul did the same, and he preached in demonstration of the Spirit and of power that the brethren's faith should not stand in the wisdom of men but in the power of God. The faith that God gives his children is the faith that made lame men leap and praise God, not for what Peter and John had done, but for what God had done. The faith that raised him up is the foundation of the hope of every little child of God; and without faith it is impossible to please God. It is the blood of the everlasting covenant that makes us perfect in every good work, working in us is that which is well pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Please excuse me for I ought not to try to write. I am too old to try to write or to preach any more, but I love the Old Baptists. I have been a member since 1892, and when I go to meetings the brethren act like they are glad to see me, and I am proud of this.

Your brother, I hope,
C. Y. Osteen

ALL-DAY MEETING AT WARWICK CHURCH

There will be an all-day meeting at Warwick Old School Baptist Church, Warwick, N. Y., on Saturday, June 10, 1961. Brethren and friends are cordially invited to attend.

(Elder) A. J. Slauson

STAUNTON RIVER ASSOCIATION

The Staunton River Primitive Baptist Association will be held with Banister Spring Church Friday, Saturday and 2nd Sunday in July, (July 7, 8 and 9, 1961). Banister Spring Church is located about 15 miles North of Danville, Virginia, on Highway 29.

All brethren and friends are invited to meet with us.

W. J. Oaks, Clerk

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THE DELAWARE RIVER ASSOCIATION

The Delaware River Association is appointed to be held, the Lord willing, with the church at Hopewell, N. J., on June 7 and 8, 1961.

An invitation is extended to those of our faith and order, who are in order at home, to meet with us. All friends will be welcomed.

Letha A. Blackwell, Clerk
 Lafayette Street, Rosa Acres
 Hopewell, N. J.

EDITORIAL

HEZEKIAH'S SICKNESS AND
 RECOVERY

"In those days was Hezekiah sick unto death: And Isaiah the prophet the

son of Amoz came unto him, and said unto him, Thus saith the Lord, Set thine house in order: for thou shalt die, and not live." (Isaiah 38:1)

For some months we have been mindful of a request from a sister to write upon this subject. In October 1940, we touched upon this subject when we wrote upon the words, "O Lord, I am oppressed, undertake for me." Isaiah 38:14. This time we would consider this gracious man and his troubles; he was the son of a very wicked man, Ahaz, who had closed the doors of the temple and forbidden the people to offer sacrifices to the God of Israel; and who, following the practice of the kings of Israel, had made molten images to Baalim. When the wrath of God was clearly seen to be against him, he was more and more determined to pursue his wicked ways. It was in such a time that Hezekiah came to the throne, and from the first month of the first year he set his face to seek and please the Lord. From what we read of him and his times, we conclude that it was God's work, a sudden illumination from above, and he faithfully continued to restore and establish the worship of God. It is recorded that "He did that which was right in the sight of the Lord, ACCORDING TO ALL that David his father had done." 2 Chronicles 29:2.

He had a number of instances when it was proven to be the work of the Lord; one of them is seen in Isaiah 36th and 37th chapters, which show the determination of the king of Assyria to conquer the kingdom and overthrow that which Hezekiah had so faithfully established. Surely he was opposed by a strong, crafty foe, yes, on every hand, just as we are today in this world of unbelief. Hezekiah seemed to have trouble on trouble. How dark and distressing it appeared before God showed His mighty power in destroying in one night the host of the Assyrians, and causing their wicked king to return to die a violent death in the house of his god.

Hezekiah's greatest distress was at

the sight of the cities of Judah in the hands of his foe; and a fear, still greater, that Jerusalem would also be taken and the worship of God overthrown. It was enough to make the good man sick. Another thing must have distressed him, he was childless, and to him, as to Abram, it was a constant desire that he have a son. In this distressing condition the prophet Isaiah was sent to him with, "Thus saith the Lord, Set thine house in order." He who had been so faithful in setting the house of Judah in order and had just seen God's power so clearly manifested in overthrowing his foes, now had the sentence of death come to him. Just when life looked much easier for him, death stared him in the face. Man would say, "Why is this?" How true are the poet's words:

"Blind unbelief is sure to err,
And scan His work in vain,
God is His own interpreter
And He will make it plain."

Hezekiah was no self-righteous man any more than Job or David was, and as we look over the way he had come, as a subject of God's love and mercy, he could say, "Remember NOW, O Lord I beseech Thee, how I have walked before Thee in truth and with a perfect heart, and have done that which is good in Thy sight." This was not a self-righteous brag, but the effect of a God-given faith that gave evidence that he had worked out what God had worked in him of His good pleasure. The fact that God had overthrown the host of Assyria without the aid of man's sword, and in so doing, had heard the cry of the destitute, was enough to show that this man was not in a boasting frame of mind. Was he not David's son? As God's anointed he had done "that which was right in the sight of the Lord, according to all that David his father had

done." In his life, coming as he did near the time when Judah must be carried into captivity because of their wickedness, he stands out as a type of Jesus the son of David. Like Job, this man feared God and eschewed evil, and he had an integrity, that neither friend or foe could take from him. Paul also had the same, he could say, "I have fought a good fight — I have kept the faith." Hezekiah's prayer shows him to have a correct knowledge of himself, for he was divinely taught, and therefore he could come as low as Paul, who called himself the chief of sinners. One only has to read awhile in the Psalms to see the same truth proclaimed. David, though a sinner, could say, "Let integrity and uprightness preserve me." We therefore conclude that Hezekiah's words are not to be considered for a moment as an expression of a self-righteous person. We know if he had been such an one, God would not have immediately answered his cry. His prayer did not go out of feigned lips. A God-given faith is proven when we see our God listen to the cry of those who are His.

A self-righteous person is so sure he is right, and thinks that those who are bowed towards the earth, and weep and mourn sore like doves, have some prevailing sin that they ought to give up and then they would be happy all the day long. "There are no bands in their death, but their strength is firm." But let us look at what we would call the personal side of his religion and prayer. By nature the Lord's people, left to themselves, are proud and need trials, and God will try them as gold is tried. 2 Corinthians 12:7. Is there not a self-loathing? His prayer was like a chattering noise, and his eyes failed with looking upward and he cried, "O Lord, I am oppressed, undertake for me: O Lord, by these things MEN LIVE, and in all these things is the life of my spirit; so wilt Thou recover me and make me to live." Our Lord says in Luke 18:7-8, where He taught that men ought always to pray and not to faint, "And shall not

God avenge His own elect, which cry day and night unto Him, though He bear long with them? I tell you that He will avenge them SPEEDILY."

We are told, "And it came to pass, afore Isaiah was gone out into the middle court, that the Word of the Lord came to him, saying, Turn again, and tell Hezekiah THE CAPTAIN OF MY PEOPLE, Thus saith the Lord, the God of David thy father, I have heard thy prayer, I have seen thy tears: behold; I will heal thee: on the third day thou shalt go up unto the House of the Lord." 2 Kings 20:4-5. The Lord also said, "I will add unto thy days fifteen years." Job said, "He is in one mind, and who can turn Him? and what His soul desideth, even that He doeth." Job 23:13. God, being of one mind, knew when Hezekiah's life would terminate, even when He said, "Set thine house in order, for thou shalt die and not live." He knew what the effect of the word would be on Hezekiah. It was to bring him to His footstool to express in his prayer such testimony that will be a comfort to the household of faith in all generations. By it, he was brought into the sufferings of Christ, who came into the world to die. Humiliated before a threatening foe, grieved under the seeming nearness of his own death, despondent, as he thought of the land that he loved, being so helpless before such an enveloping calamity, he searched himself and considered the path he had taken from the first month of his reign, and he had the testimony of a good conscience. Like Paul, he had not been disobedient to the heavenly vision. Now, with so many things left undone that ought to have been done, helpless and discouraged, thoughts of sudden destruction or pining sickness would cross his mind. How fearful he was, "I reckoned till morning, that, as a lion, so will He break all my bones, from day even to night. Thou wilt make an end of me." Yet this dear man, bowed down with foes without and fears within, still had a covenant God to go to. In Isaiah 54:8, the Lord

says, "In a little wrath I hid my face from thee for a moment." Yet one has only to read the prayer of Hezekiah to see how many thoughts and fears can, in that short time, pass through an oppressed sinner's mind. He had hoped for peace, instead there was great bitterness, "But Thou hast in love to my soul delivered it from the pit of corruption: for Thou hast cast all my sins behind Thy back." Isaiah 38:17. He could, in the end of this bitter experience, see that the Lord had a purpose in it all, that the Lord was ready to save him, not as man would say, that God had one plan, but changed His mind when He saw that Hezekiah repented. Our God doeth all things well, and He has a purpose in all things whatsoever comes to pass. Today what darkness covers the earth in what men call the Christian world. The Lord's people, who profess to have been illuminated from above, seem to be few and far between, and one wonders if there is not a lesson to be drawn today from the above account of Hezekiah. Babylon seems to have spread her errors over the whole earth. There seem to be a few here and there whom God has separated, for He will not leave Himself without witness. How few there are He knoweth right well. Perhaps we have not seen the worst of it yet. In not a few places where the Standard of Truth was maintained, the doors are closed, and the ways of Zion do mourn.

"To Thee, Almighty God, to Thee,
My Rock and Refuge would I flee;
Now tides of sorrow rolling high,
Appear to mingle earth and sky.
To see Thy saints in mourning clad,
And foes by their distress made glad,
O'erwhelms my soul with poignant grief,
Lord send Thy servants sweet relief."

In Isaiah 37:1-3, Hezekiah sent a message to Isaiah that is suited to this day more than many may think! "This day is a day of trouble, and of rebuke, and of blasphemy; for the children are come to the birth, and there is not strength

to bring forth." To be sure, there came a reply from the prophet, a "Thus saith the Lord, be not afraid," yet with all the promised help that it brought, chapter 38 was needed with another "Thus saith the Lord: Set thine house in order, for thou shalt die and not live."

Today we believe that in the Church and fellowship we have known and loved these many years, there is a good conscience toward God. In its public expressions the truth, which was so boldly declared in days past, is preserved, but it will be well if we, as Hezekiah, bring the battle to the gate of our own consciences. It is a dark day, but, as we have seen, God "can clear the darkest skies and give us day for night." The preaching generally seems to have the same ring, but it is not easy for man to practice what he preaches. In that day a man could rend his garments and put sackcloth upon his head. One prophet cried, "Rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the Lord your God: for He is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth Him of the evil. Who knoweth if He will return and repent, and leave a blessing behind Him?" Joel 2:13-19.

Hezekiah manifested more than an outward show of repentance, the word of the prophet was regarded, and it caused self-examination, a confession of error and general mourning. The writer of this article has the sentence of death in himself, and ere long will have ceased the struggles of this life. He knows that the truth has been and is preached amongst us, and it is high time that, as one body, we have a feeling anxiety for every member, not forgetting that in the true body of Christ, if one suffer, they all suffer. Let us look closely to the fellowship of those with Hezekiah in his distress, there was not one of them but could rejoice with those that did rejoice. It was the Lord's doing. "And Hezekiah rejoiced and all the people, that God had prepared the people: for the thing was done suddenly." 2 Chronicles 29:36.

G. R.

"So the father knew that it was the same hour, in the which Jesus said unto him, Thy son liveth: and himself believed, and his whole house." (John 4:53)

Some time ago we had a request for views on the last clause of the above: "And himself believed, and his whole house." "His whole house" believing is the chief point of inquiry. At the time we had nothing which seemed satisfactory in way of reply, so have delayed until now. The same inquiry would probably include this scripture: "And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, straightway." (Acts 16:33)

In considering this, or any other portion of Scripture, we must remember that the Scriptures are one whole and complete pronouncement of those things God is pleased to reveal of himself; and of his unchangeable will towards men. And, we would hasten to say, of his special dealing with those of the election of grace. All is built upon one sure, and certain, and continuous foundation. *Whatever the statement or event may be, it stems from, and is a part of the whole.* It matters not, therefore, which portion, or what statement, or event, *it is sure to be in full conformity with itself as a whole.*

We see great beauty in the way and manner in which God has manifested himself in the Scriptures. From the beginning, to the coming of the Saviour, there is a portrayal of the ever mounting necessity of grace, or none would be saved. And, along with the necessity, there is the unfolding of the promises, as well as examples, of this grace.

The Old Testament is often thought to show the way in which God gave opportunity for men to be saved; that is, through laws and precepts. But nothing could be further from the truth. Such consideration disregards entirely the stated fact that, "The law entered that the offence might abound." It ut-

terly disregards also the ceremonial portions which foreshadowed the one great sacrifice necessary for salvation. How vividly the saying of Jesus flashes the truth: "Search the scriptures, for in them ye think ye have eternal life; *and they are they that testify of me.*"

The fact that the Old Testament promised the coming of the Messiah, and that He made his appearance at the beginning of the New, and was the very embodiment of the New, certainly emphatically shows grace and mercy of God to be that which the Old Testament was unfolding.

These facts of the Old Testament are developed in such a wonderful way that all persons are shown to come under the full judgment of God's laws; and all are declared dead in trespasses and sins, since they are all condemned. This, together with the choice of God of one nation among all the others as the object of his love and merciful dealings, (which prefigures his love and choice of his church;) and the promise of the coming of the Messiah, we feel, is a summary of what is contained in the Old Testament.

The New Testament is developed in all of its parts, upon the very things which were promised in the Old: The Messiah who was promised to come, came; and in the way and manner as foretold. All that he did, in obedience, in life, and in death, was fully known and recorded; and is found perfectly in accord with all prophecy.

Therefore, it must be remembered, the New Testament is not just a modification of the Old; not just a kind of after-thought to make up the deficiencies of men; not just another opportunity offered. For, do not the promises of God run like a golden thread throughout the Old Testament? Are they not perfectly brought to fruition in the New?

If there is one thing more than another which should be kept in mind in our consideration of these things, it is, that Jesus did for those who are spirit-

ual Israel, the spiritual seed of Abraham, what they could not do for themselves. And that Jesus fully satisfied the judgment against them, so that all are freed from the law of sin and death. The Apostle said, "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." (Romans 8:2-4)

The above is what the New Testament declares has been accomplished for all for whom Jesus died, and arose again. The prisoners have been set free. They never again can be accused by the law of sin and death. All these old things are passed away, and the provisions of the New Covenant have full dominion. The redeemed can no longer be terrified by bondage and chains. They are set free from these things. And we do well to distinctly and loudly proclaim this truth, and never attempt to apply to the New, things which belong strictly to the Old. Of a truth, the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made us free from the law of sin and death. One is as distinct from the other as day is from night.

Much false teaching is derived from the lack of knowledge of these things. Many proclaim the New Testament, but insist that much of the Old is still applicable. Many take the things which apply strictly to God's dealings with Israel under the law, and handle them as if they were still applicable to the church under the proclamation of the gospel. Could we imagine for a moment that there are any who know the New Covenant in its application to themselves, who are yet in bondage under the old? If such could be the case, then the grace and mercy of God is a failure!

What beauties we see when we are blessed to trace out the evidences of

God's mercies, as they were couched in their types and shadows many years before their actual fulfilment. The Old Testament is full of these things. How good it is to hear the servants of God when they are led to delve into these ancient things, and show their perfect fulfilment in the person of our Saviour; and especially when we have already felt them fulfilled in us!

What a great difference there is when the laws of God are written in the hearts and minds of God's people, rather than on tables of stone! What a difference grace makes! "The grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men (all classes or conditions of men: Aged men, young men, aged women, young women, and servants, as shown by the context,) teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ."

If anyone has not learned this he is not qualified for church membership. If anyone has not learned this, and is as much at home with ungodliness as with Godliness, he has no place in the church. If we do not see the fruits of the Spirit manifested in the professed followers of Jesus, it is safe to assume that the grace of God has not appeared to them. Not that we may expect these fruits to be always in manifestation, while men are yet in their earthly existence. It will be remembered that the question was asked, and then answered: "What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?" This expresses the deep emotions of those delivered from the bondage of sin. They are no longer *dead in sins*, but *dead to sin*. When one is overcome of the lusts of the flesh, the evidence of grace and godliness appears as there is remorse and godly sorrow manifested. This is of great value to the brethren, in that

it tempers their "sitting in judgment", and causes them to know their weaknesses, and their continual need of the grace of God.

We must now come to directly consider our subject. What we have been saying is ground-work for it.

Why did men believe that Jesus was the Christ? The answer is, They had evidence of it. John said, "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God." (1 John 5:1) When John the Baptist saw the heavens open and the Spirit descending like a dove upon Jesus, and heard the voice saying, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased", he had no doubt as to whom Jesus was. Saul, under the power of the light from heaven, heard the voice saying unto him, "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?", he said, "Who art thou, Lord?" The reply was, "I am Jesus whom thou persecutest." Then Saul trembled and was astonished — he had no doubt as to whom Jesus was.

When Peter confessed, with his brethren, "Thou art the Christ the Son of the living God", he was told that he was blessed, for flesh and blood had not revealed it unto him, but the Father in heaven. The evidence was such in the heart of the Eunuch that he proclaimed to Phillip, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God."

On the day of Pentecost, while Peter was preaching, the evidence and power was such that many were pricked in their hearts, and we are told that they that gladly received his word were baptized. Peter had told them that, "... the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even to as many as the Lord our God shall call." This we take to be a statement of truth and fact as to whom believers on Jesus should be: "Even as many as the Lord our God shall call." There is nothing here to indicate anything other than that the promise was unto both Jews and Gentiles, whom the Lord should call. Certainly there is no indication that Peter meant that the promise was unto

each natural child of those who were pricked in their hearts; as if this were a matter of heredity. Much false doctrine has sprung from wrong premises derived from this and similar scriptures. So we do well to enquire what is the mind of the Spirit in these matters. We know that a "natural religion" can be taught, and handed down from generation to generation; and we know that children can be brought up in certain doctrines or tenets which are held by their parents, and that it was true among the Israelites of old; but we also know that before any of them could know the truth as it was in Christ Jesus, there was an extraneous work beyond the power of hereditary teaching which was necessary in each one of them. And we may be sure that the same is necessary today.

All evidence is that belief on the part of those mentioned in the Scriptures, was because of some word or work which took place in their hearts from an outside source; that is, not of human effort or will. And that it was a work which was *always effective*, for it was not carnal, "but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds." And, "Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalted itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ." (2 Corinthians 10:4-5) Is it not with us as it was with the Apostle? We are, "confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." (Philippians 1:6)

The fame of Jesus had gone out to many parts of the country, and many followed him out of idle curiosity to see what he would say or do. Our text has to do with a certain nobleman whose son was sick at Capernaum. Jesus had returned again to Galilee shortly after he had spoken to the Samaritan woman, and "told her all things that ever she did," and she had said, "Is not this the Christ?" The nobleman came to Jesus

and besought him to come to Capernaum and heal his son who was at the point of death. But Jesus said, "Except ye see signs and wonders, ye will not believe." The people had heard of, and probably some had seen, his first miracle of turning the water to wine, for it was done in that same town of Galilee; and they had seen the things which he did at Jerusalem at the feast. It is probably that what Jesus said was meant for all of them, though it was addressed to the nobleman.

We are impressed with the lack of hesitation on the part of the nobleman, though accused of desiring to see signs and wonders: "Sir, come down ere my child die." Jesus immediately said to him, "Go thy way; thy son liveth." How quickly he believed Jesus, and went his way towards home. "The man believed the word that Jesus had spoken unto him, and he went his way."

As he was journeying, he was met by his servants, who had departed from home to bear him the news, "Thy son liveth." And he inquired of the hour when he began to mend; and it was the same hour in which Jesus had told him, "Thy son liveth." "And himself believed, and his whole house." That is, himself and members of his household believed.

From the evidence we have gathered in the former part of this writing, as to all scriptures and doctrine being in full conformity with itself, we are safe in saying that this man, and all his house, believed because of the working of the mighty power of God in them; as it was evidenced to them that Jesus had done what no mortal man could do of himself. "Thou art the Christ, the son of the living God," some had said before; and these needed no further evidence. How certain it is that this man and all his house, were included in the number: "even as many as the Lord our God shall call." Their evidence and conviction was as strong to them as Paul's was to him; or Peter's to him; or as John the Baptist's was to him.

And they all believed.

We can see nothing in these things other than the unfolding of the way the Lord brings his people individually to the knowledge of the truth; because Jesus said that no man could come unto him except the Father draws him, and that it was the work of God that they believe on him.

When rightly understood, there is nothing in the Bible which upholds the theory of man's free will; nor of mere invitations to believe. The Bible just doesn't teach such doctrine.

What we have written, we hope will at least stir up the pure minds of our brethren.

J. D. W.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

CAVE ADULLAM

Elder G. Beebe's Sons — Dear Brethren in Christ: — A man who is now past his three score years, in his youthful days used to hear and sometimes read the remarkable story of one David, who "escaped to the cave Adullam, and when his brethren and all his father's house heard it, they went down thither to him, and every one that was in distress, and every one that was in debt, and every one that was discontented, gathered themselves unto him, and he became a captain over them, and there were with him about four hundred men." This same old man learned in early life from some source that Adullam meant "their witness" or testimony, but what meaning there could be in such a statement he could not imagine, for such a class as were described as gathered themselves to David, seemed to him to be a class of persons wholly unprepared to testify to anything but their own wretchedness, although he had read in a book, called the New Testament, the following description of certain characters: "Even unto this present hour we both hunger, and thirst, and are

naked, and are buffeted, and have no certain dwelling place, and labor with our own hands; being reviled, we bless; being persecuted, we suffer for it; being defamed, we entreat; we are made as the filth of the world, and are the off-scouring of all things unto this day. I write not these things to shame you, but as my beloved sons I warn you." What possible connection there could be in these declarations, and the characters described as being in the cave Adullam, could not be seen so as to be understood.

When this now old man was about eighteen years of age, a strange something took hold of him, and he became convinced that everything between him and his Creator, God, was wrong on his part, and then it required no elaborate argument to convince him that he was a sinner, justly condemned by the righteous law of God, and it needed no learned disquisition to convince him that there was a state of existence beyond this world, where all the race of mortal men would still have a being in either weal or woe. After seeing such to be the case, he immediately went to work to change his condition, not knowing that the fountain within was totally depraved, and that nothing but corruption could issue from such a source; though there were times that there seemed to be some relief, but soon the matter seemed worse than ever, and some two years or more passed, and he found himself to be "in distress, in debt, and discontented," and in some unaccountable way to him, he found himself in the cave Adullam, mingling with persons having exactly the same kind of trouble, and after being in the "cave" some time their captain, David, made him a personal visit, and that lovely, sweet and charming countenance can never be forgotten while reason remains upon the throne, for he truly appeared "the chiefest among ten thousand," and the one altogether lovely, and when those heart-cheering words were uttered, "Because I live, ye shall live also," the distress, poverty and discontent seemed gone;

soon followed the words from that precious Captain, "If you love me, keep my commandments." Then the man remembered that it was written, "For it became him for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings," and so sweetly and powerfully were those declarations applied to him that he clearly saw why David was the captain over them in the cave Adullam.

He read in the New Testament the following: "Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan, unto John, to be baptized of him. But John forbade him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? And Jesus answering, said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness. Then he suffered him. And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: and lo, a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." So powerfully were the circumstances connected with the baptism of the Captain of our salvation, by his servant John, applied unto that man at times, that a glory indescribably great appeared to surround and envelop that awfully sublime scene, and three important things were clearly seen as connected with that baptism of Jesus, viz: A proper mode; a prepared administrator of the ordinance; and the true character, for in that ordinance was set forth by that man Christ Jesus not only the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ, but every member of his body.

But the man who saw such glory and majesty in the ordinance of baptism had at times an anxious desire to obey his glorious Captain by following him into the "watery grave" as soon as he felt "good enough", but after waiting a long time and finding no improvement whatever in the principles dwelling in

his flesh, and that he had not got far removed from the cave Adullam, the words of the apostle Peter, which declare that baptism is "not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God," had such an effect on him that he was constrained, out of love, he hopes, to obey his Lord, by being baptized by a servant of the church, "in the name of Jesus Christ," which act he has never regretted, but has been made sad and gloomy very, very many times, on account of his shortcomings and his wanderings in forbidden paths, and although he has had a hope in the mercy of God toward him through Jesus Christ about forty years, and has been a member of the visible church over thirty-six years, he finds that he has not improved his fleshly passions and lusts any during that long period of time, and he still finds himself in distress and discontented, at times, fearing that he must be mistaken in the great matter of salvation, and he is often made to say, "Woe is me that I sojourn in Mesech, that I dwell in the tents of Kedar."

During the forty years he has had a hope that Jesus died for him, one great, important and fearful lesson has been taught him, and that is, **not to trifle** with what the inspired apostles have written, nor to seek to evade any of their positive declarations, for he has found measurably, at least, what a short-sighted, ignorant, erring mortal he is, and the awfully momentous truth recorded by Paul when he said, "For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing; for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not," he finds true. How trifling those words of the apostle appeared to the man when he was a wild, giddy and foolish boy, but since he was brought "down into the cave Adullam" he has found that the apostle penned the truth, for forty years has not removed out of his flesh, covetousness, wrath, malice, revenge, jealousy and evil surmisings. Those "vile

serpents" are all alive, but sometimes more quiet than at other times, but not any of them are dead, and at times, when disturbed, their "hissing" is frightful, but reigning and abounding grace can and does chain them down. The closest and most profound examination shows to this man the certain truth of what the apostle recorded concerning his flesh; and if they were quiet there would not be such a strife, but they are active; hence the same apostle says, "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."

Upon another occasion the same apostle said, "For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh, and these are contrary the one to the other, so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." These principles are not only in the flesh, but are active ones, and since this man has seen himself in such distress, involved in such a debt, and so discontented, and found himself with such a class in the cave Adullam, he has had no desire to shun the company of Paul, by improving what he said concerning the warfare. During the time this man has had a hope, he has heard thousands of sermons, and sometimes he felt elated, and at other times depressed, cast down and gloomy, feeling that he lived undesired, and should die unlamented. It has seemed generally to be more interesting preaching to him when the trials, sorrows and afflictions of God's dear children have been dwelt upon, and the full, complete and finished salvation, in Christ Jesus, for just such poor, helpless, wandering creatures, has been clearly set forth, than simply to be dwelling on the duties of obedience and "right living" of God's children while here in the flesh, especially when it has been urged that their blessings depend upon those deeds, as such, for that position is antisciptural because it puts effect for cause. The church, in all her members, is already

blessed, according to the following divine declarations: "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; having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself according to the good pleasure of his will."

These declarations positively show that the members of the body of Christ are already blessed; therefore instead of creature obedience being the means of obtaining the blessings, the blessings bestowed by the Father of mercies and God of all grace and consolation, cause the true obedience. How often has this man listened to preaching, and his mind has been like the "fool's eyes," rambling far and wide; yet he was present, filling his place among the members of the church, but had a "lean time;" therefore he has learned the just meaning of the following declarations: "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 that worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure," and this man is so childish as to receive these important declarations just exactly as the apostle has penned them, and the reason his beloved brethren had always obeyed was because God gave them the will and the power. Then was their obeying the cause of the will and the power, or was it the evidence and result! The thought has often been given this old man, concerning the spiritual blessings, about as follows: "If great and precious blessings were given a child of God in Jesus Christ before time began, and those blessings were to be given or bestowed according to the obedience of that child, while here in the flesh, and such child should be so disobedient as not to merit one of the blessings, what confusion there must arise in the divine arrangement, for

there are surplus blessings given in Christ, according to the carnal theory, you do and then you will be blessed. But how any one who has been in the cave Adullam, and had a view of the great, the wise, the glorious, the infinite and righteous Captain of our salvation, can advance the carnal view that our blessings depend on personal obedience, when the record made by inspired penmen teaches exactly the reverse; but our God, in his infinite love, boundless mercy and endless compassion, has seen fit to give "credit," as it were, to his dear children, in some places recorded in the Bible, for that which they are absolutely debtors; but this "ignorant" man so understands the matter, and, according to what the apostle James has written, everything for the good of God's people comes from him, for he says, "Do not err, my beloved brethren. Every good gift, and every perfect gift, is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning;" therefore all the children of men ever have done, are now doing, or will ever do, has not even caused the shadow of turning with Jehovah, if the testimony of the apostle James is to be received and believed; but if it is to be "improved and changed," woe be unto them of his children who countenance such a thing.

In the New Testament it reads, "We are fools for Christ's sake;" and this man, who has been in the cave Adullam, as he hopes, is so foolish in the eyes of the "wise and learned" of the present day, that he is willing to take the New Testament just as it reads concerning the choosing of the members of Christ's body in him before the foundation of the world, the vital unity between Christ and his people, the efficacy of the atonement for the sheep, the spiritual birth, the ordinance of baptism, the warfare between the flesh and the Spirit, the office work of the ministry, the deep mystery of the resurrection of the bodies of the saints, the description given of the invisible God, the final glorification of all the elect in the world

of immortal glory, and the everlasting punishment of all the non-elect; all of which matters are as fixed and sure as the eternal throne of God, and can no more be changed than God can cease to exist. He closes these remarks, wishing Zion well, and that our God, if it be his will, will keep his dear people from carnal theorizing and vain speculations, and cause all to be childlike and simple, being willing to take forms of expression that inspired apostles have left on record, and not attempt to suit them to "the favor of the learned world of mankind," by modernizing them, thereby attempting to accommodate matters with worldly religionists. May God apply the following declarations with sweetness and power: "But ye, beloved, building up yourselves on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Ghost, keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life."

SIMPLICITY

(The above originally appeared in the Signs November 15, 1884, and was written by Elder Wm. J. Purington; of whom Elder Chick wrote, "Than whom there has not been an abler gifted minister of the gospel since the days of the apostles."

We believe and advocate today the same principles which were maintained by Elder Purington. — J. D. W.)

OBITUARIES

HENRY THOMAS EARNHEART

On April 22, 1960, God in his infinite wisdom saw fit to take from us by death, our beloved brother, Henry Thomas Earnheart. He was born July 3, 1885, making his age almost seventy-five years. He was the son of the late Lee and Sallie Earnheart, of Maury City, Tennessee; and was married to Miss Fannie Ellen DeShazo, of Friendship, Tennessee, on December 23, 1917. Surviving are his wife and six daughters and three sons: Mrs. Evelyn Moore, Fort Worth, Texas; Mrs. Shirley Batte, Memphis Tenn.; Mrs. Julia Browder, Memphis; Mrs. Martha Walker, Memphis; Mrs. Altha Dell Cunningham, San Angelo, Texas; Mrs. Emily Ellen Green, Fayetteville, Tenn.; Max Earnheart, Friendship, Tenn.; Lee Roy Earnheart, Jackson, Tenn.; and Calvin Earn-

heart, Pineville, Louisiana; and by several grandchildren.

Brother Earnheart has been coming to the Memphis church for many years, driving about ninety miles each way; and did not miss many meetings. He united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Memphis, November 14, 1954, and was baptized the fourth Sunday in November. Although he was well up in years, he was not afraid of the cold water, but rather rejoiced to the fullest extent, believing and loving God with all his heart. He loved his church; and in his last years it was a great pleasure to him for his wife to read and re-read each copy of the *Signs of the Times* as they came.

Funeral services were conducted by Elders H. R. Prince and H. G. Brown, assisted by a Methodist and a Baptist minister. His body was laid to rest in the Belvernon Cemetery, at Friendship, Tenn. We bow in humble submission to God's will, knowing that He is too wise to make a mistake — He doeth all things well. "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." "His mercy endureth forever." May we all meet beyond the grave to forever praise Him who loved us. Yours in sweet hope of everlasting salvation.

(Elder) H. G. Brown

DAVID FRANK PAGE

In memory of a beloved brother in Christ, David Frank Page, whose time ceased on January 29, 1961, after more than 72 years. (The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh; blessed be the name of the Lord.)

Brother Page was a retired farmer who had lived a clean and respectable life, and provided for his household well, in the community of Pagetown, near the church at Bush Arbor, where he united on Saturday before the 2nd Sunday in August, 1959. He was a loyal and faithful member, manifesting the spirit of Christ, which we shall miss.

We feel, with a sad heart, that our loss is his gain, but we would not ask the bereaved family, who stood so closely by him with willing hearts but helpless hands, not to mourn the loss of one so near and dear. Those left to mourn include his dear companion of more than 49 years, Mrs. Lula Robertson Page; two children, who so tirelessly served him during his illness, Alton J. Page, and Mrs. Oscar Brintle, Elon College, N. C.; two grandsons; one brother, Zackery Page, Reidsville, N. C., and one sister, Mrs. Tommy Page, Elon College.

The funeral was conducted by his pastor, Elder W. C. King, assisted by Elder Harvey Smith and Elder Earnest Oakley, and burial was in the church cemetery at Bush Arbor

Primitive Baptist Church, where his body now rests in the silence of the tomb for that glorious resurrection, when hope shall be reality, and these little ones shall come forth fashioned like the glorious body of our Lord, and be satisfied forever.

RESOLVED, That a copy of this be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication; and a copy be spread upon the Record Book of the Church.

Done by order of the church at Bush Arbor at her regular conference February 11, 1961.

Elder W. C. King, Moderator

Earl Rudd, Clerk

Written by Clifton Robertson

DEACON DAN CAMPBELL

Donald A. Campbell was born September 12th, 1860, and departed this life on February 23rd, 1961. He was a native of Lobo Township, where he farmed until twenty years ago. He was predeceased by his wife Christina (McDougall) Campbell in 1941, and by a son Archie in 1944. He is survived by a daughter, Mrs. Stanley (Flora) Robson and three grandchildren, all of Lobo Township, Ontario.

Brother Dan, as he was called by the brethren who loved him so dearly, was a gentleman of excellent character and behavior, which made him greatly esteemed by those among whom he lived. He united with the Covenanted Baptist Church at Lobo October 6th, 1917, and was baptized by the late Elder J. B. Slauson, and became a very valued member of the church. He served the church well as a deacon for about thirty-five years, and was blessed with a gift to comfort and encourage those who showed themselves interested in the things of God. He had a very clear active mind on the Scriptures to the end of his days; and while unable to get to meeting for some years, during which, part of the time, he was confined to his bed, blind and quite deaf, he was able with joy in his heart to speak of things of God, to the comfort of those who heard him. The writer found much pleasure in visiting him.

Last September 12th was his one hundredth birthday and many called to see him on that day. His last sixteen years were spent at his daughter's home, where he was lovingly cared for by that dear family until he breathed his last. The writer spoke at his funeral, where a large gathering of relatives and friends came to show their loving sympathy and respect. Interment was in Ivan Cemetery, Lobo Township, Ontario.

George Ruston

EDITH DURAND McCALL

The following is from a Winnipeg, Mani-

toba, newspaper:

"On April 4, 1961, at the Misericordia Hospital. Edith McCall, aged 77 years, beloved wife of Gilbert McCall, 167 Lanark Crescent. Born in Herrick, Pennsylvania, she came to Winnipeg when she was married in 1912. She was the daughter of Elder Silas H. Durand, for many years pastor of the Old School Baptist Church at Southampton, Pennsylvania. She was a graduate of Bryn Mawr College. Mrs. McCall was an active member of the University Women's Club and the Canadian Club. She is survived by her husband Gilbert; three daughters, Mrs. Ellen Clark of Storrs, Connecticut, Mrs. Margaret Glabais of Red Deer, Alberta, Frances of Winnipeg; one sister, Mrs. Charles B. Gordy of Ann Arbor, Michigan; and six grandchildren. Funeral service 2:30 p. m. Thursday, Canon J. N. Dodge officiating. Interment in Brookside Cemetery."

Winnipeg, Manitoba

Dear Brother George,

Edith passed away at the hospital last night. Ellen, Margaret and Frances are here, and have been attending her day and night. She has been in a half-conscious state for several days past and did not appear to be suffering pain. I am thankful that her illness did not result in a prolonged period of hopeless suffering, but my loss is none the less. Please send a notice for the "Signs," if you can find the time, so that her many friends may know.

Affectionately your brother,
Gilbert

Our beloved friend was blessed with a lively, affectionate disposition which endeared her to all who knew her. She visited in our home several times and enjoyed attending our meetings whenever she came East. In our intercourse with her, both in conversation and correspondence, she evinced a knowledge and love of the truth as it is in Jesus, and we believe that she is for ever with the Lord.

We extend our loving sympathy to our dear Brother Gilbert, his daughters, grandchildren and our dear Sister Mildred Durand Gordy.

George Ruston

CHARLES HENRY JARMON

In memory of our dear brother and deacon, Charles Henry Jarmon, who was born February 6, 1870, near Berlin, Maryland, and died on August 10, 1960 at his home in Newark, Delaware.

He was the son of George Werner Jarmon and Sarah Ann (Brittingham) Jarmon, who were devoted members of the Indiantown Old School Baptist Church near Powelville, Maryland. He was married to Miss Bessie Staton in March, 1894. She was the daughter of Elder

Joseph Staton. Sister Jarmon died several years ago.

Our dear brother was a remarkable man. Many years ago, when a young man, he lost a leg. His acceptance of this has been outstanding in all the years. He did not give up the struggle of life, but as soon as returning strength would permit, he plunged with fervor into the making of a living and in caring for his household. He has told me that he heard the doctors talking about his approaching death, but that it did not alarm him. For more than sixty years he continued to take his place among men and to live a rugged, hard working life. In all the terrible pain and suffering he realized that it was not worthy to be compared to that which Jesus suffered for him. It was my privilege to know our brother the last five years, and but few people that have come under my observation, suffered more intense pain than did he, and yet he was as free of murmur as any sufferer I have known. Even though the Lord blessed him to a ripe old age, He blessed him with a keen intellect within days of his death.

He was appointed to the office of deacon at the Welsh Tract Church on March 14, 1931, which place he filled with praise to his Maker. He was a faithful member of this church for sixty-six years.

Our brother is survived by three daughters and two sons, to wit, Mrs. Elizabeth Holloway of Snow Hill, Md.; Mrs. Annabelle Shakespeare, Mrs. Helen Hawthorne, Rees Staton, of Newark, Delaware; Louis Tilham, of Graham, N. C. He also left one brother, William, of Wilmington, Delaware; two sisters, Mrs. Ida Holloway, and Mrs. Katherine Laws, both of near Berlin, Maryland, together with six grandchildren.

Our brother was laid to rest in the church cemetery at Welsh Tract, after services conducted by the writer.

We, the family, the church, and the town, feel that we have lost a precious follower of the Lord, but we realize that the Lord giveth and the Lord taketh, and blessed be His holy name: for what is our loss is his eternal gain.

(Elder) W. D. Griffin

ALLIE BELLE GOSSIEN FITZGIBBON

It is with much sadness I attempt to write of the passing of our dear and precious sister in Christ, Allie Belle Gossien Fitzgibbon, who passed away in the Warren, Ark. Hospital after a lengthy illness. Sister Allie, as she was known by all who loved her, was born at Kingsland, Ark., December 2, 1889, and passed away February 7, 1961, at the age of 71 years and 2 months. She was married to James Fitzgibbon on December 20, 1908. She is survived

by three children, Mrs. C. M. Wilson, James N. and J. R. Fitzgibbon; also two sisters, Mrs. Will Gambill and Mrs. Louie Calvert, both of Warren, Ark.; two brothers, Walter Gossien of Warren, Ark., and Oscar Gossien, of Little Rock, Ark. At the time of her death, she resided with her sister, Mrs. Will Gambill.

Sister Allie united with the Antioch Primitive Baptist Church, near Warren, Ark., and was baptized by the late Elder H. H. Phillips, who was pastor of the church at that time, on third Sunday in October, 1942. It was a sweet and precious privilege to know Sister Allie, as she was a faithful member of the church, always ready to care for the church and those she loved. She was a faithful believer in salvation alone through the imputed righteousness of Jesus Christ, and we are confident was in possession of that sweet hope that Jesus bore her sins upon the cross. She depended not upon the works of the flesh for salvation, but confessed that her hope rested alone in the blood of Jesus. While those who knew her doubted not concerning her belief, yet she freely stated that all she had was a sweet hope of eternal life beyond this vale of tears and sorrow. She was afflicted with cancer the past few months of her life, yet she bore her pains and afflictions in much patience, and was a faithful attender of the meetings until the last month of her illness, when she was confined to the hospital. Though the bereaved ones will miss her, and there will be a vacant chair in the home, as well as the church, we feel of a surety that she is at rest with her dear Saviour and has ceased from her toils and sorrows of this life, and will no more have to bear the afflictions and trials that are promised to those that shall live Godly. The blessed spirit of Christ that dwelled within her bosom has returned to God who gave it and the body returned to the earth from which it came, there to await the resurrection morning when the Lord shall descend with a shout to call his loved ones to himself, to that place called heaven, the place of heavenly rest for all the saints of God, to reign with the Lord forever in a world that shall have no end.

Funeral services were conducted by the unworthy writer before a large gathering of friends and relatives, and a large array of floral offerings, and her body was laid to rest in the family cemetery near Warren. May God who is rich in mercy and love, grant unto those left to grieve, grace sufficient to say thy will oh, God be done and not ours. May He ever be their guide and strength in all things, to the praise, honor and glory of His great and matchless name.

Written by her unworthy pastor at the request of the family, and one who loved her dearly.

Robert L. Miles

KATHERINE VICTORIA CAMPBELL

Katherine Victoria Campbell, daughter of Sister Etta Campbell and the late Mr. S. D. Campbell, was born May 24th, 1904, in West Lorne, Ontario, from which place she removed with her parents to Dutton and later to London, where she resided until her death, August 16th, 1960.

Besides her dear mother, she leaves to mourn her loss, a brother, Dr. Mac Campbell, of Detroit, and one sister, Jean, who lives with Sister Campbell. Katherine, along with her dear mother, joined the Covenanted Baptist Church by relation of experience and baptism at Lobo, Ontario, in September, 1944, being baptized by their pastor, Elder George Ruston.

Our dearly-beloved departed sister was for many years a great sufferer, but was always patient in tribulation. After one of our meetings in July, 1944, she wrote to me that for some time she had had a desire to ask a name with the church; then she added, "On Saturday morning I awoke from a dream, in which I saw the church in communion. I desired to partake, but the thought came, you can't, you are not a member, you haven't been baptized, go and be baptized, confessing your sins." She asked her dear mother if those words were in the Bible, she replied "Yes, in Matthew 3:6." "And were baptized of him (John) in Jordan, confessing their sins." She and her mother came before the church, and she, being so crippled, was carried by a deacon and myself down into the water on a chair, and was so baptized. For quite a while afterwards she was much improved in health and it rejoiced her brethren to see her so happy and at home in their fellowship. This could not last for long and she was taken to hospital for an operation, yet she was not left without comfort. The words "Let not your heart be troubled — In my Father's house are many mansions," were given to her; and we wondered if the Lord intended to take her to her heavenly home. That was not to be at that time. She returned home and lived on, a great sufferer, yet patient, with a mind to cheer others and a loving thoughtfulness for those around her. She was lovingly and unceasingly cared for by her family, who did everything to make her as comfortable as possible. She lingered on in patient suffering until the Lord took her to Himself, which is far better. A few days before she died, when she was being pressed to eat but had no desire to do so, she said, "Man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord doth man live." Deuteronomy 8:3. The writer spoke from those words at her funeral, where the twenty-third Psalm and "Abide With Me" were sung. Interment was in Dutton Cemetery.

George Ruston

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 129

DANVILLE, VA., JULY, 1961

NO. 7

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 7/1
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

MY WEB OF LIFE

"We know that all things work together for good to them that love God." (Romans 8:28)

No chance has brought this ill to me;
'Tis God's sweet will, so let it be;
He seeth what I cannot see.

There is a needs-be for each pain,
And He will make it one day plain,
That earthly loss is heavenly gain.

Like as a piece of tapestry,
Viewed from the back appears to be
Nought but threads tangled hopelessly.

But in the front a picture fair
Rewards the worker for his care,
Proving his skill and patience rare.

Thou art the workman, I the frame,
Lord, for the glory of Thy name,
Perfect Thine image on the same.

"When He hath tried me I shall come forth as gold." (Job 23:10)

Jessie Gillis
Canada

R.F.D. 1,
Check, Virginia

Dear Editors:

With a sad heart I am sending, at his request, the last writings of my dear father, Elder S. L. Moran, to be published in the *Signs of the Times*. He is sadly missed by his daughter.

Grace Sowers

THE LAST WRITING OF ELDER S. L. MORAN

I want to relate some of the things I have seen in mercy; and this is one of them.

I was living at the place where I first bought land, and there were no Baptists living near me, except two sisters. My wife's father lived close by, but he had no use for the doctrine the Old Baptists contended for; so I was there between two walls, and felt that someone would buy the farm which was on the other side of me.

I was attending Pine Forest Church, and on coming home one Sunday evening, as I turned in at my gate, my father-in-law came into my mind with great force, along with the desire that he could believe just what I did; and with this feeling there came forcibly the words, "He will believe". These words sank within me. I went into the house and asked my wife, "What would you think if your father believed like we do?" She said, "If there is anything impossible, that is." And I replied, "There isn't anything impossible with God; and if he doesn't believe, I have no hope."

Time went on, but it wasn't long until he went to Laurel Creek Church. His habit was to sit near the door, and if anything was said that he didn't like, he would go outside. This time he came halfway down the aisle. I was on the stand, and, of course, he came into my mind. When preaching began, I could tell he was hearing, for tears were flowing freely. Words cannot tell my feelings at the time. He went home with his cousin, and told her that he had been going to meeting all his life, and

was 60 years old, and had just heard his first sermon.

There had been a stand built where Mountain View Church now stands, where they met for worship. When the invitation was given, he came and asked for a home with the people whose doctrine he had thought wouldn't stand the test. He was received into the fellowship of the church; and I haven't seen anyone more established in the faith. He would relate things that were wonderful, which gives me great assurance that what I had seen was not my imagination.

I would like to mention also W. E. Eanes buying the farm adjoining me. I was sorry when he came; and I told my wife that I wished that some Old Baptist had bought it. Once, as I was passing his house, he stopped me, and said, "Why don't you come to see me?" I told him that it wasn't any farther over the hill to my house, for him to come see me; and he said he would soon.

In a few days, as I went out to work, a scripture came into my mind with force: "In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand, for thou knowest whether shall prosper, either this or that, or whether they shall be alike good." This was continually with me during the morning. At 12 o'clock I said to my wife that I thought I would go over to Mr. Lawrence's, as he wasn't expected to live. I started to go, and as I had to pass near Will Eanes' home, I thought as he had asked me to visit him, I would go by. Then the thought came, "You will have an argument if you do." And I turned to go away. Then another thought, "I can keep quiet about religion." So I went to the house.

He said that he was glad I had come; and all the time that scripture was on my mind, and I could not think of anything else to talk about. So I said to him, "Will, we work together. I know we don't believe alike, and I don't want an argument. I will make you a proposi-

tion: I am going to tell you a few things that I have been made to believe, and when I am through, you can talk all you want to, and I will not disturb you."

I began talking; and as soon as I began, I felt the power of the Gospel, if I know anything about it. I saw that he was receiving every word I said; and when I was through, he came to me in tears, and said that people might think this foolish, but I know it is the truth. I then said to him, "Now tell me what you want to."

He said, "A wonderful change has taken place in my heart. When I asked you to visit me, it was not just asking, I felt if you would come, you could take a burden off of me; and you have come, and have done just that. You don't know how glad I am, and pleased, that we can believe alike, for I thought there was no one like me." I told him that I could baptize him on what he had told me. He said, "You know how my people believe: they have no use for Old Baptists. I have to look to them to do my work, and I don't guess I can ever join the church." And I replied, "I will not persuade you to join the Baptist Church."

I went back home, and told my wife that I had a good meeting, and we had one of God's humble poor to live by, for he gave me a good reason of a hope. I want to say that I have been taught something in these things that no man can teach. I can say in truth, as the prophet, "Oh Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself; it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." Not long after this I was taken ill, and he came to see me; and when I had to go to the hospital, he came to the car and said that he hoped I would come back. And I said that if the Lord had any more use for me, I would be back; and if not, I am as ready as I will ever be.

The Lord willing, I will try to give a few more hints of some things I feel He has shown me: In a vision or dream I

had in the year 1908, as near as I can remember, I went to bed feeling as well as usual, and that night I saw two women standing over me; and they were dressed in white, with white caps on their heads. I had never seen anyone dressed like that, since I had never been to a hospital at that time. They laid a cloth over my mouth, and it seemed to take my breath, for I felt it going out; and I heard a noise, saying, "All right." And I awoke; and behold, it was a dream. I told my companion I had seen something that I guessed meant my death. I was shown it meant something to me.

I went on thinking about it for sometime, and then it left my mind. But one morning as I went out to work, a deathly pain struck me in my stomach, and the dream come back forcibly to my mind. We went to the house and told my wife I was sick, and that the dream I had had eight years ago is going to take place. The end of this was that I was taken to the hospital, and the next morning to the operating room; and there were the two nurses I had seen eight years ago. They placed a cloth over my face, as I had had in my dream. I knew it was the same, for it had the same effect on me; and when they thought they had me asleep, the doctor said, "All right". It was the same voice I had heard in my dream.

... What I saw in this was the merciful hand of God on a poor old sinner. When I got home, this neighbor came, and said, "I want to go to your next meeting, and if you will have me, to join your church. It makes no difference what my people say or think." He came, and was received; and later ordained a deacon of Mountain View Church. If I am a judge of a deacon, he was a God-called servant; and served until his death, which was about twenty-five years. His memory lingers with me in love.

These things may not be worth anything to those who read this, but it has been strength to me: to behold the mer-

ciful hand of God in his love and kindness to an undeserving sinner. I feel that He has been so merciful to my unworthiness, and has not remembered my sins against me. If he had, I would have long since fallen by the wayside. I have had a desire to write this for publication when I am gone.

S. L. Moran
Check, Virginia
(January 19, 1959)

REPORT OF GOOD MEETING

301 Rives Road
Martinsville, Va.

Dear Brother Wood:

I wish to report on the signs of the times as manifested in Martinsville Primitive Baptist Church this Easter Sunday evening, April 2, 1961. Elder A. B. Ayers, Moderator of Kehukee Association, filled an appointment with us, and was blest to preach most eloquently the whole council of God to an overflowing audience. He began by reading his text which is recorded in Acts 20:28, "Take heed therefore to yourselves, and to the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." He manifested zeal and enthusiasm as he handled this most interesting and timely subject to our people who had gathered from our sister churches in Pigg River, Smith River, Staunton River and Upper Country Line Associations.

I say that the subject was timely, as the Apostle was addressing a group of ministers from Ephesus when he set forth the above mentioned text. Ministers present, other than myself, were Elder Cecil Turner, our pastor, Elders O. K. Tench, Jim Hollandsworth, Leonard Brammer, David Spangler, Rufus Brown and W. R. Wray. Elder Wray introduced the service in his humble manner, using hymn number nine in Lester & Durand hymnal.

"Ye humble souls approach your God

With songs of sacred praise,
For he is good, immensely good,
And kind are all his ways."

Elder Ayers reminded us ministers of the sacredness of our calling, and our duties as faithful servants of the Lord Jesus Christ. We feel that is good to have our pure minds stirred up from time to time, and this Elder Ayers did in a most effective, fatherly manner. His discourse was followed by Elder O. K. Tench, who spoke briefly but feelingly of the goodness and mercy of God in saving his people with an eternal salvation. Tears flowed down his face as he spoke in his usual manner when blest to preach the glorious gospel of Christ.

Elder Wood, I write these signs of our times that our dear brethren, in far away places, may rejoice with us, and know of the love, peace and fellowship that we enjoy when assembled together in God's peaceful presence. We have not departed from the primitive precepts and examples as some dissemblers would have you believe, but use the Holy Bible for our guide.

Sometimes there are several ministers present at our meetings but seldom do more than two or three speak, and the others judge and rejoice. (1 Cor. 14:29) Our regular services usually last about 1½ hours including the song service. When we have special all-day meetings we usually have from two to four discourses before intermission and a similar number afterward, depending on the number of ministers present and the amount of time consumed by each minister, whose time is not designated. We are aware that Paul preached all night on one occasion in his day, but someone fell asleep. We do not want to keep our audience together longer than they can remain comfortable. May we hear from peaceful Primitive Baptists everywhere. What are the signs of your times?

Yours in sweet fellowship,
(Elder) P. E. Ingram

HE FOUND IT UNTRUE

Bates, Oregon

Signs of the Times:

Enclosed find my subscription for two years. I would hate to miss any of the copies of the old paper: It has been in my parents' home ever since I can remember, and I understand that it was in the home of my grandparents ever since it was printed on a sheet, and had to be cut apart. I remember the pinkish color of the old covers, and the inscription on the covers, long before I was able to read (which has been quite a while).

I sometimes find things which I do not understand, but they may be "just deeper than I have been instructed to understand." I really do not find any fault with these articles; and most of the others are so plainly written that I get the message, and usually agree fully with them.

Since my last communication, I have joined a "Bible Baptist" church. I knew that I would find many things that I did not agree with, or to my liking. I had a long talk with the minister, a very able young man, and told him of my beliefs and experiences. He assured me that my beliefs did not conflict in any major part with what they practiced, and that both were complimentary to each other, rather than in conflict. *How untrue I found this to be!*

I knew I would not be able to digest many things that were served as spiritual food, but thought I would be nourished by the things I could digest. Now I find so much that is served, is so highly seasoned with the works of man, (and so little to God's credit,) that I loose my appetite long before the first course is over.

I have enjoyed reading the correspondence between Elder Gold and Dr. Hooper. . . . After my experience in this "Bible" church, I see what they were both talking about. Elder Gold seems to know "whereof he speaks", and I fully

agree with everything he says.

Many may wonder how "a dyed-in-the-wool Hardshell" could join with a sect, as I have. I was lonely, and thought that any church home was better than none at all; and I had many friends in this community, and was not near enough to be with "the ones I should be with". Excuses are not reasons, I know, but I was taken in, just as my father was years ago, and Elder Gold about the same time. I don't recall how long either stayed before they pulled away, but I see that I must leave sooner or later, (probably sooner).

The missionary part of the church, I knew I could never swallow; and I was in doubt about "saving souls". I find our minister knows all the latest "begging methods". If the "cash value" was taken out of his sermons, I am afraid we would have to sing a lot to fill in the time during the meetings. I must be a "goat": I know I am not a "sheep", as I cannot follow a shepherd who can read so many different things out of verses while I am listening.

I received many responses to my last letter, (February, 1960). Apparently there are many who believe as I do. If we all are wanderers, there will be quite a bunch of "strays" at the "last round-up". If things depend as much on man's "free agency", as I have been told to believe, and God has no control over things as they happen, then the world is doomed and entirely lost; (which I do not believe to be the case). I believe that God is all powerful; that He rules the world, and everything that is in it, (including the Bible Baptist Church). What his purposes are, and how they all fit in with the final plans, I do not know. I believe that those who are saved were so ordained and created from the beginning; and that in the time and place as it was so ordained, they will be called, and will answer the Master's voice. I know that I could not stand still when I was called, even when I knew I did not believe as others did. . . . I am still probing my way, praying

that God will guide me in the way he knows best. What my path will be, or where He will lead me, only He knows. But I am positive that He can, and will, take me where I am supposed to be; and I only ask that I may be reconciled with whatever it may be. A stray, who tried to slip in and eat with the wrong group.

Sincerely,
Charles W. Bond

PRECIOUS EVIDENCE OF GRACE

Mount Hermon Road
Salisbury, Maryland

Elder and Sister Ruston,
Precious ones in our Lord Jesus Christ:

I feel poorly qualified this Sunday morning to answer your lovely letter which I so joyfully received and deeply appreciate. Especially do I feel unqualified to write to ones so able in the things of the Spirit. However, I realize that I have that which I have received, and I have no right or desire to apologize for what the Lord is pleased to grant me, be it little or much. Whatever He grants IS much! I long to be grateful for that which He has given and does so graciously give me, and to learn "In whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content." I do have moments such as this, but they do not last long. I am not given much to doubts, as many of my dear brethren seem to be, but oh! the long periods of drought that I have — weeks and sometimes months when I'm swallowed up in things of earth, and the "JOY of my salvation" becomes only a memory. It is in just such a state that I'm now living through. There just seems to be nothing for me at these times and my heart cries out for His dear presence and tender words of love to comfort my sore heart. Last month Elder Griffin visited me and last week he was in this community for more than a week and I was with him several times, hoping and longing for a change in my cold

state, but each time I was with him, he seemed to be just as lifeless as I was — which shows clearly that it is no more in the power of the preacher to feed than it is in ourselves to reach and grasp it — but in and through Him only! I've had many such dreary times and mostly they have come to an end suddenly, usually when I was alone, then would follow indescribably sweet communion. I'm reminded of the verse:

"When darkness seems to veil His face,
I rest on His unchanging grace.
From every high and stormy gale,
My anchor holds within the veil."
"On Christ the solid Rock I stand,
All other ground is sinking sand."

These grand old hymns have come from the depths of someone's experience — deep trials and glorious deliverances! Why it is the lot of some to soar so high and fall so low, I cannot explain, but I'm certain each of us is led in the pathway which He, in His great love and wisdom, knows is best, and my great desire is to be conformed to Him!

It is true that our Association next October seems a long way ahead, but it will be here before we realize it, and I do hope you may be shown a clear way to come. So many of our good old ministers who are not afraid to declare the whole truth of God, yet declare it in love, are slipping away, and it nearly breaks my heart as I realize they are not being replaced. I often wonder and am greatly troubled as to what the future of our people holds, should the Lord's coming be in the distant future, yet He has promised that He will not leave us comfortless, and regardless how dark the future may look, one glorious thought remains: He lives! Yes, He was dead and is alive for evermore!

"He lives, my dear Redeemer lives,
What comfort this sweet sentence gives;
He lives, He lives, who once was dead,
He lives, my great Eternal Head."

You spoke of missing Elders Bellows and Lefferts. I miss them too. Both of them meant so much to me in the days after I was given a knowledge of the

truth. I'll never forget what dear Elder Lefferts said to me awhile before my coming into the visible church. I had talked with him two or three times in the preceding year, and one Sunday at Welsh Tract he said to me in that very forth-right way of his, "Well, Mildred, I keep looking for you to come to the church, but the years are passing and you don't come. I certainly hope you won't wait until you are too old to be any good to the church." Right here, I want to say that I've never felt to be any good to the Church — I've been on the receiving end! Anyway, I told Elder Lefferts that some of the old members told me to stay out as long as I could, and when I could stay away no longer, to come, to which Elder Lefferts replied, "I don't agree with that theory for one moment — I say, come as soon as you can." Some weeks later Elder Spangler, while visiting in my little home, spoke to me along the same line. I told him what Elder Lefferts had said, and he replied very firmly, "I agree with Brother Lefferts."

I believe the Lord directed those conversations and I began to be stirred up concerning membership — then one Saturday night at Snow Hill, I was given, through Elder Spangler's sermon, that which I hope was unmistakable evidence. I didn't sleep that night, and towards morning I was made to feel that I must go, and determined I would. Then I fell into a peaceful sleep. That morning I did go and was received. Two weeks later dear Elder Spangler, in obedience to the command, led me into the stream and baptized me — so beautifully symbolic of death and arising to "newness of life." That was nearly twelve years ago, and I've been in deep water much of the time since then, but through it all, my dear Redeemer has stood by, sustained and comforted me, so that I was not overwhelmed. What an adorable Saviour we have! How utterly He saves and keeps! How glorious are even His chastisements, because they are dealt by the Hand of love —

not to punish me, but that our sufficiency might be in Him! How beautiful He is when we are enabled to behold Him in all His loveliness!

Going back to Elder Lefferts, I can never forget the last time I saw him, and his sermon that morning at Welsh Tract — just two weeks before his departure. His text was "I know, oh Lord, that Thy judgments are right and that in faithfulness Thou hast afflicted me." He said many things that morning, especially of the faithfulness of the Lord in afflicting His people, that have comforted me and helped to bear me up in my eye and facial affliction which is a constant "thorn in the flesh." Many of our people think the afflictions spoken of in the Bible are spiritual afflictions only; maybe they are, I don't know, but I do believe the promises of God hold true in the natural realm of His elect as well as the spiritual. What I'm trying to say is that He who provides for our spiritual well-being is no less able or willing to supply our natural needs. "Your Heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of these things." When Paul said, "My God shall supply all your need, etc.", I believe he meant ALL our need. When Peter said, "Casting all your care upon Him, for He careth for you," I do believe he meant ALL our care. Besides, we are so wonderfully and fearfully made that who can say where the natural leaves off and the spiritual begins? Certainly we are just as dependent upon Him for natural life and subsistence as for spiritual; and I believe He DOES supply all our need. What manner of love He has bestowed upon us and how forbearing He is with us, knowing our frame and remembering that we are dust; yet clothing us with His righteousness and already having delivered us from the penalty of sin and the dominion of sin, He will one day deliver us from the presence of sin. Oh glorious day! Yes, the dear saints who have been called, are now forever with Him beholding His glory, while we are yet

"looking for that blessed hope and His glorious appearing," and then we, too, shall ever be with the Lord. May we "comfort one another with these words." What else in this world matters? I did so enjoy being at your meeting and in your sweet home. I hope I may go again, but can see no way in the near future. My vacation this year will be spent mostly in preparing for, entertaining and attending our own Association at Salisbury where my membership is. Again, I hope you can come and spend at least a little time in my little home. We do feel so thankful for our dear pastors, Elders Spangler and Griffin. We feel highly blessed in having them. Both are wonderful and mean untold blessings to me.

I am so sorry, dear Sister Esther, about your eyes. I'm wondering if you experience any pain, or is it just lack of sight, and do the doctors give you hope of improvement? I surely do sympathize with anyone who has eye trouble. The doctors tell me mine will never be any better, and it hurts every moment of my conscious hours, but my affliction could be much worse. It could be both eyes, or I could be crippled, a helpless invalid and a burden on someone else. So far, the Lord has spared me that and I do hope I'm deeply grateful. Also I'm thankful that I've been given grace to accept my affliction as coming from the Lord and not to question His goodness in sending it. This is a very, very great blessing and while so blest "prisons would palaces prove."

I must bring this letter to a close. I had not the faintest idea of writing so much when I started, but it came faster than I could write. As I have written the tears have fallen fast; and behold, the darkness has been dispelled, and the Voice has spoken to me, "Rise up and come away, the winter is past, the voice of the turtle is heard in the land." How very beautiful! The Church arrayed in the meekness and humility of Christ, is like the dove, gentle and harmless. Oh, I could write on and on,

of so great a Saviour. When I started this letter the sky was cloudy and gray, but now, as I look through the window, the sun has broken through and is dazzling as it shines upon the new-fallen snow. How true in the spiritual realm when the Sun of Righteousness arises with healing in His wings. Truly, "He restoreth my soul!"

My love to you both in "That blessed Hope."

Mildred Dykes

THE LOVE BESTOWED UPON US

1158 Falls Terrace
Union, N. J.

Dearly Beloved Brethren in the Lord:

"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." (I John 4:1)

Behold, look, see, take notice of the manner of love; a love that will not let us go; a love that is everlasting; a love that binds with a tie that can not be broken; a love that can not be fathomed by the natural mind; a love that can not be comprehended by any except those who have been given a heart of flesh, a heart made tender and understanding by that love. This manner of love can not be explained with mere words, but it can be seen and felt in the facial expressions and in the handshake when the saints of God meet each other as they assemble themselves together according to the commandment of the God of love. "God is love," and we love him because he first loved us, not because of any merits of our own; it is all of grace, the free unmerited favor of an allwise God, who has said, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee." We are told to "love the Lord thy God, with all thine heart, with all thy soul, with all thy mind, and with all thy strength," and this love first bestowed upon us and shed abroad in our hearts, causes us to love not the

things of this world. We are given the assurance that nothing is able to separate us from the love of God.

This love has been bestowed upon us, not according to our works, but according to his loving kindness and tender mercies; and, it not being by works, far removes any boasting from us. What do we have to boast of? What do we have that we have not received? It is all according to the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God that it was bestowed upon us. This was by reason of the gift of the Father. (Eph. I:3, 4) It being bestowed upon us by him, the giver of every good and perfect gift, it can not be merited, it can not be won. It is freely and lovingly bestowed upon every heaven born child of God. What could be freer than a gift, the price of which has been paid by the shed blood of Christ? We are told to come and buy wine and milk without money and without price (Isaiah 55:1), and the manifest difference between those loved with this everlasting love and drawn by its tender cords, is that made by him that has, as we humbly hope, made us to differ from other men. "Who maketh thee to differ?" (I Cor. 4:7) We do not have anything whereof to glory, save in the precious blood of Christ, which is all a gift of God.

He has bestowed this great love upon us for a purpose; which is, "That we should be called the sons of God"; if sons of God, then children of God and heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ. (Rom. 8:17) What does it mean to be a child of God and a joint heir with Christ? Ponder the question in your mind; it is so full of food, so full of meat for thought, too much for my finite mind to comprehend, but I do like to meditate upon such sacred words of comfort, hoping that they have been left on record for my consolation. If an heir with Christ, we shall share with him the inheritance which is incorruptible and undefiled and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for

you who have been kept by the power of God. We have been made partakers of this inheritance by having been delivered from the power of darkness and translated into the kingdom of his dear Son. Oh, to be a joint heir with Christ, to share with him the joys of heaven and immortal glory, to be at home with the Father, who has given this inheritance to every saint of God! "Ye are all one in Christ Jesus, and if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to promise." (Gal. 3:28, 29) What God has promised shall not be denied, for none can stay his hand or say unto him, "What doest thou?" "Let God be true, but every man a liar."

This inheritance that awaits in that world beyond, is not by works of righteousness which we have done, but it is solely by the tender mercy of our covenant keeping Lord that we are saved. Being justified by his grace, we have been made heirs according to the hope of eternal life. This is life eternal, to know the Father and the Son; to know the Father who gave his Son, his only Son, to ransom rebel worms; to know the Son, who is now making intercession for us, that we might enjoy, in the ages to come, the inheritance prepared for us from before the foundation of the world. My knowledge and understanding is too limited to tell what it means to be a joint heir with Christ, but my heart tells me that it is a blessing and joy awaiting that can not be put into words. If the Holy Ghost has spoken to you in revelation of this blessed truth, you know of what I am writing.

My understanding is too blind to undertake to tell its beauty. While the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit, they being spiritually discerned, yet the hidden wisdom of God is no longer a mystery when revealed unto us by his Spirit. What is wisdom and where shall understanding be found? "The fear of the Lord, that is wisdom." We would not fear him unless we have some knowledge of his sov-

ereign power and will; we fear him because we realize he is omnipotent, omniscient and omnipresent. No flesh shall glory in his presence, for of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption. (I Cor. 1:29, 30) He is our wisdom, and it is bestowed upon us as the love of God, only through the workings of His Holy Spirit.

"If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God that giveth to all liberally, and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him." (James 1:5) This asking is in faith, we knowing that every good and perfect gift is from above, and from the Father who has bestowed the gift of love upon us. Ask of him, saying, "Father, not my will, but thine be done," and he will give unto you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him; the eyes of your understanding will be enlightened, and a study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, will surely follow, for the Lord gives understanding in all things. "The fear of the Lord, that is wisdom, and to depart from evil is understanding." Why do we set our affections on things above? because we have been given wisdom and understanding; why do we love to meet with those of like precious faith? because the given understanding has made us want to depart from evil and to be kept away from those things of this world which have lost their charm. All the treasures of wisdom and knowledge and understanding are hid in Christ and shall be revealed unto us as it seemeth best to the Father. May it be his will to shine in our hearts, thereby bringing us into these treasures of love and wisdom and understanding, filling us with the knowledge of his will, and giving grace to perform it, having all the fulness of Christ made manifest in us to that most glorious end. We would pray, "Lord increase our knowledge and help us to walk worthy of thee, and make us meet to be partakers of the

inheritance of the saints."

If we have been made a joint heir with Christ, we shall be glorified together with him; we shall reign with him forever and ever to sing praises unto his name; to give honor and glory to the Father, who hath bestowed this great love upon us that we should be called the sons of God. Oh, that I, a poor sinner, could be a little door keeper in the house of the Lord.

To the world, we are "a peculiar people," for we are strangers in a foreign land. If we are embraced in this love; if we were given to Christ; if we have been made heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, we will not expect the world to know us and understand us, because it knew him not, neither understood his ways. If all this has been bestowed upon us, then we will not teach every man his brother and neighbor, saying, know ye the Lord, for he that taught us in this irresistible bestowal of love and grace, will teach them all the same, even from the least to the greatest of them. Following this teaching, there comes from him that great peace and satisfaction that passeth all understanding. This bestowal of love on a sinner removes him from the world as a rule of action, or as a home, or his final rest; they are not any longer of the world (although, to their sorrow, still in the world), even as Christ was not of the world. The world knows not the things of the Spirit, which things are foolishness unto all, except they be revealed by the Holy Ghost. We are made to say of those who know us not and would persecute us as did they the dear Saviour, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what they do." Our hope is that his omnipotent power will keep them from prevailing against us and his church, knowing that we, too, would be where they are had it not been for this bestowal of love upon us. We do know that at one time our affections and desires were on the world, and that they would still be there if grace had not made the difference.

May the dear Lord give us grace to set our affections on the things above, not on the things of the earth; to enable us to seek the kingdom of God, and his righteousness, knowing that all other things will be added unto us. Oh, for strength and courage to have the Lord Jesus Christ and his righteousness first in every thought and word and deed. We are so frail, so helpless, without him we can not do anything, but we can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth us. We would not know him as a loving Saviour, had it not been the Father's will to bestow his great love upon us, that we should be called the sons of God; to give us to Christ that through his redemption we be made joint heirs with him. What a blessing, what a precious gift. Praise his great and adorable name for the unmerited favors of One who has promised never to leave or forsake his own.

Written by one who hopes that this love has been bestowed upon her, thus being made a joint heir with the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

Your little sister,
Mrs. Elsie Loeffel

R. F. D. 3,
Minco, Oklahoma

Dear Editors of the Signs:

If not mistaken I am thankful for your efforts to enlarge the subscription list, and comfort more Old Baptist believers. Surely all Old Baptists will treasure the *Signs of the Times* once they have read it. It surely has kept true to the faith once delivered to the saints, and I hope that I love it for the truth's sake. I also hope that I appreciate the efforts of you editors and brethren.

Above all, I hope I am given to love the great, allwise, and merciful God that the Old Baptists worship in spirit and in truth. They claim nothing of themselves, and live in hope of his mercy, which their Lord and Saviour made plentiful to them in giving himself,

that they through him should have everlasting life. I often wonder if I really love him. If so, why am I thus?

There are no Old Baptist members in my community. There is only one who believes, so I am sending his name for a subscription.

Thanks for allowing me to add my mite of help to the *Signs*. May God bless and sustain you and your work.

Your unworthy brother, I hope,
G. B. Loyd

JONAH'S QUALIFICATIONS

R. F. D. 2,
Elon College, N. C.

My Dear and Precious Ones in Christ Jesus:

Before Jonah was prepared to preach salvation is of the Lord, and that deliverance can come from none other, Jonah had first to learn this for himself; he must have it first-handed. It seems there must be something to be delivered from, or there will be no need of deliverance. We must first be made partakers of the sufferings of Christ before we can hope to be made to enter into the comfort, joy, and sweet assurance of deliverance, and to know whom we have believed, and be made willing to pay that which we have vowed, that, Salvation is of the Lord.

The true servant of God can't preach with power and conviction of soul, something he has not first been made partaker of. When he knows of Jonah's hell, and what it is to be carried down to the bottom of the mountains where the floods compassed him about, and the billows and waves passed over him; and, like David, brought to his wits end, then, and not before, can he pay his vow unto the Lord, and before His people, that Salvation is of the Lord.

"Now the word of the Lord came unto Jonah, the son of Amitti, saying, Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry against it; for their wickedness is come up before me." Instead of acquiescing

and obeying the word of the Lord, Jonah, like the Lord, must learn obedience by the things he suffered. (Hebrews 5:8) Jonah couldn't preach deliverance from hell and destruction to the Ninevites without first knowing something of the power of God, and that nothing was to baffle the will of God; and that he holds the winds in the hollow of his fist, and that his sovereign power extends to the winds, the billows of the seas, the great fish, and that all things else are at his command, and He does his will in heaven above, and the earth below, and in all deep places.

When Jonah said, "I will sacrifice unto thee with the voice of thanksgiving; I will pay that that I have vowed, Salvation is of the Lord," the Lord spoke to the fish, and it vomited out Jonah upon the dry land. Jonah was now prepared to preach that salvation (deliverance) is of the Lord. He was now qualified in the school of God's grace to preach the kind of preaching God prepared Jonah to preach to the Ninevites. And, under the power of Jonah's preaching, the people of Nineveh believed God, and proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth (mourning) from the greatest of them to the least of them. Even the king laid aside his robe and sat in ashes (mourning). This old king seemed to manifest a trustful fear before God, for he said, "Who can tell if God will turn and repent, and turn away from his fierce anger, that we perish not?"

Nineveh was a great city; God knew how large the city was, and how many persons therein (six score thousand), that could not discern between their right hand and their left hand. The king and the people were brought down in mourning. Jonah's preaching, under the convicting power of God's Spirit, had caused this people to turn from their evil way; and God repented of the evil that he said that he would do to them, and did it not.

God's people have been declared to

be the salt of the earth by their God. The apostle tells us that God is not slack concerning his promises, as some men count slackness, but is longsuffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance. His second coming is no less sure today than then; and God's good will and purpose to wait to gather in his last precious jewel, is no less certain and sure.

From reading of how Jonah was displeased, and seemed disappointed that God had spared Nineveh, he seemed to overlook that everything is in the hand of God; and that God is God at all times and in all places; and that in providence we may not understand his doings. But that His will is done, and must be done, we have no question. He raised up the gourd for a shadow over Jonah's head, to shield him in time of grief; and God said to Jonah, "Dost thou well to be angry for the gourd?" Jonah had pity on the gourd, but was displeased that God should spare Nineveh.

This matter was in my heart this morning, and I lay in my bed and wept at the merciful providence of our Eternal King, and at the tender, and loving, and compassionate hand of our precious Redeemer and Friend forever.

With love to all the household of faith.

In sweet hope,
(Elder) J. W. Gilliam

THE MOTE VS THE BEAM

"And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but perceivest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Either how canst thou say to thy brother, Brother let me pull out the mote that is in thine eye, when thou thyself beholdest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Thou hypocrite, cast out first the beam out of thine own eye, and then shalt thou see clearly to pull out the mote that is in thy brother's eye. (Luke 6:41-42)

The above has been on my mind of late, and, if the Lord will direct my train of thought, and guide my hand, I hope to write some of my views on the subject.

First, I call attention to the five senses of the human body: The seeing; the hearing; the taste; the smelling; and the touch or feeling. Without life in the human body, none of these senses function. If we have been born again, that is, born of the Spirit, we possess the spiritual senses. Without these we cannot see the kingdom of God.

In my endeavor to present my thoughts, it is not my intention to reflect on any person. First, The question is asked, "And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye?" There has to be a mote in, I will say, my eye in order for my brother to behold it. The mote in my eye represents my faults, my sins, my imperfections. But why should my brother see the mote that is in my eye. If he had an eye single to the glory of God, would he be looking for, or trying to find fault in his brother? Or would he not be looking over his brother for good, and not for evil?

We will note that the brother who wants to pull the mote out of his brother's eye, has a beam in his own which prevents him from seeing clearly how to pull the mote out of his brother's eye. The brother with the beam has a much worse problem than the brother with the mote. To illustrate: I remember when I was but a small child, my mother used to card cotton for the spinning wheel, and for quilting. And, as she would place the cotton on the cards, she would find motes in the cotton; and she would have to remove them in order for the card to work properly, and for the cotton to turn out a perfect roll or bat, whichever was desired. Now the mote is very small, but has a bad effect. A beam is a much larger object, and can do a lot more damage than the mote. However small the mote it has its effect, and represents sin. And when

one of the Lord's people is brought to a knowledge of the truth as it is in our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, the mote (sin) in the flesh causes anguish of soul, and great fear. Deep sorrow overwhelms the heart and soul. This is the way the Lord brings his little ones to repentance. With this knowledge, the child of God feels his or her condemnation is just, but it makes them cry out to God for mercy.

Now the brother who has a beam in his eye which obstructs his vision, is disqualified to pull the mote out of his brother's eye, for he cannot see clearly. In other words, he is at least partly blind; and if the blind lead the blind, shall they not both fall into the ditch? Then there is another thought that comes into my mind concerning the beam. Those who are experienced in carpentry know something about the beam (a strong piece of wood or iron) set into a wall of a building over a large door or opening. It has to meet certain specifications in size and length, to have the proper strength to support that part of the wall that it is to rest thereon.

Now I know this is only a natural illustration, but have we not sometimes seen some come into the church, or fold of God, who, when they have been in the church only a little while, begin to try to dictate to the church, or set out to run the business of the church; when it seems he needs to do some house cleaning at home. Oh, my brethren, if it is pleasing in the sight of God, may he bless us to love and pray for each other, forgiving one another's sins and short comings. If we love one another, even as Christ our blessed Saviour has loved us, we will not be found trying to pull the mote out of our brother's eye, but will be concerned about our own greater sins and faults.

Oh, Lord our God, our heavenly Father, make us to see and to know ourselves; make us to love each other, and to watch over each other in love.

Love covers a multitude of sins. Brethren, we may say we love the

brethren; and, if we do love them, may we show our love and our faith by our works: works produced by faith; the faith of the Son of God which maketh not ashamed.

Yours in hope,
(Elder) W. B. Barnes
R. F. D. 1,
Stantonsburg, N. C.

505 Houston Street,
Levelland, Texas

The Signs of the Times:

As it is time once again for me to renew my subscription, I would like to speak a few words of appreciation and encouragement to its editors and writers. My husband was a subscriber to the Signs when he and I were married in 1897, and it has been coming to our house ever since.

I will say here that I still have several volumes of the paper which I would be glad to send to anyone who likes to read them. I will pay all postage. My reason for wanting to do this, is my failing health and eyesight, which necessitates my moving to my daughter's to live. I had rather send them to someone who loves to read them, than to know they will be destroyed.

I believe as of now, as well in more than a century past, it advocates the same sound doctrine it did in the begining of its publication; and the reprints and Voices of the Past, I think, will bear me out in this. It is comforting, as well as encouraging, to one who is traveling near the end of life's highway, to find in those articles written so long ago telling of things they experienced along the way, that bear witness to the Spirit within.

Oh, I would want to thank God for this and all his wonderful mercies to one of the least of the flock, if indeed I am one. May our dear Lord spare each of you, and enable you to continue to contend for the truth as it is in Christ our Lord for many years to come, if

it can be his holy will, is the earnest desire, and I hope heart felt prayer, of a little sister,

Ida Bowers

———
Ingals, Arkansas

Dear Editors of the Signs:

It is time to send my renewal to the *Signs*, so I am enclosing it. The paper is a welcome visitor in our home, and is a stay between our meeting days. The letters from the brethren and sisters, together with the sermons from God's chosen ministers, are food to the soul. We are given comfort and assurance from them, if given a spiritual mind of understanding.

Our mind is a blank most of the time, but, if not deceived, we have been made to feel the goodness of our Lord in our varied travels and trials in this low ground of sorrow. When in the valley of woe and despair, we are led to call on Him, who is our ever present help. He never forsakes his people. But am I one of his, is the great question; which He alone can answer.

May God in his great mercy help you to continue to publish the *Signs* for the comfort of His saints. From one saved by the grace of an omnipotent God, through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, with no merit or credit of our own.

Charlie Harrod

———
204 N. Clayton Street,
Wilmington 5, Delaware

Elder J. D. Wood,
Manassas, Va.

Dear Sir and Friend:

Just a line or so to say that I am as well as I usually am; not as well as I have felt, but, no doubt, far better than I deserve. I certainly hope you both are fine, and will have a happy holiday season.

I do wish I could be as thankful as I should or ought to be, knowing that I am an undeserving sinner, and that through his precious goodness He has kept such an unworthy wretch as I feel to be. I am sure that I have felt that Jesus was my very personal saviour — not so often, but so sweet.

I shall not write a long, worrisome letter, but just to ask your prayers for a poor, unworthy creature as I am.

As ever a friend I am sure of that; not worthy to be called a brother.

C. A. Bass

———
REQUESTS FOR VIEWS ON
SCRIPTURES

"I wish someone would write through the *Signs* on Revelation 13:3. Has this prophecy been fulfilled; or is it yet to be fulfilled?"

Elder Louis Stewart,
Rt. 1, Box 226,
Winona, Miss.

———
"Would like your views on Hebrews 13:13. 'Let us go forth therefore unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach'."

Mrs. J. J. Reece,
Toney, Alabama

———
UPPER COUNTRY LINE ASSOCIATION

The UPPER COUNTRY LINE ASSOCIATION is appointed to meet, the Lord willing, with the church at Pleasantville, Rockingham County, N. C., beginning on Saturday before the 3rd Sunday in July, 1961, and continuing three days.

Following are directions to Pleasantville Meeting House: From Reidsville take 87 West to Corum Store, then take 704 via Wentworth to Pleasantville Church, on the right. If coming from the North over 220: after crossing Dan River Bridge, take first left hand road, No. 704, 5 miles to Pleasantville Church, on the left. If from the South over 220: just before the bridge over Dan River, take 704 to right, 5 miles.

Our correspondents and visitors are cordially invited to meet with us.

(Elder) J. W. Gilliam, Assn. Clerk

PIGG RIVER DISTRICT ASSOCIATION

The Pigg River Association is appointed to be held with Chapel Church, Franklin County, Virginia, on Friday, Saturday and Sunday, August 4, 5 and 6, 1961. Chapel is just off of Route 890. Those coming by Gretna will follow Route 40 to Penhook, and take Route 890 there; and those coming by Rocky Mount will come on Route 40 to Penhook. There will be signs along the way.

Our correspondents and other brethren and friends are cordially invited to meet with us.

Mary Brown, Church Clerk
John D. Wood, Ass'n Clerk

MAINE ASSOCIATION

The MAINE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST ASSOCIATION will convene, the Lord willing, with the Whitefield Church, Whitefield, Maine, September 1, 2, and 3, 1961.

An invitation is extended to those of our faith and order, and interested friends.

Mrs. Sanford S. Bartlett, Clerk

STAUNTON RIVER ASSOCIATION

The Staunton River Primitive Baptist Association will be held with Banister Spring Church, Friday, Saturday and 2nd Sunday in July, (July 7, 8, 9, 1961). Banister Spring Church is located about 15 miles North of Danville, Virginia, on Highway 29.

All brethren and friends are invited to meet with us.

W. J. Oakes, Clerk

**ANNUAL MEETING AT
SLATE HILL CHURCH**

The annual meeting of the Brookfield Old School Baptist Church at Slate Hill, New York, will be held, if the Lord so wills it, the 1st Saturday in August — August 5, 1961.

All brethren and friends are invited to attend this meeting.

(Elder) A. J. Slauson

**CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE
INDIGENT FUND**

(To May 1, 1961)

Verna C. Allison, Fla.....	\$5.00
Mrs. J. C. Holly, Va.....	1.00
Mildred D. Gordy, Mich.....	2.00
Mrs. J. B. Simmons, Tex.....	3.00
John Franklin Lax, Ill.....	5.00

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All letters for this paper should be addressed and remittances made payable

TO

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

Route 5, Box 332F Danville, Va.

CIRCULAR LETTER

The Delaware Association of Old School Baptists, in session with Welsh Tract Church, Newark, Delaware, May 13 and 14, 1961, sends Christian greetings to those brethren whose chief concern is to remain in gospel faith and order, and those with whom we correspond, and with whom we unite in prayer for grace to be kept faithful in things pertaining to God and godliness.

Dear Brethren: We address you in our Circular Letter with the desire that we may be mutually drawn together in thanksgiving and praise to the great and only God for his abundant grace and mercy in preserving us in the truth of the gospel, so that we do not seek confederacy with those of dissimilar doctrines and practices.

We are aware that we are few in number, and that the number of voices to preach the unsearchable riches of God's grace, are few in these parts, yet we are no less desirous of maintaining what our brethren have maintained in

the churches of this association for many score years; for we are convinced that what they maintained is the doctrine of God our Saviour, the faith once delivered to the saints; and we earnestly pray that, if God wills it so, we may be preserved in our course in these matters; and that we might continue to be mindful not only of the doctrine, but the order as well. We know that this is necessary for the preservation of the distinctive and true doctrine of God's revealed word; and we would be admonished that the full sense of Apostolic teaching was to preserve the bonds of fellowship among brethren, by endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. This we would strive to do; and this is what is done when disorder is not condoned.

It is no secret that there have been many departures because of one thing or another, since our brethren stood together at Black Rock, and other places, during the early years of the nineteenth century. Our position is that those things believed and maintained by the brethren then, are the same that should be maintained by us today, in order that our distinctive doctrine and order be not different from our staunch brethren of years ago; in order that we continue steadfastly in the Apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayer; and in order that our distinction of Baptists of the Old School be not lost in the maze of conflicting doctrines and practices. Upon these primitive things we are standing today, and would not be removed from them.

It has been with much concern that we have read and heard of disorders and departures before our day, and have sometimes observed them for ourselves. We are pained that these things should be, but we know that in human experience passions are often unbridled even by those in the church; and that often brethren follow men who, for the moment, are unrestrained in their quest for notoriety and leadership. And we know also that sometimes there has

been an easing of membership requirements, so that men untaught of grace have had influence in churches, and finding the tenants of the Old School not to their liking, have undertaken to reform, much as prior to 1832, which has resulted in retaining the name, but un-tempering the doctrine and order, to make a show of love for men not authorized by distinguishing grace.

To these probably many other things could be added, but these suffice to show that there has not always been a "taking heed unto thyself and unto the doctrine"; not always an examining of ourselves whether we be in the faith; and not always seeking the mind of the Spirit in the affairs of the church.

These things are recognized and acknowledged, but we are convinced that the truth is still in our midst, and is not departed from the earth; that the Lord is yet calling his people out of darkness into light; that there are many, many places where the Lord is worshiped in spirit and in truth; and that there are many of his called servants who are blessed to preach with power and demonstration of the Spirit, making no compromise for personal advantage.

We are therefore glad to say that all is not gloomy; that all of our joys of faith are not at an end, for our God yet reigns over all of his work. False brethren, false doctrine, much disorder, or many divisions, have not changed the course of God's purposes concerning his church. Have we not seen revivals where it seemed all was dead? Is there not a closer knitting together of brethren when the causes of trouble are departed? Have not the Lord's servants been drawn closer together when persecutions and divisions have caused them to stand up as one man in defense of the truth?

As we are reminded of these things, and as some of us are assembled here in this meeting, is there not a solemnity; is there not a felt sense of the Lord's presence; is there not a rever-

ence when we come together where prayer is wont to be made? And is there not a feeling of awe when we remember how greatly we are blessed with the love of God's truth, and with the love and fellowship of His people; and with the desire to stand firmly in the only God honoring and God given faith that has ever been in the world?

Our address to you is a reminder of our ancient heritage of God's mercies. As we remain steadfastly in the faith once delivered to us, so do we uphold the honor and glory of our God in the midst of much error and ungodliness; and so do we testify against doctrines contrary to the teaching of the Spirit. Outside of these things, the church would have no distinguishing marks, and nothing to indicate that she is a kingdom not of this world.

As we see departures from the faith, and idolatry rampant throughout the world, may we have the spirit of prayer indited in our hearts, to pray for Zion as Habbakkuk did for Israel in his day, "O Lord, I have heard thy speech, and was afraid: O Lord, revive thy work in the midst of the years, in the midst of the years make known; in wrath remember mercy."

Elder John D. Wood
Elder Arthur R. Warren, Moderator
Reese S. Jarmon, Clerk

EDITORIAL**THE PRESENT SALVATION OF
THE CHURCH**

The Lord's people are commanded to pray for daily bread. The type in wilderness holds us to the fact that what we had yesterday will never do for today. To use the type in our preaching means that everything happening to them on that wilderness journey is, in some wonderful way, applicable to us today. Who gave them the manna? If we know who gave them the manna, then, if the type is applicable to us today, we know who gives us our food, spiritually speaking. If they devised, or helped after another

devised, then we have a pattern for the church today. If the Lord blessed them, independent of them all, then he likewise blesses us today. The pattern holds good whichever way it was.

It doesn't matter what men say about it, whether those men are in or out of the Old School Baptist church. All of the assertions of men will never produce one scintilla of evidence in the highest court of time, to wit, the church of the Lord Jesus Christ, that our present salvation is one way or the other. It takes Bible evidence to prove things before this court. Everyone taught of God must have a "thus saith the Lord" for their evidence. What men think will not do. The irrational raging of men against the truth will never satisfy a soul that is exercised in the things of God.

That pattern is given for all time. The things written aforetime were written for our learning. Whose learning? Those that we could reach? No, my God, not that flimsy doctrine. Those that we could proselyte? No, no, none of the proselyting doctrine which would make us two-fold the inhabitants of hell. But the things written aforetime were written for our present day learning. This learning belongs to the children of God, and, primarily, it belongs to the Old Baptist people. If we have not learned, both from the written word, and from experience, that the Bread which feeds our hungry souls comes from above, we have not been taught very far by the Lord.

God gives the spirit of prayer, but that is not all that he gives. We likewise have the answer given to our prayer. I do not mean that all our petitions are answered, because they are not all prayers from the Lord. The daily begging for bread is daily answered with Bread. The answers may not seem in mercy sent, but somewhere they will be made clear. If our present salvation was in our hands, and God answered our prayers accordingly, many of us that write and read these lines would not be here to do so. It is certainly a great blessing that God answers the prayers that his

Spirit enables us to pray, but it is a great blessing that he does not answer the ones that come from carnal longing.

As I sit here in ponderation on the present status of my own fragile barque and the condition of my dear people, the Old School Baptist, I am made to look in astonishment at the saving grace and marvelous power that has subdued my carnal nature and brought me, as I humbly hope, in meek submission to his prevailing will. In the first place, I would never have been (if I am) an Old Baptist. I did not know **how** to be one; not knowing what they believed, nor why they believed it; not knowing how to act like one, nor why they acted as they do, if I had or tried to be, I would still be stumbling around trying to mimic the church of the Lord Jesus Christ. But that helplessness is not confined to the beginning of my experience. The warfare has been a daily conflict since its inception; I have had to endure its raging charges from day to day, and from moment to moment, knowing that the next would end in my utter abandonment to the wiles of Satan. Being reduced to desperation and destitution I could never have stemmed the tide, had not the sovereign and eternal Spirit of Almighty God been enlisted on my side, leading, directing, encouraging. That was true yesterday; it is no less true today. With John Newton, it is my soul's delight to sing

"Through many dangers, toils and snares,
I have already come:
'Tis grace has brought me safe thus far
And grace will lead me home."

And John Newton had the same grace in mind all the way through the hymn. It was sovereign grace that brought him from the drunkard's tavern to the house of the Lord, and it was the same grace that kept him there.

It was the sovereign work of the Lord Jesus Christ that gave Peter in his day, together with the elect family of his time and times to come, a lively hope. This living hope was given them by the resurrection of Jesus Christ. If we have this hope today, it is given us by the

same power. We believe today, if we believe, in the same way, and from the same source, that the brethren at Ephesus did (Eph. 1:19, 20), and there isn't a man or woman living, or that has lived, or will yet live, that had the first septillioneth part in their believing. It came about by the same power to these at Ephesus, and to all the elect in Peter's day, as well as in our day. It doesn't differ about the time element; the two thousand years since Christ arose from the dead has not diminished from the power of that resurrection. Christ is as much alive **now** as he was when he said, "I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive forever more, Amen; and have the keys of hell and death." (Rev. 1:18)

To them literally and spiritually, and to us spiritually, there has never been an equal to the death and the resurrection of Jesus Christ. This is an experience that Paul and Peter kept referring to. What sweetness and joy and keen anticipation there is in the soul cheering doctrine of the resurrection of the dead. As I write again and again of the dismal scene; as I preach again and again of the trying time through which these dear saints passed; as I blend it all again and again in my picture drawing of the tryst of the soul in its bitter anguish of an absent Lord, I do hope that the trembling jailors and weeping Marys among my many readers may be given to pause in the mad rush of the age in which we are living and to come hither and look into the present beauties of Beulah land.

All the tongues and pens of dull mortality are not sufficient to describe the anguish of the two as they walked toward Emmaus, or of Mary as she viewed the empty, gaping tomb, thinking that His precious body had been removed by the gardener; or, for that matter, Peter and all those that had travelled with him as He went ministering, giving them to believe that, through His coming into the world, Israel would be restored, or, for that matter (and most importantly) we poor ruined sinners

today, as we feel the bitter anguish of our soul after having known and felt the dear Saviour, and then to feel His absence. What a ruined, destitute assembly that turned towards home after his burial. Ah, dear reader, young and old, rich and poor, high and low, how awful, how dreadful it was when Jesus was first absent from your soul. Did it not have the same effect on you, as it did on the two that walked toward Emmaus, as it did on Mary when He revealed himself to her, as it did on Peter when he sent forth that living epistle?

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy (John 10:10) 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." That hope was in lively exercise at that time. We, the strangers scattered wher-
ever they may be found, have now at this present moment this hope. We have it one day the same as another, all coming about through the power of Christ's resurrection.

Well may the Church sing in triumphant praise:

"Who can faint while such a river
Ever flows their thirst t' assauge;
Grace which, like the Lord, the giver,
Never fails from age to age."

And this has been the keynote of the songs and supplication of the dear saints of God down the steeps of time, and it will be our present salvation along this whole journey through, for we shall continue to sing with John Newton,

"The Lord has promised good to me,
His word my hope secures;
He will my shield and portion be
As long as life endures."

And, furthermore, if our salvation is of the Lord, as John heard the heavenly hosts singing that it was, and as our daily experience has shown us, we will soon cross the dark river of death, but in that bright and celestial city of God, we will not change songs when we arrive there. We may have learned it, as did

Jeremiah, by fire being shut up in our bones; as did Jonah, in the belly of hell with seaweeds around our neck; as did the whole household of faith, with Pharaoh behind, the sea in front, and the mountain walls on each side; as did Peter, after finding that his thought of being able to save, not only himself, but Christ; as did Paul, when he counted, one by one, all his vast stores of earthly riches off as dung that he might be found in Christ, but whatever the crucial through which we are brought, our testimony and our song will be,

"It is finished, O what pleasure
Do these charming words afford;
Heavenly blessings without measure,
Flow to us from Christ the Lord;
It is finished, it is finished,
Saints the dying words record."

And the hand of Christ, the footsteps of the flock, the loving letters of Paul and Peter and John and James and Jude will be in our hand and mind, joy shall be on our countenance, our tear dimmed eyes will be lifted heavenward, and our footsteps will be wending our way toward Him in whose strength and salvation we now are travelling.

W. D. G.

VOICES OF THE PAST
"He being dead yet speaketh"

REPENTANCE

Many, La., July 19, 1874

Elder Beebe: You will confer a special favor on poor me, by explaining how it is that men in a state of nature, or rather in our fallen state, are required and commanded to repent, and still they cannot do so unless enabled by divine power. Please grant my request through the "Signs," and you will oblige one who feels that his lot is cast in an isolated place.

E. Duggan

REPLY

Much confusion, we apprehend, results from confounding the various kinds of repentance of which the scriptures speak, without discriminating between legal and gospel, natural and spir-

itual, or that which is required of all men everywhere, (see Acts xviii. 30) and that which is the gift of God, and inseparably connected with the forgiveness of sins. The scriptural meaning of the word repent, or repentance, is to turn away from some principle, practice or thing, and embrace, pursue or practice something opposite, or in another direction. As for example, "It repented the Lord that he had made man upon the earth," which is explained in the same connection to mean, that God had determined to destroy man whom he had created from the face of the earth. — Gen. vi. 7, 8. Also Jonah iii. 10, "And God saw their works, (the men of Nineveh) that they turned from their evil way; and God repented of the evil that he had said he would do unto them, and did it not." And yet in the sense in which the word is applied to man, we are assured that "God is not a man that he should lie, neither the son of man that he should repent." — Num. xxlll. 19. In all his attributes, God is immutable, and with him there is no variableness nor shadow of turning. In the dispensations of his providential government, he forms the light and creates darkness; he makes peace and creates evil. He sends blessings and judgments, as seemeth him good.

Legal repentance, if we may be allowed thus to discriminate, is the turning away from any transgression of the law, and doing that which is lawful and right. As in the ceremonial law, Israel was commanded to "Cease to do evil, and learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, and plead for the widow." — Isa. i. 16, 17. "Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, every one according to his ways, saith the Lord God. Repent, and turn yourselves from all your transgressions; so iniquity shall not be your ruin. Cast away from you all your transgressions whereby ye have transgressed; and make you a new heart and a new spirit; for why will ye die, O house of Israel? For I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord;

wherefore turn yourselves, and live ye." — Ezek. xviii. 30-32. There was a legal repentance required of the Israelites who had transgressed the law that they were under, and sin offerings prescribed in their law by which a ceremonial atonement was made, and the delinquent Israelite was restored to the temporal blessings of peace, prosperity and security. This was commanded. But when the law in its spiritual application is applied, then sin revives and the sinner dies.

No legal repentance, no bleeding victims, no rivers of oil, nor cattle of a thousand hills, can remove from us the guilt of our transgressions, or make for us a new heart, or give us a new spirit. But the demands of the law are inexorable, and heaven and earth shall pass away, but no jot or tittle of the law shall pass away till all is fulfilled. Thus by the law is the knowledge of sin, and when convinced of sin by the law, we are made to know that by the deeds of the law no flesh can be justified in the sight of God. We cannot put away our sins from us; we cannot make us a new heart or a new spirit; therefore without something more than what the law can do for us, we must be held under its wrath and curse forever more. But what the law could not do for us, 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. — Rom. viii. 3, 4. Compare the demands of the law as stated, Ezek. xviii. 30-32, with what God himself has promised to do for his people, Ezek. xxxvi. 25-27. "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean; from all your filthiness and from all your idols will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you

to walk in my statutes; and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them. And ye shall dwell in the land that I gave to your fathers; and ye shall be my people; and I will be your God."

That repentance which is unto life, and needeth not to be repented of, as will be seen by the above written scripture, is the gift of God, wrought in the hearts of God's people by God himself, and is always inseparably connected with eternal salvation. The testimony of the Son of God himself on this subject is conclusive. "Then opened he their (the apostles) understanding, that they might understand the scriptures, and said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day, and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem."

— Luke xxiv. 45-47. "Then Peter and the other apostles said, We ought to obey God rather than men. The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, whom ye slew and hanged on a tree. Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Savior, for to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins. And we are witnesses of these things; and so also is the Holy Ghost, whom God hath given to them that obey him."

— Acts v. 29-32. This evangelical, or gospel repentance, is a change from death to life, from sin to holiness, from condemnation to justification, from a legal to a gospel state. It is no where in the scriptures demanded of any man; but it is a free, gracious and saving gift, bestowed upon all the heirs of God.

The repentance preached by John the Baptist was addressed exclusively to a people prepared of God for that change which should bring them out from Judaism, to believe on him who was to come after John. If John had commanded all the Jews to repent, he would not have demanded of the Pharisees and Sadducees, who had warned them to flee from the wrath which was to come upon the Jews. It was not enough that they had Abraham to their father; for all

whom John recognized as the subjects of the baptism of repentance, were such, and only such, as brought forth fruits meet for repentance.

Repentance also is a word used to signify the reclamation of any of the children of God who have erred either in faith or practice. "If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him." — Luke xvii. 3. Repentance here as in other cases means a change, recantation, a turning away from that wherein he has erred.

Thus, to the angels of the churches in any error it is said, "Repent; or else I will come unto thee quickly," &c. — Rev. ii. 5 & 16. When Paul stood on Mars' Hill, and preached to the Athenians against their abominable idolatry, he told them that although God had in former ages of the ignorance of the Gentile world, winked at their idolatry, he now commands all men everywhere to repent; that is to desist from worshiping idols — or from ascribing to the works of their own lands such honors as belong only to the true and living God. Because he hath appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained, whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that he hath raised him from the dead. — Acts xvii. 30, 31. That appointed judgment day was ushered in at the resurrection and exaltation of Christ, and his inauguration into his Mediatorial glory, as the Judge of the quick and the dead. He is now seated in the throne of his glory, and before him all the nations, Jews and Gentiles, are gathered, and he is now separating them, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats, and setting his sheep on his right hand, and the goats on his left, and saying to those on his right hand, Come, ye blessed, and to those on his left, Depart, ye cursed. — Matt. xxv. 31-46.

Our inquiring friend, E. Duggan, will perceive that we have not, in the foregoing remarks, attempted to reply to his inquiry in the order in which he

stated it, as we have been led rather to treat on the subject as the word is variously applied in the scriptures. It is not true that God has commanded all mankind to exercise or possess that repentance which is unto eternal life; for as we have proved, that saving repentance is the gift of God, the work of the Spirit, and the evidence of eternal life already in possession.

In regard to God's commanding what men have no power of themselves to perform, we hold that it is his sovereign right to do so. When Christ commanded the lame man to take up his bed and walk, and the man with a withered arm to stretch it forth, they had no power to do so, only as he gave them the power. When he commanded Lazarus to come forth from his grave, what power had Lazarus to leave his tomb except the power conveyed with the word? When God commanded Israel to advance, they had no power of themselves to divide the Red Sea, or to cause Jordan to roll back his waves. Indeed if we speak of the commands of God in his law to Israel, he commanded them to do what they had no power of themselves to perform. So when our exalted Prince and Savior calls sinners to repentance, his quickening power attends his word, and he speaks the word and it stands fast, he commands and it is done. "It is the Spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing; the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life." The dead have no power to quicken and raise themselves, but at his command they shall come forth; for the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live.

Many have seemed to regard the word repentance as only meaning sorrow or regret for something done, but Esau was sorry, and deeply regretted that he had sold his birthright, but could not recede from the contract; he could find no place for repentance, though he sought it diligently with tears. He could be sorry, but he could

not repent. Those who were pricked in their hearts on the day of pentecost were greatly alarmed, and cried out, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" But they had not repented, or withdrawn from their connection with Judaism, by baptism in the name of the Lord Jesus; therefore they were commanded to repent. The terrors of death and hell may fill the natural mind of men with remorse and sorrow for their sins, but only the love of God can lead to evangelical repentance. The sorrow of the world worketh death; but godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation, not to be repented of. — 2 Cor. vii. 10.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe, September 15, 1874.)

OBITUARIES

SILAS C. BIRD

Our dear brother in Christ was born September 11, 1884, and departed this life September 25, 1959. He was a son of Joseph H. and Elizabeth (Wiley) Bird; and was united in marriage to Geneva Frances Plumley on October 24, 1906. To this union ten children were born: Orvie, Evi, and Ernest, of Hurricane, W. Va., Alvin, Charleston, W. Va., and Bernie, South Charleston, W. Va.; Mrs. Mack Searls, Mrs. Raymond Edwards, and Mrs. Sylvia Thornton, Hurricane, W. Va., Mrs. Elba Harris, St. Albans, W. Va., and Mrs. Roy Edwards, Culloden, W. Va. These survive, together with four brothers: Walter L., J. Addison, and John, of Hurricane; and Andy J. of Milton, W. Va.; and two sisters, Mrs. Stella Johnson of Hurricane, and Mrs. Vergie Pennington, Huntington, W. Va.; and there are 41 grandchildren and 22 great grandchildren.

Brother Bird was reared, and spent most of his life, in Putnam County, W. Va. as an industrious farmer. In early manhood he was brought under conviction for sin. So deep was his conviction and travail, and so mercifully was hope given him when peace was spoken, that he thought he was alone in the world, and that no one else believed as he did; as I have often heard him say. At a meeting of the Pocatalico Association in September, 1910, in a discourse by the late Elder J. H. Terry, he heard his convictions and belief preached out. His parents were Primitive Baptists, yet he did not know that Primitive Baptists believed the very doctrine of his experience. His rejoicing was great in first hearing the gospel, as the Spirit gave utterance to this father in Israel, and gave reception in the heart of

Brother Bird.

From this time Brother Bird desired a home in the church, but, feeling unworthy, he carried this desire for many years; until at length the Lord brought him home. I well remember when he came before the church at Providence, and was received and baptized by the unworthy writer, at our July meeting, 1942. Many things could be said respecting his sterling qualities, but it suffices to say that he was honest and upright, humble and unassuming, deeply indoctrinated, and gifted in expressing his convictions. His trust and hope was grounded in the blood and imputed righteousness of Christ, and that salvation was by grace alone. He was a kind husband and a tender father, rearing his children morally by precept and example. He was a very pillar in the church, and his joy in receiving the preached word, was strengthening to my feeble ministerial efforts. We were first cousins, but the love we had is sublimely greater than natural love.

He was in failing health for a number of years, and was nearly helpless for a long time, but quietly and peacefully fell asleep in Jesus, in hope of the resurrection of the dead. He left his widow, Sister Geneva, to mourn and struggle on for a short time, until she too passed on.

Funeral services were conducted at Mt. Moriah (Missionary) Baptist Church by the writer, assisted by Elder J. R. Lane; and he was laid to rest in the church cemetery to await the Master's call.

also

GENEVA FRANCES (PLUMLEY) BIRD

Our dear sister, and widow of Brother Silas C. Bird, was born May 24, 1886, and fell asleep in Jesus in Thomas Memorial Hospital, South Charleston, W. Va., January 1, 1961. She was a daughter of Evi Plumley and Martha (Smith) Plumley. She was a little more than 74 years of age.

Her decline had been gradual since the passing of Brother Bird. During his long illness she constantly ministered to his needs, desiring to be spared and be given strength to care for him. This was sweetly granted unto her. Shortly after Brother Bird united with the church, Sister Bird came before the church, giving the reason of her hope in Christ, and was received with open arms. And it was my privilege to bury her in the grave of baptism. She was an humble, faithful member, until afflictions and infirmities interfered with her attending her meetings. She was a gracious wife and mother; yes, a mother in the neighborhood.

In addition to the children and grandchildren mentioned above, she leaves to mourn, four brothers: George Plumley, Hamlin, W. Va., Ambrose, of Milton, W. Va., Sherman,

Columbus, Ohio, and Walter, of Griffithville, W. Va.; three sisters: Mrs. Ross Tabor, Hager, W. Va., Mrs. Bessie Stowers, Hager, W. Va., and Mrs. Neva Honaker, Midkiff, W. Va.

As I pen these lines, sacred memories flood my soul of the place they filled in the church, and of the days past and gone. And there is an aching void in my heart respecting the vacant seat in the church, and in the home, which can never be filled. To the bereaved children I would say that for father and mother to die, for them was gain. "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord; they cease from their labor, and their works do follow them." These works, the fruits of the Spirit, adorned their walk and conversation. May God's grace be your strength and stay.

Funeral services were conducted by the writer, assisted by Elder J. R. Lane, by request, at Mt. Moriah Church, after which she was laid to rest beside her husband, in hope of that blessed immortality. May God comfort the mourning ones. Submitted in love.

H. J. Bird

CHARLES WILLIAM THOMAS

Charles William Thomas, 80, died suddenly from a heart seizure on April 5, 1961, in the home of his cousin, Mrs. B. B. Hutchison, of Arcola, Virginia. He was the son of William Phineas and Sally Riticor Thomas; and was born and lived his entire life in Loudoun County, Virginia. He had been a farmer until a few years ago, when, after the death of his wife Mabel Furr Thomas, he retired and lived in and near Leesburg.

Mr. Thomas is survived by three children by a former marriage: Mrs. Stuart Barrett, Alexandria, Va.; J. Rector Thomas, Arlington, Va.; and Mrs. Julia Sowers, Aldie, Va. And by two sisters: Mrs. Margaret Ellington, Waynesboro, Va., and Mrs. Mabel Farnie, Leesburg, Va.; two brothers: Clarence R. Thomas, Charlottesville, Va., and Henry P. Thomas, Alexandria, Va.

Mr. Thomas was a regular attendant of Mt. Zion Old School Baptist Church, where funeral services were conducted by the writer on Saturday, April 8th; with burial in the church cemetery.

John D. Wood

MRS. HASSIE SORROW

Sister Hassie Sorrow passed away February 6, 1960, at the age of seventy-one. She was a member of Black Creek Church in the Oconee Association, in Walton County, Georgia, for a number of years; and joined New Harmony Church, Paulding County, Georgia, on confession of faith, November 2, 1958. She was

a true believer in the doctrine of the Primitive Baptists, and was a faithful member and regular attendant of her church meetings.

She leaves seven children to mourn her passing: four daughters: Mrs. Grace Tony, Mrs. Monteen Hardeman, Mrs. Jonny Sprag, and Mrs. Lois Smallwood; three sons: Claude, Noble and Charles Sorrow.

Funeral services were held at Black Creek Church by Elder O. J. Croker. She was laid to rest in the church cemetery.

Her husband, John Sorrow, was a member of Black Creek Church for a number of years. He died June 10, 1945, at the age of sixty-six years.

J. F. Jordan,
Clerk, New Harmony Church

FELIX G. DUFF
Springfield, Tenn.

Dear Editors:

I am enclosing the obituary of my father, Felix G. Duff, at his request, who read the *Signs of the Times* religiously each day. His eyesight was so poor he could hardly read the Bible. He certainly enjoyed his *Signs*. He was a member of the primitive Baptist Church, and served as Clerk of Fykes Grove Baptist Church for several years. My mother passed away January 9, 1958, and we miss them both very much.

Sincerely,
Mrs. Ernest Wilkerson

The following information is from an Adams, Tennessee, newspaper:

Funeral services were held for Felix G. Duff, 83, at Meggs Funeral Home, by Elders Joe Darnell, Carl Smith, and R. L. Biggs. Burial was in the Adams Cemetery. He was a retired farmer, and a native of Robertson County, the son of William R. and Mary Ann Stroud Duff.

Surviving are three sons: Ernest W. Duff, Pensacola, Fla.; Felix Grady Duff, Nashville; Edwin A. Duff, Russellville, Ky.; three daughters: Mrs. Clayton Rust and Mrs. W. B. McKinney, Adams; and Mrs. Ernest Wilkerson, Springfield; two brothers: J. W. and Earl B. Duff, Nashville; two sisters: Mrs. Edna Tolleson, Adams, and Mrs. George Whitehead, Los Angeles; and six grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

OBITUARY AND RESOLUTIONS

INASMUCH, As it has been the will of our heavenly Father to remove from us our dearly beloved sister, Ella Williams Richardson, we bow in humble submission to His will.

Sister Richardson was born March 24, 1889, and died January 11, 1961, after suffering a stroke on Saturday before the 5th Sunday in May, 1960. She was united in marriage to George T. Richardson in August, 1911, who died many years ago. She united with Malmaison Primitive Baptist Church in August, 1968, and attended her meetings as long as she was able, and the doctrine of salvation by grace, and grace alone, was her meat and her drink.

She leaves to mourn their loss, three sons, two daughters, one brother and one sister.

Her funeral was held in Malmaison Church, conducted by her pastor, Elder O. K. Tench, and Elder J. W. Gilliam.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That a copy of this be placed on our church records, a copy sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication, and a copy be sent to the family. May the family be reconciled to God's will.

Done by order of Malmaison Church.

Elder O. K. Tench, Moderator
Kate Dodd, Clerk

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

We deeply mourn the death of our dear sister, Lela Stewart Barefoot, who passed away January 20, 1961, at the age of fifty-eight. She was married to Brother John Henry Barefoot, who survives; as do five step-children, one sister and two brothers.

Sister Lela was a devoted and faithful wife, a devoted step-mother, and a good neighbor. She united with Liberty Church on Saturday before the 1st Sunday in June, 1956, and was baptized the Sunday following with her husband, who united at the water, by Elder Lester E. Lee. She was a faithful member to her church, and often attended other meetings. She and her husband had been faithful to attend many years before uniting with the church.

The family and church have sustained a great loss, but we feel it is her gain. May God, who doeth all things well, give each one grace sufficient to say, "Thy will be done."

Funeral services were conducted at Liberty Church on January 22nd by Elders Lester E. Lee, W. D. Godwin, and Dewey Turner.

RESOLVED, That we extend our heartfelt sympathy to the family. May God bless and comfort them. And that a copy of these resolutions be sent to the family, a copy be recorded on our church record, and a copy be sent to the *Signs of the Times* and *Old Faith Contender* for publication.

Done by order of the church in conference February 4, 1961.

Committee: Sisters Eva Tadlock, Liddie Tart, Dolly Stewart, and Hattie Denning

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 129

DANVILLE, VA., AUGUST, 1961

NO. 8

GENTLE HANDS

There was once a great physician
By the shores of Galilee,
And his hands were swift in mercy
To set the sufferer free.

Oh, they came to Him great numbers:
The great and the small were there.
Yet his hands were raised to bless them,
And to lift from them each care.

The blind man approached him stumbling,
And upon his knees did go:
"My Master, only speak the words,
And my sight again will glow."

Then the Master spat on the ground;
And then with his hands so strong,
He mixed a clay to salve his eyes:
For he had been blind so long.

Then his eyes were opened at last,
And he rejoiced all his days;
For the Master's hand had healed him
And set his feet within the way.

The lepers cleansed, the lame did walk;
And the woman in the throng
Of passersby did touch his robe,
And thought she had done no wrong.

But virtue had gone out of him,
And he was so quick to know,
For no one can come unto him
Except blessed by him below.

So, raising his hands, he blessed her,
And her faith was brave and strong;
For she felt these hands would help her —
These hands that had done no wrong.

His hands so gentle with the aged:
With the young so soft and kind.
Swiftly he reached them to Peter
When great doubts had filled his mind.

"O ye of little faith," he cried,
And raised him out of the wave.
He reached his hands out to Lazarus
When he brought him from the grave.

O, could we all but remember
His feet have walked on our sod;
And his hands swiftly healed the sick;
And he leads us back to God.

Then we ought with our brethren go,
And journey that second mile;
Our coat and cloak we'd hand to him,
And do it all with a smile.

Our God has blessed man with two hands,
And so earns his daily bread;
But man lives not by bread alone,
As our good Master has said.

So we should gladly give a hand
To a brother when he falls:
We do not know what we may need
Extended us when he calls.

We too would sink beneath the waves
If not held up by his hand;
The rushing waters pull us down;
And they make us understand.

Since man lives not by bread alone,
Christ's virtue has been given:
It is his hand that lifts us up,
And leads us on to heaven.

Mary L. Eckhard,
7811 N. Yale,
Spokane 52, Wash.

BROUGHT TO LOVE THE TRUTH

Dear Editors and Readers,

It is Easter Sunday, and I don't remember when the Lord has blessed us with a more beautiful day. But perhaps this day would be beautiful to me even if instead of the golden sunshine there were rain, or instead of the trees being decked out in spring green they were barren of leaves, for this morning I was received into full fellowship with the sisters and brethren here at Saint's Rest Church in Dallas — and the joy in my heart is deep and real. Elder W. W. Taylor told me sometime ago that perhaps I would like to write to the SIGNS sometime and tell you of my experience. However at the time he told me, I felt I wouldn't be able to. But today my heart is so full that I want to speak

to someone, so I shall let it overflow, as it were, in this letter, and ask you to do with it as you see fit.

All day the melodies of two hymns have been sounding in my heart, but of those two hymns only these words, "Amazing grace, how sweet the sound," and "Cast down, but not destroyed." Together with this should yet go the words, "God moves in a mysterious way, His wonders to perform" — and there I have in three sentences the reasons, if I am not deceived, which in a circuitous and to me yet almost unbelievable path, which brought me to Saint's Rest Church, and into fellowship with the dear souls there. Isn't it strange that at the time of certain events in our lives we rarely see or feel the guiding of God's hand, and yet when by His grace we have arrived at a certain destination which He had long ago purposed, we are enabled to look back, and step by step see how He has brought us there. This must be so that we can say, "Yours is the glory dear Lord, all Yours."

The joy in my heart today, yes and the days and weeks past since I first heard Elder Taylor speak of God's electing grace, in October of last year, has been so great that it has inspired me with awe that one so utterly unworthy as I should be allowed to experience it. For the first thirty-two years of my life I knew nothing of God in that I cared to know nothing about Him. Of all the friends and acquaintances I had, I believe there was only one who truly with heart and soul loved her Lord, and that was the first person I came to know when as a ten-year old child I came with my parents and sisters to America. She was a Kindergarten teacher, and the only teacher in the school to which I was sent, who spoke German. So it was that I was put in Kindergarten. She taught me not only my first English words, but told me also about God's love, but I was not interested. Yet I know that she never ceased praying for me, and when 22 years later, through a strange chain of circumstances I was

confirmed in the Lutheran Church, no one, I believe, was happier than she. Not because I had become a Lutheran, but because she thought I had also become a child of God. I remember that she wrote me, "there is joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth." But I didn't know then what repentance was, and there was no joy in heaven the day I was confirmed. Yet perhaps at that time God did kindle the first spark of spiritual life in my soul, for I was different in that I tried to be different, yet try as I would, I never really was.

Allow me to go back a minute to say how I came to belong to the Lutheran Church — something I had neither planned nor purposed. My first son was about to be born and I thought (unbelievable as it sounds now) that he would have to be baptized. I knew that I had been, my sisters, and my parents before us, yet none of us believed in God. So I reasoned to myself that baptism was necessary. I never stopped to think that I had been born in a country where church and state were combined, and baptism, yes and confirmation too, was almost a matter of course, not necessarily of belief. And so to have my child baptized I began attending the instruction classes at the Lutheran Church which culminated in my being confirmed on Pentecost, 1951. I will always look on my "first" baptism, even though it was not valid before God as such, as a signpost in my life which served to bring me not only to a knowledge of God, but to a deep longing to know Him better — a longing which was never satisfied even though for ten years I was a most faithful member of the Lutheran Church. I studied doctrine, I studied dogmatics, I took instruction courses, made mission calls, taught Sunday School, was active in every way and manner that I could be. I truly desired to do the Lord's work, for the emphasis was always being put on that "we" are the Lord's hands and feet, and He needs "us" to do His work for Him. And oh, how I wanted to do that work; how hard I tried to help "convert" sinners to faith

in Him, never knowing that indeed He needs no help, and that the greatest need was my own. I did know I had a need, for my prayer for ten years was, "Lord, I believe, help Thou mine unbelief" . . . "increase my faith" . . . yet despite that prayer, I wasn't letting Him do it, but was trying my utmost to do it myself, for I know that hidden in the deep recesses of my heart I felt He would somehow "reward" me with a faith which I knew to be real. But all my "willing" and all my "running" was of no avail, until I learned that it is "of God who sheweth mercy."

In what a strange manner the Lord led me to come to an experimental knowledge of these words. If my baptism was a sign-post which first brought me to know of God — a Bible, one particular Bible, which I acquired in a strange way too lengthy to mention, was another "sign-post" which in an equally strange way led me to the "Bible Hospital" where Elder Taylor was working. Through this association I visited Saint's Rest Church one Wednesday, but not because I was looking for anything. Yet here, through his preaching I felt the first stirrings deep in my soul, awakening me to the fact, not that I knew God, but that He knew me — not as righteous, but as self-righteous, as a sinner through and through. And there came a day, rather a night, in January, which I hope I may never forget. It was as though my inmost being was stirred up, and the words came over and over, "confess your faults," "there is something you have to confess," "My knowing your sins is not enough" . . . and one after the other, not only the sins I had committed against other people, but all of the "works" I had done the past ten years were literally wrung from deep inside me (being born again is a painful process) — and with each one it was as though the question came, "Did you do that for Me? And each time I had to confess, "No, Lord, not for Thee," "No, not for Thee," until I thought I could bear it no longer and I cried bitterly. I knew I was justly condemned,

but that was not why I cried, but because I knew that it wasn't Jesus I had been serving, but myself, and it was bitter in my mouth. But all at once like spring rain there came the words, "If you confess your faults, He is faithful and just to forgive your faults." And, what to me was a miracle, occurred: I felt forgiven, I felt washed, and clean — even as the rain washes the dirt and dust and grime from whatever it touches. It was as though Jesus had said, "your sins and iniquities will I remember no more" and I could feel to say, "Let us drawn near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience." That same day it was as if a voice said to me, "Now you are just beginning to know Me" — and I thought, oh Lord, after ten years, and the words came to me "what are ten years? With Me it is but the flickering of an eye" — and I felt at peace.

Two weeks ago I was baptized and it was as though "I had been washed with pure water." And today the sisters and brethren gave me their hand in full church fellowship. I feel altogether undeserving, and humble, but oh, so full of joy. I have heard it said, "God's children live in a mountain country" and already in these past weeks I have experienced what it is to go down into the valleys, but I trust that our Lord who said, "cast down, but not destroyed" will give me the strength to cling to His guiding hand, wherever He may lead, over rough or smooth paths, and will, I hope, at the end of the road bring me safely Home.

There is so much more I would like to say but this letter is already much, much too long. Yet I still want to add how much I have been enjoying the SIGNS the short time that I have been getting them, for in every article I read over and over again not only my own experience, but the wonderful truths which have become my dearest possession. May our Lord continue to bless this publication to the joy and uplifting of His children to whom it brings preci-

ous food.

A "very new and little" Sister,
Renate Trawniki
1114 Tarpley Ave.
Dallas 11, Texas

THE CHURCH

The church, as I see it, has been called a number of different names, such as Israel, Zion, Speckled Bird, The Lord's Habitation, The Lord's Chosen, Elect, The Kingdom of God, The Generation of Jesus Christ, The Sheep Fold, The Bride, The Church of God, The Church of Christ.

I have recently had continued thoughts about trying to write to the paper. As I undertake to do so it is with fear that it will not meet the approval of the editor or the readers. But most of all, I fear it will not be spiritually directed. I believe that it is a duty of some to write, but I don't know if I should be one among them or not, realizing my inability due to various reasons. If I should write anything unsound, I trust someone will feel it their duty to offer me some correction; and may it be just as true when the seriousness of any church matter becomes great enough to make it necessary for those responsible, to take proper steps to make the needed adjustments to the best interest of the church as a whole.

Well, I must get on with what I intended to write about, the church. I would like to begin with Galatians 3:16: "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ." God made this promise to Abraham. He and Sarah, his wife, both laughed at this as he was a hundred years old and she ninety. We find in Hebrews 10:23, "He is faithful that promised." The promise, in particular, that I would like to call your attention to, is in regard to the Church. In doing so, I would like to notice what is said about the seed

in Genesis 17:19, "And God said, Sarah thy wife shall bear thee a son *indeed*; and thou shalt call his name Isaac: and I will establish my covenant with him for an everlasting covenant, and with his seed after him." A son indeed was promised and his name was Isaac. This promise being made to such an aged man, along with other unusual characteristics, makes it very clearly seen that Isaac was a type of Christ. I can see some symbol of Christ in Isaac as Abraham was making his way to offer Isaac on the altar on the mountain, where he was about to be slain. Genesis 22:10, "Abraham stretched forth his hand and took the knife to slay his son." From there, Isaac, to me, represents the church in God sparing him; as he went free, unharmed from the altar by reason of God providing a ram to take his place. Inasmuch as the ram was offered in the place of Isaac, I believe that Christ bore the weight of the sin of the church while in the garden, and the suffering and shame on the cross, for an offering to God without spot, that the church would be free from the guilt of sin and the penalty of it in eternity. I believe that God looks at the church, through the sacrifice of his Son, as being without spot or wrinkle or any such thing. I can't help from believing that rather than being eternally condemned, the church has been made every whit whole by the offering of Jesus Christ.

Getting back to the promise of Abraham and his seed, I think of this as a two fold promise. Isaac was a fulfillment of the first part, and what God would do concerning his seed as the second part. We may consider that those going to bring Rebecca for a wife for Isaac were made to know that she was the one, as she quoted words of the meditation of the servant as a sign desired by the servant, which was unknown by Rebecca. When she was leaving her household to become the wife of Isaac, it was said by some of her kinsmen, according to Genesis 24:60,

"Be thou the mother of thousands of millions." Now it surely must have been the spirit of prophecy directing the one that gave the parting words to Rebecca, as she was leaving home to become the wife of Isaac. I believe that God made the choice for Rebecca, who was a virgin to be the wife of Isaac. God must have had a purpose in the parting words. It seems as if this had some connection with Solomon's Song 6:9, "My dove, my undefiled is but one; she is the only one of her mother, she is the choice one of her that bare her." I believe that this one Dove here is the Lord's people; which takes my mind back to the one seed which I mentioned in the beginning. The mother spoken of here, I believe, has reference to Rebecca, the wife of Isaac, the mother of thousands of millions. I know not how many, but I would say all that's within the chosen realm.

Let us now notice a very interesting bit of prophecy concerning the fountain for the cleansing of the church. Zechariah 13:1, "In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and uncleanness." Surely this fountain was opened at Golgotha for the house of David and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, which were the Lord's chosen people, for sin and uncleanness. This fountain was the only sufficient cleansing that has ever been offered for sin and uncleanness. This prophecy was penned long before the fountain was opened, even back in the days when many sacrifices were offered which could not take away sin, and when the Lord's people were often referred to as Zion.

Let us notice Isaiah 4:4, "When the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion, and shall have purged the blood of Jerusalem from the midst thereof by the spirit of judgment, and by the spirit of burning." Notice the words, "when the Lord shall have washed away the filth of the daughters of Zion". This I take,

means a positive event for a future day. Some more of Isaiah's prophecy which is very closely connected with the verse above concerning Zion and the foundation of the church, is Isaiah 28:16, "Therefore thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I lay in Zion for a foundation a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation." I would say that this prophecy is pointing directly to Jesus Christ in the New Testament age concerning the foundation of the church: I Corinthians 3:11, "For other foundation can no man lay than is laid, which is Jesus Christ." Christ also said, "Greater love hath no man than this that a man lay down his life for his friends." Yes, Jesus was obedient unto death. His suffering was great enough, his blood was precious enough and powerful enough; and God loved his people good enough, to give Him as a complete offering for the sins of the people that make up the church.

May I go back just once again to the old scripture, as I love to think about the prophecy of the old and it being confirmed in the new. Psalms 127:1, "Except the Lord build the house they labor in vain that build it." For vain is the help of man. I trust you will notice that I have intended in this letter to write in regard to the spiritual house rather than the meeting house we use to worship in. We have to be made fully conscious of the fact that the Lord, only, builds the house, and there is nothing a man can do about it. I hear quite a bit said about duty, and I highly agree as far as it is in harmony with the Scriptpures. For an example, notice Hebrews 11:7, "By faith Noah, being warned of God of things not seen as yet, moved with fear, prepared an ark to the saving of his house." and Genesis 6:22, "Thus did Noah; according to all that God commanded him, so did he."

So the real truth of the matter is that Noah was warned of God through faith and fear, and, if I may make it precisely, I would say there is power

in the command; and I believe wherever grace has shined into the hearts of God's chosen people as the light of men, it will have an effect. But any act on the part of a man for the peace and comfort of God's people is worthless. I often think of the scripture which says that some have a zeal of God but not according to knowledge. Men often get an idea that it is their duty to do a certain thing and are not divinely guided. I am afraid it may be the case in writing this letter. A man may sometimes think he is to some degree lifted up, and it will be only misleading thoughts from his fleshly mind.

I think of Peter when he wanted to build three tabernacles, and it was not the leading of the Spirit. But, may I leave the improper statement of Peter, and take note of a positive and correct one as he answered Christ in Matthew 16:16-18, "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. And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church." The scripture speaks of a spiritual rock which was Christ. In I Corinthians 12:3, "No man can say that Jesus is the Lord but by the Holy Ghost." It appears that the readiness of Peter to give a correct and positive answer without any hesitation, "Thou art the Christ," surely was by a divine revealed knowledge of the Holy Ghost from the Father, — revealed in Peter, not because of who he was, but rather for what he was. It was the work of God in Peter that Christ was speaking of when he said, "Upon this rock I build my church." Ephesians 2:20-22, "And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God

through the Spirit."

Here, when Paul was writing to the Ephesian brethren, he didn't limit this matter just to Peter when he referred to the church being built on the apostles and prophets. I think Paul was meaning the same thing that Christ did when talking to Peter about building his church. This, to me, means the very principle of Christ that was in these men. The same thing that caused them to be apostles and prophets was also that which Peter was blessed with when he and John found the lame man at the gate, and Peter said, "In the name of Jesus rise up and walk." He was healed and leaped for joy.

So, it's the work of God through his Son Jesus Christ that Christ is referring to when speaking of building his Church. The scriptures tell us that Christ is the foundation of the church, the head of the church, the chief corner stone, and door. So, He is the author and finisher of the Christian's faith. I Peter 2:5, "Ye also as lively stones are built up a spiritual house." I believe a lively hope is a lively stone in a spiritual house, and in some wonderful way they are builded together for a habitation for the Lord through the Spirit and are one as a body in Christ. Many are one body in Christ and every one members one of another. I Corinthians 12:18, "God set the members every one of them in the body as it hath pleased him." This was when God chose a bride for his Son before the days of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Christ said before Abraham was I am.

Inasmuch as God was well pleased in his Son, I believe he is also pleased with the bride he chose for his Son when he placed the members in the body as it pleased him. "It pleased the Father that in Him should all fullness dwell." These members are those that God chose and predestinated to be conformed to the image of his Son. They also are bought with a price. Jesus purchased them with his own blood. They are the church, and shine forth as ac-

ceable in the beloved, through the perfection of the offering of himself to God without spot. Christ also loved the church and gave himself for it that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of the water of the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish. This, of course, is when he comes for his Bride. I believe Jesus set in order his church in its militant state when he went upon a mountain and called unto him whom he would and ordained twelve and sent them out to preach. If I am correct this was Mount Hatan in Palestine; and he often went to the mountains. I have felt to go to the mountains many times myself in the past 24 years, where I feel I have received a source of comfort at least some of the time.

I have tried to convey some of my thoughts of the Old Scriptures as well as the New, hoping I haven't been too lengthy. I have written only a brief portion of what I had in view. If I have written any thing that seems to not be in harmony with the faith that was once delivered to the saints please tell me first. If I have written any thing that is worth the time and space in the paper, give all the praise and honor to the Almighty Sovereign God of all Grace and his dear Son the Saviour of sinners. I trust he has appeared to me in a spirit of just condemnation, and also in a spirit of merciful justification through the sacrifice of Himself for such an undeserving one as I.

Thomas T. Brammer
Box 303
Collinsville, Va.

WHAT GREAT THINGS WE LEARN THROUGH TRIALS

Box 3,
Denison, Washington

Dear Editors and Readers:

It has been brought to my mind to

write, and if I am given strength, and God so directs, I will try; without Him I can do nothing.

I have been blessed to enjoy the wonderful writings in the *Signs*, for they are the things I believe. God's people are made a willing people, and the things they experience today, are the same as those experienced by those long gone before. God is still the same eternal, steadfast, unchangeable, all powerful God.

I will try and tell of one of my experiences. My oldest daughter was missing all of one cold day and night. Her Dad and I started our search for her, but it was many hours of searching in vain. I was made to realize the helplessness and weakness of the flesh; but I was determined I would find her on my own, after having tried to pray, and knew that my efforts there, too, were all in vain. Oh, the bitterness and rebellion that befell me! It seemed to me He had turned his back and closed the door, saying, "I know you not."

Oh, the torture I suffered in that state! I tried to pray, and couldn't. I tried to beg for mercy, and couldn't do that either. After what seemed an eternity, I was made to ask, "Almighty God, if you will, give me strength. Stand by me, and comfort me in my hour of need." I was made more calm now, praying for strength He alone could give; and was made to know that God is all power, and that of myself I had nothing — not even the power to pray. I believe all things come from God; and I mean all things.

It was near noon the following day when I was told to call a certain phone number; which I did. I placed the receiver to my ear, and heard my daughter's voice. "Oh, God!" I cried. I felt ashamed for the way I had acted; and my thoughts and heart uttered groans I could not utter. I feel sure that you, dear ones, who have had any of these experiences, know how I felt. I did then beg for His mercy; and to forgive this wicked, helpless mass of utter confu-

sion, called man; this lump of clay; this lump of nothingness.

Yes, I believe we are made a willing people. He opens and none can shut; He shuts and no man can open. He gives, and He takes away. And I am made happy, and glad, for if He is with us, who then can be against us? He makes the lion to lie down with the lamb. He calms the storm. He, and He alone, comforts my heart and heals my sufferings; He humbles my heart and soul, and leads me in the way of his will. He makes me to know that he is GOD; and to know him is to fear him. And I am made willing for his will to be done. He is the potter, and I the clay to be moulded to his will and purpose.

My prayer is that I might be made humble, and to wait upon him. One of the very least, if one at all.

Hasseltine Allen

Ocean City, Maryland

Dear Editors:

I am sending you, with his permission, a letter I received from Elder A. J. Slauson. It came on a day when I was very low in a dry place, and for awhile after reading it, I felt lifted up, and was made to think of our wonderful, all powerful Saviour. After the sweet meditations it brought, I felt I would like to share it with others, if you have room in the *Signs of the Times* to use it.

May God in his great mercy give us grace to sometimes look away from this perishing and sin filled world, and unto Him, the Lord of all.

A sister in hope,
Ethel Holloway

"HE IS THE WAY"

46 Cedar Street,
Kingston, N. Y.

Very Dear Sister Holloway:

I am ashamed for the long delay in answering your very kind and most appreciated letters; and before I say

anything more, I want to thank you for the two nice pictures of two of your meeting-houses in Maryland. I was so glad to be with you dear people again last Fall at your association; to see and greet so many of the kindred in Christ. I always have enjoyed coming among you dear people, though some we used to see have been called home, having lived their allotted time in the wilderness world; which is mingled with joys and sorrows, from which to depart and be with Christ is far better. The Apostle said, For him to live was Christ, but to die was gain.

Dear one, if we can feel in some measure that we have a little foretaste of that heavenly manna which comes down from the God of all love and mercy, to feed our hungry souls from time to time, through the teaching and work of the Holy Ghost; who teaches as no man can teach: convicting of sin, and causing the poor sinner to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to cry unto God for mercy, grace, and strength; and as a little child unable to walk alone, then when Jesus is in some wonderful way made to know us, saying, "I am the way," then our utmost desire is for him to be The Way for us. No other way will suffice, for the poor, helpless sinner, for all other ground is sinking ground.

Jesus said, "I am the way." And he is the way that every child of grace wants. He is the way from death to life; the way from condemnation to salvation; the way from under the law to grace; the way from un-godliness to righteousness; the way from earth to heaven; the way from darkness to light; the way from sinner to saint; the way from hatred to love; the way from being blind to seeing; the way from being deaf to having a hearing ear; the way from weakness to strength; the way from the wilderness to the City of Zion; the way from the lack of understanding to knowing God; the way from having no God to having God; the way to know how to thank God for his many

blessings; the way to look unto God for all our needs; the way to know how to serve God with fear and trembling; the way that enables one to trust in God; the way that enables one to love God; the way that enables one to love the brethren; the way from selfishness to charity; the way that the foolish man learns wisdom; the way that the poor sinner knows that without Christ he can do nothing; the way the poor sinner is made to hate his own life; the way that enables a poor sinner to pray to God.

And He is the way that intercession is made to God the Father for poor sinners; the way that the sinner is freed from bondage of sin and iniquity; the way that the law has no more dominion over the saved sinner; the way that the Bride (the church) shall be fully cared for in all that she is in need of in this world, or the world to come; the way that when He shall appear, his children will appear with him in glory and see him as he is; the way that their vile bodies shall be fashioned like unto His glorious body.

. . . Sister Slauson remains so weak she can scarcely do any work. Hope you and your dear husband are enjoying the great blessing of good health. I often think that we all have to drink our cup: if it be pleasure, joy, or afflictions; or pain and much suffering; or it be vinegar mingled with gall. But the poet says: "The bud may have a bitter taste, but sweet will be the flower." Dear sister, if it can be our lot, a few moments in heaven will make amends for all. Best regards and wishes to your dear husband and much love in the Lord to you, from both of us.

A. J. and Elizabeth Slauson

REBUKES AND ADMONITIONS HAVE THEIR PLACE

R. F. D. 1,
Ruffin, N. C.

Dear Brethren:

I am reminded that our subscription

is due; and I hope as long as I shall live, I shall have the privilege of receiving the paper. I have read much good from its pages: at times I have felt rebuked and admonished in reading some of the articles. When that certain something within me arrests my attention to the fact that I am "out of the way", and to seek the old paths wherein is found righteousness, it causes a striving to take place within me to turn my face towards Zion's hill, where I know my greatest joys. When I am head-strong, self centered, and unmindful of the things wherein, as I hope, I have been taught, oftimes then when I have read, or heard a good sermon, I feel the rebuke, or admonition applies to me; and for days have pondered over it, that surely that was written or spoken to me.

Oh, I am such a wayward child. So often do I go astray, doing or saying things so unbecoming to one who professes a hope in Jesus' name. Then do I wonder if I did not run before I was sent; or, perhaps I only caught the shadow and not the substance. It seems I am so full of wrong doing, which, when I am reminded of it, fills me with grief, and with hatred of the things I do that are so sinful. Then I long for the sweet peace in being drawn close to the things which are most dear to me; and I long to feel that I am a link in the chain of love: heaven born love. I love the soft breezes that warm our soul; I love the time of the singing of the birds, for these are like the joyful sound of the gospel. The melody is in harmony, the warm breezes engulfs made known to us, saying, "I am the ward and upward towards the mark for the prize of the high calling in Christ Jesus our Lord.

If we are his children, I believe He will lead us safely all the way through our journey here. We cannot expect the world to love us, for they did not love our Lord, nor his teaching. Should the time come that some of us shall have to give up this earthly life because they

refuse to bow to the beast or his image, it is indeed a comforting thought to feel that not one sparrow can fall to the ground without Him. When the Spirit is present with us, it teaches us to love our enemies, and pray for those who would despitefully use us. Then, lead us, Lord, as children of light, giving us a heart of thanksgiving in all that is done for us.

We feel thankful for our paper, and its editors who labor to give us so many things that be of God and true holiness, which we glean from time to time from its pages; and feel that even a rebuke given for our good, is given in the bonds of Christian love. What a blessing that I am not cast away.

Mrs. Fred Cobb

THE WAY OF A MAN WITH A MAID

In the Proverbs of Solomon we find that in all his wisdom, he said, "There be three things which are too wonderful for me, yea, four which I know not." The fourth thing being, "the way of a man with a maid." I would not tell you that I understand this, for no words can describe the beauty therein; but I do feel that the man and the maid are figures of Christ and the church.

I would like to start with Adam being a figure of Christ; and the rib which the Lord God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man. (Christ said, "No man can come unto me except the father which sent me draw him.") Adam said that this is now bone of my bone and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called woman, because she was taken out of man. "Therefore shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave unto his wife; and they shall be one flesh." I feel that there is nothing on earth as precious to a man's heart as his bride. There is also nothing on earth as precious to Christ as the church. A man's bride is to forsake all others, just as the church is to forsake the world for her husband (Christ).

We find that the angel appeared unto Joseph 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." I hope I believe in predestination; for I believe that in the foreordination of God, Mary was the wife of Joseph. And I believe that the church was predestinated to be called, justified, and glorified; and I believe that Christ feared not to come into the world and cleanse her for himself; for the Spirit of Christ that is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost.

We find in Genesis 3:16, "Thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee." Ephesians 5:22: "Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing. Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish."

We find in I Corinthians 14:33, "For God is not the author of confusion, but of peace, as in all churches of the saints. Let your women keep silence in the churches: for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law. And if they will learn any thing, let them ask their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speak in the church." This I have experienced; for when our deacons were laboring so hard for peace, and to hold the church together, the women started making motions, and seconding them, and caused division. I see the regret of this shameful act.

I know that I am poor and ignorant,

but some things come to my mind; and I am made to wonder. With all due respect to ministers, I wonder if this scripture could apply to them. For the bride has many members in one body, and all members have not the same offices; so we being many are one in Christ. I realize that the minister has to present himself a living sacrifice, not knowing if he will be blessed by the Husband with the gospel; and, if not, and he preaches in the flesh, he will preach the things of the flesh; and fleshly things are shameful things.

We find in Acts 20:28, "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them." To me, an overseer is an adviser; not a ruler. He has rules with which to advise, just as the minister has the Holy Writ with which to advise. I feel our deacons are to watch over the table, which is the pulpit, and to see that the food is fit for the flock. The deacons are to take care of the church of God.

Those that are married know the ties of natural love; and those that are married to Christ know the ties of spiritual love. I like to think back over my experience, if indeed I have one, when I felt my burdens to be more than I could bear. I had been out in the darkness of the night crying and begging God for mercy, the forgiveness of my sins. I couldn't live; and I couldn't die. When I came in, my wife met me, and said, "You can tell me your troubles, for I have known this for a long time." I believe that only the children of God know the works of God; and I felt very small to think that I had tried to hide these things from one so precious to my heart. "Houses and riches are the inheritance of fathers: and a prudent

wife is from the Lord." (Proverbs 19:14)

I realize that it is impossible to tell all the glorious things about this Husband and wife, so I would like to close with the beautiful sight the angel showed John in Revelation 21:9-11: "And there came unto me one of the seven angels which had the seven vials full of the seven last plagues, and talked with me, saying, Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb's wife. And he carried me away in the spirit to a great and high mountain, and shewed me that great city, the holy Jerusalem, descending out of heaven from God, having the glory of God: and her light was like unto a stone most precious, even like a jasper stone, clear as crystal." This is the bride that He cleansed to present to himself a glorious church, not having spot, wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.

If I am not deceived, he shewed me this church in a dream. They were all clothed in solid white, no male or female; and the beauty thereof I cannot describe. I hope I love this church with such a love that, as Paul said, if eating meat offends her, I will eat no more meat. I know the Bible says that it must needs be that offences come; but woe to that man by whom the offence cometh! It is better to have a millstone tied around my neck, and be cast into the sea, than to offend one of these little ones. And I hope that God will bless me and enable me, should at anytime my presence cause confusion and unrest among the people I hope I love, to step aside, that the sea might be calm, and the ship cease to rock.

I realize that the belly of hell is an awful place; but it is not a new place for this poor sinner. I believe with all my heart that the only road to heaven is through hell. My prayer is to be kept humble at my brethren's feet; for he that exalts himself shall be abased. I don't mean to be offensive to anyone, but the word of God is offensive to un-

believers. "The simple believeth every word: but the prudent man looketh well to his going", for the truth causes us to judge ourselves, and not others.

The bride shall not be judged, for He has cleansed her with his blood; and she shall be acceptable to her husband on that day for which all other days were made.

Clifton Robertson,
Reidsville, N. C.

EXPERIENCE

I would like to write something of my experience of the new birth, and things that happened to me while I was in nature's darkness. I was brought up under the teaching of Campbellism, but my parents died in 1908 while I was in my early teens; and I then made my home with Mr. and Mrs. Estes and family, who were Missionary Baptists. In 1910 we moved to Ellis County, close to a little place called Mountain Peak. There were two churches there — a Methodist and a Missionary Baptist. The Baptists called themselves the "old line party Baptists"; and I joined their Sunday School because I had gotten disgusted with the teaching of water-salvation, which the Campbellites firmly believe in. In 1911 these Baptists were holding a revival meeting, and when they called for mourners to be prayed for, I went up to the mourner's bench. I wanted the Sunday School and revival meeting religion for I really had always believed in it ever since I had been a Sunday School pupil, but I didn't feel any change until the next day, when I had a very clean feeling come within my breast; and in a few moments I felt another movement within me. Then I said within myself, "Now I've got it." (Yes, I had a change alright — instead of having one evil spirit, I had eight evil spirits.)

So I got the Sunday School and revival meeting religion. Christ said that, "When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places seeking rest and findeth none; then he saith, I will return into my house from

whence I came out; and when he is come he findeth it empty and swept and garnished. Then he goeth and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there; and the last state of that man is worse than the first. Even so shall it be with this wicked generation." So I got a good dose of the Pharisee's religion.

In 1913 we moved to Johnson County, and the Methodist church was the only church close, so I joined their Sunday School. I had the reputation of always knowing the lessons, for I took their Sunday School book and memorized the lessons. I didn't read the Bible very much in those days. It always condemned me. After Mr. Estes died, we moved to Fort Worth, where I joined the Klan; and was swelled up with pride. I concluded I ought to join a church there, so I joined Frank Norris' church; and I thought I was doing a glorious thing, and was really filled with vanity. But after I joined the New School Baptists, I became very much disturbed about the new birth; so I picked out texts in the Bible and *prayed* that Frank would preach on it, and maybe it would give me some knowledge of the new birth. This happened three times, and Frank used the texts, but it did me no good. I then prayed that the Lord would send an angel from heaven to tell me the truth, for the truth was not in man. One evening the next week I walked over to the Samson Ranch, expecting to meet an angel who would tell me the truth. But when I came close to the ranch, I became fearful, because I found myself in the presence of a great God; a holy, righteous, *reverend* God, who knew every evil thought and every evil intention that I ever had. I was made to know that He was everywhere present and no place absent, and that I could not hide from him, which I had thought of doing when I first felt his presence. Then I saw myself one of the world's greatest sinners; and I heard a still voice saying, "Many are called but few are chosen." These words locked my mouth like a

vise, and made me realize that I was trying to take of the Lord's table without having a wedding garment, because I had not been born again.

A terrible, dreadful feeling came over me, it seemed to me that the end of the world had come. When this feeling wore off, the Spirit of the Lord hardened my heart, and it felt like a heavy flint rock, and had a sharp pain in it; then I prayed that I might be relieved, and He gave me relief. I was plenty excited; and when I got home, I told the Estes family what had happened to me. Mrs. Estes said, "Will, that was the Lord talking to you." And I felt that I knew it was.

I worked for the County, and we were getting gravel out of a pit beside a little wooded creek; and between trucks we would have a little time. And I would go down to the creek and try to pray; and every word that fell from my lips, it seemed I could hear hitting the ground. Once at dinner time as I laid down trying to sleep the conviction off, the other workers though they would have some fun out of me. They took a trace-chain and wrapped it around my legs; then made a loud noise by shouting and slapping their legs, and woke me up. The first thing that entered my mind was that the Lord had come, and they were running from him. I got up to run and hide, but the chain had me fastened, and I fell over and screamed, for I was thoroughly frightened. They looked amazed, and said that they were only having a little fun. I didn't tell them at the time that I was under conviction, but later when they found out, they said they would not have done it if they had known.

After ten days, the heavy burden fell from my breast, and I received a hope that caused a rejoicing. But it didn't last long, for the thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan was given me. I prayed three times for it to be removed; and I did without food for six days. Then I thought it was not pleasing to the Lord for me to do without food, so I ate a meal; then picked up the Bible. Before I had been afraid to read the

Bible, being fearful that that which was in me would cause me to blaspheme the great God, if I even touched the Bible.

I opened the Bible at 2 Corinthians 12th chapter, and the first place I looked was the 7th verse, and I read the 7, 8 and 9th verses. And after reading them, I realized that that which was in me would not destroy me, but was put there to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. I seemed that if his grace was sufficient for the Apostle, it is enough for such a one as I. And I felt it was put in me as a token of salvation, and I desired to find a home. A voice said to go to the Primitive Baptists. But I thought they were too common, and I could not go to them. In my ignorance I disobeyed the heavenly voice, and I joined a Sunday School church. I stayed with them three months, serving their idols through the lusts of my flesh. The night I was to be baptized, the preacher took for a text, "The living Word of God." He preached that the Bible was the living word; but my thought was that he did not know what he was preaching, for the Bible is only the printed word, and Christ is the living Word. But I let him baptize me; yet realizing as I came out of the water that I would have to go to the Primitive Baptists.

There was a sister living close to Mrs. Estes, so I walked over to see her. I was hoping she would agree with me; so when I got into the house, I began to give my views on spiritual things. She let me talk about thirty minutes, then she said, "Bill Williams, you are a Hard-shell Baptist. That's their doctrine you are talking." She told me they had services the first and third Sundays, and why not come and hear the Primitive Baptists preach. I replied that I would go the first Sunday, if it was the Lord's will. I got there a little late; and when I stepped into the church house and looked at those Baptists, a feeling came over me that these people are my brethren. I sat down on the very back seat. When the preaching was over, I thought,

"These don't skim over the surface like others do, and tell you nothing. They go down under the letter and bring out the meaning of the letter."

The next meeting day, after hearing Elder Moreland and Elder Smith preach, I thought, this is the church of the living God. I offered for membership; and Elder Moreland said, "Tell us Brother Williams what great things the Lord has done for you." I didn't have one word to say; but they received me into the church. Before, I had merely told them that I wanted to be baptized, when I had joined churches; and that was all there was to it, because others are so eager for members they don't bother about asking questions. At that time I did not know anything about the customs and practices of the Old School Baptists.

I resigned from the Klan, because the words pressed heavily on my mind, "Come out, and touch not the unclean thing." I rejoiced to get out of the thing I gloried to get in. I was to be baptized on the first Sunday in December. That week all the little creeks froze over hard, and it seemed they would have to break the ice to baptize me. In my mind I prayed that the Lord would send enough warm days to melt the ice. By Sunday the ice was all gone. Before Elder Moreland put me under the water, the very cold feeling left me, and when I came out of the water as if it were a day in June.

I felt that I had been baptized, but had not the three times before. When I got home, I received a cold reception from Mrs. Estes and one of the daughters, almost as cold as the weather. This was in the year 1924.

Living in hope of eternal life,
W. K. Williams
3125 Hiawatha
Fort Worth 14, Texas

"THERE IS AN UNKNOWN TONGUE"

643 Mt. Vernon Avenue,
Portsmouth, Va.

Dear Elder Spangler:

Enclosed is a check for my renewal of the dear old *Signs of the Times*; which I eagerly look forward to each month. It is food to those who "hunger and thirst after righteousness", for if it doesn't contend for the faith once delivered to the saints, I know not anything at all about it.

When I was very young, I recall an elder that when he prayed, he would say, "Lord teach us to know God, whom to know is life eternal." They shall all be taught of God from the least to the greatest; for the dear Lord does teach and reveal to all his people the things of the Spirit that he would have them to know. We do not learn these things from men. When we sit under the sound of the voice of God's under-shepherds, we are made to rejoice, and are made, by the workings of his "will and to do" in us, to know that they are preaching Christ and him crucified.

There is an *unknown tongue* that only those who are taught of the Lord understand; and blessed are those who can hear the exceedingly joyful sound, for it is truth. Let him that hath an ear to hear, hear these mighty, wonderful things of the Spirit; and blessed are they. They have a peace that passeth all understanding here below. "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit."

The Spirit brings to n a u g h t the things that are, and makes manifest the things that are not. Paul was bent on binding the saints and taking them to prison; but then when a great light shown round about him, it brought to naught, as it were, the things that were; and brought to light spiritual things into his mind and heart — things which were not (in evidence) to Paul. Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of heaven, (or h e a v e n l y things).

"And you hath he quickened, who were

dead in trespasses and sins; wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience." (Ephesians 2:1, 2) So was the Apostle walking in ignorance to the Spirit of Life, until he was called with an holy calling, and told what he was by nature, and what he was by grace.

May the dear Lord bless you all to continue in his loving kindness until the end, and then receive you unto himself. Pray for me, one of the very least, if one at all.

In hope of mercy beyond the grave, where can be said, "O death where is thy sting; and grave the victory?" And where we shall know as we are known, according to his rich mercy and loving kindness.

A sister,
Mrs. C. W. Adams

"THE CRUMBS HAVE TO FALL"
Princeton, W. Va.

Dear Brother Spangler:

Am sending some money to pay for the *Signs of the Times*, the dear old paper which has been so much comfort to this poor and afflicted one. For many years I have enjoyed your writings, and Brother Wood's, so much. I am shut in most of the time from afflictions.

I remember hearing your dear old father preach many years ago; and I also stayed two or three nights in your parents' home; and remember something your mother said to me about your being called to preach, hoping you would not be, as you were weakly. But I believe the Lord illuminates his preachers through afflictions.

I get so low in my feelings; and often try to walk by sight, but am made to beg the Lord to hold me up, for I seem to sink where there is no standing. Now and then I feel to get a crumb, or a glimpse of something beyond here. I think of the woman who said, "Yea, the dogs eat the crumbs that fall from the master's table." Now the crumbs have to fall. I try to reach out and get a crumb, but I find that my arm is too short. So it has to be revealed that it is not as it pleases me, but at the Lord's time; for so much of the time I ask amiss.

I feel to be such a poor and needy person, as having nothing, as dying daily; but if we have that treasure in our earthen vessel, behold we live: And the more we die, the more we live; for we walk by faith and not by sight. I wonder about those of whom the Apostle John wrote, who said that they were rich and increased with goods, and had need of nothing. Oh that the Lord would give us more of that hidden Wisdom, for Wisdom is the master builder of his house. May the Lord keep the city that the candlestick be not removed.

Yesterday was our meeting time at Glenwood Park, and it seemed we were blessed to eat of the hidden manna; but, you know, we have to have new supplies everytime we are fed. Please overlook my imperfections.

Your sister in hope,
Mrs. W. G. Pritchett

NOTICE OF THREE DAYS MEETING

The Bethel Primitive Baptist Church, of Riffe, Washington, will hold their three days meeting, the Lord willing, on Friday, Saturday, and 3rd Sunday in August. A welcome is extended to all who can come and be with us.

Vernie Schoonover, Clerk

THE LEXINGTON-ROXBURY
ASSOCIATION

The Lexington-Roxbury Association is appointed to be held with the Olive and Hurley Church, at Holcottville, N. Y., Wednesday and Thursday, September 13 and 14, 1961.

Brethren and friends are invited to meet with us. Those coming Tuesday will take Route 28 to Fleishmans, then take Halcott Center Road 4 miles to The Maples, the home of James Peet. Those coming Wednesday will go directly to the Meeting House at Holcottville.

(Elder) A. J. Slauson

CORRECTION

In the July issue, at the end of the Circular Letter of the Delaware Association, page 161, we stated that Elder Warren was the Moderator of the association. This was in error. The ending should have read: Written by Elder Wood, with Elder W. D. Griffin, Moderator, and Reese S. Jarmon, Clerk. — J. D. W.

CONTENTNEA UNION

The next session of the Contentnea Union will be held, the Lord willing, with Lower Town Creek Church, the 5th Sunday in July, 1961, and Saturday before. The church is located near Pinetops, N. C.

All lovers of the truth are invited to attend.

W. W. Stallings, Jr., Union Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE
INDIGENT FUND

(To June 1, 1961)

Emma Brake, N. C.....	\$2.00
John W. Attaway, Texas.....	5.00
J. Y. Vanhook, N. Y.....	2.00
Mrs. Letcher Smith, N. J.....	5.00
Mrs. J. B. Hill, N. J.....	2.00

E. M. Smith, Clerk

THE CONTENTNEA PRIMITIVE BAPTIST
ASSOCIATION

The next session of the Contentnea Association is appointed to convene with the church at Autry's Creek, Edcombe County, N. C., to begin on Friday before the second Sunday in October, 1961. The meeting house is located between Crisp and Fountain, N. C.

Danville, Virginia

August, 1961

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EDITORIAL

THE FUTURE

At this time I want to notice the following Scripture: "But we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the dead: who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver: in whom we trust that he will yet deliver us (2 Cor. 1:9, 10)." This is a history of the apostle's salvation. Is it the history of yours?

Let us notice John 6:37. All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. We have in this passage three of the fundamental points of doc-

trine. Election, effectual calling, and the preservation of the saints, is clearly and emphatically taught here. To deny one of these points is to deny the whole. If one is left out of God's choice; if one thus chosen is not brought; if one thus brought is not kept, then the doctrine is worthless. This is the history of the salvation of the people of God. Is it the history of your salvation?

What did this declaration of truth do for you? Not the first thing. The choice of God did not bring you to Him; the declaration of His effectual work in bringing men and women to him, and in keeping them from every enemy that would arise did not do a thing for you. God's truth must be made to live in us; there must be a manifestation in our lives of the doctrine. This manifestation was made to one, a pattern left on the sacred pages of the New Testament, to wit, the apostle Paul. This work is shown in types and shadows, in figures and allegories all through the Bible, but brought to its full prominence in the history of Paul's life, and in a marked degree in every child of God.

As we look in on the Apostle in his second letter to these Corinthians, it is with delight that we read of his knowledge of the travel of a child of God. He had learned contentment in whatever state that he was in (Phil. 4:11), and his afflictions and his comfort were all tied in with the past and the present and the future. This sentence of death was not something acquired or apprehended or intercepted, but it was placed in him by the Spirit's mighty power. I have the Scriptures on my side about the past, both as to my experience and Paul's; likewise it is on our side about the present. If his testimony by inspiration, and mine (I hope) by revelation, does not convince, then it is not because of the weakness of what he and I have been delivered from, but because that the sentence of death is lacking in unbelievers. His trust for deliverance was justified just before his death, was made manifest in complete triumph. Whatsoever is not of faith is

sin. Were the disciples ever commanded to have faith in themselves? Did the New Testament writers give us one example whereby we were to have faith in ourselves or in one another?

Trees always come before fruit. It is the tree that makes the fruit. The fruit does not bear the tree, but rather the tree bears the fruit. Any source of fruit receives credit for the fruit. Have we got a tree, either in reality or in a symbol, that is set in the nature of men, which will enable us to have faith in it for the future? Which of nature's gifts will we have faith in? It can not be the sword, for if we use that, we shall perish by it (Matt. 26:52); it can not be the natural mind for certainly our hope for the future must be in something more than foolishness (1 Cor. 2:14; it can not be in the carnal mind for it is not, and can not be, subject to the law of God and is death (Rom. 8:6, 7); it can not be money for it had to perish with the user long ago (Acts 8:20); it can not be by the mighty and wise and noble, for but few of that kind are called and in that call they become the least; then in what shall we believe in for the future? Where is our faith coming from? It is all coming to us as a fruit of the Spirit. Faith is the gift of God, the product of the mighty working power of the in-wrought energy of God's Spirit (Eph. 1:19, 20; 2:8; Gal. 5:22). This faith is in God.

We sing:

“Twas grace that taught my heart to fear,
And grace my fears relieved;
How precious did that grace appear,
The hour I first believed.

Through many dangers, toils and snares,
I have already come;
‘Tis grace has brought me safe thus far
And grace will lead me home.”

And we haven't had a hymnologist or chorister that would dare make two kinds of grace out of the experience of John Newton or Paul, but we sometimes, in this enlightened day, find folks preaching two kinds of grace. One kind saves, the other would, if you would.

My future, as well as the future of the church of Jesus Christ is dependent on saving grace.

There are two kinds of looking to the future. One is begging God to lead us and show us the way; the other is a dead traditional belief in the past, resting (not in his love (Zeph. 3:17), but) in laurels of long ago, pointing with pride to this man or that man or the other. What are we looking to for deliverance? Is our hope in God that raises the dead? Or is it in the name of yesterday's leaders? I would feel indeed sorry for the man that is not worried about present conditions among the Old School Baptists, but as bad as his condition would be, it is not as bad as it would be if I got to the place that I believed that about face was all that was needed to remedy the situation. How full of unbelief I am when I say one that has wandered away is able to find the way back. If the future of the church has depended on that in the past we are singing the wrong song, and we are preaching the wrong doctrine, and it would be becoming in us to change accordingly. If I did not know the way any better than to deviate from it, and my works were not the kind that keeps me, I feel mighty poorly about me getting to a former position. Lack of wisdom will not improve one's perception of the right way as we travel along further away; then I do not see how to get back. Lack of power to stay in the right way will not improve as I remain without it; then I do not see how that I can return, seeing that I am weak in both wisdom and power.

But, dear brethren, there is something much better than all of this, for, if you have been on a prodigal road, you learned that all this is a mess of husks. This kind of doctrine (if you will, God will) was placed on our brethren many times in the past. It is a galling doctrine and the church has not come to where it is by trusting in it. Grace and the in-wrought righteousness of Jesus Christ is a balm for the poor and needy. Blessed are the poor in

spirit, for their's is the kingdom of heaven (Matt. 5:3). It was given to the poor, and the poor we always have them with us (Matt. 26:11), thus as long as we have them with us they will have the kingdom of heaven. It used to be the pleasure of our heavenly Father to give the kingdom to the little flock, which is as poor as it is little. If he gave this kingdom to the poor, since when has it become their's by their wisdom, ability, riches of the flesh?

The poor own this kingdom. It is a rich kingdom, and they are joint heirs with the King of it. The subjects of this kingdom are brought into its pleasant borders by the quickening power of God's Spirit. Being begotten again to an inheritance that is beyond this life, they are not left to shift for themselves, but are kept ready for that which is to come. Let me state here that if I am not deceived, my being kept ready is just as sure as the inheritance is safe in its laid up place (Psa. 31:19; Col. 1:5; 2 Tim. 4:8). I do not see any way for enemies, inwardly or outwardly, to get into that sacred abode and destroy that inheritance. He who called me, as I humbly hope, out of darkness into the marvelous light of the Son of God, has promised to never cast out, never leave, not to leave comfortless.

In the days of Gideon a small remnant was saved. This salvation was of the Lord. In the days of Daniel a small remnant was saved. This salvation was of the Lord. In the days of Elijah a remnant according to election was saved. This salvation was of the Lord. In the apostle's day there was, at the precise time of which he spoke, a remnant according to the election of grace and they were saved by grace. If we are preaching what Paul preached, we, as boldly as he ever said it, are preaching salvation by grace for the fiery trials ahead, and, since I believe that when the Lord comes the second time without sin unto salvation that he will find faith in the earth, I feel just as sure as God is on his throne that those faith-

ful people will be saying then, That there is a remnant today according to the election of grace.

This church was alright when I came to it. I am not condoning the evil among us; I will rebuke and reprove, exhort and admonish as long as I find it in my people. I will thank God for this church as long as breath is in this body, just like Paul did the Corinthians, even though I find in the body things that ought not to be there just like he did there. That little church is still alive down in Alabama that gave me my first taste of heaven below in a church capacity. As I have said, she was alright then, and as I have many times since then sat in her midst, sharing her joys and sorrows, I feel today that she is still faithfully keeping house for the Lord. Her membership has rose and fell over the years, but I am sure that when it was the least in numbers that God was taking care of her then; that every blessing belonged to those members as much as when the membership was larger. Now that I am a member in Ebenezer Church, in Baltimore, I feel that I can thank God for her, as I can thank him for past blessings down in Alabama. The two churches will survive as long as it is the will of our Father. They will be in a sad way when Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or some weakling like the writer, has to back track and get them on the right road. But how happy and contented is that church, at home, abroad, on the land, on the sea, in times of sorrow, in times of weal or woe, in times of thanksgiving, in times of brotherly love and affections is blessed to sing

"The Lord has promised good to me,
His word my hope secures;
He will my shield and portion be
As long as life endures."

for ere long we shall sing the song of triumph in yonder's world and shall render all praise and honor and glory to the Captain of our salvation, past, present and for all time to come.

W. D. G.

158 East 17th Street,
Hialeah, Fla.

Dear Editors:

My subscription expires in February, so am enclosing renewal for another year. It is the only paper I have found which truly adheres to that doctrine once delivered to the saints, which I find so precious to my soul. I have enjoyed many hours reading and re-reading my copies over the past year, and have shared them with other believers of like faith.

My health hasn't been too good the past year, but the Lord sustains me and keeps me by his power. How comforting it is to know that, "All things work together for good to them that love the Lord; to them who are called according to his purpose."

I hope this New Year will be a good one in both spiritual and natural blessings for all you brethren of the *Signs of the Times*.

A sister in hope,
Mrs. Chas. M. Hartman

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

MATTHEW XIII. 33; LUKE XIII. 21

Brother Beebe: — Please give your views on the parable of the leaven hid in three measures of meal. What are the three measures? Why not four, or six?

Yours in hope of eternal life,
W. A. Watson
Van Buren, Ohio
March 23, 1879

REPLY

Our views on the same parable have also been solicited by an inquirer after truth at New Lexington, Ohio.

When the disciples asked Jesus concerning the parables in which he so frequently spake to the people, "he said, Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God, but to others in parables; that seeing, they might not see, and hearing, they might not understand." — Luke viii. 10. From this ex-

planation we learn not only the sovereignty of God, in hiding the mysteries of the kingdom of God from the wise and prudent of this world, but also that a knowledge of them is a special gift of God. No man by the exercise of his mental powers or deep researches can possibly attain a knowledge of spiritual things. No man can see the kingdom of God except he be born again; it is just as impossible as for a man to see the things of this world without first being born of the flesh. After our natural birth of the flesh, we required the gift of light and instruction to develop the mental powers with which we were endued by the Creator, to enable us to understand the mysteries of the natural world. So also, those who are born again, of incorruptible seed, are dependent on the teaching of the Holy Spirit to reveal to their faith the deep mysteries which God has hidden from all who are not born of the Spirit. Hence we are expressly told in the Scriptures, that even "The preaching of the cross is to them that perish, foolishness; but unto us which are saved, it is the power of God. For it is written, I will destroy the wisdom of the wise, and will bring to nothing the understanding of the prudent." "For ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called: but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are; that no flesh should glory in his presence. 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 Cor. i. 18, 19, 26-31.

The total ignorance of the mysteries of the kingdom of God, which holds in chains of darkness all who are not born

and taught of God, however far they may have advanced in what the world regards as the science of theology, is not a condition which God had not power to avert if it had been his sovereign pleasure, for he hath hidden these things from them because so it seemed good in his sight; and our adorable Redeemer rejoiced in spirit, and thanked the Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because it was even so. — Luke x. 21.

Among the many parables, which for this cause were spoken by our Lord, we have the one now proposed for our consideration, in which the kingdom of God is likened unto leaven which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened.

The kingdom of God, here compared to leaven, we think is the kingdom as chosen of God in Christ as her spiritual Head, and as sanctified by God the Father, before the foundation of the world, preserved in Christ Jesus, and ultimately called with a holy calling according to God's own purpose and grace, which was given to the chosen subjects of it in Christ Jesus before the world began. Three elements, or constituent parts, are necessary to constitute a kingdom: a king, subjects, and laws. All these are found in Christ. He is expressly called God's King, whom he has set upon his holy hill of Zion. — Psalm ii. 6. All the spiritual subjects of this kingdom were chosen in him before the foundation of the world, (Eph. i. 4,) and the law of God was in his heart. — Psalm xl. 8. All the component elements of the kingdom of God were in Christ, as the Mediatorial Head of his body, the church, from everlasting; hence, Christ could say, "My kingdom is not of this world." It was prepared for the saints from the foundation of the world. — Matt. xxv. 34. It was appointed unto Christ by the Father, and unto the members of Christ by the Son. — Luke xxii. 29.

This kingdom of God, as a purely spiritual kingdom, was so embodied in Christ, that when he came in the flesh it was said to the Jews, "The kingdom

of God is come unto you." — Matt. xii. 28.

Without adducing further testimony to sustain our position, that the kingdom of God, as a spiritual kingdom, existed in Christ, as the Mediatorial Head of the church, from everlasting, in vital union with him as their head and life before any of the subjects of it had a fleshly existence in the earthly Adam, and before either Christ the Head or any of his spiritual members were made flesh, or had become partakers of flesh and blood, yea, before Adam's dust was fashioned into man, we will pass on to consider the strikingly appropriate similitude of the parable.

This spiritual kingdom was with Christ from the ancients of eternity, and was like leaven, designed of God to be put into three measures of meal, until all the meal should be leavened, or be by its assimilating power perfectly conformed to the nature and likeness of the original leaven. The apostle says of those who are the called according to the purpose of God, that "Whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first born among many brethren." — Rom. viii. 29.

As leaven has the power to diffuse itself into all the meal in which it is hidden, and by fermentation impart its nature to the meal, until the meal in which it is hidden itself becomes of the nature of leaven, so the life and immortality of the church of God, which was given her in Christ Jesus, as the seminal head and spiritual progenitor of all her members, with all spiritual blessings ever to be developed in the kingdom of God in time or in eternity, were treasured up and embodied in him before they were manifested in any of the fallen sons of men. In him all this fullness dwelt, and of his fullness all the vessels of his mercy are the happy recipients; and as the meal receives the leaven, and is subjected to its transforming power, so they receive Christ Jesus as

their resurrection and their spiritual, immortal and eternal life. As the power to leaven the meal is all contained in the original leaven, so all the power, to quicken and transform the redeemed people of God was and is embodied in our Lord Jesus Christ.

The three measures of meal, in the parable, we believe represent the chosen people of God, which are redeemed from all the kindreds of mankind by the blood of Christ. The definite measurement is according to the election of grace, and the three measures signify to us the definite and exact quantity redeemed of those who were of the three dispensations, which make up the fullness of the times, in the which all shall be called by grace, quickened by the Spirit, born of the incorruptible seed, and leavened and conformed to the likeness of him by whose power and grace they are made meet to participate in the inheritance of the saints in light.

The chosen and redeemed people of God, embracing all whom God has ordained to eternal life, are figuratively called the seed of Abraham; and if we are Christ's, then are we Abraham's seed, and heirs according to promise. This seed of Abraham Christ took on him when he was made flesh and dwelt among them; and as their spiritual life, he was hidden in them from the days of Abel, and he bear them, and carried them all the days of old. So, as the leaven in the parable was hidden in the meal, even so this mystery hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints, to whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles, which is Christ in you the hope of glory. — Col. i. 26, 27. As the power of the leaven is sure to conform all the meal in which it is hidden, so the spirit of life in Christ Jesus our Lord is beyond the possibility of failure sure to permeate all the chosen people of our God, and conform them to the likeness of the Son of God. 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.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe, September 15, 1879.)

OBITUARIES

MRS. MINNIE M. THOMAS

Mrs. Minnie M. Thomas died in Arlington, Virginia, March 31, 1961, at the age of ninety years and four months. She was born November 14, 1870, the daughter of the late Edwin and Jane Davis, of Loudon County, Virginia; and the widow of the late Milton E. Thomas. She is survived by two daughters, Mrs. Mary Alta Dewey, and Mrs. Ruth Harrington, of Arlington, Virginia; and one son, Robert W. Thomas, Grants Pass, Oregon; also by three grandchildren and three great grandchildren, and one sister, Mrs. Bessie Turner, Frederick, Maryland.

Sister Thomas united with the Frying Pan Old School Baptist Church, Fairfax County, Virginia, on Sunday, August 14, 1949, and was the last person baptized by Elder H. H. Lefferts. Sister Thomas had attended the meetings for many years before uniting with the church; and even at her advanced age, she loved to mingle with the brethren. Her daughters, Mrs. Dewey and Mrs. Harrington, were faithful in seeing that she got to her meetings, and to visiting in the homes of those whom she loved, and who loved her. They always saw that she lacked for nothing, and did everything possible for her comfort and pleasure.

Funeral services were conducted at the Ives Funeral Home, Arlington, Virginia, on April 3, 1961, by the writer, and interment was in the Arnon Cemetery, Fairfax County, Virginia. Sister Thomas was sound in the faith, trusting in nothing but the grace and mercy of her God, both in life and in death. She now awaits the glorious resurrection at the coming of her Saviour.

John D. Wood

BROTHER ALEX POLLARD

After a short illness, our dear brother passed away at the Western Hospital, Toronto, Ontario, December 22, 1960, in his 78th year. He was born in Dunwich Township, Elgin County, Ontario, the son of Levi Pollard and Margaret Campbell, and grandson of the late Elder William Pollard, who served the church in Canada for many years.

His wife, the former Katherine May McAlpine, predeceased him January 9, 1949. Two

sons, Clifford and Duncan, four grandchildren, two brothers and five sisters survive to mourn their loss. His body was laid to rest in the Prospect Cemetery, Toronto.

Brother Alex united with the church at the Lobo Quarterly Meeting, September, 1957 and was baptized at that time by the writer. For years he had shown great interest in our meetings, especially in Toronto. It was not long before the church saw the gift of deacon in him, and set him aside to that office, which he faithfully filled to the comfort and satisfaction of the church.

For years before he came to the church, we had much sweet spiritual intercourse with him. On one occasion, while his wife was very ill, he had to leave for his work before the nurse had arrived, and he was very anxious about her, but while journeying to his work, the words were given to him, "He shall give His angels charge over thee," and his fears were allayed. That evening the writer was holding meeting in Toronto, and to our brother's surprise, the text was, "He shall give His angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways." This was very confirming to both him and his pastor.

We sorrow because we shall see his face no more among us, but we believe he is forever with the Lord.

May our God reconcile us all to His holy and sovereign will in all things.

George Ruston

IN MEMORY OF SISTER NOLA DEAL

Sister Nola Deal departed this life March 17, 1961. Date of birth was November 1, 1870, making her stay with us 90 years, 4 months, 17 days.

In her young days she taught in our public schools. She united with Nazareth Church on Saturday before the second Sunday in December, 1906; was baptized by the late Elder S. J. Norris, and lived a faithful and devoted member the balance of her stay with us. Her nearest relatives were 5 nephews: P. C. Howell, D. D. Howell, Ben Harris and C. A. Harris of Tuscaloosa County, Judge Bruce Harris, of Pickens County; one niece, Mrs. Sidney Norris, of Northport, Alabama.

Although she had no family of her own, yet she had tender loving hands to care for her in her last days. No time or effort or money was spared in supplying the comforts of Aunt Tomy.

"By their fruits ye shall know them." It has been the privilege of the writer to know and live near Sister Deal during our entire life, and during this time we have never known or heard of her by word of deed saying or doing anything that would discredit or hurt

the feelings of anyone. She always had a kind and soft answer for all, and was very considerate of all, regardless of station in life. On one occasion there had been a misunderstanding in the neighborhood and the writer said to her: "You have never said anything either way that anyone can bring a charge against you." Her reply was, "No, but I have had many thoughts;" thus she acknowledged the weakness of the flesh. "For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die, but if ye through the spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live." (Romans 8:13) Again in Second Timothy 2:25, "In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging the truth." It seemed to the writer that she always had an abundance of grace, which kept her always at the feet of the brethren, and she spent this long life in labor and love, and that she could truly say with Paul, "I have labored more abundantly than you all, nevertheless not I but the grace of God that was with me," then it was by the grace of God that Paul labored; and so God in his infinite wisdom gives each one grace that He sees he stands in need of that enables him to fulfill the office it was foreordained that he should, to the praise and glory of His name.

We would say to the loved ones that we feel your loss is her eternal gain, and that when she wakes in His likeness she shall be satisfied. So let us sing,

"I would not live always — no, welcome the tomb;
Since Jesus hath lain there, I dread not its gloom.
There sweet be my rest till he bid me arise,
To hail Him in triumph descending the skies.
Who, who would live always, away from his God,
Away from yon heaven, that blissful abode,
Where the rivers of pleasure flow o'er bright plains
And the moontide of glory eternally reigns."

The funeral services were conducted by the writer.

(Elder) W. L. Norris

LEAH CATHERINE LAWS

Leah Catherine Laws was born October 2, 1864, and died February 11, 1961, aged 96 years and 4 months. She was the daughter of George W. and Sarah Ann Jarmon of Berlin, Md., one of nine children.

She was married January 2, 1884, to James H. Laws in the Indiantown Old School Baptist Church at Powellville, Md. Two years later she and her husband were baptized by Elder T. M. Poulson, and became members of the Indiantown Church, which they attended reg-

ularly for 63 years, until his death in 1947.

Three of their children died in infancy and eight survive: Mrs. Irene Toadvine, Mrs. Augusta Powell, Mrs. Jacob M. Adkins, Mrs. Margaret L. Walker and Ruth Laws, also Homer, Ralph and Calvin. She also left eight grandchildren and ten great grandchildren. While she was a devoted mother, her greatest pleasure was her church. She never missed an opportunity to attend services. She especially enjoyed entertaining Old School Baptist people and loved the yearly meetings.

During the last few years of her life, her eyesight failed completely, but her hearing remained perfect and she was able to enjoy conversation with her pastor and her friends. Her funeral was preached by Elder Arthur Warren, her pastor, and she was laid to rest beside her husband in the Laws' family burying ground.

"There is a land of pure delight
Where saints immortal reign.
Eternal day excludes the night
And pleasures banish pain.

There everlasting spring abides
And never-withering flowers;
Death like a narrow sea divides
That heavenly land from ours."

Written by her daughter,
Margaret Laws Walker

ROBERT L. DALTON

Robert L. Dalton was born May 1, 1881; and departed this life November 29, 1960; making his stay here 79 years, 7 months, and 28 days. He united in marriage to Madie G. Holley in 1909, who preceded him in death on June 17, 1957. To this union six children were born, all of whom survive: Harry L., Wade M., Marvin, Dempsey, Mrs. Beulah Washburn, Spray, N. C.; and Mrs. Dorothy Davidson, Raleigh, N. C.

Brother Dalton united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Dan River April 24, 1937, and was a faithful and lovely brother there until death.

Funeral services were conducted at Dan River Church by his pastor, Elder D. V. Spangler, and Mr. R. F. Hardy, of Stokesland; after which he was laid to rest in the church cemetery, to await the glorious appearing of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ and the morning of the resurrection.

It can truly be said of Brother Dalton that he lived his more than seventy-nine years to the fullest; and, with Father Abraham, he believed God and it was accounted unto him for righteousness; for he claimed no righteousness of his own. His last days were spent in the home of his son Harry, of Stokesville, Virginia.

Dear bereaved ones, I think he is much better off than we who are still subject to disease, pain, and death. He is beyond all suffering and trouble, because the evidence shows that he believed in the Lord and had confidence in his mercy. May God bless you to believe in that God he honored and praised while he lived. Yours in hope and through grace.

Coley S. Stroder

MRS. MATILDA SHREVE ALLEN

Mrs. Matilda Shreve Allen, born January 1872, died March 1961. She was the youngest child of Elder Robert Shreve's fourth wife, Sallie Cox. Grandfather's four wives begat him twenty-three children.

Aunt Till, as she was known, married Thomas Allen when she was around forty years old. She had no children of her own, but some faithful stepchildren of Uncle Tom's first wife. She, like Uncle Billie her half brother, never joined the Militant Church, but were true believers in Salvation by the Grace of God. Their general life of deportment was in keeping with the faith of God's elect, because, they proved their faith by their works.

Her body was laid to rest at Wolf Island Churchyard, where she attended during her whole life. Services were conducted by Elder Hayward Wray, her nephew, and Elder Roy Smith.

This testimony furnished by request.

John R. Smith, Nephew

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

WHEREAS, It has been the will of our heavenly Father to remove from this earth our beloved brother, J. M. Alderman, who died at Woodard, Oklahoma, December 4, 1960; and whose funeral service was held in Tims Chapel of Memories, Altus, Oklahoma, conducted by Elder G. H. Crain.

Brother Alderman was born in Mississippi, August 23, 1879, and moved to Jackson County in 1920. He united with the Little Flock Church, Altus, Oklahoma, by experience and baptism April 7, 1923, and was baptized by Elder W. M. Green. He was a faithful member and was always in his place at church as long as he was able to come.

He is survived by two daughters: Mrs. Arthur Clark, and Mrs. Delbert Neel, of Altus; and two sons: Leonard, of Altus, and J. F., of Phoenix, Arizona; and by eleven grandchildren and two great grandchildren.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That we deeply sympathize with the family; and

that a copy of this resolution be made a part of our church records, and a copy be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Done by order of the church.

Elder C. M. Haygood, Pastor
Mrs. Nina H. Stallings, Clerk

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

WHEREAS, It pleased our Heavenly Father by His divine wisdom to remove from us by death, our beloved sister, Lula A. Foster, March 28, 1961.

WHEREAS, Bush Arbor Church bows in humble submission to a just and wise God, knowing He is righteous in all of His ways; our hearts are saddened by our loss.

She was born in Caswell County, N. C., May 6, 1870, and died March 28, 1961. She was the oldest member at Bush Arbor Church and would have been ninety-one (91) years old on May 6, had she lived.

She was married January 10, 1892, to John L. Foster. To this union were born six children, one deceased, leaving two girls, three boys, twenty - two grandchildren, thirty - two great grandchildren, two great great grandchildren, several nieces and nephews to mourn her loss. Her husband died when their children were small and she was a widow for fifty-seven years; however, by the Grace of God she was blessed to rear her children. The Lord blessed her to unite with the church at the age of thirty-three, and He also led her in a wonderful long life, being faithful and loyal to her church as long as she was able to fill her seat.

She frequently expressed her love for the church and how good the Lord had been to her. To know her was to love her. May God in His love and mercy reconcile her dear children and all that mourn her loss. I feel that our loss is her gain. We sorrow not even as others, 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.

Her funeral was conducted at Bush Arbor Meeting House, March 30, 1961, by her beloved pastor Elder W. C. King, assisted by Elder W. J. Berry. Her body was laid to rest in the Church Cemetery beneath a beautiful mound of flowers.

BE IT RESOLVED, That a copy of this resolution be placed on the church record, a copy given to the bereaved family, and a copy sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication. Written by one who loved her, Alice R. Smith, her niece. Done by order of the Church in May Conference 1961.

(Elder) W. C. King, Moderator
Earl S. Rudd, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 129

DANVILLE, VA., SEPTEMBER, 1961

NO. 9

EXPERIENCE

Mesilla Park, New Mexico

Dear Elder Wood:

With much fear and weakness I attempt to write you again, knowing by experience that in me, that is in my flesh, dwells no good thing; and if one of His humble poor, the least of all. But what a great blessing to be given a small hope that we might be counted one of the redeemed: Redeemed by the death, burial, and resurrection of the Son of God; and given eternal life wrought alone by him when there was none to help.

I have not heard from you since I wrote you, but I feel like the article that was in the **Signs of the Times** for October, was for me as well as the rest of the family of God. I know that you do not have the time to write personally to every one to whom you would like. I take pleasure in thanking all of the Editors of the **Signs** for their untiring efforts in preparing the **Signs**, which means so much to the household of God. Many of the articles I read and re-read many times, and am so thankful for its coming to me, since it is almost all the contact I have with the brethren. I seldom attend church more than once a year, (sometimes two), as I live eight hundred miles from my home church. In all of New Mexico there isn't an Old Baptist Church — we have some who claim the name, but do not adhere to the doctrine we believe.

I will attempt to relate to you of my life's history and background, including some of my experiences: which I don't remember ever doing before. I was born in the Indian Territory, (which is now Oklahoma), of very poor parents, and

grew up on a farm. I had three sisters, two older than myself. In a few months I will be sixty-two years old. My father was a Primitive Baptist preacher as far back as I can remember; and my mother was a Missionary Baptist. I grew up the only son working in the fields with the rest of the family. My father was a very clean, honest man, studying the Scriptures the most of his spare time.

My parents took me to church regularly as they went, but I had no interest in the meetings or what they had to say. However, at an early age, (around ten or twelve), my life and future began to bother me. I had such a feeling of condemnation; and no hope if I should die. I had a feeling of unworthiness to such an extent that I would consider my sisters, and wish that I was, even in a small way, as good as I saw them. I remained in this condition through my teen age; and for eight or ten years when I would lie down at night, and many times during the day, I would pray in my way; (and it is no different at this time many years later), however without avail or relief, though my pillow would be wet with tears. I received no relief from wandering in that desolate wilderness, not knowing what awaited me. When I look back on those years without any hope, how wonderful it would have been for me if I could have had just one glimpse of that New Jerusalem, which is the mother of us all; but all was darkness and gloom at that time.

During those years, my parents moved to Texas, then back to Oklahoma; my father still finding time to preach, but I could not hear him. When I was eighteen or nineteen, I would steal away upstairs where my father kept his **Signs of the Times**, and I would read them;

and tears would flow from my eyes, because it seemed to me that those writers were talking to me, and telling me my own story. Even then I was without hope, and kept my thoughts to myself, not wanting anyone to know that I was reading the **Signs**. When my father would have visiting brethren, and they would sit up at night and talk on the Scriptures, I would sit quite away from them, listening, but would conduct myself in a way that they would not know I was interested.

In my nineteenth year I married, and worked a part of my father's farm. I was having my same troubles seemingly without end. During this period there were revivals in the community, and my wife and I attended the Missionary Baptists one night; and when they called for mourners, I went up and knelt down at the bench to have them pray for me. During all the past years I was not able to find any relief; and I had heard some say that this was the way they got saved, so I thought I would try it. An old lady, whom I had known for a long time, came by to talk to me. The things she was telling me to do, I had done many times without avail; and her words were mockery in my ears. From that time on I knew that what she had said to me was no good, and I had no desire to return. Yet I was not improved, and felt that my condemnation was just, and believed that destruction awaited me.

In the Fall of 1920, I was picking cotton one afternoon, and was studying and pondering all of these things in my mind. I had heard my father speak of a very able Old Baptist preacher, and had made the statement that he was one of the ablest ministers among the Old Baptists; and, without knowing I was doing it, I was asking in my weak way that I might have an opportunity to hear him talk along the lines I had heard other Old Baptists speak. From where I was working I had to pass my father's home; and when I did, I saw a car and knew that he had company. So I stopped; and found that Elder W. P. Snider was going

to spend the night with him. After my wife and I had eaten our dinner, we walked down to his home; and I listened to both of them talk. Later he moved on a part of my father's farm, and farmed it. About this time, I went to hear my father preach one Sunday, (as I had all my life), but I had never heard him preach before that day. He used the Scripture where Christ came to the Gadarene, and how the Gadarene had been bound with new fetters, and that he dwelt among the tombs, or the dead; and no man was able to tame him. But when Christ spoke to him, he was clothed and in his right mind; and sat at the Master's feet. That was the first time I ever heard, if I am not deceived. Even after that I did not want any one to know that I was interested in that beautiful way. Following that Sunday, I went regularly to hear my Father and Brother Snider preach; and what wonderful news from a far country!

During those days everything spoke forth His handiwork; and how glorious it was to be fed from above on those glorious truths. What wonderful hours I then enjoyed! yet I found an aching void the world could never fill. As I remember what wonderful love and fellowship prevailed with our little church, (however at this time I had not offered to the church), many doubts and fears began to step in my way, such as these: Do I love the brethren? Do I believe because my father is an Old Baptist? Is it truly the church, or am I deceived?

About this time I had begun to read day and night, or all the spare time I had; and as I would read the tears would run down my face, as I was led, as I hope, into the truths as we believe them. Prior to this time, without knowing it, I believed what the world believes; as does every heaven-born child of God before he is given a spiritual understanding. During these days I would ponder all these things in my mind, knowing that, if I was not deceived, I loved those brethren more than life itself. But, feeling as I did, I could not ask a home among them: I knew I

was nothing, and less than nothing, and altogether vanity. How could I ask for a home! I would ponder these things in my heart while in the fields plowing; and would have chapters and verses of Scriptures come to me, and when I would return home, I would turn to the Bible and read those passages, which were in accordance to what was bothering me. All the time I felt I was going to have to offer to the church, knowing that they would not receive one as I knew myself to be. Yet when the time came, I could no more resist than anything; so I went before the church and told them some of my travels, feeling in my heart they would reject me. Yet I had to do it anyway; and knew that if they did turn me away, it was just and right; but I would still love them. But, to my surprise, they accepted me.

The next thing was to be baptized, which I had a desire to fulfill. One thing I will always remember: As I walked from the water, the pastor (Father) said to me, (as they all called me), Brother Jim, I think I know how you feel. Fulfilling this obligation gave me a feeling of love and contentment that no words of mine have ever been able to convey to anyone. From then on for a few years, things went along with love and fellowship prevailing towards each other. What peaceful hours I then enjoyed! until one day I was made to believe that it was my lot that I would have to stand before my brethren and declare the wonderful works of God. Things went along as usual, only my brethren would speak to me in regard to doing my duty. I believe, if I am not deceived, I know in a measure what was meant when the Apostle Paul was told how great things he would suffer for His name's sake. Also, that it was a fearful thing to fall into the hands of a living God.

In 1937, I sold all I had, and moved to this state, New Mexico; and for fifteen years I did not hear a sermon preached, or read the **Signs**. But for some reason not known to me, I had a great desire to hear preaching; and I enquired and

found that they were having a May meeting at Altus, Oklahoma. My wife and I drove the 500 miles; and when we got there and went in and sat down, a brother, Oren Parsons, whom I had never met, shook my hand and said, "I know you. I read an article you wrote in the **Signs**." This was without me telling who I was. Then in a few minutes another man came along and sat down by me, but we did not speak. In a short time, Brother W. W. Taylor, who was in the stand, said, "Come on up, Brother Griffin." This was Brother Griffin who lived at that time in Alabama.

Have you ever been fed when you were real hungry? If you have, you can understand in a measure just how beautiful that season was to me. It seemed there was a halo surrounding Brother Griffin while he spoke. Before or since I have never heard such wonderful words fall from anyone's lips.

When the meeting was over, on our return I was still being fed, and was lifted up above this world. That has been twelve or thirteen years ago, and since that time I have traveled from New Mexico to North Carolina, to Louisiana, California, Washington, Arkansas, and Oklahoma. Yet at this time I do not feel worthy to speak His name, and do not know what awaits me. During all the fifteen years I spoke of not hearing preaching, I did not cease to believe what I do now, and my mind had the same travel in being led into the mysteries of God, if not deceived. My prayer is continually that I might be given wisdom to understand the truth taught in the Scriptures: I am made to say with the Apostle, "Lord help my unbelief."

I would like to say to you: What a blessing to be led into the mysteries of our God. If I am one at all, I am the least among you. My fellowship is for sinners saved by the grace of God. I have no fellowship for those who can direct their own footsteps, and live perfectly in the natural man. At this time I still do not know what my calling is, if any at all.

Brother Wood, when I began I had no idea I would tell you all the things I have. I still have a small hope, and am looking for that City whose maker and builder is God. I feel so lame and not able to stand alone.

Yours in hope,
James A. Bell

BRIEF HISTORY OF
ROCK SPRINGS OLD SCHOOL
BAPTIST CHURCH OF CHRIST
LANCASTER COUNTY,
PENNSYLVANIA

(Originally known as the branch of London Tract Church at Little Britain.)

Prepared by Charles B. Osborne,
Church Clerk

RECORDED EVENTS from 1766 to 1806 leading to the establishing of the branch of the church at Little Britain:

In the year 1766, June 12th, David Jenkins purchased and removed to a Tract of Land convenient to a place by the name of the Rock Springs, in Little Britain Township, Lancaster County, and himself with Martha his wife, being members of the Church at Vincent, were visited, first, by the Rev. Thomas Davis, who preached, forenoon and afternoon, to a large audience, in the wood, where about 30 rod from the dwelling house stood three trees in a triangular form; i. e., one Spanish oak in the back of two white oaks in front, in which Mr. Jenkins built a complete pulpit, nature seeming to have formed them for that purpose.

From that time, till the commencement of the American Revolution, they were visited, occasionally, by the following ministering brethren: The Rev. Missieurs Thomas Davis, John Davis, Benjamin Miller, Isaac Still, Richard Majors, John Sutton, Joseph Powel, and James Sutton.

In the year 1771, Mrs. Sarah Mathers, a member of the Church at Great Valley, removed from thence to Little

Britain — the war put an end to any more visits of that nature; and before the conclusion thereof was no occasion for any, on their account, for the Lord removed them from that place to a world unknown.

But their families, since that time, have been visited occasionally, first by the Rev. Able Griffith, after that by the Rev. Joshua Vaughn. In November, 1803, by request of Mr. Thomas Davis, Deacon of the Church of Brandywine, and Rachel his wife, daughter of said David Jenkins, the Rev. Jethro Johnson visited the remainder of the families at Little Britain, and preached at the house of his son, Mr. Nathaniel Jenkins, and at Mr. Low's, whose wife Martha is a daughter of said David Jenkins.

From a number of requests made by the people of that place to said Johnson, he answered one made by Mr. John Hannah in March, 1806, when he spent the chief part of a week in that place, preaching from house to house, at which time several persons appeared to be seriously impressed and made application for baptism, by a letter from Mr. Nathaniel Jenkins, addressed to the Rev. Jethro Johnson, Pastor of the Church at London Tract; wherein he requested him to come over to Little Britain and baptized several persons in that neighborhood, and constituted them into a Branch of the London Tract Church: which being laid before said Church at their preparatory meeting, the following Brethren were appointed a Committee to visit them upon the occasion: Rev. Jethro Johnson, John Kugler, Deacon, Dr. David Eaton, Richard Kennedy, James Gerry, and Reuben Johnson, which they did, together with a number more of the members of said Church; and accompanied by the Rev. Gideon Ferrell, Pastor of the Church at Welsh Tract, and two of his members, met at the house of said Nathaniel Jenkins, on Saturday, the 19th of April, 1806, when Rev. Mr. Ferrell preached from Acts 26th and 31st, after which the Rev. Jethro Johnson proceeded to examine the following candidates: Na-

thaniel Jenkins, Rebecca Jenkins, Sarah Jenkins, Robert Hannum, Martha Low, Martha Hannah, and Hannah Jenkins, who giving a satisfactory account of the dealings of God with their souls were approved of by the brethren, and on the day following, Mr. Ferrell preached from Psalms 4th and 3rd first clause; after which they repaired to Octorara and Mr. Johnson baptized the above candidates; then returning to the house after Mr. Ferrell gave the charge, Mr. Johnson laid on hands with prayer, gave the right hand of fellowship, set them apart as a Branch of the Church, and administered the Lord's Supper to them.

DOCTRINES

The Doctrines we hold are these that follow:

We hold the Important Doctrines of three Persons, equal in the Godhead — Eternal and Personal Election according to the foreknowledge of God, and particular Redemption by the Blood of Christ — Effectual Calling by Grace, to a life of Holiness — Justification through the Imputed Righteousness of Christ — Perseverance of the Saints, in Grace, to the End, and Resurrection of the Dead, the Judgment to come, etc. — In a word, we hold to the Baptist Confession of Faith, put forth in London, and adopted by the Baptist Association met at Philadelphia, Sept. 25th, A. D., 1742. — We hold Believer's Baptism by Immersion only, and the laying on of Hands on those Baptized — And we believe it to be the Duty of persons regularly Baptized to become members of a Gospel Church, and be partakers of the Lord's Supper according to the Command of our Lord.

COVENANT

And we do, In the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, voluntarily and freely give ourselves up to the Lord, and to one another, according to His Word, to be one Body under one Head, jointly to exist and act by the Bonds and Rules of the Gospel, etc., etc.

CHURCH ARTICLES

Articles:

1st. We do promise, by the Lord's assistance, to keep our places in His House, and not forsake the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is, Hebr. 10th-25th, but shall attend at public Service, and all other meetings that this Branch of the Church may appoint, etc.

2nd. That we pay strict attention to the discipline and good order of the Church, and take the Scripture of God for our directions, etc.

3rd. That we will not divulge any of the secrets of the Church to the world, etc., for we have a Command, from the Lord, not to give that which is holy unto Dogs, neither cast ye your Pearls before Swine, etc., because there are Some Things transacted in the Church that the revealing of them to the World would be of no utility.

4th. That we will contribute to the necessities of the Church according to our abilities. The demands for contributions in the Church might be rendered threefold: — 1st. — For the Table of the Lord; 2nd. — For the Ministers of the Word; 3rd. — For the poor of the Flock, etc.

5th. We resolve that a Church Book shall be kept and that a Clerk, chosen from among the Brethren, be appointed to take care of the same, and to act as a Recorder, at such times as it may be most convenient for him to record the same. And business shall be carried on every Seventh day before the Communion. If the Church give a Dismission for any Member, let it be recorded in the Book, with the name of the Person, and date of the month and year. And if the Church receive any Member, from another Church, let his name and letter be recorded in the Book that it may be referred to in future if called for, etc.

6th. And we further resolve that these Articles shall be read in the Church at least four times in the year. And the Members that shall be received, from time to time, shall enter under the same Articles, and let them be read on their admission to the Church.

And thus we ratify our Church Covenant with one another, praying that the Great Shepherd of His Sheep through the Blood of the Everlasting Covenant may bless us with all Spiritual Blessings in heavenly places and cause us to grow in Grace and in the Knowledge of Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.

(Note by the Church Clerk. The capitalization and punctuation of the foregoing Early History, Doctrines, Covenant and Church Articles follow closely the original record.)

LATER HISTORICAL NOTES

The meeting, in the month of April, 1956, at Rock Springs, marked the one hundred-fiftieth year of the founding of the church. Rock Springs was organized as a branch of the Church at Little Britain, on April 19th and 20th, 1806, the mother church being the London Tract Church, near Stricklersville, Chester County.

This branch of the Church was sep-

arated and set apart from the mother church on August 30, 1812.

The ministers who have served the Rock Springs Church down through the years are as follows: Jethro Johnson, who served during the period that the local church was a branch of the church at London Tract, slightly over six years; Charles Moor, about three years; Thomas Poteet, a little less than five years; Thomas Barton, over forty-four years; William Grafton, thirty-nine years; John G. Eubanks, slightly less than sixteen years; Douglas L. Topping, over nineteen years; and John D. Wood, present pastor, over twelve years.

Some of these same ministers, and other ministers, being licentiates or ordained Elders, have filled the pulpit as supply during the total of about eleven years the church did not have a regular pastor.

The Rock Springs Meetinghouse is located in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania, directly on Highway Route 222, and near the Maryland-Pennsylvania state line — the historical Mason and Dixon Line.

Nearby is a geological freak known as the Rock of Seven Springs, or Rock Springs, the waters of which are said to flow from seven different openings in a single rock. Legend has it that the Indians believed the water from each of the rock's seven crevices cured a different ailment. A village, a school, a hotel, and the church derived their names from these rock springs.

The Church was constituted with seven original members. Incidentally, one hundred and fifty years later the membership of ten was composed of seven different surnames.

The time of monthly meetings is on first Sundays, at 10:30 o'clock.

Charles B. Osborne, Clerk
John D. Wood, Pastor

QUOTATION FROM COUNTY HISTORY

"Baptist Church — Next comes the

Baptist Church (Old School) called "Rock Springs," just above the Maryland line. It was organized in 1808, (the year was 1806 — Clerk) and has pursued the even tenor of its way since that time. The congregation is comparatively small, but earnest and devoted. In adherence to the principals they profess they exhibit as much firmness as those of the larger denominations, perhaps more.

— John C. Lewis, Esq.
In *History of Lancaster County, Pa., 1883*"

(NOTE: The use of the appellation "Reverend" had become quite common even among Baptists during the period of the above early history leading to the organization of Rock Springs Church. This was due to the new schemes which were promoted among them. The term was never used by the Old School after the division in 1832. Benedict, the Missionary Baptist Historian, said that the term "Elder", as a proper distinction for Baptist ministers, from time immemorial was the usual title for them. — J. D. W.)

121 N. Hutchins St., Apt. B
Lodi, California

Dear Editors:

No doubt you received my change of address to late in December, as I did not receive the January Signs; but I have received the February issue at the new address.

Since moving, I have been going to one of the nearer churches with members of the church; and I feel grateful to the dear Lord for the sweet benefits to me. My home church is still miles from me, as the arm of the church was disbanded near here on account of illness and injuries our pastor suffered. I missed the meetings so much. Now, since moving, I am nearer this place of meeting, and hope to go more and more. I also long to go to my church meetings: my health is not good, and I am nearing seventy-one years. I love to go to church and sit under the shadow of His wing,

and forgot about self; and feast on the gospel preached in its fullness.

I have been a member of the church nearly forty-nine years, and my love for it has never changed, though I have been situated so far away I couldn't get to meetings; sometimes a few years would go by before I would be blessed to go and meet the dear members. I read a lot of good articles in my papers, and I read the Bible, but to meet with the church is sweet.

May the Lord's blessings be with all. From one hoping and trusting in the Lord.

Mrs. Mabel Lindsey

EXPERIENCE

Box 45,
Dry Fork, Virginia

Dear Brethren in Christ:

For a long time I have had a mind to write some of what I hope to be the dealings of the Lord with me. Whether the mind to write is of the flesh or of the Spirit, I know not.

When quite young I had many thoughts of death and eternity; and I thought that when I got older, I would join some church and live a Christian, thinking that was all I would have to do. I didn't feel to be a bad sinner, but that I was as good as many, and better than some. When about twenty years old, a great fear came over me, and darkness seemed to cover everything. I thought the world was coming to an end, and I was lost. The devil seemed to be near me, ready to snatch me to everlasting torment; and I justly deserved it.

I saw then what a vile sinner I was, and began to beg for the Lord to have mercy on my soul, or I would perish; for I was sinking down in an horrible pit. I would read the Bible, but that would condemn me; and I could find no comfort. I would go to different meetings, and sometimes when they would

ask if any one wanted to be prayed for, to raise their hand. I felt that if any one needed prayer it was surely me; and I did raise my hand. But still there was no comfort for me. Night and day my prayer was for the Lord to have mercy on my poor soul; though my words seemed to fall to the ground not heard, for I was too vile a sinner to call on a just and righteous God, though that was all I could do. Many a night I would cry until my pillow was so wet I would turn it over. Sometimes I would go to the old smoke-house, where there was a place dug in the ground which we had used to keep things cool in the summer, and there I would drop in as low as I could get, begging for mercy. I did not want anyone to know what a sinner I was.

My husband was a believer in the Primitive Baptists, and was a subscriber to the *Spiritual Law Counsel*. I would read it, and liked to read the experiences, but the other writings were sealed to me. I would try to ask the Lord to show me the right church, thinking maybe I would join some church, and that this great trouble would leave me. One Sunday evening, while all were gone and I was alone, and in so much trouble, I knelt by a chair and asked the Lord to have mercy on my soul, and lift me out of this horrible pit. I raised up, and took this Primitive Baptist paper from the shelf, and opened it; and there was the church in Spirit in the writing. At once my burden was gone, and I was singing:

"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 had heard that song many times, though I never thought what it meant. Now I had experienced it. I walked out into the yard, and everything seemed to be in praise to the Lord; and the great darkness was gone, and the sun was shining so brightly I could not praise

Him enough. For this was the Saviour that had lifted me from the awful pit. Then I greatly desired to hear the Primitive Baptists preach; and did go soon afterwards to Mt. Springs to a baptizing and to the meeting. I took a seat near the back, hoping no one would notice me. Elder N. T. Oaks, the Pastor, arose and began to speak; his text being, Jeremiah 20:9. It seemed as if he knew my feelings, and could tell them to me. This struck me so that I tried to shake it off, and tried to get my mind on something else. Nevertheless, the words were as fire shut up in my bones. After that I desired the more to go and hear the wonderful gospel, the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believes.

I desired no one to know I was interested, but could not hide the tears. Oh, if I could just hear, and they not see me! I was not fit to be with such good people, though I continued to go whenever and wherever I could hear them. It was all my joy. Twice I dreamed of being baptized, and was so happy, I would awake praising God. At last I could not stay away any longer, and asked for a home with them; and was received the third Sunday in September, 1919, and was baptized the next month.

Then I thought my troubles were all over, I was so happy; and for a long time I would go singing and praising His great and holy name. But I have been brought many times since into the valley, and almost ready to give up, saying maybe I am deceived, and am deceiving others. I have been made to beg for the return of the joys of salvation; and have felt a few times that my prayers were answered, and joy filled my soul to overflowing.

"My God, the Spring of all my joys,
The life of my delights,
The glory of my brightest days,
And comforts of my nights."

"Through many dangers, toils and snares
I have already come;
'Tis grace has brought me safe thus far,
And grace will lead me home."

If I could be just half as good as my brothers and sisters of this precious faith are, maybe I would not have so many doubts and fears. I feel I could write on and on, for the half could never be told. I have no kindred in the flesh to talk my feelings to, for none of them believes as I do.

I would not exchange my hope for all the world, if I could; although sometimes it seems almost gone. Dear kindred in Spirit, is this so with you?

I hope I am your sister in Christ,
Elizabeth Holley

3606 36th Street,
Nitro, W. Va.

Dear Brethren:

Enclosed find \$3.00 for the dear old *Signs* for another year. I enjoy reading the letters, which give me so much comfort when I feel so low. I love to read the experiences of grace from the children of God. They make me feel that they have traveled the road I traveled for six years; then, at last, He spoke peace to me, when I had so much doubt.

I still have many doubts, but I believe His guiding hand leads and directs our steps; and I have a blessed hope in Christ Jesus that sustains me when I feel so low. I am a member of Hopewell Primitive Baptist Church.

Yours in hope,
Anna L. Fowler

ADMONITION

"Take heed unto thyself, and unto the doctrine; continue in them: for in doing this thou shalt both save thyself, and them that hear thee." (1 Timothy 4:6)

This is an exhortation written to Timothy, the preacher, by Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ. Timothy was an ordained preacher, chosen and set apart by God, to comfort and feed his little ones, while they sojourn in this world of sorrow. Since preachers this day and

time have the same calling, to comfort and feed the sheep, the exhortation to Timothy is also applicable to them.

We are blessed in this section of the country, with a marvelous portion of the Lord's servants. There are many oases where his children may rest and be comforted. Any Sunday, churches are in driving distance, where those who are thirsty or hungry may be fed by the overseers, who were made such by the Holy Ghost. The doctrine is proclaimed in all its wonders as dictated by the Spirit. The writer, at times, if not deceived, has been made to rejoice under the dew drippings of the sanctuary.

To be taken out of one's self and lifted up to behold with the speaker, power, justice, glory, m e r c y , grace, hope, love and all other attributes of the Saviour and King, are ours to enjoy and feast upon as the Spirit directs the preacher and hearer. For these reasons, it is the first phase of Paul's exhortation to Timothy, "Take heed unto thyself," of which I wish to write.

When a comforter is lead to comfort one of God's little ones, both parties are acted upon by the Holy Spirit, neither having merited the favor. At other times this same comforter and comforted one may be left to themselves, in the flesh, without inspiration, and try as they will they cannot attain the blessing, as before. I believe they both have to be inspired or receive a revelation before they can speak or hear the mysteries of godliness. The little child, who has been fed through the preacher, is puzzled, when that same preacher tells him that only the prophets, apostles and disciples of the Bible days, were given such inspiration. That he is only a vessel of mercy, subject to mistakes, like other children, with only a hope. I believe that when Christ wants a child soothed and comforted, made richer in the knowledge of Grace, He prepares the particular preacher who is to comfort him. I also believe, that the words meant for that child, whether by mouth

or pen, will be spoken by the Spirit "through" the preacher and he could not make a mistake, if he tried. In taking heed unto himself that minister should ask, "Am I feeding that little one, saving it from doubt and worry?"

The preacher has a very special calling. "Jesus said unto him, Let the dead bury their dead; but go thou and preach the kingdom of God." (Luke 9:60) With the word of a king there is power. He was not only told to go and preach but also what to preach, the kingdom of God. Furthermore he receives his sheep food by revelation, as it is meted out to him, not his own preparation before the services: "For I neither receive it by man, neither was I taught it, by revelation of Jesus Christ." (Galatians 1:12)

A few months back I was wallowing in the slough of despair. It seemed the wings of His love were closed from under me and I was falling to destruction. My prayer for deliverance was answered through a discourse, by one of his enlightened ministers, and the way was light again. His love and mercy had only been hidden from me for a season, for my own good, He explained to me through the lips of this elder. I feasted on it there at the church and at home that night my bed was easy and restful for the first time in months. From my window his handiwork shone forth from heaven in all its glory and I delighted in the works of the Lord. "Neither pray I for them alone, but for them also which shall believe on me through their word." (John 17:20) It seemed my happiness knew no bounds, through this preached word.

But sometime later, while talking to another elder, I asked him what he thought of the sermon that had meant so much to me. His answer was, "I didn't get much out of it. It sounded like a good deal of speculation to me." I have heard very comforting sermons from this minister too, and could only question in my mind, "How can these things be?" Could Paul's exhortation

mean that such careless remarks are not calculated to save the child from pain and anguish, when he said, "Take heed unto thyself, etc."?

While enjoying the doctrinal sermons and feeding on the food sent through these ordained elders, in a relaxed, confidential frame of mind, are his children asleep in Zion? Is the watchman asleep on the wall? Such questions can be raised in a little child's mind, when it hears one elder criticize the other ministers, all who are supposed to be overseers charged by the Holy Ghost. Paul, to those who should hereafter believe on him to everlasting life, said, "No man can say that Jesus is the Lord but by the Holy Ghost." (Cor. 12:3)

When a poor, groveling worm of the dust, who is nothing and less than nothing, with the weight of his sins pushing him into a smoldering pit and the flames of destruction are closing in forever, feels all of a sudden a calm; a sabbath from all his writhings and is freed, he longs to hear more of the one who eased his pains. He hungers and thirsts for the soothing assigned to the preachers of the Gospel.

Many are called, but few are chosen. The chosen are the guards who are placed around the walls of the city to cry to the inhabitants that the wall is secure. That the enemy will never molest them again because of the strength of the wall. These chosen guards around the city have the proper authority and know what to cry to comfort the hearers.

The natural man, no matter how great he is in oratory, cannot expound the riches of the saving grace of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ in fullness and truth, unless he is given light of thought and liberty of speech or pen, by inspiration. "But there is a spirit in man: and the inspiration of the Almighty giveth them understanding." (Job 32:8) This inspiration works on the speaker and hearer alike, giving them tongues to speak and ears to hear, so that the comforter and comforted

are one in Christ.

On another occasion, the writer heard a minister take a text and preach a long, comforting discourse. As we often say, the text took him, and he was made to show me green pastures and still waters of rest and peace. Before me spread a beautiful picture of the things bought for me, unworthy though I be, by the blood of the crucified one. The river of the water of life seemed to flow from the throne of God, through the soothing voice of the speaker into my very heart and swell it most to bursting with happiness.

The very next day, an elder of my acquaintance said the text of the night before had been misapplied, that the scripture had another meaning and could not mean what the preacher had interpreted it to mean. My heart sank and a lump came into my throat.

The question comes to mind, if we are his workmanship, made able to speak and hear these wonderful promises, by the Spirit working in us through inspiration and revelation, how can these things be? The joy and gladness in my poor soul, when permitted to feast at the table of God's love, or to be given just a crumb, when I am so hungry, is almost unspeakable. There are no words to express a broken heart, a despairing soul, made glad through the ministrations and comfort, channelled through the vessels, chosen by God to feed his sheep.

Several months ago I had an illness that was accompanied by severe pain and emotional depression. It seemed, when I was almost at the breaking point, our dear pastor happened in. Did I say "happened"? To me it seemed Providential. He talked of neighbors and friends, of brethren and sisters, of the sick he had visited, of correspondence with other ministers and brethren, all this interspersed now and then on the scriptures and the greatest of all Physicians. It was hard to be depressed or think or feel pain, and when he was gone my mind and heart kept feasting

on the "medicine" he had left me. He has always filled such a need, since we united with the church. "As it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the Gospel of peace and bring glad tidings of good things."

Because we love them, we hope, for the Truth's sake, as brethren, and because we lean on them as staffs of comfort, when activated by the Spirit, we admonish with Paul, "Take heed unto thyself."

Mrs. Cisco Barron
Lillie, La.

REPLY FOR BROTHER LOYD

Editors of the Signs:

I would like to reply to the request of Brother P. A. Loyd, Box 204, Salma, Kan. who wants someone to comment on three different Scriptures, beginning with Matthew 23rd chapter. He doesn't ask for anything specific in this chapter and as volumes could be written using any one of the 39 verses for a text, I will comment in generalities of the chapter as a whole, and hope that some one's mind will be sufficiently stirred up to cause them to study the entire chapter, which are the words of Jesus with the exception of the first verse. He was addressing the multitude and his disciples, telling them about the Scribes and Pharisees. He denounces their hypocrisy and refers to them as hypocrites, blind guides, serpents and a generation of vipers; and asks the question, "How can ye escape the damnation of Hell?" He next laments over the desolate state of Jerusalem who was then in a state of bewilderment. Their house is left unto them desolate, he comments. Desolate indeed is the house of anyone of God's people until it pleases God to reveal himself to them as the chief of ten thousand and altogether lovely. There is hope though for Jerusalem (church) for he says in the closing verse, "Ye shall not see me henceforth till ye shall say, Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord." This last remark gives us courage to press

on, for as Balaam prophesied, saying, "I shall see him but not now, I shall behold him but not nigh. . ." This is Israel's hope that some day they shall see him face to face, but now only as thru a glass darkly.

Brother Loyd wants to know more about an incident mentioned in Mark 14:51, 52. He states that there is so much that he doesn't know. That encourages me to call him Brother for I am sure that we have been taught in the School of Grace of our nothingness, and made to feel that we know nothing as we ought except guided by that unerring Spirit that spoke the world into existence. The Scripture that he mentions is an interesting one and one that has impressed me as having deep significance, but I never have heard it expounded from the pulpit or otherwise. The Scripture states that after all had forsaken Jesus that there followed him a certain young man, having a linen cloth cast about his naked body; and the young men laid hold on him: and he left the linen cloth, and fled from them naked. If my impression is correct this certain young man represents the Levitical Priesthood that was coming to an end. In the morning of time the priests were commanded to wear linen clothes, but now the one had come who was to be a High Priest forever, and it was fitting that the significant covering be transferred to Jesus. Nothing is left to cover the Levite (work system) but nakedness and shame. In speaking of this changeover the Apostle says in Hebrews 7:18, 19 "For there is verily a disannulling of the commandment going before for the weakness and unprofitableness thereof. For the law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope; by the which we draw nigh unto God."

Now our Brother is concerned about Christian behavior, for he enquires about the meaning of II Peter 1:9-10. In order to arrive at a proper perspective we should read the verses leading up to, and the ones following. We should always consider who is speaking, the one

addressed and then consider the import of the message. Here in the first verse the servant of God speaks to them that have obtained like precious faith. In other words he is addressing believers in Christ Jesus; they are not dead sinners but regenerated, born again believers having received, ". . . like precious faith." "Grace be multiplied unto you . . ." he says, and tells you how this is done; thru the knowledge of God and of Jesus our Lord.

In verse nine, the Apostle says, "But he that lacketh these things is blind, and cannot see afar off, and has forgotten that he was purged from his old sins. What would bring about this blindness, nearsightedness and forgetfulness? Lack of these things. These things refer to what has been mentioned in the preceding verses; and we will take them up in their respective order.

Simon Peter has already referred to our faith, but says "Add to it virtue." The faith was given whereby you are able to receive instructions from a servant of the Lord Jesus Christ. This servant is telling a live believer, who is capable, to do something; add virtue. What's virtue? Broadly speaking, it is abstaining from evil; righteous living. To virtue add knowledge. Knowledge is said to be an accumulation of facts. Get the facts pertaining to any subject and you have knowledge. Paul, no doubt had this in mind when he was instructing Timothy. He said, "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed." Notice that he used the word workman. Do Primitive Baptist believe in works? Yes. In good works; that which God hath before ordained that we should walk in. Paul declared that he would show his faith that way and there is no other way known to the writer to let your light (Christ) shine except in good works, which is righteous living.

Knowledge is not enough, we must add to our knowledge, temperance. This has to do with an orderly walk. We must use care in our eating and drinking habits. We are told to prove all things

and to hold fast to that which is good. It is not enough to hold fast to the good but we must let go of that which worketh evil. He who eats too much has yielded to the sin of gluttony and must suffer the consequence here in this life. To the drunkard it is said, no drunkard shall inherit the kingdom of God. What must we do next? Add patience. Patience is that characteristic of Christian behavior that manifests calmness, composure, and longsuffering in our dealings with our fellowman. When we are tempted to be rash, David would admonish, "Wait on the Lord; be of good courage and he shall strengthen thine heart: Wait, I say, on the Lord. Wait patiently for him."

Next in order is godliness. To walk godly we must endeavor to walk in the precepts and examples of Jesus Christ. Paul would tell us to come out of the world and be a separate people. We should follow Christ in baptism. We should eat his flesh, drink his blood and wash the feet of our brethren. To godliness we are to add brotherly kindness. Brotherly kindness may be manifest by as simple a thing as a smile or a friendly handshake. If you love your brother these acts of kindness will not be burdensome, but come naturally. Last and greatest to be added is Charity, the bond of perfection. To describe this most fully I will refer you to the inspired writer, The Apostle Paul; in the 13th chapter of 1st Corinthians. Any explanation short of that would be inadequate. Summarizing, Peter concludes that, "If ye do these things ye shall never fail." Never fall from your steadfastness. Verse eleven tells you why.

We have been requested to make our replies brief. I am afraid that I have not adhered to the rule but if any part or the whole is deemed worthy of space and some hungry soul gets a crumb of comfort, may they render praise to HIM unto whom all praise is due.

Yours in fellowship,
(Elder) P. E. Ingram
Martinsville, Va.

STRONGLY ADVOCATES THE
DOCTRINE

416 Nelson Drive
Jacksonville, N. C.

Dear Elder Spangler:

Per your request for renewals and subscriptions to the "Signs of the Times", I am enclosing with this correspondence my renewal, plus an apology for being so late; and one new subscription.

I have read a lot of periodicals, but none advocate the doctrine of Salvation by Grace any stronger, and that is more orthodox, than the Signs. According to my feelings and experience, I have to go along with that which advocates a doctrine of a Supreme God, who not only saw, but declared the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done saying, "My counsel shall stand and I will do all my pleasure." Also, a God who has called his people with a Holy Calling, not according to our work, but according to the grace that was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began. Oh, what a glorious God; oh, what wonderous love is this that caused the Lord of bliss to suffer for Hell deserving worms of the dust. He raised his people out of the dust; He raised his people out upon a sure foundation; and that is Christ the Lord, who gave his life for those that were chosen before the world began. He came to this low ground of sorrow, to suffer, to bleed, and to groan upon the Cross of Calvary to make the election sure.

He gave his life, not to satisfy man; but to satisfy the Law; not to offer salvation to man, but to offer a pure offering upon the altar to God for those that the Father had given to him; that they may have life and have it more abundantly. All that the Father gave him shall come unto him, and he will in no wise cast them out. As the apostle Paul has said, "He is able to save them to the uttermost." Even as he yielded up the Spirit, He cried to his Father,

and sometimes I hope to my Father, that it is finished. Surely when God's people are made to sit in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, they are made to know that this is a finished doctrine. There is no more sacrifice to be made.

In bonds of the gospel, I hope
D. B. Stokes, Jr.

UNFINISHED LETTERS

Check, Virginia
January 19, 1959

Dear Brother Spangler

I have been thinking about you for sometime, and feel that I want you to know that I appreciate your sending me the *Signs of the Times*. I feel that its pages contend for the truth as it is in Christ Jesus.

I think so much of your father: how earnestly he contended for the same faith. He was at the church at Laurel Creek when I joined the 4th Sunday in November, 1910. I have gone through many hardships since that time. That was the place where it was made known to me where the true church was, and I have not doubted it until this day. If I were as sure that I am one of those who compose the true church, I would have no doubt. I only have a hope that I am one of that number; and sometimes it is sufficient, and is an anchor to my soul, sure and steadfast; and enters into that within the veil, where our forerunner has entered. When I can feel this for myself, I am satisfied.

April 12, 1959

Dear Brother Spangler:

I want to acknowledge the gift, for I felt it was in love and kind regards for me. I feel undeserving for anything, but I want you to know the gladness of my heart when I saw what you brethren had given me, and it humbled

me. If left to my carnal flesh, I would be exalted, but I have been dealt with in such a way that these things bring me to examine myself; and when I do, I find that in me (my flesh) dwells no good thing. The brethren and friends have been good to me.

I have been reading the *Signs* for over forty years, and it is the soundest Baptist paper I know of. I feel that the Lord has chosen men to stand firm for the truth, and I truly hope you and Elder Wood and corresponding . . .

S. L. Moran

(Note: The above letters written by Elder Moran were unfinished, and were sent to us by his daughter, Sister Grace Sowers, who found them after her father's death. Elder Moran is greatly missed by the brethren among whom he labored for many years. — Editors)

1258 Filbert Ave.,
Chico, Calif.

Dear Editors:

This is to say that I am no longer able to read the dear *Signs of the Times* which you have been sending me for many years — the only church services in my long life. My eyes have failed so that I can read only a few words, and I have no one to read to me. I live alone, and am in my eighty-sixth year; so surely can't be here much longer.

You never can know how I do thank you for the *Signs*; I miss being able to read them more than words can tell. I thank all concerned, and wish God's great blessings on all. I have many that I have saved. They are the worse for long wear and many readings, but would give some of them to poor folks like me, if I could.

I close with wishes for love and blessings to you and yours, and all of God's children.

Marion S. Brooks

HASSELL'S HISTORY

Hassell's Church History is available to our readers for \$4.85 per copy. If you are interested in the history of the Primitive Baptists, its doctrine and order, we would advise you to obtain a copy.

This history includes the history of the Keehukee Primitive Baptist Association, (the oldest Primitive Baptist Association in America), and traces the history of the true church in doctrine and order from creation. It has over 900 pages.

ASSOCIATIONAL MEETINGS

BLACK CREEK ASSOCIATION

The next session of the **BLACK CREEK PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION** will, the Lord willing, be held with Scott's Church, Wilson County, the 4th Sunday, and Friday and Saturday before, in October, 1961. The church is located about seven miles Southwest of Wilson, N. C. Those coming from the North follow Highway 301 South of Wilson, about three miles; cross Contentnea Creek bridge below dam, turn right and follow to church. Those coming from the South on 301 Highway, turn left at Lucama, go about a mile to intersection, turn left for about 300 yards, turn back right, and follow to church.

Brethren and friends are invited to meet with us.

W. E. Turner, Clerk

SMITH'S RIVER ASSOCIATION

The **SMITH'S RIVER ASSOCIATION** is appointed to be held at Charity Church the 1st Sunday in September, and Friday and Saturday before. Charity is on Route 40 between Ferrum and Woolwine, Virginia.

Those of our faith and order are invited to meet with us.

Amos Hash, Clerk

VIRGINIA CORRESPONDING MEETING

The **VIRGINIA CORRESPONDING MEETING** is appointed to be held at the Mt. Zion Meeting House, on Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday, October 11, 12, and 13, 1961. Mt. Zion is located on U. S. Route 50, about 3 miles East of Aldie, Virginia.

A cordial invitation is extended to brethren and friends to meet with us.

A. L. Carter, Clerk
Manassas, Virginia

SEVEN MILE ASSOCIATION

The next session of the SEVEN MILE ASSOCIATION will be held with Corinth Church, beginning on Friday before the third Sunday in September and continuing through Sunday (September 15, 16, 17, 1961). Corinth Church is located about 12 miles Southeast of Smithfield, two miles East of Highway 701.

Those coming from the West, take Highway 70 out of Raleigh, N. C., to Smithfield. At Smithfield, take Highway 301 South for about five miles before turning off on Highway 701. Follow #701 for about seven miles to a crossroads. Turn left. At this crossroads, there will be a store on the left side of the highway and an association pointer. Follow this hard-surface road about two miles to the church which is on the left side of the road.

Those coming from the North, come to Smithfield and take Highway 301 South about five miles. Turn left on Highway 701. Go about seven miles and look for a pointer at a hard-surfaced crossroads. Turn left, and follow this road to church house.

Those coming from either the South or East, come to Newton-Grove and take Highway 701 North. Go about seven miles and look for a pointer at a hard-surfaced crossroads. Turn right and go about two miles to church house on the left side of the road.

We extend an invitation to our correspondents, visitors, and friends to meet with us.

Lester E. Lee

UNION MEETING

LITTLE FLOCK PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Bakersfield, California, will hold a three-day meeting beginning September 29th. For information call Export 9-0469.

Bertha S. Wright, Clerk
108 Circle Drive
Bakersfield, Calif.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE INDIGENT FUND

(To July 1, 1961)

Pattie Arrington, N. C.....	\$ 1.00
Joseph A. Johnson, Tenn.....	2.00
J. R. Davie, Ky.....	3.00
Mrs. Mary McIntyre, Can.....	5.00
Mrs. Fannie Wiles, Va.....	3.00
Gift, Calif.....	10.00

Danville, Virginia September, 1961

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IS IT TIME TO RENEW
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EDITORIAL

AARON'S ROD THAT BUDDED

(Numbers 17:8. Hebrews 9:4)

It has been requested by an Elder that we write upon the above subject, which we shall do, the Lord enabling us.

Aaron was the elder brother of Moses and is first mentioned in Exodus 4:14 as "Aaron the Levite, thy brother," God Himself saying. "I know that he can speak well." A God that works at both ends is here seen, giving Aaron a mind to set out from Egypt to go and meet his brother Moses, whom God had commanded to go down into Egypt. God said to Moses, "Behold, he cometh forth

to meet thee: and when he seeth thee, he will be glad in his heart."

In Exodus 4 we see that God had instructed Moses, first his rod turning into a serpent, then at God's command he took it by the tail and it became a rod again. God then commanded Moses to put his hand into his bosom, and when he took it out, his hand was as leprous as snow. Again God commanded him to put his hand into his bosom and when he took it out, it was turned again as his other flesh.

When Aaron met Moses it was at Horeb, in the Mount of God, where Moses had seen the Angel of the Lord in a flame of fire out of the midst of the bush. Exodus 3. In this lovely, but awe-inspiring place, the favoured brothers met, here they greeted one another with a holy kiss, here they were united in a common cause, to walk in God's command even though it meant to face a frowning world. They went from the Mount of God to visit the people and elders of Israel, where Aaron spake all the words which the Lord had spoken to Moses, and did the signs in the sight of the people. "And the people believed: and when they heard that the Lord had visited the children of Israel, and that He had looked upon their affliction, then they bowed their heads and worshipped." Exodus 4:31.

In Exodus 7, the Lord said to Moses, "See, I have made thee a god to Pharaoh, and Aaron thy brother shall be thy prophet." In the same chapter, verse 10, we find Aaron casting down his rod before Pharaoh and before his servants and it became a serpent. Pharaoh then called on his wise men and the sorcerers: "Now the magicians of Egypt, they also did in like manner with their enchantments and their rods became serpents."

We do not believe that they could by their magic produce the same effect, but we do believe that our God caused the same result in their effort, so as to harden Pharaoh and his people against letting God's people go. The

wonder to us is that Aaron's rod swallowed up their rods, it brings to mind that "God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty: and base things of the world, and things which are despised hath God chosen, yea, and things that are not, to bring to nough things that are." It shows that before God's authority every false way was to disappear. We see in this instance in the purpose of God, that the magicians could do as Moses and Aaron did in the first three miracles, but in the plague of lice, they could not bring forth lice by their enchantments and they admitted their failure and said, "This is the finger of God."

Aaron, the spokesman and prophet, seems to be set before us as standing between God and His people, chosen of God. "No man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron." Aaron, the Levite, who had dwelt in Egypt, and witnessed the distress and enslavement of his own people, and was acquainted with their grief and sorrow, was a suitable companion for Moses, his brother, even though we see in him weakness, a man subject to temptation. In the office of High Priest which he was later on to fill, his brother would be a strength to him, for had he not heard God's word and seen the burning bush and the Angel of the Lord in the midst of the flame? After events prove that Aaron, left to himself, could turn to the ways of men to worship gods of their own making.

When Israel had encamped before Mount Sinai and Moses went up the mountain to receive the Law from God, in his absence the people murmured and said to Aaron, "Up, make us gods which shall go before us, for as for this Moses, the man that brought us up out of the land of Egypt, we wot not what has become of him." Exodus 32:1. Aaron said, Break off the golden earrings of your wives and sons and daughters and bring them to me, and

of them he made a molten calf, and they said, "These be thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt." Aaron, the good talker, the one whose rod had swallowed up the rods of the magicians of Egypt! O Aaron! How couldst thou fall so low? No doubt this was God's way (as in Peter's terrible denial of his Lord) to banish self-confidence and to cause a self-loathing. What a failure he must have felt himself to be, how ashamed he must have felt that he, who had seen the power of God to sustain them before Pharaoh and his wise men, should so forget the power of Israel's God, as to foolishly make a molten calf and listen to their rebellion, becoming a leader of them in their false worship.

Aaron, chosen of God, in his confession to Moses (on his return) exposes his own weakness when left to himself, and his putting the blame on the people, saying that they wanted it so, did not fail to heap upon himself self-condemnation that would affect his walk all the days of his life. How shocked Moses was in Deuteronomy 9:16-20. "And I looked, and behold, ye had sinned against the Lord your God, and had made you a molten calf: ye had turned aside quickly out of the way which the Lord had commanded you. And I took the two tables, and cast them out of my two hands and brake them before your eyes. And I fell down before the Lord, as at the first, forty days and forty nights: I did neither eat bread, nor drink water, because of all your sins which ye sinned, in doing wickedly in the sight of the Lord, to provoke Him to anger. For I was afraid of the anger and hot displeasure, wherewith the Lord was wroth against you to destroy you. But the Lord hearkened unto me at that time also. And the Lord was very angry with Aaron to have destroyed him; and I prayed for Aaron also the same time."

The intercession of Moses which was effectual, and the humbling consciousness of his errors, made Aaron, under

God's abounding grace, a fit man to stand before Israel as their High Priest.

Israel did not travel for long after that distressing experience before they began to murmur and find fault with Moses and Aaron, saying, "Ye take too much upon you, seeing all the congregation are holy, every one of them, and the Lord is among them, wherefore lift ye up yourselves above the congregation of the Lord?" Read Numbers 16 to see what awful rebellion showed itself, and there we see that the earth opened and swallowed Korah, Dathan and Abiram and all that appertained unto them. Aaron stood between the dead and the living and made an atonement for the people and the plague was stayed. Then a long-suffering God commanded them to take each one a rod for the house of his fathers, and Aaron's rod was to be the rod for the house of Levi. Thus twelve rods were brought to the Tabernacle with the name of each man upon his rod, and Aaron's rod was amongst them.

These rods Moses laid up before the Lord in the Tabernacle of Witness. "And it came to pass that on the morrow Moses went into the Tabernacle of Witness; and, behold, the rod of Aaron for the house of Levi was budded, and brought forth buds, and blossomed blossoms and yielded almonds. . . . And the Lord said unto Moses, bring Aaron's rod again before the testimony to be kept as a token against the rebels and thou shalt quite take away their murmurings from me that they die not."

Aaron's rod that budded and blossomed and bare fruit was therefore kept in the Ark of the Covenant, it was there as an everlasting testimony against rebels who would ever dare to do contrary to God's ordered way, a proof in all ages that God, the God of Israel, had established His worship, chosen Aaron as His High Priest and the house of Jacob as His chosen people.

What were these rods but dead sticks that man had cut down, sticks with

no life in themselves? Nothing that Aaron had done by nature made him to differ from the other eleven. The office of Priesthood was bestowed on him by his God, and the life manifested in that rod while in the Tabernacle of Witness that night (the night being a type of the night of the legal dispensation during which time the Aaronic priesthood flourished) was from an entirely different root than the natural root of the tree from which the rod was taken. This of course, was in God's purpose. Our Lord, coming from the tribe of Judah, could not be a priest under the law, the rod of Judah remained a dead stick when Aaron's rod lived, yet we are told in Matthew 2:2 that the wise men said, "Where is He that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen His star in the East and are come to worship Him." He must live and die, becoming a dead stick, cut off from the land of the living for the sins of His People. God was His Father, though He was also the seed of the woman, yet there was no sin found in Him, only by imputation. "He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so He openeth not His mouth." This was in obedience to the law to produce a righteousness that would fit us, and to cleanse us from all sin by His precious blood.

In Aaron there was a God-revealed, living testimony, he, in his person, had to be a man without blemish. Before the Lord he must carry the twelve tribes nearest to his heart, as the breast-plate had twelve stones enclosed within it, also the Urim and Thummim, shedding light and beauty over them all. He must sprinkle the whole tabernacle with blood, he must make the various sacrifices. We see him performing his many duties faithfully, surely there were evidences of life in his authority. In all he did, even to his going once a year into the Holy of Holies, we see, as in the rod that budded and blossomed, promises of better days to come. When he returned and Israel re-

joiced in sins forgiven, we see the fruit of his intercession, forgiveness was felt by the whole of Israel at the High Priest's return. It was felt by some when they laid their hand on the victim's head, (the lamb about to be offered) when blessed by faith to see Jesus, the innocent dying for the guilty.

Not only Aaron, the High Priest, but the prophets all spake of Jesus, His sufferings and the glory that should follow. Like the bud and the blossom they carried promises of fruit to come. The joy to which they gave vent when feeling the favour of God showed that many were given to taste of the fruit of God's love and mercy. Under those types and shadows they were encouraged to speak of a day to come when One would come as King and Priest, who would give even the stones of their temple a glory beyond the glory of Aaron and those who followed him in the same office. Thus the testimony of Aaron, his offerings and all that he did, testified of Jesus. If Jesus had not come, the budding and blossoming would have been of no value. The fruit being seen showed the certainty of His coming. No wonder Moses prayed "And let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us: and establish Thou the work of our hands upon us; yea, the work of our hands establish Thou it." Psalm 90:17.

To accomplish this that had been a mystery hidden from those of old but revealed in the Gospel, "God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory."

"Almighty God sigh'd human breath!
The Lord of Life experienced death!
How it was done we can't discuss,
But this we know 'twas done for us."

Our Lord must die, as the Lamb of God, to bring forth much fruit. He must come alive again to be a High Priest for ever, He, who was not of the tribe of Levi, but of Judah, whose rod remained dead, arose from the dead and was declared to be a Priest for ever

after the power of an endless life. He has gone, as our High Priest, by His own blood, into the Holy of Holies, which is Heaven itself, and has poured out His blessed Spirit upon us, enabling us to walk in love and do those things that are well-pleasing in His sight. The indwelling of the Holy Spirit is spoken of as the firstfruits, and Christ Jesus' body is the firstfruits, for He only hath immortality, but when He appears the second time, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is. Through the Spirit's work we cry Abba Father, His Spirit bearing witness with our spirits that we are the children of God.

"To all eternity our King
And Priest shall be adored;
Sinners from Satan's power released
Shall ever praise the Lord."

G. R.

VOICES OF THE PAST
"He being dead yet speaketh"

"And when he was come into the ship, he that had been possessed with the devil prayed him that he might be with him. Howbeit, Jesus suffered him not, but saith unto him, Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee. And he departed, and began to publish in Decapolis how great things Jesus had done for him: and all men did marvel."

At the Delaware River Association last May, we used the above Scripture as a text, and although we felt some leading forth of the Spirit in our efforts to speak, we did not feel that the subject had been exhausted when we had finished. As it still lingers in our mind, we will undertake to present some of our thoughts upon it for the consideration of the readers of the *Signs of the Times*, in the hope of both interesting them and finding relief of mind for ourself.

In order to more fully appreciate the picture here presented it is necessary to recall some of the background, and thereby get a more complete description of the main character involved. We wish to call attention to the fact that Jesus had left the other side of the sea and had come over into this Gadarene's country. This is worthy of note for the reason that many present the idea that the sinner must first seek Jesus. In crossing the sea a "great storm" had been encountered and those who were aboard the ship had feared the loss of their lives, but when they awoke Jesus, who was asleep and apparently unaware of their predicament, he arose and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, "Peace, be still, and there was a great calm." Those who witnessed this display of his mighty power exclaimed one to another, "What manner of man is this, that even the wind and the sea obey him?" And "when he was come out of the ship, immediately there met him out of the tombs a man with an unclean spirit, who had his dwelling among the tombs; and no man could bind him, no, not with chains: because that he had been often bound with fetters and chains, and the chains had been plucked asunder by him, and the fetters broken in pieces. Neither could any man tame him. And always, night and day, he was in the mountains, and in the tombs, crying, and cutting himself with stones." Herein is set forth the pitiful condition which this poor man was in, and it is sad, indeed. It takes our mind back to a scene which we witnessed in southern Virginia many years ago. We were too small to be at work in the field, and were playing around the house. Our house was on the main road, but about one-half mile distant there lived a man with his family who one day became violently insane. Early in the morning of the day in question he began calling to my father at the top of his voice, "Ah, friend Dodson; Ah, friend Dodson," which he kept repeating, and finally, later in the day, he brought his small

daughter over and threw her into the gutter of the road directly in front of our house, and for several hours he shouted and raved, breaking down mullein stalks, which he pretended to use as guns, shooting at the passersby on the road. My father was not at home and I was sent to the field to call the workers to the house. Others stopped, until finally quite a crowd had gathered. Eventually, it was planned that one of the strongest men in the group should slip up behind him and pin his arms to his sides, when others would rush up and assist until he was overpowered and bound with a rope, placed in a wagon and taken to Danville. Frequently, a man appears to possess supernatural strength under such conditions. We will never forget that scene as long as we live, and the sadness of it almost brings tears to our eyes as we pen these lines. A serious mental affliction is undoubtedly one of the most pitiful things that can possibly befall a human being. It is very baffling to medical science. Jesus sought out such a case to show how sad our state by nature is and to manifest his power to heal the most difficult of all diseases. This poor man saw Jesus afar off, and ran to worship him, crying with a loud voice, "What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of the most high God? I adjure thee by God, that thou torment me not," for Jesus had commanded the unclean spirit to come out of him. Jesus had here performed a great miracle and it was seen that the devils which dwelt in the man, for their names were legion, were subject unto him. They in turn recognized his power over them and asked leave of him to permit them to enter a herd of swine, which he granted, and the record is that the herd ran violently down a steep place unto the sea and were choked in the sea. Those who had fed the swine, seeing their herds destroyed, fled to the city and they that dwelt in the city came out to see what was done. And when they had come to Jesus and saw him that was possessed of the devil, sitting, and

clothed, and in his right mind, they were afraid, and well might they have been, for their doom was sealed. When those who had witnessed what took place related it to them they prayed him, Jesus, to depart out of their coasts. The feeders of those who will eat anything today will have none of the real Jesus, but those who rejoice in his love and power want to be with him all the time. This poor Gadarene wanted to accompany Jesus in the ship and pass over the sea to the other side and be with him, and he prayed him to that end, but our text says he suffered him not, but commanded him to, "Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath compassion on thee." Until recently we had thought of this Scripture as applying only to those outside of the pales of the visible church. We have heard it quoted by others and have also quoted it many times ourself by way of trying to encourage those to whom the arm of the Lord has been revealed, to take up their cross, go home to their friends, be baptized, and become full-fledged members of the militant church. We do not want to detract from this point of view in the least, but rather would we emphasize it and urge those who have been with and learned of Jesus to do their duty in this respect. At the same time we would like to stress another point, one which we have heretofore overlooked, and that is that, "He departed, and began to publish in Decapolis how great things Jesus had done for him." In view of this our text takes on a broader meaning. It shows that Jesus had not only done great things for this man in relieving him of his distress and giving him a sound mind, but that he had called him to go forth and declare his wonderful works among the children of men. There are doubtless many of God's humble servants today who would prefer to cross over the river and for ever be with Jesus, but he still has work for them to do here in this sin-cursed world, and that work is to go among their friends,

declaring his power to save unto the uttermost, and his ability to cure the hardest of cases, for nothing is impossible with him. He is able to deliver them from the legion of devils, who tempt and harrass them the most of their days while here in this time state. He is the Great Physician who can heal all of the diseases of their sin-sick souls, and he will have compassion upon them. What wonderful things, indeed, we have to tell our friends, those who are acquainted with our travel, our doubts and fears, our sorrows and our joys, our downsittings and our uprisings, who share all things in common with us. Truly, they are our friends and they understand our language, which is not strange to them. They know of his sufferings for his people, of his compassion, or sympathy for those who have been called by his grace. Decapolis, we understand, signified a group of villages, towns or cities, or the community in which this Gadarene was to publish these glad tidings, and we are told that "all men did marvel."

We also read in this chapter that Jarius, whose daughter lay at the point of death, was encouraged to pray that he might heal her and that she might live. There is also the record of a certain woman who had had an issue of blood for twelve years, and had suffered many things of many physicians, and had spent all she had, and was nothing better, but rather grew worse, when she had heard of Jesus, came in the press behind, and touched his garment, for she said, "If I may touch but his clothes, I shall be whole." What wonderful faith was her's, and it was fully rewarded, for it is declared that "straightway the fountain of her blood was dried up; and she felt in her body that she was healed of that plague."

In our natural state we are as mad men. We will fight and oppose this way with all of our might and main, and if left to ourselves would never seek Jesus, but instead would drive him out of our coast, or lives, and refuse to have him reign over us, but, oh, what untold

and everlasting gratitude springs up in our poor hearts when we discover that he has come our way, that he has sought us out, and that he commands the unclean spirits to come out of us and depart, for a season at least. Then it is we find ourselves in our **right minds**, and we not only can think rightly of him, but we are imbued with the desire to go home to our friends and tell them what great things he has done for us. The trouble with us is that we cannot begin to tell these things to our friends as we would like. We find that words cannot express what we feel, but sooner or later we realize that a hint to the wise is sufficient, and that our friends who have likewise had these things wrought in them are witnesses to the same power that has been working in us, and then, oh what a relationship there is between us. We can then sing, Blest be the tie that binds our hearts in Christian love, and declare that the fellowship of kindred minds is like to that above. What a mercy it is that those of like precious faith can rejoice together in telling and hearing of him who has loved us with an everlasting love and, therefore, with loving-kindness draws and constrains us to forsake the ways of sin and to seek him, whom to know is life eternal. God is still calling his people with an effectual calling, and when he commands them to go home to their friends and tell what great things he has done for them they have nothing good to say for themselves, but it is all of his grace. And when he calls and qualifies and sends forth his servants to preach the everlasting gospel of his blessed Son, they go preaching in demonstration of the Spirit and with power sent down from above, and those who hear marvel at these wonderful things.

(Editorial by Elder Dodson, September, 1941.)

OBITUARIES

MRS. NANCY THOMAS

Sister Thomas lived with her children in

Shreveport, Louisiana. She was born in Scott County, Mississippi, and moved to Louisiana, where she reared her family. She died April 2, 1961. Her husband David A. Thomas died about 12 years ago. She is survived by three sons: E. A. and W. L. Thomas, of Shreveport, and W. G. Thomas, of Stillwell, Oklahoma; two daughters: Miss Edna Thomas, Shreveport, and Mrs. John F. Davis, Ringgold, Louisiana. Also surviving are 18 grandchildren, and 14 great grandchildren.

Sister Thomas was a devout attendant of Primitive Baptist meetings as long as her health permitted her to go; and she manifested that great love of the humble children of God. She loved the preaching of the everlasting gospel of God our Saviour, and the great love of God was visible in her pleasant countenance when she was at the meetings. Her membership was with one of the churches near Jamestown, or Castor, Louisiana, and she was a regular attendant at Mt. Olive Church after I started going to that church.

May the Lord be with, and comfort her beloved children and their families, and give them precious memories of her love and devotion to the glorious gospel truth. She is gone in spirit to God, and her body lies in the grave until our Lord comes again without sin unto salvation, when in the resurrection His people shall be conformed to His image and be housed in their home in heaven, where all shall be peace, love, and joy.

Her funeral was conducted by the writer at the Rockett Funeral Chapel, and graveside services at Oak Grove Cemetery. There was much evidence of respect, devotion, and friendship manifested by the congregation, and there were many flowers showing their love.

An unworthy servant, if one at all
(Elder) R. W. Rhodes

LOIS ARGENBRIGHT HELMS

Lois Argenbright Helms was born February 27, 1914, and died March 22, 1961. She was united in marriage March 18, 1932, to James Rodney Helms; and to this union two sons were born: James R., Jr., and John W. Helms, who, with their father, survive. Surviving also are, her father and mother, W. F. Argenbright and Blanche S. Argenbright, and seven sisters: Winnie, Iris and Joan Argenbright, Mrs. Tressie A. LaPrad, Mrs. Estell A. Wimmer, Mrs. June A. Palmer, and Mrs. Rose Mary Maxey.

Sister Helms united with Basham Church, Bedford County, Virginia, the second Sunday in December, 1946, and was baptized by her father-in-law and pastor, Elder J. P. Helms, and was a faithful member. Her sudden pass-

ing was a severe shock to the family, the church, and her many friends, but those who know what it is to have a hope of eternal life, rejoice along with their sorrow, for they know that the Lord has but taken his own; and that

"Death is no more a frightful foe,
Since I with Christ shall reign:
With joy I leave this world of woe,
For me to die is gain."

Funeral services were conducted at Basham Church by Elders John D. Wood and Julius Bocock, where an overflowing congregation of friends were gathered in respect and sympathy; and where the many flowers gave silent and beautiful tribute of those who loved her. Interment was in the Church Cemetery.

May the Lord give reconciling grace to those who mourn, and cause them to realize that He does all things well.

John D. Wood

LUNDY COLEMAN DOSS

It has pleased God to remove from our midst by death Brother Lundy Doss. He was the son of W. L. Doss and Virginia Brumfield Doss, and was born July 11, 1896, and died January 15, 1961. He was united in marriage to Mary Hardy November 6, 1916. He is survived by his wife, five sons and five daughters: Ruben Loray, Frank, and William, of Gretna, Virginia, and Raymond, of Danville, Va., Mrs. Roy Dalton, Mrs. Allie Collins, Mrs. Morris Mills, of Gretna, and Mrs. Sam Owen and Mrs. George Mayhew, of Danville. Also surviving are eighteen grandchildren and one great grandchild; two brothers and one sister: R. L. Doss and Mrs. Albert Dooling, of Gretna, and Goldie Doss, of Alexandria, Virginia.

Brother Doss united with Springfield Church on November 8, 1924, and was a faithful member. His companion has lost a good husband and the children a good father. We feel that our loss is his gain: that his spirit has returned to God who gave it, and his body to dust from whence it came, to await the glorious resurrection, when it shall be changed and made like unto our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.

The funeral service was conducted by his pastor Elder O. K. Tench, and he was laid to rest in the Gretna Burial Park. May the Lord bless his family, and give them understanding that He doeth all things well.

RESOLVED, That a copy of this be put on our church records; a copy sent to the family, and a copy be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Done by order of Springfield Church in conference.

Elder O. K. Tench, Moderator
R. C. Dalton, Clerk

STEPHEN GROVER AKERS

This in memory of Stephen Grover Akers, who was born near Calaway, in Franklin County, Virginia, on August 15, 1884. The call came for him August 15, 1960 on his 76th birthday. He was united in marriage to Mary Etta Bryant, December 25, 1907. To this union was born ten children, five boys and five girls; one daughter died in infancy. His wife and helpmate and nine children, nineteen grandchildren, and four great grandchildren, are left to mourn their loss. But, they rest in this assurance, that their loss is his gain.

Brother Akers united with Pigg River Church in November, 1921. He was appointed as Assistant Clerk in May, 1930; ordained as Deacon in October, 1930, then chosen Clerk in May, 1957.

Brother Grover filled the offices of Deacon and Clerk with meekness and modesty, as well as any that I ever knew. All of his brethren loved and respected him, and the Lord gave the Church a faithful Deacon and his helpmeet, in him and Sister Etta. His funeral was preached at his home church by Elder William Holland, Elder Odell Thompson, and his pastor, Elder J. P. Helms, on August 17, 1960; and interment was in the Church cemetery.

Many of his brethren and friends from all walks and religious sects were present to manifest their sympathy to the family. All we can say or do, has been done — Rest in peace: you will see Him as He is.

J. P. Helms

AGNES B. GOODRICH

Our dear beloved sister in Christ, Agnes B. Goodrich, departed this life March 11, 1961, at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Lillian Becker, Vernon, New York. Funeral services were held March 14th, from the Clark Funeral Home, Central Bridge, Schoharie County, New York. Interment to be made later in Pine Grove Cemetery, Livingstonville, New York.

Sister Goodrich was the daughter of the late William H. and Alzina (Cole) Brayman. She was born March 25, 1869, in the town of Broome. Her husband was the late William Goodrich, who died January 15, 1950, in Rome, New York. They were married March 10, 1891, and lived in Hauverville until 1914.

Sister Goodrich had been a faithful member of the Middleburg Old School Baptist Church since 1902. Surviving besides the daughter mentioned are two other daughters, Mrs. Lula C. Sands, of Central Bridge, and Mrs. Naomi Bennett, of Olean; a son, Fred R. Goodrich of Rome, New York; a sister, Mrs. Charlotte Moister, of Scotia; a brother, Fred Brayman of Central Bridge; and 14 grandchildren and 38 great grandchildren. Of the 38 great grandchildren 22 are grandchildren of Sister Goodrich's son, the late G. Dewey Goodrich, of Elmira and Mrs. Nettie A. Goodrich of Binghamton, New York. Five of the 14 surviving grandchildren are children of Mrs. Lula Sands and are well known locally, Miss Laura C. Enders, Albany, New York; David Enders, David Enders, Central Bridge; Mrs. Nellie Enders, Albany, New York; David Enders, Central Bridge; Mrs. Nellie Enders Carver, North Haven, Conn.; Mrs. Mary Ellen Sands Vanerongan, Essex Junction, Vt. and Mrs. Lois Sands, Uhl, Albany, New York. Her children were very kind and devoted to her and always attended to furnishing her all of her needs in her old age, and tenderly cared for her to the end.

Sister Goodrich was much devoted to her church, though for recent years her impaired hearing was so bad she could not hear the preaching. But that did not take away her deep interest in the meetings, for it was her joy to meet with the brethren, to see their faces and enjoy the sweet fellowship and the warm hand shake of those of like precious faith in the Eternal God and His Son, Jesus Christ, whom she loved and trusted in. When in her presence, though she could not hear, it was a pleasure to listen to her testimony of a reason for her hope and her love for Christ and His truth and of her great desire to do His will and to hear her quote Scripture and recite hymns.

Funeral was conducted by the writer,

Amasa J. Slauson

MRS. FANNIE JOHNSON BLACKMON

After a lengthy illness, God in his infinite love and mercy has seen fit to call from our midst, our beloved sister, Mrs. Fannie J. Blackmon. She died at the age of 76 years and 9 months. She was the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Joshua Johnson, of Johnson County, North Carolina. She leaves to mourn her loss one son, Johnny Barefoot, of Raleigh, North Carolina; one daughter, Mrs. Loomus W. Johnson, of near Benson, North Carolina; four grandchildren and one great grandchild. Sister Fannie was a kind, loving and affectionate wife and mother, a good neighbor, doing all she could for others although she had been

in very poor health for several years.

She loved her church and filled her seat when able to go. She joined the church at Hickory Grove, Saturday before the second Sunday in July, 1946. She was baptized by the present pastor Elder Lester E. Lee.

BE IT RESOLVED, In the passing of Sister Fannie Blackmon, Hickory Grove has lost from her membership a very faithful and highly esteemed sister. That we mourn not for her as those who have no hope. May we be enabled to bow in humble submission to God's holy and gracious will.

RESOLVED, That a copy of these resolutions be recorded on our church records; a copy be sent to the family; and a copy to *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Done by order of the church in conference on Saturday before the third Sunday in May, 1961.

Committee:
Sister Georgia Hill
L. J. Kininsey and wife

SAM McGREGOR

It pleased our Heavenly Father to call our dearly beloved and esteemed Brother, Sam McGregor, from his walk in life to his home above. He passed away quietly in Hopkins County Hospital, at Madisonville, Kentucky, on March 9, 1961. He seemed to realize he was going for he took my hand and said, "I don't have much to place my hope on, but I wouldn't take all this world for what I have." His funeral was preached by Elder J. N. Darnell and our pastor, Elder Ramon L. Biggs, in the Beshears Funeral Home, Dawson Springs, Kentucky. The funeral was attended by many friends and relatives, and so many beautiful flowers were sent.

Brother Sam was born July 29, 1881. He was the son of Elder Sam McGregor. About 1905 he married Mirtie Roberts. To this union were born twin sons, Justine and Jewel McGregor, and a daughter, Kathleen McGregor Hunter. On January 9, 1923, he married Maude Tapp. There were no children born to this union. In September 1952, he married Willie Irene Kurly who was a companion for him in his last days. Brother Sam had a great love for music. He won many prizes at old fiddlers' contests. He worked on and also made many violins. It was so sweet to hear him play the old time tunes we love and sing in church.

Brother Sam joined the church when he was about nineteen years old. He was made Clerk and Deacon of the church and has been a regular father in Israel ever since. He loved the song, "If God is Mine". We do so miss him, no other can take his place and it will be sacred only for him. Brother Sam was a retired city mail carrier.

Written by order of New Hope Church in conference Saturday, May 20, 1961.

RESOLVED, That a copy be placed on our church records, and a copy be sent to his widow, Willie McGregor, in Martin, Tennessee. Also a copy be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Mona McGregor

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

Sister Mahala M. Houk, wife of the late Deacon Samuel H. Houk, was born September 20, 1864, and passed away November 16, 1960, in General Hospital, Hobart, Oklahoma, at the age of 95 years, 1 month, and 27 days. She was married to S. H. Houk July 23, 1882, at Greenville, Texas; moving to Oklahoma in 1905, and resided at Snyder, Oklahoma, most of the time since 1916.

She joined the Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church on Saturday before the 4th Sunday in June, 1887, at Mt. Zion Church, Hunt County, Texas, now Cash, Texas. After coming to Oklahoma, she moved her membership to Dawson Valley Church, later Little Flock Church, Altus, Oklahoma, where she remained a faithful member until her death. To this union nine children were born: her husband and six children preceded her in death. Survivors are one son, W. L. Houk, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma; two daughters, Mrs. M. L. Hammond, Ringling, Oklahoma, and Sister Robby Boyd, of Snyder, Oklahoma; also 12 grandchildren, 21 great grandchildren, and 6 great great grandchildren.

Funeral services were conducted by Elder W. W. Taylor at Snyder, and she was laid to rest beside her husband in the Fairlawn Cemetery, Snyder, Oklahoma. Granny Houk, as she was known by her many brethren and friends, was a member of the Primitive Baptist Church 73 years, and was always at meetings when she was able. Several years ago she fell and broke her hip, and was not able to walk afterwards. She was happy when any of the church members visited her. She was strong in the faith; and was blessed with a clear mind to the last, but her eyes were dim and her hearing impaired the last two years. God in his infinite wisdom called our sister to her eternal home: she was ready to go, and longed to meet her blessed Saviour. Therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, That we deeply sympathize with the bereaved family; and

RESOLVED, That a copy of this writing be made a part of our church record; a copy sent to the family; and a copy sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Done by order of the church.

Elder C. M. Haygood, Pastor
Mrs. Nina M. Stallings, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 129

DANVILLE, VA., OCTOBER, 1961

NO. 10

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 10/1
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

HOMESICK

Lord, 'till my time on earth is o'er,
Although thy child I may not be,
Let me, as Ruth, dwell with thy fold
While here in time my lot doth be.

With thy dear children let me live:
I'd rather a doorkeeper be
Than dwell within the tents of sin,
Since there no more is aught for me.

I love thy courts, I love thy house:
To dwell in them, dear Lord, I plea.
Fain would I shun the tents of sin,
But bonds and fetters hinder me.

Could I fly as a weary dove —
Had I her wings to pilot me —
I'd rise and soar where angels sing,
And all thy glories would I see.

There with my God forever blest,
Where doubts and fears molest no more;
There would I bathe in seas of rest
Forever on that happy shore.

Then let me here in patience rest;
Though I be chasened, sick and sore,
My God ordains that which is best —
He of the sheepfold is the door.

Then come what may of grief or pain,
Or fiery darts from Satan's store,
Through Christ I will the vict'ry gain
And dwell with Him when life is o'er.

Lord haste the time, O haste the day
When I my armor shall lay down;
When thou well done to me shall say:
Put on an everlasting crown.

I composed the above on the night of November 2nd, and wondered if I was strong enough for the 6th and 7th stanzas as my own; and was not left long to find out. I went to bed

in what I thought was perfect health, and had a stroke in my left side before daylight which has rendered me unable to do gainful work anymore. I've had many sore conflicts with Satan since, but can still hope, and say with the apostle, "Cast down but not destroyed". The above can be sung to any long meter tune; I suggest the tune Ester. Dedicated to all who are having great conflicts with Satan.

C. B. Britt
Rt. 6, Box 282
Eldorado, Ark.

WITHIN THE VEIL

"Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast and which entereth into that within the veil; whither the forerunner is for us entered, even, Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec." (Hebrews 6:19 and 20)

To all who love His appearing, Beloved Brethren: A number of times in the past two or three years, the expression "Within the Veil" has gripped me and I have had some very delightful meditations on the subject and on the verses quoted above. For some time, I have felt an urge to try to express a little of the beauty which I hope I have been blest to see. So, if it please the Lord to direct me, I shall attempt it, humbly trusting that whatever I may say will be the truth as it is in Christ Jesus and the written word of God.

The text takes us back to the tabernacle in the wilderness and the many beautiful types portrayed there. Moses, who was in so many respects, a type of our Lord Jesus Christ, together with Aaron, the high priest, was chosen to lead God's people Israel, out of Egyptian bondage where they had been exiled for

four hundred and thirty years, through the wilderness, to Canaan, the promised land of rest, freedom and plenty. The journey through this great wilderness covered a period of forty years, although the distance was not great, but God had many lessons to teach them, many trials and deliverances for them during those many years. It was on this journey that God called Moses to go up to Him in the mount, and there, on tables of stone, God gave Moses the law and commandments for the people. There, God bade Moses to have them make Him a sanctuary, that He might dwell among them and showed him the pattern of the tabernacle they were to build, with explicit instructions as to measurements, furnishings, worship. The first thing to be built was the ark, a type of our Lord Jesus in judgment. Just as all redemption, all salvation, all worship, must center in and emanate from the Lord Jesus Christ, so the tabernacle must be built around and out from the ark.

The reading indicates that the tabernacle was an oblong, wooden structure, covered with the skins of animals. The structure was in two parts — the outer part to be called the Holy and the inner part, called the Most Holy or Holy of Holies. Between these two parts hung the veil, a curtain made of fine twined linen, in blue, purple and scarlet. This veil, a type of Christ's human body, separated the two parts and barred the way to the Most Holy place. When, on the cross, Jesus gave up the ghost and died, we are told the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom, thus making possible access to the Most Holy Place, the throne of God. The Most Holy Place represented heaven, the throne of God and His glory. It was in the Most Holy Place that the ark was to be placed. Let us examine the ark for a moment. It was to be made of wood, accacia wood, a desert growth, typical of our Lord Jesus, and overlaid with gold. The wood typified

His humanity, the gold His divinity, His divinity overshadowing His humanity. In the ark was to be placed the testimony or commandments, setting forth the truth that in Him are all the law and commandments kept. Above the ark was the mercy seat with the cherubims at either end, facing each other and looking toward the mercy seat, typifying mercy overshadowing judgment. As I am blest to see, in my mind's eye, this sacred scene, my heart wells up in gratitude and praise to our God that there IS a mercy seat.

Into the Most Holy Place, the High Priest entered once a year, on the day of atonement, with the blood of an innocent victim, a lamb without blemish, for a sin offering for himself and the people, a type of the Lamb of God who took away the sin of the world. This was typical of a MAN entering heaven, into the presence of God. In fulfillment of this beautiful type, our Blessed Lord, after His resurrection, entered into the presence of God. We read in Hebrews 9:24 "For Christ is not entered into the holy places made with hands, which are figures of the true, but into heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us."

Referring back to the text, we find that Jesus has entered into heaven as our forerunner. As the word signifies, a forerunner is one who goes on before and is a pledge, a surety that others are to follow, and that when they come, they will be like the forerunner. Since Christ's resurrection and ascension, believers who leave their earthly abode, depart in spirit to be with Christ and their bodies sleep in the grave. Their manifestation and glory will take place at the second coming of Christ when their bodies will be raised and fashioned like unto His own glorious body. Until then, Christ Jesus is in heaven, on His Father's throne, WITHIN THE VEIL, the first fruits of the great harvest which is to come, and as He is, we too, shall be when He descends from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel and with the trump of God to

receive us unto Himself. As we are blest to behold Him now, a glorified man in the divine presence, we can glimpse our own glorious future, for when He appears, we shall be like Him. All earthly prospects lose their significance as we get a foresight of that future.

Our Lord Jesus Christ is now WITHIN THE VEIL to present us to the Father, faultless, blameless, and forever free from condemnation. He is there to intercede for us — not for the world, but for the household of faith, the blood-bought throng, the divine family. He is there to intercede for us, not as rebellious sinners, but as poor, needy little children who often err through the weakness of the flesh. So, God looks upon us through Christ's intercession, not in judgment, but in tender mercy.

Christ is now WITHIN THE VEIL as our advocate. Our prayers and our worship must ascend to the Father through Him for He says "No man cometh to the Father but by me." He knows and advocates our needs to the Father before we ask or even feel our need. In the case of Peter, Jesus told him he must be sifted as wheat, but that He had prayed for him that his faith fail not. Poor Peter didn't even know his faith was weak. In my own experience, I have been prepared for trials and temptations sometimes before they came. On one occasion, when I was to go through a bitter experience, I had been given, for some time before, such sweet communion, such positive assurance that He would go with me through deep water, that when the trial came, I had been strengthened to the extent that I never felt to question God's goodness in sending it. I had been fortified before the attack! Sometimes some unsought blessing comes to us and we are amazed. We should not be. Up there, WITHIN THE VEIL, stands the MAN who walked the shores of Galilee, who "had not where to lay His head" — that dear head which was crowned with thorns FOR ME, who trod our path before us, who was tempted in all things

as we, and who, for the joy that was set before Him, endured the cross for us. Amazing grace!

We understand that when the High Priest entered within the veil, the people represented waited outside for his return and when he had laid both hands upon the head of the live goat and confessed their iniquities upon his head, the animal was sent away by the hand of a FIT MAN, into a land not inhabited, to die in the wilderness. The people waited until the FIT MAN should come back WITHOUT THE SIN OFFERING. Again in fulfillment of the type, Jesus, our sin bearer, was led away by Christ, the FIT MAN, to Golgotha, a place called the place of a skull, to be crucified. But He arose, and went into heaven and He is now WITHIN THE VEIL and we await His coming the second time, not as our sin bearer, but as our heavenly bridegroom — our resurrection and our life. Paul tells us in Hebrews 9:28 "So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many; and unto them that look for Him, shall He appear a second time without sin unto salvation." Therefore, our spiritual abode, our place of worship, our great hiding place, is WITHIN THE VEIL, while our walk is yet "without the camp, bearing His reproach."

So, dear ones, let us boldly approach the throne of grace. Boldly? Not boldly in the sense that we, of ourselves, are entitled to that grand privilege — but with confidence! Confident of what? Confident that He is faithful who promised — confident that, having died for us, He ever liveth to make intercession for us.

I have barely touched upon just a few of the glorious types set forth in the setting up and worship of the tabernacle and there may be errors in my interpretations, as my knowledge and understanding is so vastly short of what I wish it were, but I am not afraid to defend the glorious truth that THE MAN CHRIST JESUS is now WITHIN THE VEIL until His enemies be made His footstool. And as the day of our

adoption draws near, and it seems it must be very near, may we ever cling closer and closer to our dear Redeemer and to His people, while we "look for that blessed hope and His glorious appearing."

Yours, with love and hope in "The Tie That Binds."

Mildred Dykes
1114 Mt. Hermon Road
Salisbury, Maryland

CIRCULAR LETTER

(Written by Elder Arthur R. Warren)

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Hopewell Old School Baptist Church, Hopewell, N. J., June 7 and 8, 1961, to the churches composing the same, and to the associations and churches with which we correspond, sends greetings in the Lord.

Dear Brethren:

As the time has come once more to address this association with what is called a Circular Letter, we attempt it with much fear and trembling, yet hoping that it may please our God to guide our minds that what is written may be of comfort to those of our faith assembled here.

We believe in a sovereign God who rules in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand or say unto him what doeth thou. We believe that many times our interpretations of the Scriptures may not be the same, but do believe that all of God's chosen people, wherever and whoever they are, are taught of the Lord that their salvation is by grace and not by the works of man; and that they are led out of the darkness in which they were born into the marvelous light of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; of which we hope to write.

We believe, by the way it has pleased our God to lead us, that God before the beginning of time knew all things that

would ever take place, and had a purpose in all things for the good of his chosen people and to his own honor and glory. The Apostle Paul said in Romans 8:28, "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." It is our firm belief that God loved his people with an everlasting love before the beginning of time, "Therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee," said Jeremiah in the 31st chapter and the third verse. Having chosen his people in Christ before the world was and in his own appointed time teaches them the depravity of spirit, by the light of the Lord, which is nothing other but the Lord revealing himself in the hearts of his people, causing them to look inwardly and see themselves poor vile sinners; and then and then only do they cry out for mercy.

We do not believe the natural mind has ever or will ever seek the things of God, for the things of God are contrary to the ways of man; neither do we believe that it is by the enticing words of man's wisdom that men are drawn to God. We believe that man is born in this world blind to the way of salvation; and he travels in his own strength until such time as it pleases God to bring him out of the darkness in which he was born into the marvelous light of our Lord.

He comes forth like a flower by the wayside with all its natural beauty, but when the heat of the noon-day sun shines upon it, it withers and fades away; likewise man is born in this world with all the natural pride and beauty of life, but we believe that when the Son of Righteousness shines in the heart of his chosen people they are cut down and they see themselves as they never saw before; and can say with the Apostle Paul in Romans 7:19-20, "For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me."

We feel to say further that this pilgrimage is a strange one to our natural minds, for the Apostle Paul said, 1 Corinthians 2:14, "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." But when it pleases God to give us a spiritual mind we have a season of rejoicing, not in our strength but in our God who has blessed us to see our weakness, and to look to him who is the Rock of our salvation.

We do feel to say further that it is indeed a blessing when we are made to see our sinful nature, not that we rejoice in our evil thoughts, the things we speak with our unruly tongues, but we rejoice because we have felt the condemnation of sin, for the Apostle Paul again spoke to the comfort of the Lord's people when he said, "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief." (1 Timothy 1:15)

Thus as we journey here we are comforted from time to time by the Scriptures which confirm us in the things we have been taught; and are given a hope, by such, that we are a part of that building not made by hands, but by the grace and mercy of an all-wise God. Amen.

Elder Arthur R. Warren, Moderator
Sister Letha A. Blackwell, Clerk

CORRESPONDING LETTER

(Written by Sister Mary L. Hellings)

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association in session with the Hopewell Church, Hopewell, New Jersey, June seventh and eighth, 1961; to all the associations and churches with which we correspond; sendeth greetings in the Lord.

Dear Brethren:

Once more we feel blessed to be per-

mitted to meet with your messengers and receive greetings and correspondence, which we gratefully appreciate, and, Lord willing, hope for its continuance.

Though we are but few in number we desire to earnestly contend for the faith once delivered to the saints.

Of a truth we feel there is no strange doctrine among us. We welcome the visiting brethren who have come in love of the doctrine of salvation by grace; and in their preached word, gave all the praise and honor to Christ Jesus, the only Saviour for sinners. We have been truly edified, spiritually comforted, and blessed beyond measure.

Our next session will convene, the Lord willing, with the time and place to be announced in the *Signs of the Times*, when we hope to meet as many messengers as can come in love and fellowship. Until then, may God bless all of you most abundantly; may He lovingly watch over you and guide you, and cause you to delight in walking together about Zion, the church of the living God.

Elder Arthur R. Warren, Moderator
Sister Letha A. Blackwell, Clerk

OUT OF THE DEPTHS

"Out of the depths have I cried unto thee, Oh Lord." (Psalms 130:1)

For the last few years we have lived in a house at the top of a hill, with the pasture and barn at the foot.

Late in the afternoon while doing the chores at the barn, it would be so dark and gloomy it seemed to be night. But as I walked up the hill to the house it would get lighter and as it was usually about sunset, nature would be showing forth the handiwork of God in the colors she portrays at that time of day. Time after time as I would reach the top, the thought would run through my mind, "Out of the depths."

Most of the time I am at the foot of the hill, deep in despair because of the

darkness in my soul. My sinful, carnal nature leads me on and on into the depths of sin.

Sometimes I almost forget there is light at the top of the hill and yet I am always aware of a "still small voice" that checks my love and revelings in these vile wishes of my being. This remorse and regret that gnaws at my heart in a world where many go headlong into the depths of sin without a twinge of conscience, is the ray of hope that makes me know there is light at the top of the hill. "For the love of Christ constraineth us."

In my girlhood days I thought I was good. I believed lecturers and other flatterers when they said a girl who followed the moral code of life was good and had a heart as pure as gold. I am still thankful for the parental love and restraint that led me thus; but when I look into my heart and see the evil and vain longings there, I wonder how I ever thought it pure. I am ashamed and try to banish these evil thoughts, but it seems the harder I try the more they come.

Once before for a long, long time I was in the wilderness, and now in my despair I try to look back and get solace and comfort from the happiness I felt when I thought the Lord had "found me and brought me out." For months and months I have longed for that freedom again. God grant that it may be done unto me as to the Israelite of old, "He rebuked the Red Sea also, and it was dried up: so he led them thru the wilderness."

It seems that some of the poor in the Lord are exercised most of the time by the dealings of the Lord. Anytime you approach them they have a wonderful account of the things done unto them, and their eyes glow with the inner light, continuously. But I, (if I am one of His) am in the darkness most of the time. A few times I have felt so happy I wanted to go home to my

Saviour. I wanted to tell the world about the great light in my soul, to stand at the top of the hill in the light of God's beautiful sunset. Oh God, lift me up, for out of my troubles I beseech thee to let me live in the everlasting light of thy love, if it be thy will. "They mount up to heaven, they go down again to the depths: their soul is melted because of trouble."

Mrs. Cisco Barron
Lillie, Louisiana
1935

Woodward, Iowa

Dear Elder Spangler:

As my time is up I am sending my renewal. I have been taking the Signs for many years, and I don't want to miss a copy of it. It is all the preaching I hear, except when I am given the privilege of going to Kentucky, where I heard you preach last October at the association. I never enjoyed a meeting more.

I would love to explain many things, but am afraid to make the attempt, for fear I would not be understood. But I do love the doctrine of Salvation by Grace, for it is all that can reach a wretch like me.

Wishing you much success and a prosperous future, I am, I hope, a sinner saved by grace. In bonds of love to you and all God's children.

W. J. Kimbro

EXPERIENCE

I was born May 12, 1884, in Randolph County, North Carolina. My father and mother were members of the Primitive Baptist Church. At a very early age, (close to five years), I became concerned about my eternal destiny; (this could be traditional from training in the home, but as to that I cannot say.) My childish desire at that time was that, above any and all things I might attain

in life, I might be a servant of the Lord; and be blessed with the experience of grace my parents had, and those ministers and brethren who visited our home; and who seemed to have only one mind in their conversation, which was invariably things pertaining to God and the church. I can remember sitting on the floor at their feet, listening to all they said, and wishing that I could be like them, and have the manifestation of love, hope, and faith they had. Through their talk I was made to see that I had to be born again before it was possible to become a servant of the Lord; and that no one but God was able to perform that miracle.

I began trying to pray that my sins might be forgiven, and I too could feel as blessed as they seemed to be. This condition went on for several years without any manifestation of an answer to my petitions; and then I began to be burdened with a sense of guilt and sin, and that surely there was no hope for me. As the years went by I received no hope or comfort, but the burden seemed to get heavier all the time.

At the age of about 15, I had a dream which gave me some slight hope that God had not left me entirely alone. I dreamed I was in a tree by a roadway, and a woman came along and told me to come down, and go with her; and without asking why, I got down and went with her. The road was smooth and easy to travel on, with nothing to hinder our progress. We traveled some distance without speaking a word, and came within sight of a great forest of trees of great height and stature; and the whole forest was a solid flame of fire reaching above the top of the trees. Then I spoke to the woman for the first time — I told her that was Hell, and I didn't want to go there. Still she did not speak; and I began to look for some way to escape, but could find no other road; the one we were on led directly into that place. I searched the sides of the road, hoping to find a way of escape; and while looking, I saw a narrow pathway leading to the right of

this road open up through the growth on the roadside, so it was possible to travel on it.

I immediately got into this pathway and began to move away from that awful place, but I found this pathway impossible to stay in, as I would be in the path and out. After going some distance, I came to a great gulf — so deep I could see no bottom to it; and there the path ended. There was no way to get around or across this gulf, except on a very small pole reaching across to the other side. I knew I could not walk across it, even if it would bear my weight; which seemed unlikely. The only way I could get across, was to get astride the pole, and move a few inches at a time. By so doing I got about half way across, then felt myself falling to utter destruction. I then cried to the Lord to save me; and it seemed as though I was lifted up and carried the remainder of the way safely to the other side of the gulf; which proved to be a soldier's encampment. And then I awoke.

This dream comforted me to some extent, but not enough to remove the weight of my sins and transgressions; and I had to continue to walk carrying this burden, which seemed to be a load I had upon my back, and at times it seemed more than I was able to do. I tried going up at one of the armenian churches to be prayed for, to no avail.

At the time I was working on a farm with a Methodist family, about 24 miles from home, and there I met the girl who was the daughter of the family. During the time I was there, we were together each Sunday at Sunday school and church. One Sunday she asked me if I were a Christian; and I told her, No. She said I ought to be, as that was the most important thing in life; and I agreed that it was. In a joking way, I told her I would have to come to their protracted meeting, and try to become a Christian the next year, since the meeting was over for that year. I had no idea of trying to comply, for I

thought I would be no where near that neighborhood then.

But circumstances proved I was wrong. My older brother hired me to cultivate a crop for him in that neighborhood, and stay with his family while he was away working; so I was close to where I was the year before, and I was with this girl every Sunday during the year. As the time for the Methodist yearly meeting came closer, I began to think of the assertion I had made the Summer before; and this added to my afflictions. I realized I had lied to her, and also in the presence of God as well; for by then, after trying to pray and do all I could with human ability to obtain mercy, I realized there was no hope for me in anything I could do in my natural strength. I tried to make an excuse whereby I could be elsewhere at the time of their meeting, but failed completely, since I was tied there. So the only thing I could honestly do, was to face the situation, and take whatever happened. I was there the Sunday their meeting began, and when they opened the way and invited all who wanted to be saved, to come up and be prayed for, I made no hesitation, but got up immediately and went up. The preacher had me to sit down on the front seat, and bow over in an attitude of prayer; and when I did so my burden grew so heavy it seemed it would crush me through the floor, and then I broke down crying, as I never had before to my knowledge. After the prayer was over, which prayer I don't think I heard one word of, the preacher came to talk to me, and asked me if I didn't think the Lord had a work for me to do; and I told him, Yes, I did, and intended to do it. The burden I had been carrying all the past years rolled, as it seemed, off my back, and was gone. The work I saw in my mind that God had for me to do, was to contend for the faith and doctrine of the old Primitive Baptists; which I believe I have for the last fifty years, and hope I will be enabled to still contend for it until I am called away from this world.

After the above meeting was over, I went back to my brother's home, and the next day being Monday, I had work to do, and did not go back to the services any more, except at night; and had no interest in what they said or did, since I didn't feel I had anything in common with them. I went to plowing on Monday, and became worried as to what had happened; and wondered if it was a figment of my imagination, for I feared I was deceived, and had allowed all these people to be deceived. Surely I did not desire to deceive any one. I became so worried, I decided to go to the woods nearby, and would stay there beseeching the Lord to show me as to His purpose concerning me — a poor miserable wretch who had been carrying this burden these years, and that burden was rolled away, and yet me to be so afflicted the next day.

I threw down the lines, and started to walk away; and it seemed that I was stopped by some power before I had made three steps, and the words came to me as if someone had spoken them aloud, saying, "Rejoice greatly in the hope of eternal glory." And, if not greatly deceived, I was filled with a glory I had never known before or since: The elements seemed to be praising God, the birds sang as never before, and it seemed all the trees in the woods were clapping hands; a dove was singing nearby, and seemed to sing differently, and a sweeter song than I had ever heard one sing before. That to me was the happiest and most glorious day I have ever known. I cannot find words to describe the glory of that day; and I felt I would never again be afflicted with my sinful condition. But, how soon I was to see I was still carnal, sold under sin, and my only hope was to trust the Lord, who, I hope, gave me this revelation that I might hope in his sure mercies.

There is only one thing I know: The burden I had to carry all those years was gone; and I could not call it back in any of my natural afflictions or transgressions. So I have gone on all these

years, being comforted in this hope that it was the work of the Lord; and being comforted in hearing the gospel preached by those whom the Lord has called to, "Comfort ye my people, saith your God." How they can comfort when they are blessed by the Spirit, is more than wonderful!

It seems I can find no place to stop, as this seems to be a subject with no end to it. There are no words I can use to describe this God whom I hope I love with a love that is from everlasting to everlasting, without beginning of days or ending of time; for I believe this God saw all these things from eternity, and before any of his creation in this world; that we, as a part of his creation, were saved in the eternal purpose of God from everlasting.

Many years have gone by since that time, with many afflictions and much hard work, but I can say of a truth that I have been blessed to be satisfied to trust the Lord to enable me to bear all my natural burdens; and that I have moved according to his purpose in this life, and have been directed according to his eternal will and purpose, and have never been afflicted above that I was enabled to bear.

I will try to describe a vision I had while undergoing treatment for a heart attack. I dreamed I was carried away out of worldly things, and was caught up by an invisible power over the blackest space I have ever seen or known. I was carried to see the place where this darkness ended; and there was a place the brightest I have ever seen. It seemed the place was a dividing line, and the darkness could go no further. And I saw a beautiful stream of water, the clearest I have ever seen, and on each side of this stream was a beautiful tree. And I seemed to be told that this was the river of the water of life, proceeding from the throne of God. I saw on the East side of this stream, a woman kneeling as in prayer, looking toward the East; and by her side it appeared there were three men standing. They were there to judge as to whether I was

worthy to be her companion.

I came back to this natural world without ever being carried out of this darkness. I verily believe that if I had passed on into that bright kingdom I saw, I would not be telling this vision now. But it was not to be at that time, and I hope that when my time comes, the same presence will carry me again out of this wilderness into that bright world I saw, to be with this woman, which means to me, The Bride the Lamb's Wife. This is my hope; and sometimes I am made to feel it will even be so, which is a great comfort when I am enabled to believe so.

. . . Here I will add some thought for the consideration of he who reads. I believe God knew his purpose in all his creation before anything was formed or created; and that the Holy Bible is God's word written for and given to his people. I believe the Scriptures have a natural interpretation, and also a spiritual, and that it is impossible for a human mind to understand them, but it has to be revealed by the Holy Ghost. I believe the sun, moon, and stars have a direct application to the church, or the children of God, as well as a light for day and night in the natural kingdom. "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth, and 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." I believe the children of God are in a state of darkness until the blessed Lord says, Let there be light. They can see the glory of God; and rejoice in it. Then the sun shines, being the glory of God in their souls, and they have been awakened to eternal life through the mediation of Jesus Christ our Lord. The sun shines on the children of God only by day, and then the moon shines by night, being the lesser light, proving to me that the child of God is never left alone, but is kept by the power of God, and is ready through this same power to be revealed

in the last day.

Bunyan Linville Snyder,
Martinsville, Va.

**"WAIT O MY SOUL THY
MAKER'S WILL."**

I know of no better subject at this present time to write upon, than the hymn mentioned above. The fact is, this hymn came to my mind for the last two mornings — October 21 and 22, 1960. Therefore I hope it is according to the will of Him in whom I live, move and have my being, to write an article on this wonderful hymn.

"Wait O my soul thy Maker's will,
Tumultuous passions, all be still."

The first thought in reference to this hymn, is, why did Beddome write it? If we read this hymn carefully, I believe we will see that he was in distress of mind, the nature of which we do not know. At this time in his experience, the spirit of wisdom came upon him, showing him that, "All things work together for good to them that love the Lord, to them who are the called according to His purpose," and so he began to write this hymn.

"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."

So Beddome was made to be still and to know that his Maker's will was being done in him.

In Verse 2, he wrote as follows:

"He in the thickest darkness dwells,
Performs His work, the cause conceals.
But though His methods are unknown,
Judgment and truth support His throne."

And now just a word about the "cause conceals." This does not mean that the cause will not be revealed in the future, for it will be. Christ said on on occasion, "What I do, thou knoweth not now, but thou shalt know, hereafter."

Verse Three:

"In heaven, in earth, in air and seas,
He executes His firm decrees.
And by His saints it stands confess
That what He does is ever best."

So the Lord has decreed something, and that something will come to pass at the time appointed. And one of the things He has decreed is the salvation of His people in Christ. "For whom He did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He (Christ) might be the first-born among many brethren." Romans 8:29.

It is also written of Christ, that He was to be made sin for us, who knew no sin, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him. This is also a decree.

Now Verse 4, the last verse in this hymn. This verse is a summation to what Beddome has written in the three preceding verses.

"Wait then, my soul, submissive wait,
Prostrate before His awful seat;
And midst the terror of His rod,
Trust in a wise and gracious God."

Having been shown that the Lord is righteous in all He does, and that He worketh all things after the counsel of His own will, and what He does is ever best, Beddome calls upon his soul to be in submission, because eventually all will work out for good.

And now a deep thought arises. What is a soul? It is written that when the Lord created Adam, He breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and Adam became a living soul. So if we stop here, we will have to conclude that the whole man is a soul. But there must be something about the Adamic man besides the soul; for Beddome said, "Wait O my soul thy Maker's will."

The psalmist said, "Why art thou cast down, oh my soul, and why art thou disquieted within me? Hope thou in God, for thou shalt yet praise Him," etc. He also said, "Wonderfully and mysteriously am I made, and that my soul knoweth right well."

So the soul must be the seat of knowledge. But there seems to be something about the man above the soul. What is it?

The answer, as I see it, is the spir-

it. So man is a triune being, composed of body, soul and spirit, and this makes man the image of God. "So God created man in His own image, in the image of God created He him; male and female created He them." Genesis 1:27.

So here we have a true account of the origin of man. He didn't evolve from a monkey. Man is still a man, a horse is still a horse and a monkey is still a monkey, and so on down the line.

Now let us consider the structure of this created man. First, he is made to stand upright, showing that he is superior to the beasts of the field. "And the Lord God said, it is not good that the man should be alone; I will make him an helpmeet for him." Genesis 2:18.

If I am not mistaken, I see Christ presented here in type. Paul tells us that the first man is of the earth earthy, and the second man is the Lord from heaven. And this second man is the Lord Jesus Christ. And as it was not good for Adam to be alone, so the Lord made or chose a woman for His son. This woman is represented in the Scripture as the bride of Christ, or His Church. "And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars." Revelation 12:1. This bride of Christ is all who were chosen in Him from the foundation of the world.

In conclusion, I will just say to any and all, if something is disturbing you and all seems dark and hard to understand, wait thy Maker's will, and in due time all will be made clear some day. Someone has written the following words:

"Some day, what now seems a mystery,

Will be made clear.

The threatening clouds which now we see,

Will disappear."

A. T. Benson
Wilmington, Del.

Room 1428
127 North Dearborn Street
Chicago 2, Illinois

Dear Brother Spangler:

I can recall when many humorous experiences of Old Baptist were told from the pulpit. Sometimes a humorous incident, when told, bears more subtle meaning than at first appears on the surface. Sometimes they strike me as humorous, when others pass them by.

When you visited Mayfield, Kentucky, in Graves County last year, you attended Soldiers Creek Association. Had you traveled East into the next county to Soldiers Creek Church, you would have been in Marshall County. The incident I am about to relate concerned Senator Humphreys Marshall, from whom this county was possibly named.

In 1795, before the break in the Baptist denomination, those who joined their churches, did so, not as a soul saving act, nor on the plea of their ministers, but to become a part of the spiritual family, asking to be received by them into the fold; and then taking their place in the church life with a degree of responsibility, just as a person should in their natural family. Before being received, it was customary for them to give their Experience of Grace as being the evidence necessary to establish them as fit subjects for membership.

In 1956, the President (then Senator John F. Kennedy) wrote a book entitled "Profiles in Courage", which is now on the book shelves in paper-back edition. On page 196 he relates a story of Senator Humphrey Marshall of Kentucky.

He chose to end his career in the Senate by standing with President Washington in approving the immensely unpopular Jay Treaty with Great Britain, and this in opposition to most of his political colleagues and the constituents of his state. He returned to his home and toured his state, explaining his position. Late one night a mob dragged him from his home with the avowed intention of ducking him in a nearby river. At the water's edge Senator Marshall, with great calm and humor, told the raging mob,

"My friends, all this is irregular. In

the ordinance of immersion as practiced in the good Old Baptist church, it is the rule to require the candidate to relate his experience before his baptism is performed. Now, in accordance with established rules and precedents, I desire to give my experience before you proceed to my immersion."

He was then placed on a stump, and in the same humorous vein warmed to his work; and concluded his speech by caustically blistering all of his enemies; some whom he later described as: "poor ignorant beings who were collected on the bank of the river for the very honorable purpose of ducking me for giving an independent opinion."

I have no doubt that the President, in the preparation of this book, enjoyed the humor of the story. I do doubt, however that he, and the many that read his book today, realize that he was relating a Primitive Baptist story, and that the manner of telling it was in their tradition also.

I also wonder what other religious sect today, would have a candidate for membership asking to be heard in relating his experience.

May you, as Editor of the Signs, find continuous joy, and added fellowship, with all your brethren, is my sincere wishes,

John Franklin Lax

ELDER RHODES TO
SISTER FERGUSON

Lillie, La.

Mrs. W. L. Ferguson,
Ringgold, Virginia

Dear Sister Ferguson:

I have just received, and do appreciate, your good and comforting letter, together with your liberal contribution on the publication of the little book, **Gospel Comments** for which I desire to thank you. May the Lord bless you, together with his humble little children, to be comforted in His precious truth, as I hope the Lord enabled me to set forth in this little book.

I feel greatly encouraged and lifted up in that so many of the Lord's little ones have written me letters expressing their feeling of gratitude for the little book and its contents. I was so seized in my mind to write on this great and wonderful subject, until I undertook it, and continued to type day and night for two days and nights without getting sleepy enough to quit, until I had finished the 157 page book. Then I began to realize it was too lengthy to be published in the Signs of the Times, or other paper, so I began to be concerned about getting it published. I had 500 copies printed, and they were gone in three months. Then I published about the same number again, and they lasted about a year. I continued to get inquiries for them, so I had a thousand copies printed about a year ago; and they are going pretty good, but printing them cost more the last time than before, so I thank you so much for your kindness and contribution. May the Lord bless, lead, comfort and uphold you, and all his humble children, by the light and teaching of his blessed Holy Spirit.

This is a very troubled age of this old world; . . . and I feel that his precious and glorious coming is near at hand, even at the door; when all his precious little children will be called by Him from the graves, and from this world: When He shall say, "Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." What a wonderful and glorious day that will be to the Lord's dear children: To be with him in heaven; to see him as he is, and be like him; and there to praise him in that eternal kingdom, where there can be no more pain, sickness, sorrows, nor troubles any more; but there will be joy, love, and peace forever.

Dear Sister, how I long for that heavenly rest, if I am not woefully deceived. That is what I long for, and hope for, through the cleansing blood and righteousness of the blessed Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious and Almighty Redeemed and Saviour. There all the re-

deemed children will be gathered to praise Him forevermore.

Dear Sister, I thank you very much; and I wish I could be with you the dear children of God in your meetings, and in your homes while I am in this world. But, if I can't do that, then I long for the time when I may be gathered with them in that bright and glorious home above. Your unworthy brother in hope through Christ Jesus our Lord.

(Elder) R. W. Rhodes

Gordo, Alabama

Editor of the *Signs*:

Enclosed is my renewal for the *Signs*. It is refreshing and edifying to read a periodical which relies wholly on the Lord's keeping, instead of the many which claim that the welfare of the church depends on obedience by us in spiritual matters.

Yours in hope,
W. L. Crowley

BELIEVES GOD FIXED
ALL THINGS

Crossett, Arkansas

Dear Editors of the *Signs*:

I see that it is time to renew my subscription to the *Signs of the Times*, so am sending check for \$5.00 for two more years. I have been reading the *Signs* for over sixty years, and don't see how I could get along without them, since I do not have opportunity to go to church very often. The good articles in the *Signs*, and my Bible are my greatest source of comfort. The *Signs* still contends for for the same doctrine it did when I first began reading them — Salvation by grace; and that is food for the hungry soul.

There is no other way given whereby we are saved: It is through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. He is the Way; He is our life; and He is our

all in all. We are exhorted to be ready to give a reason of our hope in Christ; and I believe that everyone to whom the Lord has spoken peace to his soul, has been made alive to spiritual things, and has a reason for his hope. I thought that Elder Gold, in his correspondence with Dr. Hooper, gave more of the best reasons than any piece I ever read.

I know that these wonderful truths are foolishness to the wise and prudent of the world, for they are dead to spiritual things, and cannot know them.

I hope that the dear editors will be blessed of the Lord to continue on in the old paths, and publish such things as are food and drink to the hungry. I wish that I were able to write as others, but I have never been gifted in writing. But I do love to read the sweet experiences, and the wonderful travels and thoughts that some are able to write. "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people sayeth your God. Speak ye comfortably unto Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins." (Isaiah 40:1, 2)

Aren't we proud of this double portion? Without it, we wouldn't have any hope beyond the garden, would we? I am glad that I believe in God that fixed all things, to work out for the good of his people, and for His glory. Blessed by his Holy Name.

"I love the sons of grace,
The heirs of bliss divine;
Who walk in paths of righteousness,
And flee from ev'ry sin."

Because they will my faults reprove
When suddenly I err;
How I do prize their faithfulness!
Their love and tender care."

Yours in hope of a better life beyond,
F. N. Morgan

230 Marilee Row,
Grants Pass, Oregon

Dear Elders and Readers:

I am enclosing my check for \$10.00

to pay my renewal, and also for a subscription for my sister . . . If not asking too much, I wish you would mail her the June issue, as there are some very wonderful writings in there that I am sure she will enjoy. She, my brother, and I, joined the church at the same time, the fifth Sunday in February, 1948, at Muleshoe, Texas; and were baptized by Elder J. B. Hardy, a most wonderful preacher.

I take several other Baptist papers, but I think the **Signs** is the best of all. I certainly do enjoy every article in them; and the **Voices of the Past** are so wonderful.

All the preaching I get now is through the Baptist papers I take. We do not have a church here, and not enough members here to support one, as there are only five members here that I know of, and the nearest church is at Portland.

May the good Lord bless you to keep the **Signs of the Times** as pure and clean as it has been in the past, and coming for many more years.

Your brother in Christ, I hope,
C. H. Greathouse

1550 Portland
Abilene, Texas

Dear Editors:

I am enclosing money to pay for another year's subscription for the dear old **Signs of the Times**. Though I am late in renewing, I haven't missed any of the issues.

I have been a member of the Pilgrim Rest Church, at Lawn, Texas, since July, 1952, as unworthy as I am. I have often wondered why they received me, but I am glad to have a home with them. I also go to Little Flock Church, in Altus, Oklahoma, with Brother and Sister Haygood on the fourth Saturday and Sundays. Elder Haygood is pastor at Pilgrim Rest and Little Flock churches.

Thanks again for sending the **Signs** on to me.

A sister in hope,
Mrs. Agnes Jones

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The next session of the **STAUNTON RIVER UNION** will be held, the Lord willing, with Strawberry Church, the fifth Sunday in October, and Saturday before. The church is located on Highway 750, one mile from Wood's store on Highway 41, twelve miles North of Danville, Va.

All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

Mrs. W. R. Dodd, Church Clerk

SALISBURY ASSOCIATION

The **SALISBURY ASSOCIATION** is appointed to be held with the Forest Grove Church, one mile South of Parsonsburg, Maryland, October 18 and 19, 1961. Brethren and friends are invited to meet with us.

Those coming Tuesday go to the home of Louis Holloway, about six miles from Salisbury on Maryland Route 350; or if by bus, call Salisbury PI 2-1013, and you will be met. Those coming Wednesday, take Route 50 from Salisbury to Parsonsburg, turn right, and the meeting house is about one mile.

Ethel Holloway, Church Clerk

ORDINATION OF ELDER JOE L. HAMRICK

Mt. Zion Primitive Baptist Church, Weslaco, Texas, having called for a Presbytery to inquire into the qualifications of Brother Joe L. Hamrick for the gospel ministry, the following ministers and deacon were asked to compose the presbytery: Elders W. W. Taylor, E. B. Ault, W. W. Fleet, H. L. Ballard, W. M. Burkhalter, and J. B. Reid; and Deacon C. L. Chambers.

The Presbytery was organized by choosing Elder W. W. Taylor as Moderator, and Elder E. B. Ault as Clerk; with Elder Taylor to offer prayer, and Elder Reid to give the charge. Elder Burkhalter, as spokesman for the church, presented Brother Hamrick to the Presbytery; and the Moderator, Elder Taylor, asked Elder Burkhalter a number of questions regarding Brother Hamrick's qualifications for the ministry. All questions were answered satisfactorily; and the ordination proceeded with prayer by Elder Taylor and laying on of hands by the Presbytery. Elder Reid then gave the charge.

Elder Hamrick was then presented to the church as an ordained minister.

Elder E. B. Ault, Clerk

Danville, Virginia October, 1961

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EDITORIAL

MATTHEW 23

In writing, as in all acceptable service to the Lord and to his people, there must be an unction from above. This unction gives knowledge where bestowed (I John 2:20), and it seems that if I have a gift of the things of God it is so small that I fear that this unction has not been applied to me. However, if I have a little and my brother is in need of a little, I am as unfaithful in this small matter as one who is in possession of greater gifts would be in withholding from the brother.

This chapter is abounding in food for thought. Meditation upon the mighty works of God is precious to those who are exercised thereby. There is much good instruction laid down for the followers of the Lord, and there are many rigid rebukes for the unbelieving scribes and Pharisees. The instruction is as good today as when uttered; the rebukes of the unbelievers are as much in force now as when spoken. The

things that Jesus spoke to both were things that would endure; time and usage and distance would never detract the force away from that which was said.

Sometimes a zeal will arise in the Old Baptist church to avoid being like anybody and this zeal will often take us into things that are as abominable as what we would try to avoid. The Saviour enjoined upon believers that they do all that the scribes and Pharisees commanded. There is nothing wrong in doing right, if it is done for righteousness sake. Just because that the self righteous Jews talked a lot about their righteous acts does not mean that believers are not to do righteous acts. You must not say that you do these good works and then act like the unbeliever, do them not. The motive that is enjoined on God's children is a heavy burden, whereas the faithful service of his people is done in love. The difference in a burdensome service and one which is a labor of love is the difference between law and grace. One is prompted by hope of reward or escape of suffering; the other is prompted by the love of God being shed abroad in their hearts, and the only thing that is set before them is the banner of his love. They would, through the power in the blood, be good soldiers, following him wherever his command directed, and they would not count it a sorrow but a joy and a rich gift to be counted worthy in Christ to be his follower. Another difference between the serving under the banner of love and that of law, is shown in the mutual feeling of the servants. They, of the scribes and Pharisees, will add to the burdens of God's children without a helping hand, without a kind word of encouragement, without any condolences or sharing in their feeling of despair; the admonitions to walk in the more excellent things by the children of God are accompanied by the companionship of the one giving them; there is a giving of a helping hand, a reaching to one another of that which each has been given.

These scribes and Pharisees have a system that will keep them in the foreground. Their name is ever before men for they design it that way; they must be seen of men or they soon perish and die; they must pray on street corners so that many will see their piety; they must have the high seats at the social feasts as well as in the church services; they will call attention to themselves by hailing one another in public markets and referring to one another as Rabbi, which today we hear Reverend So-and So.

These scribes and Pharisees have not been confined to the Jewish race, as we have them in all kinds of orders and it is greatly to be feared that their number and kind has infiltrated the followers of the Lamb. He or she that is born of God loves God and godliness. It is not a Sunday love and forgotten on Monday; it is not a display in the crowded hall to be laid aside when alone. These desire to be known as walking in his footsteps, and their way is by showing how many of the airs and mannerisms of a supposed follower of Christ they can put on. The ancient kind of scribe and Pharisee enlarged their phylacteries for carrying portions of the law, and the modern brand have many improved ways for displaying their knowledge and ability in regard to the law. We see so much on the streets and public conveyances, advertising by spectacular garments their adherence to the things of their religion.

The religion that has got to be advertised by raised voices, different types of clothing, special addressing of one another, and all other things that will call for notice is not a religion of the Lord Jesus Christ. His religion, when bestowed upon a sinner, causes that man or woman to take the low seat (See Luke 14:8, 11). They do not feel capable of teaching, therefore they do not relish being called Rabbi nor Master nor Father, but realize that they need to sit at the feet of Jesus and learn of him. This abasing of one's self is not an act that is put on in order to be exalted, but it

is the nature of he or she that is a new creature in Christ.

I am not sent, if I am sent of God, to preach damnation, therefore, the many woes and denunciations of these serpents, generations of vipers is not mine to hurl at folks. They are not part of the gospel of peace, but belongs to those that know not the Lord. I suggest that you read these denunciations as they were hurled upon these scribes and Pharisees. Read carefully the searching question, to wit, How can ye escape the damnation of hell? The question has in it all of the fury of God against those that know not the saving grace and imputed righteousness of his Son, Jesus Christ the Lord. Suffice it is to say that this is a terrible (and yet how truthful) description of those that believe a lie.

A profession is worthless unless it is accompanied by action in keeping with it. Unless what I say is well fortified by a 'thus saith the Lord' and accompanied by a walk that is parallel with the profession, it may cloud the issue under consideration, but it will never edify. The charges and denunciations hurled at these would-be-teachers and leaders are enough to condemn before the tribunal of justice; coming from the lips of the Saviour they will satisfy the people of God. Everything must be tested that none will have the right to hurl anything at Christ. This test is not for the purpose of God learning something, but it is to confirm the elect in the precious truth that **by their fruits ye shall know them**, and to take away all words of the gainsaying generation of vipers.

God's ways are higher than ours, and we will see his hand of providence and grace all the way. Hear this people boast; listen at them as they mock poor Isaac at the breast of that aged woman; hear them tell about piping in the streets, about paying tithes, about fasting, about all kind of benevolences. Are they like this? Is their profession from the heart or the lip? Does their holiness and piety before the Lord stem from a

heart made pure by blood or is it the outward walk of one whose aim is policy? Let us see; let us have the whole truth revealed by the work of the Lord. Behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes; and some of them ye shall kill and crucify; and some of them ye shall scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city. What has become of their goodness and piety and holiness? What has happened to cast a shadow upon their profession? They have said, but done different; they paid tithes of small matters, but have neglected the weightier; they have had the outside of the cup and the platter clean, while we now see how vile and filthy it is on the inside; they have been bearing themselves as dead to sin, this being shown by whitened sepulchres, when inwardly they were filled with dead things.

Watch these vipers as they hound the servants of the Lord; watch them as they slay the Lord of glory. The blood of saints and martyrs have run as rivers, as this professing bunch of religious fanatics have acted out what is in the heart. Every religious order under the sun has punned at the others that they were guilty of this, when they themselves are black as night with this guilt hung upon them. As a people the Old School Baptists have not persecuted others, but at the blood we have shed in persecuting one another, in backbiting and devouring one another. In what name has it been in? What has been our excuse for doing it? Oh, how sad to relate that it has been as lame as the general argument of the unbelieving Jew in crucifying the Lord of glory. How truly the words, For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel (Rom. 9:6).

Now we come to one of the Scriptures that has mystified the followers of the Lord. "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye

would not." Is the language addressed to the same person as in Isaiah 40:1? Is this Jerusalem, with her blood shed, rioting, clamoring, the same Jerusalem that shall be seen as a quiet city (Isaiah 33:20) Are these inhabitants of Jerusalem the same ones upon whom the Lord is going to pour the Spirit of grace (Zech. 12:10)? No, indeed not. These are vipers, hypocrites, serpents; these are they that can not escape the damnation of hell; these are they that kill-est the prophets and stonest them that were sent unto them; these are they that put the Lamb of God to death. These are the ones that are being addressed. But the question keeps coming up, Why does He address them in this way? We all admit that no man nor set of men nor hell with all of its fury has ever kept the almighty Spirit of God from gathering his chosen people together. All Egypt stood in array against the God of Israel, but He brought every Israelite out on dry ground. All the kingdom of Nebuchadnezzar was engaged to bring men to worship the golden image, but Israel's God preserved the helpless Hebrew children. Saul and all the Jewish courts were engaged in putting to death God's humble poor, but one ray of light and one sentence from above ended all that. We are fully persuaded that God manifest in the flesh did not make a stirring plea to Jerusalem to let him gather together the children of Jerusalem. Let us note some things that was not said, to wit: He did not say, How often I would have gathered Jerusalem, and she would not; He did not say, How often I would have gathered thy children, and they would not; He did not say, How often I would have gathered you, and you would not, but what he did say was, How often would I have gathered thy children, and **ye would not**. How clearly and implicitly the Saviour is leaving these in the middle of their perverseness. These are the same ones that heard him on another occasion, to wit, "Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father you will do" — and on this occasion

they would have stoned him (John 8:44, 59).

That Christ manifested his human relationship can not be disputed. He was a Jew and he loved them as a nation; he was in the flesh with a human nature. God the Father and Creator never manifested any relationship with his chosen people. Not so with Christ, for not only did he love after the flesh, but he was sorrowful unto death. He was grieved by the neglect and indifference of those that followed him. On one occasion a young man came to him, saying, Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life? The Saviour reminded him of the law. His reply was that he had kept all that. Christ loved him, but if the love was anything more than one national for another, it is not shown, for the young man did not show any knowledge of sonship, and his going away grieved, brought Christ to say, How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of heaven. He could not have loved him as a child of God, seeing that he was not in the kingdom. At another time he wept over the city of Jerusalem, not because it was filled with his brethren in the Lord but filled with his people after the flesh (Luke 19:41). How that he could be touched with the feeling of our infirmities and not experience our infirmities has not been explained, so I will, as blessed of the Lord, continue to say that he was tempted as we, but that in the nature which we fell under the temptation, that he stood, thus being able to succor us at all times.

How often we look at his record, and as often amazed that he sorrowed as man sorrows; how often we find him burdened under the many vicissitudes of his checkered life, and how glad we are of One that understands of our frailties. The divine will of God does not come and go as the ebb and flow of a stream, but is constant from all eternity; the will of Jesus toward Jerusalem was one of oftentimes. **He often** would have gathered them, and as often they would not. How forcibly this shows the human

will of our Saviour, which will was subject to the divine will. We must note whom he would have gathered, and who would not. We also must remember that he did gather them, but it was not those that **would not**, but it was that Jerusalem which is free, is from above, and is the mother of all the children of God. How marked is the distinction between this city which is stubborn and murderers and stoners of the messengers of God, and that blessed number of the children within the city that our Lord defends and gathers together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings. As the day of extinction for this city gathers in the impending doom, how he did warn, as a hen warns her little ones; how he did communicate to them the dangers of remaining in the city marked for destruction; how far reaching his repeated warnings to flee the city that has always been noted for its viperous nature. It is in perfect complacency that I rest: 1st. That the children were all removed before that city fell. 2nd. That the legalists fell with the city, still determined that he would not gather the children. 3rd. That the city was left desolate to those that would not, but that the children were all brought out to a new and living way; to a city of habitation, wherein dwelleth righteousness; to a city where the brethren are all ways and always welcome, being given bread instead of stones, things pertaining unto life instead of being dealt death; to a city that is quiet and in which no gallantry ever passes nor rowing is ever known, but, to the contrary every vessel is less than all the others, and all of them have their being in Christ, live and move in his sovereign and efficacious will, which will is that none of them be left there anymore (Ezek. 39:28). 4th. The city is still desolate to the viper minded, and will continue to be so until the day comes in which they shall say, "Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord."

VOICES OF THE PAST
"He being dead yet speaketh"

THE CHURCH OF GOD,
WHAT IS IT?

How indefinite and vague is the popular idea of the church of the Living God; and how various are the applications of the word **church** in the parlance of the learned and unlearned theologians of the present times. A building erected for the convenience and accommodation of religious convocations, by almost universal consent, is called a **church**; and by that name, with great ceremony, is frequently consecrated, and with much parade given to the Lord! A church made of wood, or of bricks and mortar, so consecrated is by many regarded as a most holy place. Others with scarcely less absurdity apply the term to all religious organizations; as the Catholic church, the Methodist, Presbyterian, Episcopalian, or Mormon church: and these with very many other religious bodies are very generally regarded as churches of God, but of different denominations, alike intitled to be known as churches of God, and all in their different ways, real worshipers of God, and alike acceptable to him. But the Scriptures of truth can only recognize the church of God, as one body, having but one head, built upon one rock, by but one builder. The inspired apostle Paul says. "There is one body, and one spirit; even as ye are called in one hope of your calling: one Lord, one faith, one baptism. One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all." Will this apostolic description of the church of God apply to all the discordant and conflicting organizations which claim the name, but deny all the essential characteristics which divine inspiration has shown to be indispensable to the church of God? Do all these towering piles of brick, or lumber which men call churches, stand vitally united to Christ as

their head? Have all the various denominations alluded to above, kept the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace? Have they all but one Lord, one faith, and one baptism? Are they all one body, having but one spirit; and do they all even profess to be called in one hope of their calling? They certainly do not.

If then these great popular denominations, when weighed in the balance, are found wanting, and when tried by the Scriptures are rejected; does it not become us, who profess to be Old School, or Primitive Baptists, most carefully to examine, in the light of divine revelation whether we possess the marks by which the holy Scriptures identify the church of God?

When the rising Savior brought the immortality of his church to light; when he had vanquished death and finished transgression, made an end of sin, having obtained eternal redemption for all his members; he ascended up on high; went to his Father and our Father, to receive the kingdom which the Father had appointed him, and his coronation as King of Righteousness and Priest to the Most High God; he was raised up far above all principalities and powers; and all thrones and dominions were made subject to him; and he was given to be Head over all things to his church, which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all. In evidence of all this He sent the Spirit down, as he had told his disciples he would, which came like a rushing mighty wind, immersing all who, obedient to his command, were in the house, and recognizing them as the only body vitalized by his Spirit and Baptized with the Holy Ghost and with fire. On this occasion the church appeared in the first disclosure of her gospel organization; and was expressly recognized as the church, unto which God continued to add such as should be saved. The constituents of the church of Christ are, first, Our Lord Jesus Christ himself, as the Head, the King and only and blessed Potentate, the Prophet and Priest, the Way the Truth and the Life. In whom is vested

exclusively all legislative power. Second, the Apostles of the Lamb, seated, by the special command of Christ, on twelve thrones of judgment, not of legislation, immediately inspired by the Holy Ghost to rule in Judgment, as infallible expounders of the laws, ordinances, doctrine and order of their Sovereign. Next to the apostles, are Evangelists, and pastors and teachers. These are solemnly required to recognize, and be governed by the laws of Christ the King, as laid down and expounded by the enthroned apostles; with express instructions to be governed by the laws and institutions of Christ, without presuming under any circumstance to alter, revise, add to or diminish from the decisions made and recorded by the apostles. Deacons, exhorters, helps and every gift as found in the apostolic rules, are to be recognized precisely as it has pleased God to distribute them among the members of Christ's body for the profit and benefit of all the church.

All the members which the church has power to recognize, must come in by the door; all who would climb up some other way, are thieves and robbers, who come in only to steal, to kill and to destroy.

As all the laws of the church of Christ are immutable and irrevokable, the same rule which was observed at the day of Pentecost for admitting to fellowship are in force throughout all ages in Christ's church; and any community claiming to be his church that does not recognize them is an harlot and not the church of God. This declaration may seem uncharitable; but let those who fear God beware how they controvert it.

We hold, first, that Christ has no church in earth or heaven over which he does not positively preside.

Second, There is no church existing over which Christ presides except where his apostles rule in judgment. For he himself has said, "When the Son of man shall sit on the throne of his glory; (his Mediatorial throne is the throne of his

glory) then shall ye also set upon twelve thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel." We know that the apostles are not here now in the flesh, nor is the Savior now here in the flesh; for henceforth know we them no more in the flesh. But all their doctrine order and decisions are here in every church or branch of the church where Christ presides as the King; for Christ has farther said that whosoever rejects his apostles rejects him also. They cannot be separated in the organization of his kingdom or church.

Now then, Let the laws of Christ, embracing all the doctrine which he established, as settled forever by the decisions of the holy apostles, as left on record in the New Testament, be regarded as the infallible standard or test by which the church of Christ is identified, and, it must follow that all who are deficient in these essential and indispensable points are weighed in the balance and found wanting. This cannot be the case with the church of Christ; for she is the Ground and Pillar of the Truth. She is the perfection of beauty. She is the workmanship of God, and All his work is perfect. It therefore follows inevitably that all who profess to be the church of Christ, and reject him, his apostles, his doctrine, his ordinances, or his government, are base imposters.

In view of these well defined principles, let us look well to the order established by the apostles, for the reception of members to church fellowship and membership. Of those who were received on and about the day of Pentecost it is written, that the Spirit was poured out in a most astonishing manner, in fulfillment of the prophecy of Joel, by virtue of which many heard the preaching of the apostles, so that they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? Thus quickened by the Spirit and made to feel and know their lost and helpless condition, their minds were directed to the apostles for instruction,

and when the way of life and salvation was opened to their understanding, and the word applied to them by the Holy Ghost, they gladly received the word. A wonderful change was wrought in them; insomuch that the word which had no attraction, and of the spirit and power of which they had always been so profoundly ignorant before, now seemed to them as apples of gold, in pictures of silver: as words of life, peace and comfort to their hearts. The apostles' doctrine, which so recently they could ridicule and reject with scorn, was more to be desired than all the glories of the world. Without reluctance now, they gladly received the word. It was perfectly adapted to their renewed state; for now being born again of an incorruptible seed, by the word of God, they desired the sincere milk of the word, that they might grow thereby. Hitherto they had despised and hated the apostles and their doctrine; but now by the quickening power of the Holy Spirit which God had poured upon them, they not only received, but gladly received the word, and according to the word as preached to them by the apostles they were baptized, and added to the church. That is, they were brought manifestly into the fellowship of the apostles, and the apostolic church. And they continued steadfast in the apostles' doctrine; having gladly received it, they continued to be perfectly satisfied with it. The record given that they continued **steadfast** in the apostles doctrine, implies that they encountered opposition; which they certainly did, for it was a time of severe persecution. But so deeply were they rooted and grounded in the truth, that neither the bitterness of cruel persecution, nor the specious allurements of new doctrines zealously promulgated by Judaizing, or other teachers, could shake their confidence in the apostles' doctrine. The apostles' doctrine, and the apostles' fellowship are so joined together that they cannot be separated. If steadfast in the one we are equally so in both. But if we

depart from the one, we cease to enjoy the other. In departing from the apostles' doctrine, we may secure the fellowship of the world, or of anti-Christ; but we cannot depart from their instruction, and still retain their fellowship.

Thus, quickened by the Holy Ghost, recipients of the doctrine of the apostles, baptized on profession of faith in obedience to the command of Christ, fully recognizing Christ as the Head over all things to his church, and the apostles as divinely authorized and qualified exponents of all the laws, order, ordinances and doctrine of his kingdom, we have described the Old School, or Primitive Baptist Church, built upon the foundation of the apostles, Jesus Christ being the chief corner Stone. And being thus steadfast in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, they will be steadfast also in prayers, and in breaking of bread; and they may confidently expect the Lord will add to them such as shall be saved. How very different in all respects is the church of the First Born, from those humanly constructed **religious** organizations which have become so numerous and diversified in these times. However much they may differ from each other in some characteristic peculiarities, they are all alike in adopting the spirit of the proposition of the "Seven women, who shall take hold of one man, saying, We will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel; only let us be called by thy name, to take away our reproach." Isa. iv. 1. They dislike to be called anti-Christ, or false churches, as that would be too humiliating: but to live on every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God, by no means suits their taste. They have no relish for the apostles' doctrine, nor do they desire their fellowship; they desire rather to make a figure in the world, and be at liberty to believe whatever doctrine they please; conform to such rites and ceremonies as they please; get religion when they please, of whatever

kind or quality they please; keep it as long as they please, and lay it aside or exchange it when they please. Such churches as they presumptuously call themselves churches, are fond of receiving such members as will find themselves, having self-righteousness enough to live upon and only desiring to have a name to live while they are dead. For them the apostles' doctrine is quite too stale; it is behind the age of progression in which we live; it is to slow, it waits for God to add to his church such as shall be saved; while their plan is to add themselves such as shall not be saved; or such as give no evidence that they shall be saved.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe, March 15, 1866.)

OBITUARIES

MRS. H. W. LAWLESS

Sister H. W. (Annie) Lawless was born Margaret Annie Griffin, June 9, 1877, in Tuscaloosa, Alabama; and departed this life April 28, 1961. She was united in marriage to H. W. Lawless in 1899; and to this union were born five children, who survive: one daughter, Mrs. A. B. McMillian, Lawn, Texas; four sons, Clyde, of Lawn; Clinton, Floyd, and Clinton, of Abilene, Texas. Surviving also are 9 grandchildren. Her husband died April 28, 1958.

They came to Taylor County, Texas in 1902; and she was a charter member of Pilgrim Rest Church, Lawn, Texas, and remained a faithful member for fifty years, lacking a few days. Surely a mother in Israel has passed from this old world of sin and sorrow to be at rest, and asleep in Jesus until his second coming to gather his people home.

Funeral services were conducted by her pastor, C. M. Haygood, and Elder Hanley.

(Elder) C. M. Haygood

MAHALA M. HAUk

Sister Mahala M. Hauk was born September 20, 1865, near Greenville, Texas, the daughter of the late Mr. and Mrs. R. W. Simmons. She was married July 23, 1882, to Samuel H. Hauk, and to this union nine children were born. Her

husband and six children preceded her in death. She passed away November 16, 1960, at the age of more than ninety-five years.

Sister Hauk is survived by one son, N. L. Hauk, Oklahoma City, Oklahoma; two daughters: Mrs. M. L. Hammons, Ringling, Oklahoma; and Mrs. Robby Boyd, Snyder, Oklahoma; and by 12 grandchildren, 21 great grandchildren, and 6 great great grandchildren; and many other relatives and friends — as shown by the large number who were present at her funreal, and by the great number of flowers.

She moved to Oklahoma in 1905, residing at Snyder most of the time. She united with the Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church at Mt. Zion, near Cash, Texas, and was baptized in June, 1887. After coming to Oklahoma, she moved her membership to Dawson Valley Church, near Vernon, Texas; and later to Little Flock Church, Altus, Oklahoma, where she remained a faithful and highly esteemed member. She was a semi-invalid for many years, and in March, 1954, she fell and broke her hip, and was not afterwards able to walk. But as long as her eyesight permitted, she spent much of her time reading her Bible, *The Signs of the Times*, and her hymn book, her mind staying clear to the end.

Funeral services were held in Snyder, Oklahoma, November 18, 1960, by her pastor, Elder W. W. Taylor, assisted by a minister whose name I do not have. She was laid to rest in Fairlawn Cemetery, Snyder, Oklahoma, beside her husband.

Sister Hauk was always glad to see her friends and talk with them concerning the Bible; and she would often say, "The Lord has been so good to me all the days of my life." She was saddened by the death of her precious son, Brother Henry Hauk, who died two years before she did. May the Lord bless the loved ones and comfort them, is my prayer and desire for Jesus' sake.

(Elder) R. W. Rhodes

LILLIE LAW CARTER

It has pleased the Lord to remove from our midst and from this time world, our dearly beloved sister, Lillie Law Carter. Sister Carter was born July 17, 1887, in Franklin County, Virginia, daughter of the late William Lee Law and Lodeskie Spencer, of Patrick County. She passed away Sunday night, April 30, 1961, in Martinsville General Hospital, making her stay here 73 years. Besides her husband, Brother Thomas Green Carter, she is survived by one son, William Thomas Carter, of Bassett, Route 1; one daughter, Mrs. Jessie Mason of Portsmouth, Virginia; two brothers, Mr. H.

A. Law of Bassett; Mr. Posie Law of Beckley, West Virginia; two sisters, Mrs. Lee Mullins, of Bassett; Mrs. Goldie Adams, of Collinsville, Virginia. Also, one daughter preceded her in death on June 23, 1923, Erma Maude Carter. She leaves eight lovely grandchildren.

Sister Carter united with Republican Primitive Baptist Church on May 9, 1911, of which she was a loyal member, filling her seat whenever she could. We feel that her walk and her talk, and her way and manner of life, made manifest what she was kept by grace. We think of her now as we bow our heads in humble submission to the will of our Heavenly Father; we think of her faith and the patient love and devotion to her husband, to her children and grandchildren, and her church.

We would see her come to the church when we felt that she was not physically able to come. We think also of her labors of love in the Lord, and how that we feel that she was interested in the welfare of others more than herself, even to the end. Our sympathy and our prayers go out to the family and we Primitive Baptists in this part of the country will miss Sister Carter very much, but we feel that our loss is her gain.

Funeral services were conducted for Sister Carter in Riverview Church by Elder C. E. Turner and the unworthy writer, in the midst of a large congregation who mourned with the Carter family. She was laid to rest in Rose-lawn Cemetery in Martinsville, Virginia, to await the second coming of the Lord, when we hope that we can join with Sister Carter and praise the Lord of Lords and King of Kings forever.

Leonard J. Brammer

AUGUSTUS HOWELL O'NEAL

Augustus Howell O'Neal departed this life September 15, 1960, at the age of seventy-two. He was born in Talbot County, Georgia, but lived most of his life in Columbus, Georgia. He was retired by the City of Columbus, Georgia, after twenty-two years of service. In the Spring of 1958 he moved to Atlanta, Georgia.

He was married to Zula Thetford October 12, 1914, and to this union were born three sons: A. Howell, Jr., of Louisville, Kentucky; Charles W., Jonesboro, Georgia; and Marion C., of Memphis, Tennessee. Two grandsons and two granddaughters also survive him. We miss him so much.

He was not a member of New Harmony Church, near Atlanta, but he seldom missed being seated in his pew when the services convened. He loved the Pastor, Elder O. J. Croker, and the brethren and sisters. Although he was in a very poor state of health, he loved

to go to Church and hear the sweet sound of the gospel, hoping he would someday be given a new body. His present body was crippled up from rheumatoid arthritis, and he also had a cancer on the larynx. He suffered much pain, but he did it in patience.

Elder O. J. Croker preached the graveside service and was assisted by Mr. Mack Anthony, of Columbus, Georgia. Interment was at Park-hill Cemetery, Columbus, Georgia, amongst the presence of many relatives and friends.

"O Death, where is thy sting?
O Grave, where is thy victory?"

Written by his wife,
Zula Thetford O'Neal

THOMAS CURRY ALLRED

God called the spirit of Brother Allred from this world to be with Him in Glory May 31, 1961. He was born and raised in the community of Bush Arbor Church. The Lord blessed him to live a long and useful life, 81 years. He leaves to mourn his departure one son, A. Lewis Allred, of High Point, N. C., where he had made his home since the death of his last wife; one sister, Mrs. Mamie Garrison, Route 2, Elon College, N. C.; one brother, Mr. Ezra Allred of Burlington, N. C.; and four grandchildren.

Brother Allred was twice married. His first wife, Sealey Ann Smith, lived only a few years. He later married Ada Smith who died January 9, 1951.

At our April, 1951, meeting he united with the church at Bush Arbor and lived a faithful member until his death. We shall continue to miss him, yet we can't but feel our loss is his gain. He so often prayed that God would take him from his suffering, yet he was one of the humblest men I ever saw, so thankful for everything that was done for him. Surely he could say with Paul, "I am in a strait betwixt two having a desire to depart and be with Christ which is far better." May God's blessing be upon each member of his family. Especially, would we like to mention how tenderly and lovingly his every need was taken care of by his son and family.

Brother Allred's funeral was largely attended at Bush Arbor Church and conducted by his pastor, Elder W. C. King, and Elder J. Harvey Smith. His body was laid to rest in the silent tomb to await the coming of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, who shall call his sleeping dust to arise and come forth made like His own glorious body, where sickness, sorrow and death shall never come.

This memorial was approved by Bush Arbor Church in her regular conference at her

July, 1961, meeting; and ordered a copy be put on our church record book, a copy sent to his son and a copy be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

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

EVADNA LANDERS DUDNEY

Sister Evadna, affectionately known by many as "Vad", Landers Dudney, died Wednesday, March 1, 1961. She was born near Emmet, Nevada County, Arkansas, November 16, 1878, and was the youngest of 15 children of Elder and Permelia Matthews Landers. She was blessed to live a beautiful life, died in a good old age, full of years and gathered to her people, being 82 years, 3 months and 13 days old at the time of her death. She was married to Ira B. Dudney December 8, 1897, who preceded her in death on March 1, 1947.

Survivors are her four daughters, Ivad Dudney, Mrs. Trula Lloyd, Mrs. Marie Brownning and Mrs. Esther Tillman, all of Texarkana, Texas; a son, Bennett Landers Dudney of Kansas City, Mo.; a brother, Joe E. Landers of Texarkana; six grandchildren, two great grandchildren and a number of nieces and nephews.

Sister Dudney was a faithful member of New Hope Primitive Baptist Church, near Hope, Arkansas. The date she joined is not known, but at an early age when her father served as pastor in the late 1800's going to his appointments horseback. She loved her church and continued her attendance as long as she lived. She will be greatly missed by all who knew her and especially by the brethren and sisters of New Hope Church.

Her funeral service was conducted Friday, March 3, 1961, by her former pastor, Elder E. J. Lambert, at New Hope Church. Her present pastor, the writer, was ill and unable to be present. The beautiful floral offerings and large congregation of brethren and sisters, relatives and friends was evidence of the love and respect of all that knew her. Her body was laid to rest in New Hope Cemetery to await the glorious resurrection when the bodies of all the Saints shall be changed and raised by the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, and fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby He is able to subdue all things unto Himself.

May God bless and comfort her loved ones and all that mourn her passing.

Elder W. A. Speer

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

WHEREAS, The Lord has seen fit, in his wise providence, to remove from us by death, our dear brother Elder G. E. Frazier, on May 30, 1961. For several years Elder Frazier was in bad health, and while he was not pastor of New Hope Church, he would often open the services and preach when he was able. He was always present when health permitted and had a way to travel. We loved him, and feel that our loss is his gain; therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, That we bow in humble submission to Him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will; for he never makes a mistake; and

RESOLVED, That we, the church at New Hope, have lost a faithful brother and elder; his wife a good husband; his children a kind father; and his neighbors a good neighbor; and that we therefore send a copy of these resolutions to his wife; and a copy spread on our minutes; and a copy be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Done by order of the church, with Brother Taylor acting as moderator.

Sister Minnie Loftis, Clerk

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

WHEREAS, God in his infinite wisdom and everlasting love, has seen fit to remove from our midst our dear brother, Junius Howard Gay; who was born December 11, 1889, in Franklin County, N. C., and died February 10, 1961; making his stay on earth more than seventy-one years. He was married to Elonie Murray, and to this union eight children were born, four boys and four girls, who survive, except one son preceded him in death. There are twenty-seven grandchildren.

He joined the Sandy Grove Primitive Baptist Church, Nash County, N. C., May 23, 1923, and was baptized by Elder George Boswell. He was a faithful member, always filling his seat unless providentially hindered. He was ordained a deacon May 23, 1954. He will be greatly missed by his wife, Sister Gay, and the family, and by many friends, and by all the churches he visited.

His funeral was preached by Elders J. B. Murry and D. B. Stowes; and he was laid to rest to await the coming of our Lord. Murry and D. B. Stokes; and he was laid to

BE IT RESOLVED, That a copy of this be sent the *Old Faith Contender* and to the *Signs of the Times*; and a copy spread on our church books.

Done while in conference.

L. H. Stephenson, Moderator
W. T. Brantley, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 129

DANVILLE, VA., NOVEMBER, 1961

NO. 11

WILL CHRIST ACCEPT ME?

"Much is being said among the orders of today
Over the radio, the press, and every way,
About accepting Christ if you will; —
Has no place in my humble heart to fill.

I just wonder if they look
Inside of God's precious Book;
And when hungry sinners feel His power
They accept Him at that same hour.

For salvation comes by saving grace,
And with the sinner finds its place;
In the depths of the penitent heart
Where the Spirit performs His part.

Not by works that man can do
But by grace through and through;
So why, will mortal man attempt to change
And preach a doctrine that is strange.

It must be they do not know
About the things they try to show;
Put stumbling blocks in the way of men
And pull them down to deeper sin.

For they have no food for the hungry soul,
And all is husk, upon the whole;
But the "Elect Lady" they can't deceive,
Because the little flock won't believe.

For they have something from above
In bonds of mercy, peace, and love;
So let us look to God with praise
For all His plans and righteous ways."

Selected by a reader.

"THE ROCK THAT IS HIGHER THAN I"

(Job 38:15, 16: Psalm 61:2)

One night, in deep slumberings,
I had an impressive dream;
In this dream it seems I crossed
The dry bed of a stream.

Now, when I had safely crossed
The bridge across the sand,
A dear late Elder met me,
And took me by the hand.

It appears that then he led me
Up on a great high rock,
And that there he talked with me
Of joining the "little flock."

A church meeting was being held
Upon this rock nearby,
Which is a pertinent figure of
"The Rock that is higher than I."

I hope this dream was indicative of
A good work in me begun,
And in the resurrection to meet
The Just and Holy One.

Oh! to be raised in His likeness,
And be for ever blest,
To spend with the saints in glory
An "eternal Sabbath of rest."

How sweet it is to contemplate
The consummate bliss above!
Nothing there doth mar this joy,
Where all is perfect love.

C. W. Vass

ELECT

There was a man, a very pious man. He was zealous of good works and told God about them in prayer. In his own mind, he kept the law tithing and fasting. But in the same church a fellow man of his, humble and afraid, would not lift his eyes toward heaven, but prayed only, "God be merciful to me a sinner". Jesus said of him, "I tell you this man went down to his house justified, rather than the other". (Luke 18:10-14)

Did you ever ask yourself why? What did he do to obtain justification? The answer is, nothing. Christ who fulfilled the law and satisfied justice, by taking the sins of his people on himself and dying in their law room instead, knew the Publican as an elect. However, the Pharisee, who tried to fulfill the law with his own good works, was unjustified, not having Christ to take his place.

We often are made to wonder why Christ would leave the throne of glory,

take on flesh with its accompanying trials and tribulations, die on the cross of Calvary for sin cursed man, and ascend again to heaven to continue making intercessions with the Father for them. The great love and mercy He has for the elect, his chosen people, from the foundation of the world, was God's purpose in the earthly ministry of his Son. He came to save such poor, wretched sinners as the Publican mentioned above, through grace and mercy, just because He willed it so.

Naturally speaking, the deserving one of these two would have been the Pharisee, who not only did good works but left off doing bad ones (in his own imagination). However, for some reason known only to himself, God saw fit to choose the poor and humble at heart, as vessels of mercy. He chose the publicans of this world who bring no offerings, rather than the Pharisees who boast of their tithes, fasting and offerings. These vessels of mercy, the elect, are his, not because of their good works, but because they were chosen in Christ Jesus before the world began; and only because He willed it so. "For He saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. So then, it is not of him that willetteth, nor of him that runneth, but of God who sheweth mercy." (Romans 9:15-16) It seems the Pharisee and Publican were seeking the same thing, but only the Publican found it. Why? Because the Pharisee "sought it not by faith, but as it were by the works of the law." (Romans 9:33)

There was a son, an obedient son. He fulfilled the request of an aging father and worked to receive his blessing. However, through deceit, his younger brother stepped in and received the blessing before the work was finished, yet, who can question the will of an all wise God who said concerning the younger brother, the deceitful one, "Jacob have I loved", and of the working one, "Esau have I hated"? For making this choice between the two can we ask, "Is there

unrighteousness with God? God forbid." (Romans 9:14) "I have loved you, saith the Lord. Yet ye say, wherein hast thou loved us? Was not Esau Jacob's brother, saith the Lord: yet I loved Jacob. And I hated Esau and laid his mountains and his heritage waste for the dragons of the wilderness." (Malachi 1:2-3) Here the Lord himself speaks of a choice, an elect, and though they were brothers, even twins, with like backgrounds and heritage, He loved one and hated the other. "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. (Romans 9:11) We still question why, oh why, and the answer comes from inspiration, "even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight." (Luke 10:21)

Jacob, who represents the elect, was poor, underserving and unworthy of the blessing which, under the law, was justly Esau's. However, God saw fit through his love to exalt Jacob and turn Esau out into the desert. In his decree He willed that the seed of Jacob should be as the dust of the earth, and "in thee and in thy seed shall all the families of the earth be blessed." (Genesis 28:14)

There was a persecutor, a man who sought to bind and slay the disciples of the Lord. He guarded the garments of those who slew Stephen, and consented to his death. He also made havoc of the church and imprisoned the members. While this persecutor was on the way to Damascus, with letters of authority to bind any disciple of the Lord he might find there, he was surrounded by a light from heaven and fell to the earth. After the Lord made himself known to this man, who was a religious worker under the law, with much zeal, and yet a persecutor of God's elect, he asked, "Lord what will thou have me to do?" and the Lord answered, "It shall be told thee what thou must do." (Acts 9:6) From that day forward Paul preached and wrote to the children of God, comforting and suffering with them in love. His ministry to and for

the elect is recorded in his many epistles in the Bible. His epistles, or letters or communications were meant for instruction and comfort to the addressed, or elect, and not the whole world. For instance he addressed his brethren at Ephesus: "Paul an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, to the saints which are at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ." (Ephesians 1:1)

Because it was his holy will, God elected and set apart Paul, a former persecutor of Christians, to minister unto a people he elected and set apart as his own. Paul had done no good works to merit his salvation, being in the business of persecuting Christians under the guise of religion. His only claim to heaven and life eternal is through the death of Jesus Christ, who fulfilled the law in his stead. He was thus chosen because of the will of God and love and mercy of his Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

Mrs. Cisco Barron
Lillie, La.

EXPERIENCE OF ELDER P. D. GOLD

(Editor's Note: Many of our readers enjoyed the re-publication of Elder Gold's Correspondence with Dr. Hooper, and we are requested to re-publish his experience. We are glad to comply with this request, for we believe many will also enjoy it.)

"But this I confess unto thee, that after the way which they call heresy, so worship I the God of my fathers, believing all things which art written in the law and the prophets. And have hope toward God, which they themselves allow, that there shall be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and unjust." (Acts 24:16-16)

Many have requested me to write my experience and manner of life, but it has seemed to me that my life is so poor and sinful that it is unbecoming in me to make much personal reference. However, it is a fact that what each and every one writes reflects his own character and inner life. If a politician writes

in bitter flings at the opposite party, it is because his heart is full of that strife. Should one's writing or talk be of lewdness, it is because his soul is full of that filth, and if you could mirror his heart you would see the imagery of this bestiality ruling in him. Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh.

The prophets and apostles spoke and wrote as they were moved, of the things of Christ Jesus. They spake and wrote not by the will of man, but that which they had seen and heard and their hands had handled of the word of life, they have declared unto us. Notice how constantly Paul refers to his own experience in his writings. Indeed what could we know of redemption were there no living epistles written by the Holy Ghost in our hearts, and known and read of all men. In that sense the apostles were themselves a savor of life unto life in them who are saved; that is, those who are saved could and did behold in the apostles so sweet smelling a savor of Jesus that was delightful to them, and they glorified God for such gifts. So every servant of God should so act and conduct himself in both word and deed that all that love the Lord Jesus will be charmed with his good conduct. No one should ever be ordained to preach that has a bad name among them without; that is, that acts so badly that outsiders have a right to speak evil of him for his dishonest conduct. It is not persecution for one to be talked about because of his defaulting conduct. The enemies could find no fault of Daniel except concerning his religion. He could say, like Paul, we have defrauded no men, therefore receive us.

It is the inner and real life of a Christian that you desire to know. Hence the writers so often tell of their own joys and sorrows. The Bible is made up in great part of the recital of the troubles and deliverance of God's people. It is only in this way, or by the fruits they bear, that one can see the handwriting of Deity in the life of another. Nor is there any other way for you to have

hope that you are saved, only as the Lord works in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure, and your working out and making manifest that salvation to others as well as to your own comfort. So that we are to be ready always to give to every man that asks us a reason of the hope that is in us with meekness and fear. For one that loves the truth desires to hear you tell what great things that the Lord has done for you, and had mercy on you. Hence Jesus said to the one out of whom he had cast so many devils, go home to thy friends and tell them, not what you have done, but what the Lord has done for you; and that is all that we hear of his doing afterward.

Notwithstanding my embarrassment to refer to myself so much, when an aged and much beloved Sister Percy Ham recently said to me she desired to read my experience before she died, and earnestly requested me to write it out and publish it, there was a willingness of heart to do so. The text of Scripture at the head of this article occurred to me this morning as embodying the substance of what it is my mind to write.

I was born in what is called Cleveland County, N. C. (then it was Rutherford County) on the waters of Sandy Run Creek, almost on a line and equi-distant between King's Mountain and Gilberttown, places made famous by important scenes and events of the Revolutionary war. When a youth one of these old soldiers lived near; and this old man is about the only Revolutionary soldier within my memory. The date of my birth is March 25, 1833, so that the great progress made in modern arts and sciences, such as application of steam to machinery, has been done chiefly within my memory. Such a thing as telegraphy was not known then, which has so revolutionized business. There was not a railroad in operation in all this country at that time.

The name of my father was Milton Gold. My mother's maiden name was

Martha Fortune. My father was a farmer and a poor man that never owned a servant, though it was common in the South for men to own slaves. He and my mother with their children did the farm and house work. It was not common for him to hire work done. From early morn to dewy eve it was labor, labor. Seldom did we have a Saturday afternoon even for rest or sport.

It seemed hard to me not to be allowed to roam and play or frolic. For they did not allow their children to go to dances or parties. It was only a short while after crops were laid by that we went to school a few weeks. Our winters were spent chiefly in clearing up large new grounds for cultivation. That boys and girls of this day may know how my time was spent in youth, this part is written.

Now the memory of my parents is dear to me for giving me this severe discipline.

What were my habits of life? While my morals were fairly good, yet my nature was abominably corrupt. It is not my way of thinking to gloss over crime, nor blacken that which is good. While men in writing memoirs of life or obituaries of those gone, hide the faults and magnify the virtues of their subjects, this is not according to the pattern shown in the mount. The Bible tells of our first father's sin, and of our first mother's nakedness. It does not keep back the drunkenness of Noah nor the adultery of David, nor the back-sliding of his son, Solomon, nor the faults of God's people. When the Bible records the ugly traits of one it does not select an obscure person, but the king on his throne, as well as the humble and obscure, is selected. God causes the writers of his book to tell the truth. He is a God without partiality.

While I was never drunk with intoxicating liquor until I was grown, yet since then it has been shown to me that my thoughts were vile and every abomination dwelt in me. It was about the time of my birth that the division among Baptists began on the mission

question, which Andrew Fuller and his aids devised in the preceding century; but the progress of Fuller's methods did not spread so rapidly in that country. For in my youthful days there was not a salaried preacher, nor a Sunday School, nor any of the modern machinery of the Missionary Baptists in all that country.

My father and mother were members of Sandy Run Church in my youthful days. Elder Drury Dobbins, "Uncle Drury" as many called him, was the pastor of that church. Not within my memory, or observation either, has ever a preacher been beloved, or more deservedly so. His grave is dear to me now. Last Summer it seemed to me his dust was precious to me, as a friend and myself visited it. Elder Dobbins was a predestinarian Baptist, and preached the whole truth ably. He was wonderfully gifted, and his conduct was exceptionally good. His manners were charming, his wit without slur, his wisdom above guile, his eloquence burning, his speech sublime, his expositions of Scripture were indited by the Holy Ghost. In the memory of the old people he yet lives in that country.

It was as a youth my days were passed under that wonderful preaching. Who can tell the power of a godly preacher on a country?

Elder Dobbins opposed the new measures of Missions in full as long as he lived. He was not in favor of protracted meetings, and stood as a wall against Mission schools to teach people to preach, money beggars, and all that hive of modern schemes to control the world, so endorsed and practiced by modern missions. He kept those things out of the churches he served, and out of the Broad River Association as long as he lived. These things are remembered by me. Besides they are admitted in a history of the Broad River Association recently written by one of its leading missionaries, J. R. Logan, Esq., a man that was personally known to me very well,

and an honorable man. Drury Scruggs preached the funeral of Elder Dobbins about the year 1845. This man lauded Elder Dobbins with all the force of his speech (the writer was present). On the next day he went down to Sandy Run where Elder Dobbins had been pastor perhaps forty years, and had preached election of grace so long, and this man Scruggs said at a protracted meeting they had commenced, "As for the doctrine of election and predestination, I stamp my foot upon it"; accompanying the remark with that action of his foot on the pulpit floor.

Then Missionism began to sprout up and spread all over that country, and soon it had overrun the entire country, and has deluged it ever since.

In my day, after these things, protracted meetings were common. After crops were cultivated in the leisure weeks of August and September, the preachers would hold their protracted meetings, and frighten people with graveyard tales and old wives' fables, and get them to the mourner's bench to get religion, as they called it.

Such scenes as these have often frightened me, and to escape the awful doom they pictured, the young people generally, and myself among them, would kneel for prayer. Many made a profession of religion at such meetings; and many that professed, afterwards made it manifest that they knew nothing of the truth. What is the good of so reproaching the blessed worship of God by these desecrations? By the lawful and true preaching of the gospel all that are ordained to eternal life will believe. Much scandal is brought on that blessed name of Jesus by such unhallowed measures. It is good to have gospel preaching, and God will not leave himself without a witness. This gospel of the kingdom has already been preached to the end of the world, and the Jewish world has come to an end.

When attending these meetings many would be seized with paroxysms of such excitement that they would become quite excited and then sink into a semi-

conscious state for awhile. After the excitement would pass off, the reaction would bring a calm, which the preachers would tell them was religion. But to me there were no such feelings. Often my desire was to feel my sins as others seemed to feel theirs, but my heart was as unfeeling as a stone. Satan or my evil nature would suggest to me to commit some sinful deed in order to bring on conviction, but still hardness of heart was my lot. What a gloomy state this has since appeared to me. There was no true fear of God, no life toward him, no knowledge of sins, or the dreadful estate of a lost sinner. It was a state of delusion and deceitfulness when no truth was preached. If ever the doctrine of truth was once preached in all that dreary time, it is unknown to me. It was held out by all the preachers that it is all left with the sinner to determine about his salvation. The Lord has done all that he can do to save sinners, only he is standing waiting and waiting, but he has no power over the sinner unless the sinner will allow him to come in and save him. Such a thing as Jesus standing at the door of the disobedient Christian and knocking to come in and feast or sup with that Christian, was not hinted. All exhortations were to the ungodly, or chiefly so; and the dead sinner was represented as having the power of himself to accept; and if sinners did not accept, these preachers would be swift and willing witnesses against them in the judgment.

(Continued next month)

IMMORTALITY

"Who (God) only hath immortality, dwelling in the light which no man can approach unto; whom no man hath seen, nor can see; to whom be honour and power everlasting." (1 Timothy 6:16)

This agrees perfectly with God's decree in the beginning with our foreparents and their succeeding generations: "And the Lord God said, Behold the man is become as one of us, to

know good and evil; and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life (Christ) and eat, and live forever; therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden. . . So he drove out the man; and He placed at the East of the garden of Eden, Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life."

Therefore, for anyone to possess immortality, it must come without merit of the creature, he being dead to the things of God; and is wholly by the sovereign will of God, for "He quickeneth whom he will".

"Who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." This will of God embodied the fall of man through the deception of the serpent, Satan; God giving to Satan the power of death (in sin) over our foreparents. This power of death Satan holds over all Adam's posterity until the Holy Spirit quickens into eternal or immortal life his own children. "Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, He also took part of the same, that through death He might destroy him that had the power of death, that is the devil." "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life."

The unjust pass their days here in this state of death — a state in which there is no life of Christ. "Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ he is none of his." In the resurrection: "They that have done evil unto the resurrection of damnation." It is called the second death. This is not a resurrection to life, but to death, therefore could not be called immortality though they continue to exist forever. The word immortality means more than continuing to exist. It is the very nature of God himself, and only as his people are "partakers of the divine nature", are they immortal too. First in this life by being quickened in the new birth, it being a spiritual

birth; later, in the resurrection, the mortal body shall be quickened by His Spirit that dwelleth in you. For in this life, "If the Spirit of Christ dwell in you the body is dead because of sin." "For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality."

W. L. Crowley

DESIRERS TO LIVE UP TO THE NAME

To the household of faith, and to all that have tasted that the Lord is gracious; and the power and sweetness of the world to come:

Dear Brethren and Sisters in the Lord: (If you will allow one who feels so little and unworthy to address you thus.) I have felt from time to time for forty-five years that I wanted to tell you in part what I hope has been the dealings of the Lord with me. But being so unlearned, and not knowing whether the feelings and impressions I had were of the Lord, or just imagination of the flesh, I have hesitated. But the feeling lingers with me, and, if the dear Lord is pleased to direct my heart and hand, I will try with his help to do the best I can.

When I was a small child I had serious thoughts about where I would spend eternity, and sometimes wished I had never been born into this world; then I would not have a soul to be saved or lost. When I was twelve years old, my precious mother died, and one day when I was doing the dishes, I was feeling very sad and condemned. I felt I was a sinner; and as I dried the knives, forks, and spoons, and put each one in its place, I promised the Lord I would quit my sinful habits and ways, and be a better girl. But how little did I know then that I would not keep those promises! They were soon forgotten, or grown dim, and I was worse than before.

There was an association at Pee Dee Church where my father was a mem-

ber, and we went, but I went through the meeting with no interest, until they began to sing the parting hymn: Number 618 in Lloyd's Hymn Book. The singing arrested my attention, and I thought it was the saddest and sweetest music I had ever heard. We had in our neighborhood the Old School or Primitive Baptists, and the New School Baptists, and somehow I felt there was a great difference in them. So much so I thought the Old School had a Bible to suit their religion, and the New School had a different kind to suit theirs.

We went up in the country to an association, and Elder Isaac Jones was there. His preaching was sweet music to my soul. I must have had a quickening of the flesh, for I felt good after hearing him preach, and I wanted to be good and not do anything wrong: I would not sing any worldly songs, for I thought it was wrong. I always had a tender spot in my heart for him, and loved the name Isaac Jones. The serious feelings lasted about a month, and left me. I felt there had to be a change in the person. I had read the experiences in the Landmark, and heard the preachers tell theirs from the stand; and I felt there had to be a great turning about, and deep suffering for sin. And I thought if that ever happened to me I would know I was under conviction, and when delivered, I would see a bright light, and know I was a Christian. But how little I knew! I finally came to the conclusion that the Lord had finished his work with his people on earth, and when the Old School Baptists died out there would be no more of his people here; for I felt they were his people.

Once a year I would go to hear the New School Baptists at their big meetings. One night, after I returned home, I felt somewhat disturbed in mind. I went out in the silent night and tried to ask the Lord to show me the right way. And when I became so distressed over my sinful condition I tried to beg him to forgive me for being so weak.

There had been an association at Pee Dee, and I did not go, my children being small I stayed at home. I cried when I would see others going. Then it was time, in course, for another association at Pee Dee Church, and I went each day. I got along fine; did not get much interested until Saturday afternoon when Elder Samuel McMillian went forward to the stand. I don't know what his text was, but he preached predestination and election. He said in his preaching, the election was over and the polls closed. Oh, it was wonderful to me! Such preaching I had never heard before, and with so much power. I felt so sure that what he had preached would stand all through time and throughout the ages of an unending eternity, that I said to a woman who was criticizing the Hardshells, as she called them, that if that doctrine went down, I felt willing to go with it.

As I started home, a woman called to me, and asked, "Are you a Hardshell?" I said, "Yes." Then I said, "No, I'm not, but I wished I were." She replied, "Yes, and you will be one of the first to go to Hades." (only she said it in a harsh manner — the word is too big for me.) After believing what I had heard that afternoon, I still had no spiritual hope, but felt so sure it was the truth and would stand forever, I loved it.

Sunday morning Elder L. H. Hardy went to the book-board first. He preached about the opening of the seven seals in Chapter 5 of Revelation. Then Elder McMillian followed, saying he was suffering with a bilious headache. I think he forgot the headache. He read a good portion of the 10th Chapter of St. John; but the 16th verse struck me hard: "And other sheep I have which are not of this fold, them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd." But his main text was the 26th to the 29th verses, "But ye believe not because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they

shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." It was all so sweet and touching, it was sweet music to my soul.

I felt very different by Monday morning: I felt to be a condemned sinner over what I had heard the two previous days. I believed it to be the truth, and would stand forever; but me — what would become of me after death. I greatly feared I had no part in it, and I knew there was nothing I could do to bring myself in favor with the Lord: My sins were too great for that, and I was afraid I would be found in sin in thought or deed. I felt my sins were so great they could sink a world like this. I fell a beggar at his feet. I was weeping and mourning. I felt lost and undone, for I knew that without His mercy I was forever lost.

I was begging and pleading all my wakeful hours, hoping the dear Lord would be merciful to me a vile sinner, the One I had sinned so bitterly against and trampled his mercies under my sinful feet. I was begging and pleading with him not to send me down to everlasting woe, which I felt I justly deserved. I tried to beg him to let me be a servant or a door-keeper in heaven, that I might escape the burning flames, and not cast away from his holy presence.

I fled to the New Testament to try to find comfort there; and when I would see anyone coming, I would hide it, for I did not want anyone to know I was in trouble. I remained in this state of mind for about six weeks. One night I had retired, and a vision appeared beside my bed as a small tree; and on the limbs were small objects hanging from top to bottom. In the vision I knew the objects were the Lord's people, and I saw myself as one amongst the very lowest, almost ready to drop. And in the vision, I spoke and said, "Lord, is it that I am still hanging on?" And the vision was gone. I have never thought I was asleep. I rejoiced a little, but not like I thought people did when they met with a change. But my burden was gone, and I felt free and calm within.

In a night or so I dreamed I was in a small boat that people steer with oars, and Christ was in one end as a little babe dressed in pure white, and I was in the other end. I awoke rejoicing, but still did not feel as happy as some I had read about, but my troubles were gone. I thought to keep this all to myself and never tell anyone that I ever thought on the name of the Lord. My little hope, if I should call it a hope, was not bright enough to tell. I did not suffer over sin as I thought I should, and my deliverance was not bright enough. I did not see the bright light; and I will say here that I have often thought if it had left me there and not have followed me on, I don't think anyone would ever have known that I had thought on the name of the Lord, for I felt that I could live just as good out of the church as I could in it. And, too, I was not fit nor impressed with joining the church; and, too, I thought the Primitive Baptists were a people that could not bear the thought of sin, and therefore were the people against all the world that would believe my story. I had no impressions to go to the church.

This was in December after the association in November, 1915. How little I knew of the wills and shalls of our great Jehovah God: How they carry you where you would not have gone. I went to church in January following; and on Sunday Elder Bell, the pastor, preached on Isaac and Rebekah. Somehow his preaching was sweeter than it ever had been to me. Sometimes I would dream of fixing to offer, but never did offer in my dreams.

In April was meeting time again at Pee Dee, the 3rd Sunday and Saturday before. There was a man there who was speaking in public, who took up most of the time each day. I got along fine, and did not feel disturbed in my feelings in the least, until our dear old Elder Bell got up late on Sunday, and in just a few words preached a very wonderful and sweet sermon. He read for a text in the 11th Chapter of Matthew, 28th to 30th verses; and as he read, "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 ye shall find rest unto your souls; for my yoke is easy and my burden is light." Then the hymn, "Alas and did my Saviour bleed." It seemed as he read he was speaking to me, and his words took hold on my heart, and I felt like he thought there was someone there that ought to join the church; but not me. I did not give myself a thought. It had been four months since the burden of sin left me, and I had gotten along so good, never intending to let anyone know I had ever thought on the name of the Lord. But as the hours went by, I began to feel more and more disturbed in my feelings; and the feelings grew deeper and deeper with the hours, and in just a few hours I did not have to ask who was in trouble. If I had stayed at home and not gone to church, perhaps I would not have gotten in this fix. Yet there was a sweetness as well as a sadness in it; and I began to feel that the one thing I thought I never could or would do, I now felt I must do. My feelings grew deeper and deeper as the hours went by. On Thursday morning the same week I was sitting all alone in a little log cabin where I lived, and I was over shadowed by some great power; and it was shown me so plainly that it was my duty to follow the Lord and Saviour in baptism. I did not hear anything nor see anything with the natural eye, but I felt something. It was the sweetest and saddest thing I ever felt, and unto this day it is the sweetest and most outstanding part of my experience. It was so severe it took my natural appetite. I prepared a dress that day to be baptized in, and put it away. I was impressed to tell my sister, who was not a member of the church, some of my feelings, and I did not want to tell her. When I saw her, I loved her with the sweetest love, and as we walked along, we were talking about our aunt, and I said, "It is strange that she never united with the church." And she said, "How about you?" She

caught me off guard, and I said, "I feel sometimes like I will have to." She threw her arms around me and burst into tears. I was sorry I told her, and begged her not to tell anyone; but she made sure she did.

Elder George Gore and Elder Brown sent an appointment to Pee Dee for the 4th Sunday and Saturday before in June, and the Baptists came to let me know. I was so afraid they would say something to me about my feelings that I would not stop ironing. I knew they had heard about me. My uncle who was a member, told me about the appointment, and I was getting ready for the meeting. The day came, and I was there. When they began to sing, the tears began to roll down my face, and I had no control over them — and I wanted so much to keep my feelings hid.

When Elder Gore began to preach, it was just heaven to me, or as near heaven as I ever will be in this world. It was the same way on Sunday. Elder Gore and Elder Brown had promised to come back in August. I wanted to be baptized the worst of anything I had ever thought about; and Jesus was the sweetest name in all the world to me. When I would pass the waters, they looked so beautiful to me. I wanted Elder Gore to baptize me: I had dreamed that he did, and that was my desire. But how could I ever go before so great a people and ask for a home, as unworthy and unfit as I felt to be; and how could I live and not be baptized, was a question and a cross to me.

The third Sunday was meeting time again for the pastor, but there was a storm and he could not come. I felt the Lord sent the storm to keep me from offering to the church because I was not fit. But he did come in August; and I got along alright Saturday and did not feel to offer. Sunday, when he announced a open door, I stood with a fan in my hand, and there was a storm raging in my breast. It seemed as if my heart would come out, and I trembled like a leaf and could not hide my feelings. After the meeting closed, I went out the

side door, but felt I must speak to the preacher. I went back in the house and shook hands with him. He said, "You couldn't come." I said, "I am not fit to come." And he said, "Those are the kind."

I felt somewhat relieved after speaking with him. We were to have meeting the next week-end; and I felt I would have another opportunity, and tried to beg the Lord, if it were his will for me to go to the church, to strengthen me and go with me. And different Scriptures would come in my mind, such as, "Seek ye first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added unto you." and, "Today if ye hear his voice harden not your heart."

Elder Gore and Elder Brown came as promised; and when Elder Gore finished preaching Saturday, he walked down to the floor from the stand, and they began to sing, "Amazing grace", and there was nothing in my way then, not even myself, and I went forward, and was received and baptized that afternoon, August 26, 1916, by Elder George Gore. I left a burden there that has never returned. But I did not feel clear, and would sigh and groan until I fell asleep. When I awoke next morning all was peace and quiet within. It was a beautiful day: all sighs and groans had fled away. "Not a wave of trouble rolled across my peaceful breast." My heart was full of love and praise to Christ my King, and I was happy as could be.

After returning home from another heavenly meeting, I walked the yard in the afternoon in praise to our heavenly King, and wondered how I could ever doubt these things anymore. But the tempter soon was to visit me to frighten my soul away. I have had many ups and downs since then; had many dark seasons, and some bright ones. I have felt lonely and almost forsaken; have found my feet walking in forbidden paths, for which I have had to bear the rod. Oh, how glad I would be if I could live up to what I feel the name Old School

or Primitive Baptist stands for. But I have miserably failed.

I have left much untold that has been both sweet and sad. I loved the church when I went to them when I had no where else to go; and almost 45 years later I still love them. Whether it is the right kind of love, I do not know; only hope so. Of late years I have been in a dark and thorny desert where there was no spiritual food or drink — so low in my feelings I could not say Brother or Sister to the dearest people on earth. I felt too far beneath them; and I dared not to call them Mr. and Mrs. But the dear Lord has brought me through it all, and let me taste and feel once again the power and sweetness of His love, if not deceived. Praise His great name! I can never thank and praise him enough for the way I feel now. I have been to many an association, but none ever meant to me what the one did in 1915.

I hope His rich and reigning grace will rest and abide with all the chosen saints of God. May the glorious light of his love light your pathway through the pearly gates in heaven, where all but love is done away, is my sincere desire. I hope to be remembered in your prayers.

If this should come before the Editor, do with it as you feel best, and I will abide by your decision. A very little Sister in hope.

Humbly submitted,
Frances Moore
1204 Morning Glory Avenue
Durham, N. C.

HIS HOPE IS PRECIOUS TO HIM

Box 160
Woodward, Iowa

Dear Elder Spangler:

Why I am doing this I don't know, but the desire is, I hope, for some comfort to myself and to others. I heard you preach at Mayfield, Ky., last Fall at the association, which is the last sermon

I have heard. I enjoy so much hearing those Old Baptists proclaim the richness of God's glory.

I don't know just where to begin, or what to say, but I do hope the Lord of mercy will guide my mind and heart to say nothing to offend anyone. I claim to believe the doctrine the Old Baptists contend for. As for an experience of grace, I don't know that I have one: I can only say what I believe, and what I have been taught by one not seen by natural eye. When I am with them I feel I am treading upon sacred ground: there is a solemn peace which comes over me I cannot describe; and the good old songs of Zion calm a fear I cannot tell about, for there are no words to describe the feeling of contentment and peace that calms the fear that engulfs me most of the time.

If anyone lives as far away as I do from the people who are so dear to their heart, they may understand in part my lonely condition. I am the only one that I know of who believes as I do, living in this part of the world. There are people here who claim to be Old Baptists, but I can't go along with them. Their preaching just don't ring true to my way of thinking. Salvation by grace is my only way of believing; and the doctrine of salvation by grace is all that will ever reach this old sinner, for I can do nothing to merit the mercy I so much desire. But I don't know whether it will reach down this low to redeem such a worm as I feel to be.

There is so much to say, I could write volumes; and yet say nothing of value to anyone, as my understanding is so limited. I one time had good eyesight, but now my sight is very poor, and in reading what little I can in the Bible there is much I don't understand; but when it is explained, I hope I can understand the meaning then.

I hope, the Lord willing, to go back to the association this Fall and hear Elder Darnell preach once more. I won't even attempt to tell of the beauty and glory of the sermon he preached on Saturday morning concerning the king-

dom not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. It has been on my mind ever since I heard him.

I don't belong to any church now; the one I joined here in Iowa has gone down and does not exist anymore. So I am one alone in a desert land, where there is no food and no water to drink. What a desolate place to be! Six-hundred miles to the nearest place to eat and drink at the fountain of truth and righteousness! I would love to have a home with these dear people, but I am getting old and would be of no value to them — only a stumbling block. I received my Signs this morning, and have read it as far as the Editorial page, and have enjoyed it to my comfort.

I will try to write something of my travels through this time world. I was born and raised by Old Primitive Baptist parents in Southern Illinois; where, in my youth, they had to go to church about twenty miles mule-back. I can remember very well some of the happenings of my early life. As a little child I remember sitting on the ground by my mother, and listening to the preacher; and when he would stop, I would wish for him to keep on. Even at that tender age there seemed to be a feeling come over me which I can't yet describe. But, if I know my heart, I have always had some kind of a feeling that there was a higher power that leads in a way we don't know. They never did try to instruct me in the way they believed, and yet they would attend the Missionary Baptist Church sometimes about a mile from where we lived, and would let me attend their Sunday Schools; but I never could quite understand their teachings.

I can't help but believe that God in his wisdom knew before he ever made the world, what would happen all down through the ages to come. He spoke the world into existence out of nothing, creating all things that exist, visible and invisible, for his own glory. He never left anything to man, for man never existed until all things were created. What, therefore, has man to glory in,

except in the shed blood of Christ? I don't believe that all the prayers of all the saints will ever change the mind of God, or cause him to change his mind, or save one sinner that He did not give his Son to die for on the cross of Calvary. His mind was fixed in his purposes before the foundation of the world. He chose his subjects as it pleased himself, and gave them to his Son to die for. His will is done in heaven and on the earth, for there is none to advise such a wonderful Saviour.

If man could only see and realize how small and insignificant and weak he is, there would not be so much confusion in the world. I have enjoyed the Signs for many years, and hope to continue enjoying it for the rest of my life. I have not learned to love its contents through the teaching of men, although they have been instrumental in explaining the things that have been so comforting to my lonely existance.

I realize that I have not written as I would like to write; my understanding is so limited, and I am so ignorant of things pertaining to things not of this world, which makes me fear that I don't know anything at all. But my hope is that at the last day this old body will be raised in the likeness of Him who said, "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." I feel that I have labored, but to no avail: it has all been of a higher power. But that hope that seems so small at times, is so precious to me that I would not exchange it for ten thousand worlds and all their riches. That is all I have left in this world to look forward to.

In closing, I wish you and all the editors and writers of the dear paper, all the richest blessings of Him who never slumbers nor sleeps; whose watch-care is ever over his dear people. I hope to meet you all in that world that God prepared for his people before the foundation of the world. If you see anything that is offensive, or not to the betterment of the cause, throw this away, and I will thank you for doing so. May

God in his mercy uphold and guide you and all who believe in Salvation by Grace, and grace alone. Written in love for all God's little ones, whose trust is in the Lord.

W. J. Kimbro

Rt. 3, Box 123
Stanton, Texas

Dear Editors:

Just a few lines. Without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin; and as Christ shed his blood to fulfill the promise of a Saviour, the blood was shed to redeem the chosen ones in Christ. We have no need for more offering for sin. Christ saves every soul that will ever see God and heaven. At the end of time Christ will come and call all he shed his blood for. He will call all the redeemed from the four winds of the earth; He will say to the North give up, and the South hold not back. He will bring his sons and daughters from afar, and they will be caught up with Christ in the clouds, and the wicked will be judged according to their works. "Whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire." (Rev. 20:15)

"God that made the world and all things therein, seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands; neither is worshipped with men's hands as though he needed anything, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; and hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation." (Acts 17:24-26)

He made all things for a purpose. He has all power in heaven and on earth, and we have nothing to say concerning our salvation, for our lives are in the hands of our maker. The Apostle says to work out our own salvation with fear and trembling, for it is God that worketh in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure. God works in purpose

and righteousness, and we should rejoice and love him, and thank him for the gift that worketh in us a work pleasing to our Maker.

He calls and redeems his elect, and when their days are fulfilled here, there will be no more sins to be forgiven, as the blood of Christ hath cleansed them from all sins, and they shall live with Christ forever.

My letter is getting too long to ask for space in our good paper. I love the Signs of the Times, and the good editors keep it clean: Thank God for that. I have written what I have, and hope God has directed my thoughts and hand. There is only one true and lawful Bride. Her eyes are as fair as a dove; and her children are their Father's pride.

The Lord adopted mercies plan;
He made the world, also the man.
This is the way the thing was done,
Without a ray of light or sun.

Away out there alone, above,
Without a thing to make it of:
The world was made without a flaw,
Without a hammer or a saw;
Without a bit of wood or stone,
Without a bit of flesh or bone,
Or anything to nail it to.
F. P. Welch, age eighty-two.

Dr. F. P. Welch

A TIME TO BE BORN, AND A TIME TO DIE

Perrin, Texas

Dear Editors and Readers of
The Good Old Signs:

I see my time is about out, and I don't want to miss a single one. It is almost all the preaching I hear lately that amounts to anythings to me. I was 92 my last birthday, and I can't go much. But I feel that the good Lord has been with me in all my ups and downs, and had kept me as the apple of his eye; and has kept all the strange gods from me, for I am not sufficient of myself to do anything of myself. But with Jesus, with his almighty arms upholding me, I can do all things by him that strengtheneth me.

I find every day I live that I am fully dependent upon Almighty God for the true blessings that come my way. I have felt many times I have comforted God's little ones, in trying to preach Jesus and him crucified for our offences, and raised again for our justification. We are not uneasy about God's little ones, for what God did was done forever — nothing shall be taken from it, and nothing shall be added to it. The Old Baptists have a wonderful God.

With this good hope, we are looking for Him to come without sin unto salvation, which all God's people will be fully satisfied with. It won't be long I know, that I will have to go and learn all it means; but it is just as natural to die as it is to be born, for there is a time to be born and a time to die. Our God set a time to every purpose under the sun.

Your brother, I hope,
C. Y. Osteen

7811 North Yale,
Spokane 52, Washington.

Dear Brethren:

I am enclosing \$3.00 money-order to renew my subscription, and also a poem I wrote sometime ago, if you care to publish it.

. . . I had a dream or vision which I would like to tell you about: I dreamed all the world was a vast race track, and everyone was either racing, or watching people race in small cars. It was evening and almost dark, and there were clouds in the sky as if a storm was brewing. As I looked, I saw my sister in one of the race cars, and they were traveling at an immense rate of speed.

And a man by my side, with whom I was talking, wanted me to look off in the distance where the cars were coming from; and I looked, but I seemed to be drawn to look into the sky, and saw a dark cloud. A light began to show in it, and it opened up; and, Oh, such a beautiful sight was there! It was the glory of God, and I was so enraptured.

As I looked, I saw a fish net hanging in this cloud in this glorious light — it was so beautiful, all a golden light. The end reached in to heaven; and I cried out, "Oh, my God, the net is empty, isn't it?" And a wind began to move in the cloud, which was the Spirit of God, and the net began to stir, and I could see that it was empty.

As I awoke, these scriptures were in my mind: "Arise, Peter, kill and eat." "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men." What does it mean? I hadn't had the Bible, or God, or the church, or anything like that in my mind for several days, before the dream. But it surely had a great effect on me; and, as surely as God is my witness, I did see it. But what it means, I know not. Please bear with me; and remember I know I am the vilest of all sinners.

But I hope I have a love for my fellow-travelers, and the blessed truth, and our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ; and I know that if I do, it is because it has all been given me — freely, and unmerited, for sure. I feel, too, that if I am not kept by the power of God unto salvation, then I am none of his, and am lost and undone.

I am often made to feel that, though I make my bed in Hell, still He is there. And, as I tell so many, if I cannot live my natural life without Him, how could I expect to live a spiritual life without Him?

May God bless and keep you, and guide your feet in the paths of truth for His glory, and for his little ones who read the dear old *Signs*.

Mrs. Mary L. Echard

Winfield, Alabama

Dear Editors of the Signs:

I promised myself the last time I wrote to the *Signs* that I wouldn't write anymore. I am so weak and unworthy I can't write like I would like to. I am here alone as far as earthly creatures are concerned, but I am not all alone, for

I feel the presence of Almighty God with me. Oh, how I do hope I am thankful to our Lord and Saviour for all the blessings he has bestowed upon me, and for lifting me out of the pit of darkness. Oh, my soul, I can't praise him enough. How could I keep from praising him, when he is all in all to me.

Nothing else matters when I can feel the Holy Spirit with me, leading and guiding me. I know I can't mean anything to the church, but they do mean so much to me. What a wonderful Saviour we have.

To me the **Signs** was extra good this month (August). I just couldn't lay it down until I read it through. It explained my experience better than I ever could begin to. I couldn't read for my eyes filling with tears, and had to stop and dry the tears to see how to read. The whole book seemed so filled with the goodness of the Lord. I rejoiced all through it.

Sometimes I long to go on and be with the Lord. I used to think I was having such a hard life, but now I can look back and rejoice and be glad, for I know I was being wrought upon by Almighty God. How sweet it is to feel the presence of the Lord!

How precious are the dear Primitive Baptist people. I pray God's blessings on every one of them. And I pray the Lord will bless each of you editors in the precious work you are doing, and to keep you in health, if it be his holy will, for Christ's sake, Amen.

Mrs. A. T. Couch

Rt. 1, Box 34-A
Sims, Texas

Dear Editors and Readers:

I am a member of the Prospect Church at Old Union, but feel to be so worthless. I was baptized this past July a year ago, along with Sister Pearl Barnes and Brother George Daniels. I fought it a long time, for I felt to be such a great sinner and so worthless; but I love the Old Baptist people very

much. I am like I heard Elder Spears say in a sermon awhile back: "I don't seem to have an experience like so many others have; and sometimes I wonder if I have any at all. I just have that very little hope."

My husband attends church with me regularly, and I hope he will be given a mind to come in with us sometime. The first night after I was baptized, just after I had laid down, a big bright eye appeared to me, and I was shown that it was the Lord's eye, that he was looking on; and that night I dreamed that I was tossed in a very swift river and I couldn't swim, and I felt that I was lost. But somehow I came out of the water so easily; and as I started to look for a cousin who was standing beside me when I was tossed into the water, I wandered around and saw a big white house. In the house I saw a woman dressed in white; and as I walked on towards the house, I came to a pretty all-metal gate, which I thought would be locked and that I couldn't get in. But I seemed to push a button, and the gate opened easily; and as I walked down the narrow lane leading to the house, I saw my cousin and my husband, whom I was looking for. I do not know just what the dream meant, but I have a little hope.

I was baptized by Elder Lloyd Wall, and he and his wife have visited us a few times, and we enjoy their company very much. My father, William Joe Johnson passed away in April. We miss him very much at church and at home. He attended the meetings regularly and was one of their deacons. My mother is greatly broken up, but the Lord saw fit to take him. I do believe our days are numbered, and that we are saved by grace, through faith, and that not of ourselves.

I remember you visiting our church several years ago, Brother Spangler, and preaching one night; and I enjoyed your sermon very much. Hope you will have a mind to visit with us again.

A sister with a little hope,
Adiline Burkhalter

Danville, Virginia November, 1961

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EDITORIAL

"Seeing then that all these things shall be dissolved, what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for and hastening unto the coming of the day of

God, wherein the heavens being on fire shall be destroyed, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat?" (2 Peter 3:11, 12)

For some years we have had a few passing thoughts on the above, but since trying to speak of some of the things written in the first part of this chapter, we have had further meditations on the latter part.

It is evident that Peter was not urging upon the brethren that doctrine which is so prevalent: That the manner of persons we are by human efforts will determine our state of being when, "all these things shall be dissolved".

Peter had no such thought in mind. If there ever was one who believed and preached to the contrary, it was Peter; and his brethren were solidly with him. After all his self-confidence and self-works were wonderfully and effectually removed from him, as is recorded, and he was "converted", (see Luke 22:32), Peter was prepared to strengthen his brethren; which he did in a remarkable way, as, for instance, on the day of Pentecost. Peter was thus qualified with the other apostles to bind the false, and loose the true doctrine of God our Saviour unto his brethren.

As we read Peter's two epistles to the "strangers scattered", who had obtained like precious faith with him, we notice that, at the very beginning, he lays the foundation for all things which he wrote; and he wrote consistently with the foundation he laid. He told these brethren that they were, "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification (their being set apart or called out) of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus." And he continued by saying that, according to the abundant mercy of God, they were begotten again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead; and that their hope was to an inheritance which was incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for those who were kept by the power

of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

Now we take it that the things that Peter wrote is the doctrine of God our Saviour; and that everything taught by the apostles is in complete harmony with it. Is there any variance between this of Peter, and that of Paul in the eighth of Romans? "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to the purpose. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to this image of his Son, that he might be the first born among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified. What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?"

It is good to read the commendation of Peter concerning the things which Paul had written unto the brethren: "And account that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation; even as our beloved brother Paul also according to the wisdom given unto him hath written unto you; as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction." (2 Peter 3:15, 16)

These are the things we believe and preach; and, finding no inconsistencies in any of the scriptures, and nothing contrary to the things we believe we have been taught of God's mercies to poor sinners, we hold no reservations in declaring these very things, when we are blessed with understanding and liberty. We have rejoiced in them ever since being brought to the end of our supposed righteousness as an aid to salvation. These are the things that Jesus taught; they are what the Old Testament portrays and foreshadows to the enlightened heart; they are what the New Testament writers preached and wrote.

And these are the very things that the Lord's people believe when they have received the earnest of their inheritance, being sealed with the holy Spirit of promise. They rejoice in them, and love to meditate upon the goodness and mercy of God; and, though they have to stand relatively alone in their faith, they will not try to push these things into the background as of minor importance, and give way to the sophisticated ideas of moral reformers, who talk much of "practical godliness," and leave off the weightier matters, such as the source of all fruits of the Spirit.

In this third chapter of his second Epistle, Peter said that in both of his epistles to them, he was stirring up their pure minds by way of remembrance, that they may be mindful of the words which were spoken before by the holy prophets, and of the commandment of the apostles of the Lord and Saviour. Thus he was not adding anything new to their doctrine and faith, but was abiding in that which was of the holy prophets, and confirmed in themselves in their commission to preach the gospel of the Son of God.

But, in doing this, Peter, and the other writers, and the Lord himself, makes mention of those who oppose these things. Peter called the scoffers, walking after their own lusts. He showed that they cared not for the promises of God, and were willingly ignorant of the fact that the "world that then was, being overflowed with water, perished;" and that "the heavens and earth, which are now, by the same word are kept in store, reserved unto the fire against the day of judgment and perdition of ungodly men."

But Peter confirms his beloved brethren that all time is in the hands of their God, and that, "He is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness, but is longsuffering to usward, not willing that any (of his own) should perish, but that all should come to repentance."

In these things Peter was but stating

the true state of affairs among men. There are but two classes: Believers and Unbelievers. There are those who are begotten again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead; and there are those who are false prophets, scoffers, those who bring in damnable heresies, etc.

Now more directly to our text. Those to whom Peter was writing were begotten again unto a lively hope — a lively hope of their inheritance. This is the same as was mentioned by Paul in his letter to Titus: "In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began." These had been born again — born of the Spirit, and were sealed with the holy Spirit of promise. They were pressing toward the mark for the prize of the high calling in Christ Jesus. Heaven was begun below, and their thoughts were heavenward. They desired the fullness of what they had previewed and foretasted. This world was no longer their home; and the same grace that gave them their hope, caused them to look for their new heavens and new earth wherein dwelleth righteousness, according to the promise of God.

Each one of these has a work wrought in his heart which teaches him, "That denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, he should live soberly and righteously in this present evil world." This is the fruit of the grace that brings salvation to all of God's men; and is effective in all of them. They are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time; and their desire of holy conversation and godliness is not for gain, but because they have the principle of the life of godliness in them; which is Christ in them the hope of Glory.

We feel that every godly exhortation is of the same source as godly preaching, and it has its effect as applied by the Spirit. In it is a reminder of what they are saved from, as they run the race set before them, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of their faith.

The New Testament declares what the

children of God are through the imputed righteousness of Jesus; but at the same time does not hide what they are in the body of this death. How seriously Paul exclaims, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin." (Romans 7:24, 25) This flesh, with its native weakness, is the cause of the children bemoaning themselves, because they cannot do the things they would.

If ever there is one who does not thus sigh and groan, it is doubtless because he has not seen and felt the beauties of holiness; and such will not be concerned as to the manner of person he ought to be in his daily walk and conversation. Nor will he be more concerned should he be admonished.

On the other hand those who are quickened together with Christ, and are raised up together, and made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, as Paul shows in the second chapter of Ephesians, know that they are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that they should walk in them. This is the very element into which they are brought, and would remain as they abide their time, and reach forth unto those things which are before them.

J. D. W.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

"Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin." (Romans 6:6)

The apostle has here declared a strange thing; he says of himself and

his brethren, that their old man is crucified with Christ, for the purpose and to the intent that the body of sin might be destroyed; that from that time on they should not serve sin. The question is, How is this true, and in what way is it accomplished? Paul was a living man, and so were the brethren to whom he wrote; they still had natural life, and were servants of the Most High God, yet their old man was crucified. How was this, and by what process? Some would seem to wish to convey the idea that our mortal bodies are the old man, and that to put off the old man would be to discard our mortal frames, but such could not have been Paul's meaning. They were crucified, he says, and yet they retained their mortal powers and frames.

Paul, in the preceding chapter, had said that through one man's disobedience many were made sinners, and so also by the obedience of one many were made righteous. He means that the sin of Adam was entailed on all his posterity, and also that Christ's righteousness was entailed on all his posterity, which shows how the people of God, though vile in themselves, can be considered righteous before a just and holy God; it is by imputation. Our God in his all-wise and eternal purpose laid the sins of his people upon Christ, and his righteousness upon his people. Thus the Redeemer and his people were passive in the matter. Jesus declared repeatedly that he came not to do his own will, but the will of him that sent him, and once he prayed, "Not my will, but thine be done." Thus Jesus was not a free agent, in the sense that men attempt to claim free agency for themselves.

In the connection Paul also said, "Moreover the law entered, that the offense might abound," and also that by the law is the knowledge of sin. Hence the law was given solely for the purpose of bringing in man guilty, in order that every mouth might be stopped, and all the world become guilty before God. He who seeks to use the law for any other purpose perverts Scripture. Paul also

said in this same connection, Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound. To some it seems passing strange that our God should give a law to make man guilty before him of sin, and then cause grace to much more abound where sin abounds. Thus we can understand a little of Paul's meaning when he said, "For until the law sin was in the world, but sin is not imputed when there is no law," meaning, as it seems to me, that where there is no commandment men are not condemned. Paul seems to mean that during the twenty-five hundred years from Adam to Moses, who gave the law, sin was in the world, but that in the absence of law sin was not imputed, and that wherever there is no law, there is no transgression. When the law did come it made sin to be a transgression, that all the world might become guilty before God, because all the world was sinning, as Paul has so forcibly declared in the third chapter of the Romans. Hence we must conclude that the purpose of the law entering as it did, was that offenses might abound. This paved the way and opened the channel for grace much more to abound. Thus the remedy is made known as much greater than the disease. This truth is again shown by the declaration of Paul, that as sin had reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life. This would seem to mean that as the law is the strength of sin, so that without the law sin is dead, therefore in the absence of the law sin could not reign unto death, and while sin remained in the world for the first twenty-five hundred years, until the law came, yet man was not considered a transgressor until the law was given.

To come directly to the text now, I will say that man has been a sinner against a just and holy God all his life, but until God writes his law in man's heart, he will not know that he is such a great sinner, so Paul said, I was alive without the law once, but when the commandment came, sin revived and I died. The sin which was in his heart, and

under which he lived, when the commandment came, produced death. Before the commandment came he was alive, afterwards he was dead. National Israel was without the law of Moses four hundred and thirty years. They then had the promise and circumcision. After the law was given it thundered judgments upon them, and death reigned, and distress was felt everywhere. The same is true in an experimental spiritual sense. Paul said as quoted before, "I was alive without the law once." Paul did not mean the law of Moses, for he had never been without that, and it was not that law which killed him. He was speaking of the law of God written in his heart which had caused sin to revive, the law being the strength of sin. Sin is a sweet morsel under the tongue until the law is given. Paul asks the question, "Was then that which is good made death unto me? God forbid." He means, Was that good law written in my heart made death unto me? No, no. "But that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good." He means, The good law written in his heart was that which gave strength to sin to work death in him. He also said that the commandment which he had thought to be unto life, he found to be unto death. Sin took occasion by the commandment written in his heart, and deceived him, and by the commandment slew him, and it also wrought in him all manner of concupiscence.

See what sin does for those in whom God has written his law; it kills them. So sin reigns unto death, and because of this sin and death grace and mercy are the only hope of the Christian, and here is his crucifixion of which Paul speaks; this is the way by which we are crucified with Christ. It was sin that put Paul to death, and it was sin that put Christ to death. Christ was made sin for his people by coming under the law, the life of his people was in him, and as the law demanded the life of his people, so he must lay down that life. We were all guilty, and as he was our life, the law must take him to reach our life; he is

the head, and they the body; the life is not in any member of the body, but in the head; a member may be taken away and we still live, but if the head be taken we die.

Paul asks the question in the beginning of the chapter, "What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?" This was in reply to the assertion that if it be true that where sin abounds grace much more abounds, then let us continue in sin that grace may abound, but Paul says, "God forbid. How shall we that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?" If sin has reigned unto death, and if sin has killed us, how shall we that are dead to sin live any longer therein? How are we dead? The answer is plain. Sin which had caused us no trouble until the Lord wrote his law in our heart, has strength from the law, and has revived and deceived us, and has slain us, and has wrought in us all manner of concupiscence. "Sin, that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good; that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful." This is just the condition every child of God finds himself in when the law of God is written in his mind and heart. Then, and then only, does the sinner think of grace and mercy as what he needs. The self-confident old man is slain, all our first religion is shown to be false, and all our former notions about God, false. We never knew anything about the power of sin until the law came and gave it strength, and we were slain by it. What was slain? Our old man, our first trust and hope; self was laid aside, in the sense that our first strength was gone, and with it all confidence that we could do aught to save ourselves, or that we could do anything good.

Thus Paul says, "Our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed." That is, that self and all the pride, haughtiness, confidence and trust in our own strength, which once we thought to be so great, might be completely crucified as Christ was. And as Christ was freed from sin

when he had been crucified, so those whose sin has been slain by the law, are forever freed from sin, and they are no more under the law, for they have been as completely crucified under the law as was the Savior. The Redeemer was literally crucified upon the cross, while we are crucified in our affections and desires. The one was a setting forth, as in a type, of the other. Paul says again, "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?" He, as it seems to me, means that by baptism we set forth that we have been completely crucified to the world, and the flesh, and all things that are of the world, as much so as was the blessed Lord literally, when he was crucified upon the tree of the cross.

Take the case of a poor sinner who has the work of the new law written in his heart, while his conscience bears witness and his thoughts meanwhile either excuse or accuse him, and he feels to be in the grasp of a mighty monster, viz: death, and when one has thus been crucified, he has no further use for the doctrine of free agency; he is dead, and his life is hid with Christ, and he is ready to be buried with Christ in baptism, by baptism into death, and as Christ went into the tomb, and burst the bars of death, even so have we viewed many poor sinners going down into the liquid grave, a scene as solemn as death, and when they have been buried by baptism into death with Christ, and have been raised up again, we have seen a smile of victory over death plainly visible on their countenances. They have been buried with Christ, and raised up to walk with him in newness of life; the bars of death have been broken, and the captive set free, and there is a song of praise in their mouth. It is true when one is born of the Spirit there is joy in the Lord, even as was the case when Jesus was born in Bethlehem, but when Christ was raised from the tomb, a victory over death was secured and proclaimed. In baptism, with its burial and resurrection from the watery grave,

there is a setting forth of their faith and hope in the burial and resurrection of Christ, and it also sets forth our own death, burial, and the resurrection of this mortal body. Each step in the ordinance sets forth a step in the chain of events that transpire to all the people of God in their experience in this life. As Christ was dead and buried under the law, so they are crucified and raised up to walk in newness of life. No one is a proper subject for baptism, but he whose self, or old man, has been completely crucified. These have no more use for the company of those who think that salvation is by works, or that it is conditional on the part of the creature. "When we were without strength, in due time, Christ died for the ungodly." He did not die for the righteous, but for the ungodly. "If when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more being reconciled we shall be saved by his life." It is by grace, and grace alone, through the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, that we are saved, not of works; O no! lest any man should boast. We are simply his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God has ordained that we should walk in them. Chosen ages past, before the world began, that we should be holy and without blame in love before him. O, what matchless provision has been made for us in Christ; created in him, and chosen in him, and holy in him, and without blame before him in love, and all this purposed to be done for his people, away back yonder before time began. What more can be done? All that we can do is to say, Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty.

Dear Brother Beebe, as some of the dear brethren have asked to hear from me through the Signs, I submit the above for their perusal. I have been confined at home for the past five months with my sick father, and have therefore not met with many of the brethren, and now my mind reverts back to them whom I have neglected for so long. I gave my father almost all my mind, but

he is now gone from us.

(The above appeared in the Signs of May 15, 1901, and was written by Elder Newton Peters, of Portland, Indiana. We found it very interesting, and feel it will be to the brethren. — J. D. W.)

OBITUARIES

JAMES M. CARMACK

James M. Carmack was born June 10, 1898, at El Paso, Arkansas. He was united in marriage to Miss Reiter Hudson, and they lived in the vicinity of Farmerville, Louisiana, for a long time. He died March 20, 1961. He is survived by his wife, Mrs. Reiter Carmack, and two daughters: Mrs. Jack Jaggers, Jonesboro, La., and Mrs. E. J. Albritton, Farmerville, La.; and by his mother, Mrs. L. C. Carmack, and three brothers and two sisters: J. S. Carmack, C. S. Carmack, J. E. Carmack, Mrs. Herbert Kiehl, and Mrs. Hugh Spinks, all of North Little Rock, Arkansas. Five grandchildren also survive.

Mr. Carmack had a lengthy illness, and underwent two or three operations. He did not hold membership with the Primitive Baptists, but was a good friend to them, and he and Sister Carmack attended the meetings as regularly as their restaurant business would permit. He was good to me personally, his wife's pastor, and in many ways manifested an interest in the church. We believe he is resting in the grave from the great turmoil of this world, and that in that sweet and glorious day when the Lord comes again, to call his people home to heaven and immortal glory, that he will be among that number to whom the Lord will say, "Come ye blessed of my Father inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

His funeral was conducted by the writer, assisted by Elder Woodrow Hudson, Jr., at Liberty Hill Church, and his body was laid to rest in the Taylor Cemetery. May the Lord richly bless and comfort all the dear family, together with the friends and neighbors, in their great loss.

Your unworthy servant,
(Elder) R. W. Rhodes

MRS. L. M. BAKER

In memory of our dear mother, Mrs. L. M. Baker, who passed away April 25, 1961, at the age of seventy-six. She was born December 2, 1884. On December 7, 1906, she was married to Eddie Jaggers; and to this union a son was born. Mr. Jaggers passed away January

21, 1908, leaving her a widow for four years. Then she married Dad, Lem M. Baker, on February 29, 1912, who died June 12, 1955. To this union two boys were born, who died in their young days, and four girls who survive: Mrs. Fred Flemister, Crossett, Arkansas, Mrs. Cecil Goyne, Little Rock, Arkansas, Mrs. Author Lloyd, Jr., Little Rock, and Mrs. John W. Daniels, Albuquerque, N. Mexico. There are also nine grandchildren surviving.

She went through trials and tribulations, as she was very unhappy as a member of the Missionary Baptists. On September 16, 1917, she was made to sing "Oh how happy are they who their Saviour obey." And on September 23rd, she asked for a home with the Primitive Baptists, and was baptized that evening. She always said, "That was the happiest day of my life. It was a day that excels all earthly joys. It was the day my burden was lifted from this poor soul of mine, and I was given a sweet hope that Christ had pardoned my sins, and caused me to sing glory to His name — a sinner saved by grace, if at all." (These are quotations from a piece she wrote to the Signs of the Times in the June issue, 1941.)

She was church Clerk for thirty years. She and Dad were both members, and cared for the church of Ephesus, of the New Hope Association, in their home for forty-three years. She went about her work humming one of the dear old hymns; and even when she was so near death that her mind was drifting, she would lie in bed and hum the sweetest tunes. "I'm passing on, the table is set; it's so beautiful", were her words.

I feel that as He promised to go and prepare a place, and will come again to receive his unto himself, she is now waiting, and will be with Him for ever where all will be peace and love, and will enjoy those things she viewed the last hours of her life.

Funeral services were conducted on the 26th by Elder David Turner, Bastrop, Louisiana. He preached a wonderful sermon on predestination of all things; and if saved, it is by grace and not of self, but a gift of God; lest any man should boast. Her body was laid to rest by Dad in the Lone Sassafras Cemetery near home, Ladelle, Arkansas, to await the coming of her Lord of hope.

A daughter,
Mrs. Cecil Goyne

FREDERICK E. MERRILL

Frederick E. Merrill was born November 14, 1883, and died October 29, 1960. He was the son of Charles E. and Lavinia B. Merrill. On November 16, 1904, he was united in mar-

riage to Sadie E. Thorn; and to this union one daughter was born, Lillian, who is married to Elijah L. Allen. There are two grandchildren surviving also.

Brother Merrill united with the Hopewell Old School Baptist Church July 14, 1945, and was baptized the following day by Elder C. W. Vaughn. Brother Merrill was a good husband and father; a good citizen, and a good brother in the church. He was chosen deacon on February 28, 1959, and he faithfully filled the charge as long as he was with us. He was a quiet, meek, and humble brother, truly believing that salvation is by grace, and grace alone — not by any work which man can do. He was the last male member of our church. All we can say is, "The Lord giveth, and the Lord taketh away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

Funeral services were conducted by Elder Arthur R. Warren, pastor of Hopewell Church, at the Cromwell Funeral Home, assisted by Mr. John H. Ginter, of the Presbyterian Church, Hopewell, N. J. Brother Merrill was laid to rest in the Highland Cemetery, at Hopewell.

We miss our dear brother very much, but realize he spent his appointed time here; and feel to say, "Thy will be done, Oh God."

Letha A. Blackwell, Church Clerk

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

In loving memory of our highly esteemed brother, Charles L. Saunders. It would be impossible to write how we felt about this dear brother. His loving kindness and Christian walk will never be forgotten. It is sad to know that he is gone never to return; but feel he is now where there is no more sorrow or pain, but happiness forever.

"Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful. But his delight is in the law of God." (Psalm 1:1, 2)

I feel that I can say he was a man of love and understanding in the blessed word of God. Words cannot express what he meant to Lickfork Church, and to all that loved him so much. We feel that in his death we have sustained a great loss — a vacant seat which can never be filled. We miss his kind and humble smile as we gather on our meeting days. He was not well, but never let anyone know his feelings. May God in his infinite wisdom make us understand his will must be done, not ours. He seemed always to be reconciled to his lot, looking to God for mercy and guidance. We feel he was bountifully supplied.

Knowing this dear brother, and the life he lived, I feel that he was none other than one

of God's little ones. He was blessed to be on the earth seventy-three years; and he united with Lickfork Church in 1920, and served as deacon from the same year, and as Clerk since 1922. He served both offices faithfully until death.

BE IT RESOLVED, First, that we bow in humble submission to our Heavenly Father's will. Second, That we extend to the family our heartfelt sympathy. And Third, That a copy of these resolutions be sent for publication in the *Old Faith Contender*, and to the *Signs of the Times* for publication; a copy be mailed to the family; and that it be recorded in our Church Minutes.

By order of the church.

Willie W. Lee, Clerk

JOSEPH W. BECKETT

Joseph W. Beckett was born January 17, 1880, and died January 18, 1961. Brother Joe united with Hopewell Primitive Baptist Church in November, 1912. He was a dear humble soul, always quiet and pleasant to every one. He was faithful in attendance, and his sweet countenance expressed his interest and enjoyment when sound doctrine was preached.

He is survived by his wife, Ardenia; one son, Clifton, of South Charleston; one daughter, Mrs. Tida Bird, St. Albans; three brothers: John, St. Albans; Charley, Ormond, Florida; and Oliver, Hot Springs, Arkansas; and several grandchildren.

His funeral was conducted by Elders H. J. Bird and J. C. Hammond, at Snodgrass Funeral Home, South Charleston, W. Va., where Brother Joe had lived many years.

May God, who doeth all things well, strengthen and comfort the bereaved ones.

Nanna M. Carney, Church Clerk

LAURA V. MELTON

Laura V. Melton, of Dunbar, W. Va., departed this life March 28, 1961, at the age of 87, after an illness of ten years.

Sister Laura was a member of Hopewell Primitive Baptist Church, Kanawha County, W. Va. She was a devoted member and seldom missed a meeting, until her illness prevented. She was so patient during this long illness, never complaining, and seemed to be resigned to the will of her blessed Saviour. Laura and Albert (her husband), as they were known by friends, lived on a farm on Poca River until she became ill, then they moved into Dunbar. Their home was a gathering place for those of the faithful in Christ. Many ministers and brethren and sisters, who have visited our meetings will have pleasant memories of their

visits in this precious sister's home.

We have long missed her dear presence in our church, and now she will be greatly missed by her husband and children, and especially by her husband who is 90 years old, and still attends meetings regularly.

Surviving are, her husband, Albert; one son, Arnie, of Dunbar; one daughter, Mrs. Vada Ray, Cross Lanes, W. Va.; and six grandchildren, ten great grandchildren, and one great great grandchild.

Services were conducted March 30, 1961, at Hopewell Primitive Baptist Church, by Elders J. C. Hammond and H. J. Bird. Interment was in the family cemetery near their old home on Poca River.

Nanna M. Carney, Church Clerk

MARY L. CARTER

It has pleased our heavenly Father in His divine will to remove from us by death our beloved sister, Mary Lou Carter, known by many of her friends as Molly Carter. We bow in humble submission to the will of our God knowing that he is just in all his ways. Sister Carter was born October 13, 1880, daughter of W. Lee Law and Lodesky Spencer Law. She was married to John A. Carter November 12, 1896.

She leaves to mourn her loss her husband, John A. Carter, Ferrum, Virginia; four daughters: Mrs. Rosa Meadors, Mrs. G. M. Ingram, both of Ferrum, Mrs. Alton Prillaman, Mrs. Leonard Hurd, both of Bassett; a son, Ralph Jesse Carter, Ferrum; three sisters, Mrs. Naomi Mullins, Mrs. T. G. Carter, both of Bassett, Mrs. Goldie Adams, Collinsville; two brothers, P. D. Law, Beckley, W. Va., H. A. Law, Bassett; 36 grandchildren and 37 great grandchildren. Two sons preceded her in death, Archie C. in September, 1947; and William A. on November 22, 1960.

Sister Carter united with the church at Union in Patrick County, Virginia, August 21, 1909, of which she was a faithful member as long as she was able to attend. In her later days, she was not able to go but she enjoyed her brethren and sisters visiting in her home. Sister Carter loved her church, and her home was a welcome place for the people of God, her neighbors and her friends.

She bore her affliction we trust in faith believing that some day she would lay them by. I visited Sister Carter in her affliction and someone asked that we have prayer. I selected the hymn, "Come thy fount of every blessing, tune my heart to sing thy grace," and she sang with us without a book very clearly; and I don't think there was a dry eye in the house. Sister Carter was a devoted wife and mother and grandmother. We know that she

is missed very much by all that knew her. Our deepest sympathy goes out to the family, and especially for her husband whom we love very much. We feel that time and space would not permit if we should write of her history, but we believe that her life and her conduct will suffice. She was often heard singing, "We will all shout together on that morning." She looked forward for that morning, and may the Lord bless us to look for that morning of the Resurrection when we shall be raised with her.

Funeral services was conducted for her March 25, at 2 P. M. at Republican Church by Elder J. R. Hollandsworth and her Pastor, Elder Leonard J. Brammer, in the midst of a host of friends that mourned with the family. Then she was laid to rest in the church cemetery to await the coming of her Lord.

Written by her unworthy pastor,
Leonard J. Brammer

ALICE SHEPHERD

Our sister, Alice Page Apple Shepherd, was called from among us May 21, 1961, at the age of 67 years. She was married to Joe Apple in February, 1919; and to this union three sons were born. The following two survive: Lowell N. Apple, McCleansville, N. C., and Ralph F. Apple, Gibsonville, N. C. Surviving also are three step-daughters: Sister Mary Fitch, Reidsville; Julia Jackson, Raleigh; and Myrtle Bebbles, Greensboro; and five step-sons: Brother Joseph Apple, Elon College; Joseph Elisha Apple, Greensboro; Morris A. Apple, Mebane; Arnold B. Apple, Pineville, La., and Clyde Apple, Portsmouth, Va.; and one grandchild.

Joe Apple died in 1923, and she later married Jake Shepherd, who died in 1954. She had been a member of Pleasant Grove Primitive Baptist Church, Caswell County, N. C., over forty years.

Her funeral was held at her church by her pastor, Elder J. Harvey Smith, and Elder W. Curry King; and her body was laid to rest in the Apple Cemetery, there to await the second coming of our Lord, when all the redeemed family of God shall be raised and fashioned like their Saviour, and be forever with their God.

To all the family left to mourn her passing, the church wishes to extend their sympathy. We also desire a copy of this be given to them; a copy to be spread on our church records; and a copy be sent the Signs of the Times for publication.

Written at the request of Pleasant Grove Church in conference at their June meeting, by a little sister, in hope

Mrs. Fred Cobb

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 129

DANVILLE, VA., DECEMBER, 1961

NO. 12

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 12/1
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

THE TIME — 1961

The clouds of our times darken:
Satan seems rampant in the land;
Leaders to peace pleas will not harken;
Innocent blood stains African sand.

But our Redeemer liveth:
Over all nations holds command.
While Soviets their jealous wrath spitteth,
God's precepts immovably stand.

Though Rome in high seat sitteth
Hoping their power to expand,
Yet the Father in all things worketh,
And disposal is in the Lord's hand.

A sister,
Riffe, Wash.

BY GRACE YE ARE SAVED

"For ye are saved by grace, through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."
(Ephesians, 2nd chapter)

Dear people, who are deeply and seriously concerned in the truth or what is truth as touching the doctrine of the salvation of sinners: Among the professors of the primitive faith there are various ideas and theories to be found, and some of it has to do with the doctrine of the salvation of the elect of God.

I do believe that those bearing the title of Primitive Baptist of all factions, profess the doctrine of eternal and unconditional election. But in the ranks of our Baptist brethren, there is a difference in the interpretation of the doctrine of God, as it respects the salvation of God's people in their life. Now touching the doctrine of regeneration, I believe it is unanimously agreed that it also is unconditional. But from the time of regeneration, is where the difference begins; for according to their theory, the saving grace of God terminates with regeneration, for regeneration is unconditionally by the determined providence of God. Therefore, it can not fail because it is the work of God that they be born again. But these Baptist contend that there is another salvation pertaining to this life, which is known as a "Common or Time Salvation", consisting of every benefit, and every heavenly blessing in this life, in which any child of God may fail because of disobedience. Now if anyone may fail, as I understand, it would do no violence to reason to say that the entire church of God could all fail together. But the above text seems not to intimate such a theory of doctrine; it says that "ye are saved by grace through faith and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God, not of works", which must mean that this efficacy did not proceed from the people. One can not boast against another then, for works play no part in this salvation. But what part does grace play in this salvation? Here we must consent that grace plays every part, or else it plays no part at all, for the salvation of God is not by a combination of grace and works; it is either of grace, or of works.

When Paul's ministry abounded more

than his companions, he credited nothing to himself, but all to the grace of God. Then we see that the grace of God has something to do with what is called a common or time salvation, and if it has anything to do in it, it has all to do, for the church of this age is under grace. Every righteous devotion of the saints of God is said to be the fruits of the Spirit. Now if bodily exercise in assembling ourselves together and humbling our bodies and ordering our conversation in scriptural fields, induces the presence of the Holy Spirit to bring showers of heavenly blessings, and whereas we have power to forbear this devotion, and fail of this blessing, then this would be the only conclusion: That the presence of the Holy Ghost was induced by obedience. In other words, the presence of the Spirit is the fruit of our labour.

But the above text affirms the saints are the workmanship of God created in Christ Jesus unto good works which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. Then, shall we conclude from these words that the disobedience of the saints may make void the purpose of God to which they were created in Christ; and shall the ordination of the great Creator be disannulled by the disobedience of his creation? No, my brethren let us not deceive ourselves. God is not a man as we are that he should be disappointed and his word fall unfulfilled, for it is written that, "As I have thought so shall it be, and as I have purposed so shall it stand." It is also written that his word accomplishes his pleasure, and prospers where he sends it.

But upon what does this prosperity depend? Is it predicated on the volunteered obedience of poor sinners, or does it not rather lie in the effectual work of the Holy Spirit? The promise of God by the prophet was that, "I will make a covenant of everlasting peace with them." Is such peace to be the reward of their righteousness, or does it rest in the mercy and grace of God? Again it is written that, "Thy children

shall be all taught of the Lord, and great shall be the peace of thy children." Can it be in keeping with the word of truth to assume that this consoling peace comes only in obedience as a condition to be met by his people? But how would such a conclusion agree with such experience as is accounted in Romans 7th chapter? "To will is present with me, but how to perform that which is good I find not." "I know," said he, "that in my flesh dwelleth no good thing." "O wretched man," said he, "who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Can we assume that this man of God felt that he had attained to so great a peace as God had promised, by his pious and righteous conduct before God? No, but he testified that "by the grace of God I am what I am." Here is how that great peace comes, and not by our works. This peace came by Jesus Christ, "My peace, said he, I give unto you, my peace I leave with you, and my peace no man taketh from you." This is the covenant of peace spoken of by the prophet. It is also written that thou wilt ordain peace for us, for thou hast also wrought all our works in us. Wherein we see that the works of the saints are the fruits of the Spirit, and this glorious fruit is thereby wrought of God, and in such works they are ordained of God to walk.

Though the outward man perish, the inward man is renewed day by day. What part then does mortal man play in the spiritual realm of the kingdom of heaven, since his very nature is at war against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh? This cross has never been removed. There is no harmony between them. Then pray tell me how the prophet's words, "that great shall be their peace," apply to him? I think of Simon Peter when he told his Lord saying: "Though all men forsake thee yet will I not, I will go with thee both to prison and unto death." The Lord said, "Wilt thou not forsake me? I tell thee, Peter, before the cock crows this night thou shalt thrice deny that thou knowest me." Poor miserable man, his words

there were not prompted by the Spirit but through confidence in his helpless ambition of mortal man. If the determination of Peter had stood, he would have whereof to boast; but alas, it did not, but fulfilled every word of Jesus, and Peter was only left to weep in bitter remorse seeing his mortal power crumble and fall. How true the words of Paul; "that which I would that do I not, but that which I would not that do I." There is no doubt in my mind that some who profess the primitive faith would oppose the apostle Paul, and wish to withdraw from him on a charge of heresy, if he were in their church. But the holy prophets would go with him because they testify of a sovereign God who rules in heaven and earth; in whose hands alone is the hearts of all men, who removes the hard and stony heart, and gives them hearts of flesh, and puts his laws in their heart, and causes them to keep his commandments and do them; he orders their going and directs their steps. And this confidence persuaded Paul that God would perform the work which he himself had begun in them, until the day of Jesus Christ. (Philip. 1-6).

These precious people God keeps, and will keep them unto salvation. But what salvation is meant? Can it be that eternal and unconditional salvation acknowledged by all factions bearing the name Primitive Baptist, or where does this salvation extend? As I understand, as the result of his choice of them and his eternal love for them, his mercy to save them extends itself to the realms of time to deliver them from the tribulations and temptations which befalls every child of the kingdom, "I find another law in my members warning against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin." (8th chapter of Romans). Man surely can not meet the so called "conditions" of a holy law, for he is carnal sold under sin. He is a captive, and we know that a captive is not free. And while we sojourn in this state of mortality, we hear in this body the sentence of death. But

while in this state of mortal life, we see by the light of that holy law, which according to his (God's) promise, is now written in the heart, the vanity and sin and uncleanness of nature. And where as we have this promise of a house which is eternal, free from all labour and sorrow, and where no sin can enter, we groan within ourselves desiring to be clothed with our house from heaven. There are no conditions here to be met by the people of God, and if there were, they would fail just as did the fathers under Sinai's law. And again if they were able and did keep it independent of constraint of the Holy Spirit, they would have no need of a constant watch-care of a Shepherd to keep them.

"To him that worketh is the reward, not reckoned of grace, but debt. But to him that worketh not but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness." (Romans 4-4). If I understand the language of this text, the first part of it has to do with those who are strangers to the grace of God. Having never been quickened from dead works, and thinks to be justified by the works of the law, he does not know the poverty of his own soul; and in this ignorance he feels that when he has observed the letter of the law that he will be justified before God; that the justice and righteousness of God indebts him to bestow to him the promise of life eternal, and all blessings of this life for service rendered.

"But to him that worketh not but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly" — this is not to be applied to those whose faith without works is dead, mentioned by James, but this is the poor sinner who is stripped of all self-righteousness, and his confidence in any godly virtue in himself is taken away, but his faith is stayed upon Jesus Christ and his hope is in the mercy and grace of God. Yet there is a fruit to be seen in him that bears evidence of his acceptance with God; a virtue which is not seen or even known by the one possessed of it, but which shines as a light

to those of like faith.

"He flies from works to Jesus blood; yet proves by works he is born of God."

We conclude then, that a man is justified by faith, and not by the works of the law.

Unworthily in hope of mercy,
R. P. Hendrix
Frisco City, Alabama

CIRCULAR LETTER

With belief in that which is to be, the Pigg River District Association (Virginia), in session with Chapel Church, August 4, 5, and 6, 1961, sends greetings, and desires to cordially, sincerely and very cheerfully bid all those with whom we correspond, God-speed.

Dear Brethren:

If this letter has any value at all, it lies in the conclusion that all praise and power belongs to Jesus Christ the Lord. The church by Jesus Christ is home to the chosen of God. No weapon that is formed against them shall prosper. Everyone of them has received at the Lord's hand strength to continue, a hope that saves, and peace that cannot fail. They do indeed rest in the shadow of a great Rock in a weary land.

We calculate to a certainty that those who have passed from death unto life love the brethren, but have no authority over their brethren. Those who would substitute authority for love, are, therefore, false brethren. Ungodly men with long faces, and long rules, who claim to be helpful, or needed in the cause of Almighty God, have been the church's manifest enemies since Jesus promised deceivers shall come among you.

It is so, is it not, that Almighty God is His church's builder and keeper, and she has been from the foundation of the world holy and without blame; and she needs none of man's works or inventions

to help it, or to boss it, or to steady it on the way, or to purify it either from without or from within? We own no auxiliary. It will not do to have the language of dependence on our lips, while our hearts are leaning on creature helps. We conclude, therefore, that all except the church is in the world, and is therefore just a part of it.

In view of these many things, we desire your prayers to God to make and keep us thankful for the blessed comforting hope that we are not seated in the world, but with the Church at Chapel; not in the position of workers, but in the happy and elevated position of worshippers; not in the place of judgment, but in the place of testimony.

The church is quickened out of the grave of Christ; it is part of His flesh and part of His bones. He is the Head, she is the body, making one man, as we read in the fourth of Ephesians. Now the glorious thought in this: ALL who are thus seated with the church will no doubt occupy their unique place through sanctification of the Spirit, until they fill their place in His coming glory.

In view of this, we are, we hope, thankful, devoutly thankful, for the blessed fact that we are seated with the Chapel Church. Our only business is to praise God. We would not change it if we could, and could not if we would. The Master has the mastery.

Our blessings and our trials were willed to us as individuals; and all of our past and all of our future and all that shall befall us, was determined by one God who appointed the bounds of our habitation, the ancient people, the things that are coming, and shall come. His eternal counsel and His finished work constitute the imperishable basis upon which rests the glory of God; and all our salvation both for time and for eternity.

Grace be with you all.

Written by request, and submitted in love by a sinner named

Julius Bocock

EXPERIENCE OF ELDER P. D. GOLD

(Continued)

When about twenty-one years of age at one of these meetings, some excitement seemed to get hold of me, and my hope was that it was conviction for sin. A few tears were shed, and on my way home one night a kind of relief came, which appeared to me then as religion. The next day they received me and baptized me soon. But there was no change in my faith or doctrine. The same notions that were held by me in all my youthful days, that salvation is attainable as the result of creature effort, were still held by me, though my mother had often repeated the words in my hearing, "Salvation is of the Lord." Nor was there any change in my morals or affections. It may have been that more care was taken that my conduct should give no offense to others, for pride would prompt a young man of my views and aspirations to maintain a decent regard for good behavior. The question has often been agitated in my mind whether such a system of religion, wherein preachers and their theories, and not the love and fear of God, controls the minds of the membership of such churches, is any profit to mankind or not. That the converts of this system deny the power of God, yet maintaining a show and form of religion, is apparent. For if you will talk with one on the subject of religion of his idea of faith you will find is just that of all natural men, and the limit and test of self-denial is to pay the preacher and give a few dimes to save the heathen, and maintain a decent behaviour, claiming at the same time that money can send the gospel anywhere. He will tell you that unless the money is sent the heathen are lost, but that if it is sent, they will be saved; while he may himself be worth his thousands, yet not give ten dollars a year for that purpose. He will not tell you anything of personal experience, knows nothing of being a lost sinner, has never felt the power of Jesus

in his soul, nor the comforts and guidance of the Holy Spirit. He thinks the doctrine held by the Old Baptists the most dangerous and horrible of any ever held. He cannot endure election and a life of faith. He thinks there is no kind of drunkedness but that of liquor. Education is indispensable to qualify one to preach the gospel he holds.

Such were my views before and after the time here spoken of. My glorying was in the Missionary Baptist denomination; not once did ever the question arise in my mind, Can they be wrong? or myself either. Occasionally in an encounter with a Primitive Baptist during the war, as we would argue on subjects, and differ, it occurred to me what a dangerous doctrine they do preach and hold, what ignorant, selfish and conceited people they must be.

It was my intention when a young man, to be a lawyer. When between twenty and twenty-one years of age, and just before joining the Missionary Baptists, my academic course at school began. As soon as they received me as a member, it was remarked that there will be a preacher. This was very distasteful to me. For amid all my imaginings in my youthful days as to my occupation in after life, it never occurred to me at all that I would be a preacher. There was nothing in it of any charm for me. My ambition was to be a lawyer. A few years found me with my legal diploma and damaged morals — damaged not because of the legal profession, but because it was in me before, and began to rage. It is not good to charge one's bad conduct to his associates or occupation. The source of the trouble is in the man. If he were right, he would choose good associates and pursue a righteous course in life. Man is weak, however, having but little margin or reserve force against temptation, and should not presume that he could weather the storm. Let him choose the safest craft he may, and steer in the calmest waters, and even then he will make shipwreck.

Soon my soul was plunged into much

trouble in consequence of reckless living. Then it occurred to me that the best way to do was to preach. This was decided upon as the antidote for my troubled conscience. But to be a great preacher was the next step. The war in a few years came on before my course was complete, and I left school. There was a new trouble confronting me. Debts to the amount of about \$3,000.00 were on my hands, and nothing with which to pay. For the first time this mountain of trouble stood towering and threatening me. Such had been my thirst for education that this difficulty had not much embarrassed me until now. For one may be so absorbed in the pursuit of a cherished object that he will quite forget, or scarcely notice, great dangers, even imminent. After leaving school this debt matter greatly oppressed my feelings. My father had always advised me not to make debts; yet my lot so far had been to be in debt from the time of my majority.

During the war my marriage occurred in the town of Goldsboro. The woman given me of the Lord possessed no worldly goods. In this respect we were equals. In purity of character she was, and is yet, far my superior. For the Lord has blessed me among other things, with a good wife. During the war, and after my marriage, a friend gave me \$5,000.00. The Confederate money was used as far as my creditors would receive it in payment of my debts contracted for my education and otherwise; and it liquidated nearly all of those debts, which was a great relief to me.

After the war was over, for about five years we lived in Halifax County, N. C. During the war my troubles began in another and severer form than ever. While attending my usual course of service as a preacher, and glorying in that denomination, in a manner wholly beyond my conception or control, it appeared to me that my heart was full of sin, rendering me totally unfit to preach to anyone. The people were kind to me, the congregations large, and prospects flattering outwardly, but there was no

pleasure for me. It increased until it seemed that to be allowed to crawl under the house and not be seen, but merely suffered to hear someone preach, would far better befit my desperate case. The thoughts of my heart were foolishness. Sin was a burden to me. My heart trouble and anguish of soul weighted me down.

For months this darkened state of feeling oppressed me. The justice of God appeared so clearly in my condemnation that the word, amen to my condemnation seemed fittest. God appeared so holy, and my nature so vile, that it looked to me that no place but Hell could be suitable for such a sinner. Sin seemed as a tempest raging in me, and it looked to me that if a great stone were dropped in the atmosphere as it could have no power to resist its own fall, but its own weight would hurl it down, so my own sins were driving me justly to destruction; nor did it even enter my thoughts that this was conviction of sin that would end in salvation for me; for there was no hope for me. In the midst of these awful moments, while riding on horseback, suddenly Jesus was revealed to me in a glorious appearance in the heavens; and these words were sounded out as plainly as if spoken to me, "If God gives you Christ, how shall he not with him also freely give you all things." This occurred on the 15th of February, 1865.

It did not then occur to me that this is salvation. My mind seemed to be wholly absorbed in the contemplation of the glorious character of Jesus. The load of guilt and sin was gone, and self was lost sight of for a time. The glorious character and kingdom of Jesus appeared to me as it had never before. It seemed to me as a new world; but with my preaching it was different. At once Christ appeared to me as the only way of truth. This in letter or words for years had been held by me, but now in a new spiritual and glorious form it appeared and possessed my spirit; and thus the character of my preaching was changed. For from that time it was that

Jesus is the Christ.

New views of the church and way of salvation opened up to me, so that questions arose concerning Christ and his kingdom in a manner so distinct and unmistakable that they were answered in my conscience only by preaching Christ as my righteousness and the righteousness of saints. Jesus appeared to me from that time in power and glory, as the head of the church, having all power both in heaven and earth. There was, then, nothing else for me to preach but Jesus. All else was excluded from my heart and conscience. Money, Sunday Schools, Boards of men, Theological Schools, Human learning, the force and strength of combinations of men all disappeared; nor was it in my heart to preach them anymore. Jesus appeared to me as the righteousness of saints, and ever since that time, more than twenty-five years ago, it has seemed to me there is nothing else for me to speak of or attempt to preach. We preach Jesus crucified, to the Jews a stumbling block, and to Greeks foolishness, but to them that are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.

The matter of preaching has been a grave and serious question to me for many years. It was the most offensive thing to my feelings, and never, if this nature of mine had been suffered to dictate my course of life, would this have been my lot. How it came to pass that I was made willing, was most soul-humbling. It was a crucifying of my nature, and caused an immolation of my most cherished objects of earth. But to be willing to swallow down all that I had endorsed and espoused, to renounce that which had been so dear, namely the institutions and doctrines of modern missionism, and discard all my former associates, and to worship after the way they call heresy, was a sore trial; so much so that nothing but divine power could lead me to do this.

They began at once to reprove me for that sort of preaching, and to tell me it was not profitable, and would scatter

the congregation of people, and wither the church; that while it would do to talk predestination around the chimney-corner to old women, or to serve old established Christians, it was not palatable to be general and mixed congregation composed in considerable part of unbelievers; and that the experience of their people was that in order to hold the congregations and win converts, the preaching must be adapted to the tastes of the hearers. It may as well be remarked here that the more of such arguments as this were advanced, the weaker their cause appeared to me. It was said that my facial appearance and construction of my brain made me a predestinarian, and that my views would land me in the lap of Hardshellism.

Others said it is the disposition of some men to take this view of questions, and see only the Lord's work in operation. But not until recently had it so appeared to me. A great and radical change had passed over me. Once I had believed as they did, and encountered lovers of predestination with the same arguments they now assailed me, and that which once appeared to me as glorious had been stripped of its beauty. Now the Lord appeared to me as the great operator of all the powers and forces of the universe, and men are but as dust and ashes in his hand.

(To be continued)

609 7th Avenue, F. F. Hglds.
Fairfield, Alabama

Dear Brother Wood:

On my last issue of the Signs I noticed it's time to renew my subscription for another year. I feel we are wonderfully blessed of God that we are still able in these dark days to have the truth published; and to know there are those who yet believe in a God who rules in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and who is not in need of man's works to effect the salvation of his people, as so many think.

It seems there is so much trouble in every place: nation against nation, and all seem to be working frantically to bring about peace, and yet things just keep getting worse. But God knows; and I feel sure when it's all over, it will work out for His glory, and his people's good. The rulers of today have their bounds set just as Pharaoh of old.

We have just held the 94th session of the Five Mile Creek Association, and had a wonderful meeting. I thought the ministers were wonderfully blessed to tell of the wonders of God's grace.

Yours in Christian love,
Claude C. Hand

R. F. D. 3, Box 123
Stanton, Texas

Dear Saints:

If it can please the Lord, I would like to pen my heart's desire; for I want my faith known to the saints. The people that God chose in Christ, our King, Priest, and Redeemer, the elect and not one more nor one less, will ever see heaven. The old prophet wrote long years ago what God the Father said, "The house of Jacob shall not grow nor dwell among the dead." These, the redeemed, were chosen in Christ before man was made a living soul. "And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire." (Rev. 2:15)

God determined before time to have a people to sing his love and praises: They are a chosen people; chosen in his Son, and redeemed by his Son to serve and love God.

The Lord can teach me in my dreams,
And my instructions seal;
His cleansing blood in flowing streams,
My sinful nature heals.

The Father gave me to the Son
Before the world began;
And Jesus Christ will not lose one
Included in his plan.

Their names were written in my book
When there were none of them;
My holy Son their nature took,
And put away their sins.

His life was given for his sheep,
And they shall hear His voice;
For he is under oath to keep
The objects of his choice.

Dr. F. P. Welch

Memphis, Tenn.

Dear Editors of the Signs:

Enclosed is a letter I received from Sister Jones over a year ago. It has come to my notice several times, and I can't seem to put it away. So I am sending it to you for your approval, as to whether it will be good reading for the Signs.

I would like to say to you, Elders Spangler, Wood, Griffin and Lambert, that we did appreciate and enjoy your visit among us, and hope the Lord will give Elder Ruston a mind and open up the way for him to visit us sometime. Your sermons were enjoyed, and we felt so comforted and lifted up. This poor one wanted to write and tell you so; but, Oh, my leanness, my leanness! There are so many thoughts which follow an impulse to write; and, as I look into them, I am not sure from whom they come. So thus it passes, leaving me with a sad feeling, afraid I would be wearisome to my brethren.

I feel that I learned long ago that I had no ability of my own, and, if God's name was praised and honored in my feeble attempts, it was of him that my heart and pen was set in action. I was willing to appear a fool for Christ's sake, but it seems I can't be sure; nevertheless I do know He is able to hide, or reveal, as it pleases Him. No wonder he said, "Without me, ye can do nothing." But we know that with or in him we can do all things. How our hearts are refreshed and we rejoice, when He opens our understanding of the Scriptures, and we have rich meditations of the works of God our Saviour;

and we feel strength enter into us, and we find ourselves standing, though trembling, in the hope of so great a salvation, which has been graciously given to the heirs of the promise; and which is made known to them in due time, according as He had thought, and according to His word that was spoken; and thus He fulfills his word.

In Jesus all fullness dwells; and when we are given eyes to see, and hearts to understand, we see him all things pertaining to life and godliness; and in his wise designs are our down-sittings and uprisings; our joys and our sorrows; our distresses and our comforts; our fears and our faith; our weakness and our strength, for it is in Him that we live, move and have our being.

Yours in a sweet hope,
Mrs. Luther Campbell

THE LETTER FROM SISTER JONES

R. F. D. 1
Martin, Tenn.

Dear Brother and Sister Campbell:

Dear precious friends, your letter at hand today, which I have re-read, and, if not deceived, it is meat and drink to a weary traveler. So much of the time I am weighted down with trials, sadness, and disappointments, that it's only a moment of time that I have a peaceful mind. But, Oh, to be given the thought that God is God, and beside him there is no Saviour: How unsearchable are the riches of his grace, and his ways past finding out. He leads you through the night, not letting you know he is guiding your wayward feet 'till the dawn; and his appearing and living presence is so sweet that you feel within your soul the whispers of his love, saying, "It is I, be not afraid." It is then you have again thrust your hand in His side, and see the nail prints in his hands, and you are no more doubting, but rejoicing, and cry, "My Lord and my God!"

The darling Son had to go to the garden of Gethsemane, and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood. The disciples went with him also; but see how helpless we are: they couldn't even watch one hour. Neither could they pray. The Son prayed to the Father three times, and was able in the Spirit to say, "Not my will but thine be done."

When you are carried to the deep, and made to cry by reason of your afflictions, you will pay that you have vowed: Salvation is of the Lord. Oh, dear sister, when you are made to feel these things in your heart, aren't you so glad its own record, and you find these precious things you have felt in the Scripture; which are the testimonies of Jesus. There are times you read with eyes given to see, and a heart to understand, are you not then bearing the body of Jesus in your dying body? I believe you are; and that is what His children see in their brethren that melts this old man to tears; and then gladly call each other brother and sister.

I believe that love is so great to the extent you do know for a small moment that you have passed from death unto life. These things are what make you look for a city who's maker and builder in God; and to look beyond this veil of tears, to a place of rest wherein dwells righteousness. I hope I know something about the downsittings and uprisings of a poor and afflicted people (as you said), who are traveling in this wilderness, sighing with groanings which cannot be put into words. I wonder if this is praying without ceasing, while being carried through the wilderness, being instructed, and kept as the apple of his eye; so when we are given a heart of understanding, then none of the Saviour's sayings seem to be hard sayings; for then you see all things working together for good to those who love the Lord. The great I Am is before all things, and by him all things consist; he is the same yesterday, today and forever. His power is just as great when you are not a believer, as after you are made to believe. He has all power in

heaven and in earth; and if he sends your soul to eternal woe, just and righteous is he. But when the love of Christ surrounds and fills our hearts to overflowing, then we can sing, "How sweet the name of Jesus sounds in a believer's ear; it soothes his sorrows, heals his wounds, and drives away his fear."

Dear Sister, I travel on not knowing the way which the Lord has purposed. It is with much fear, though the Lord knows all things: There is nothing hid from him, and he is never disappointed or alarmed as we, when things take place with us; for he said in his wisdom, power and mercy, "As I have thought so shall it be; as I have purposed so shall it stand." It would take many words to pen all that is seen in this at times. Now, I feel this is too wonderful for me.

I often feel fearful that I have never been brought to the knowledge of the truth; but when (if I be one), I am blessed to consider with understanding, I feel to say with one of old, "Lord, I believe, help thou mine unbelief." For, indeed, to believe is the work of God, and brings peace, comfort, and satisfaction; which is worth more to a poor sinner than ten thousand worlds like this.

I must tell you today, your letter is much comfort to me; it seems you think my thoughts, but you are blessed to so beautifully express them. I feel you have learned long ago that I am weak and unlearned, and slow of speech. But peace, sweet peace, when the broken family of God are permitted to meet here in one accord in love and unity; and He gives them a glimpse of heaven of rest, and that, one day, the family will all be gathered home, to appear in his likeness and be satisfied. But not so while we remain here, for in this world we shall have tribulation, and the world will hate you; but Jesus said, "Be of good cheer, for I have overcome the world." It is also said that whom He loveth, he chasteneth, and that chastisement at present is grievous, but after-

wards worketh the peaceful fruits of righteousness. Known unto God are all his work from the foundation of the world; and Paul says, "Grace be to you and peace from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings 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."

. . . I love to hear Jesus preached, for he is the way, the truth, and the life; He is the resurrection. I believe there is a people who are preserved in Christ, who can't be carried about with every wind of doctrine: Their sufferings are great in becoming believers.

Farewell in the Lord. Give our love to all the dear ones of the church. A little sister, I hope, by the blood of Jesus.

Mrs. Aseneth Jones

EXPERIENCE

R. F. D. 2
Elon College, N. C.

Dear Brother and Sister King:

If it is the Lord's will, I would like to write you about some of the things I have experienced (if not deceived), since I couldn't tell them when I joined Bush Arbor Church at the association. I know that God has all power, and without him I can do nothing. It has been my desire ever since I've wanted to join the church, to tell God's little children what great things He has done for me when I joined, but I was shut up, and couldn't tell them.

One night last January, I dreamed I saw a little midget about the size of a three year old child. He had on a suit made of one piece; I didn't notice anything else about him. It seemed that I laid down on a cot, and saw two little hands on the edge of the cot, and I took hold of them, and pulled the little midget from under the cot; and struggled with him until I had his hands crossed.

Then I asked him what he was doing under my bed. He replied, "You don't tell enough about how good the Lord has been to you." Then I awoke.

After that I had a desire to tell my experience, but it seemed that I couldn't; until it got to be such a burden that I told a few whom I feel are God's little ones. Then I felt relieved for awhile. "The Lord shuts and none can open, and he opens and none can shut." I feel I know this; and unless He blesses me to write or speak of him, it is a hopeless case.

When I was in my teens, one night we had a bad storm; and the wind blew so hard I was so afraid. I begged the Lord to save us and not let the wind blow our house over. It was the first time I realized He was the only one who could, since I had always felt safe with my mother and father. After the storm was over, and we were spared, I begged Him to save me when I died; and to let me know that he would in a dream. I dreamed I saw myself so corrupt that worms were coming out of me. When I awoke, I felt awful, and decided to be a better girl, and He would save me. I tried every way I could, but have been getting worse ever since.

One Sunday after that, while I was reading the comics, I felt so condemned that I promised the Lord, if he would spare me, I wouldn't do that again — but I did. I made so many promises to him — and broke them all. I would slip and read the Bible, but couldn't get anything out of it. I would sometimes think that God's people whom I read about, could do better than they did; and that I wouldn't do such things, but do just the things that seemed good to Him. And all the time I couldn't do anything but worse and worse. I have learned that, "It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps."

I believed that the Old Baptists were God's people, and would go to hear them preach, but couldn't get anything out of it. One night in September, 1955, I dreamed of being in a stand with you

and some other preachers, Brother King, and something had taken place with me. When I awoke, I felt my hard and stony heart had been melted; and the song, "Come thou fount of every blessing," was on my mind. We went to Williamsburg that day, and when they sang that song, I felt it was for me, and I shed tears of joy.

One night later, I think I was awake and trying to pray, I saw a light coming down from heaven toward me through the top of the house, as if the house was not there. I was so afraid that I cried, "Lord have mercy." The next thing I knew I was up in the clouds looking down, and saw the prettiest green fields I've ever seen, all joined together. I didn't feel the light when it reached me. After this I was so happy, but something would say in my heart that I must be baptized; and I would say, "Lord, I can't. I'm not fit." That was one thing I didn't want to do.

I got to feeling pretty good after that, and I thought I had hope and faith. Then something took place with my natural body that I desired to know about more than anything. After I asked the Lord to show me what I wanted to know, and felt that He did in a dream, I found that I was wrong about the whole thing; and, because I told my dream, I felt I had sinned against heaven and earth, and there went all my faith and hope. Because it didn't come true, I felt all my dreams and visions were imaginary. This was in May, 1957, and from then until the following November I was the most miserable person in the world. I felt to be so wicked I thought the ground might open up and swallow me, like it did in Bible days. By Fall I was in so much trouble, when I went to bed I would beg the Lord to let me die so I could get some rest in my grave before I went to Hell, where I felt I was surely going. Then one night in November I dreamed I saw this same light I had seen before, coming straight from heaven toward me, and I cried, "Lord have mercy." It came toward me, and struck my body three times with

the heaviest weight I have ever felt. And I saw streams of water in this light, and after it struck me, I saw my arms and legs wither away, and what was left of me was no larger than a baby. I awoke rejoicing, with all my burden gone. I was the happiest person alive; and sang praises to my God. The earth looked so pretty; it seemed the grass and everything was praising my God.

Then I wanted to be baptized, and tell God's people what great things He had done for me, and asked him to make me go at his appointed time, and to put the words in my mouth that would be to his praise, honor and glory; and that if I were not his, to keep me from joining the church. Oh, how I've longed and prayed to be baptized. But there is a time and a season for everything; and I kept hoping He would give me more evidence. I had dreams of joining since then, but I never did have as much evidence as I wanted.

When I went, I wanted to go so badly; then before I got home, I felt I had made a mistake, and that evening and the next morning I was so miserable, because I felt I joined the church and wasn't fit. I cried and begged the Lord to have mercy on me. Tuesday morning I decided I would tell the church I had deceived them, and they need not put my name on the book; but just let Elder King baptize me. I still wanted to be baptized so badly. About noon the song, "Come thou fount of every blessing," came to me, and the storm that was raging inside me, was made to cease. Once again I felt that peace that passes all understanding, and I was made to rejoice. When I was baptized I left such a burden in the water, and I was the happiest I've ever been in my life. I believe I'll have many troubles and trials in this life, but if I am His, He will say, "Peace, be still", when the storms are raging within me, and He will bless me to feel that sweet peace.

Brother King, I am very grateful to you for baptizing such a wretch as I am; you don't know what it has meant

to me; and for singing that song, "Come thou fount of every blessing," that night.

If you have a mind, will you pass this on to Brother Spangler to publish in the Signs of the Times, if you think is suitable. I don't want anything that I write published if it is not right. May God bless both of you, and keep us all.

An unworthy sister, in hope,
Gladys Page

Huntington, W. Va.

Mrs. Mary E. Claggett
Bethesda, Md.

Dear Sister Claggett:

Your letter, coming from an old soldier of the cross, who is a shut-in, to such an unworthy sinner as I feel myself to be, made me rejoice as I read it. O sister, how can I answer — what can I say for myself! I of myself can do nothing, but through Him can do all things. All I know has been given me by Him, and if I am enabled through Him to speak comforting words to those of like precious faith, give all the glory to God.

This is a comfort to me, and I know it is a comfort to you: "I have been young, and now am old; yet have I not seen the righteous forsaken nor his seed begging bread." (Psalm 37:25) We both have toiled in the vineyard of the Lord all day, and will receive our penny, the same as those who toiled but a few hours; for we know that all the chosen people of God are saved by the grace of God, and our toiling in the vineyard did not make us sons, but because we are sons; and because He leads his people, and draws them by the heart strings, and brings them into the banqueting house under the banner of love. Unto us the heavens show the glory of God, and the firmament sheweth his handiwork.

But with me, dear sister, so much of

my life has been dark and dreary. When I turn my eyes within, all is dark, and vain, and wild, filled with unbelief and sin — can I deem myself a child? But what can we expect, as Satan tempts and tries to make us put it all aside and worship him; and promises riches and enjoyment in sin; and I know I have my fill of it, and I am weak. Then it comes to me the suffering that Jesus went through. He said to Satan, "Get thee hence, Satan: for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him alone shalt thou serve." It was not for himself, for he was without sin; but it was for you and me, and all poor sinners in whose hearts God dwells; "Christ in us the hope of glory."

When we, his servants, have served our time here beneath the circle of the sun, He will crown us with a crown of glory; then we will be satisfied. In this world we shall have tribulation, but in Him peace. As we walk through the valley of the shadow of death, we will fear no evil, "For thou art with me, thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." We dwell in the midst of a perverse generation, with nothing but confusion all around us. In a world of people that know not God, we are as shining lights, known of God and redeemed by the blood of the Lamb.

Sister Claggett, the sun is getting low in the West, and will soon be setting in our pilgrimage, and we will be numbered with the has-beens. But we are comforted in the fact that, "The Lord knoweth them that are his," and no power on earth, nor life nor death, can separate us from the love of God. His love will never end, and he will carry out his great eternal will. May we humbly pray that his will be done in earth as it is in heaven.

Sister Weaver is enclosing a few lines. I have been real well, and I am thankful — of course, old and gray headed, but still able to preach Christ and him crucified. May the Lord be with you, dear sister, that you may have some good thoughts and pleasant times in Him.

Pray for this old sinner.

A sinner saved by grace, I hope,
(Elder) George L. Weaver

SOLDIERS

I long, dear Lord, to thee confess,
To tell the blessed story,
Of Jesus' blood and righteousness,
And then go home to glory.

I long the world to overcome,
Although my hair is hoary;
To fight until the battle's won,
And then go home to glory.

I would, dear Lord, a soldier be —
I would not be a tory;
I would the field of battle see,
And then go home to glory.

I long to leave this vale of tears:
The battle field is gory;
To quit this land of doubts and fears,
And then go home to glory.

'Midst storms and persecutions great
I'd launch my barque or dory,
And gladly leave this world of hate,
And sail for home in glory.

And after I have told to all
The sweet and lovely story,
O, may I in the battle fall,
And then go home to glory.

The above can be sung to the tune "New Harmony." I composed it about 1938, and sent it to the late Elder J. C. Sikes, of Gainesville, Texas, who liked it very much, and gave it the title, "Soldier".

If published, I would like to dedicate it first to the glory of God, and next to the memory of Elder Sikes, a very able minister and writer.

C. B. Britt,
Rt. 6, Box 282,
El Dorado, Arkansas

OLD TIME DOCTRINE PREACHED

Dozier, Alabama

Dear Editors:

Enclosed you will find check to renew my subscription to the *Signs of the Times*; also two dollars for the Indigent Fund.

Most all of our associations in this part of Alabama are now over, and I

believe they were all blessed with the ablest preachers, who stood firm on the old time 'Hardshell' doctrine as God enabled them to deliver it to us poor sinners.

I wish I knew how to express my feelings as some others can, but I am what I am, and can't seem to be any other way. I really enjoy the *Signs of the Times* each month, and hope and pray that I may continue to do so for many more months to come.

May God bless and keep you all, is my prayer,

Sincerely,
J. Fred Clark

UPPER COUNTRY LINE
UNION MEETING

The Upper Country Line Union Meeting is appointed to be held with the church at Bush Arbor the fifth Sunday in December, 1961: on Sunday only.

Bush Arbor Church is located on Highway 62, nine miles South of Yanceyville, N. C., and about eighteen miles North of Burlington, N. C.

Brethren and friends are invited to meet with us.

Earl S. Rudd,
1005 N. Mebane Street,
Burlington, N. C.

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Elder W. W. Taylor is manager of THE BIBLE HOSPITAL, Dallas, Texas, which does all kinds of book binding. They have had more than 25 years experience, and would appreciate serving those who have need of their craftsmanship. The address is:

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DESires THE WRITING OF
ELDER H. M. CURRY

The great nephew of the late Elder H. M. Curry, Charles W. Floyd, of 1848 W. Wier Avenue, Phoenix 41, Arizona, desires to obtain as much of the writings of his great uncle as he can; and desires to correspond with anyone who may have some of them. Please write him at the above address — Ed.

Danville, Virginia December, 1961

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EDITORIAL

"AND THE IRON DID SWIM"

2 Kings 6:1-7

We have been requested to write upon the above Scripture, and in doing so, it will be of interest to notice that during the lives of the prophets Elijah and Elisha there were men gathered to-

gether in increasing numbers, who studied the Scripture, and who also desired the company of those men of God.

They are called Sons of the prophets and are also spoken of as the School of the prophets. We do not for a moment think that they followed the prophets thinking that the prophets could teach them to prophesy. No doubt the remarkable gift that was seen in Elijah drew them towards him. He appeared suddenly (in the reign of Ahab, one of the most wicked kings), prophesying that there would be neither dew nor rain for three years. During that time the Lord fed and sustained him by ravens, and later by the Widow of Zarephath, whose son he raised from the dead. We wonder if it were these sons of the prophets whom Obadiah took, a hundred of them, and led them by fifty in a cave and fed them bread and water. I Kings 18:3-4.

We see that there were groups of them at Bethel and also at Jericho, and we have no doubt that they were often favoured by the prophet being present with them.

From the Word of truth it can be seen that these men's interest was in what the prophets did and said. Both those at Bethel and at Jericho had a positive impression that the Lord would take Elijah from them that day. In both places they communicated their impressions to Elisha, who was then the servant of Elijah. To each group Elisha's answer was, "I KNOW IT," and he told them to hold their peace.

So impressed were they that fifty men of them stood afar off and watched the prophet and his servant Elisha, they saw them come to Jordan and they saw them cross it dry shod. We are not told that they saw what appeared to Elisha, "A chariot of fire and horses of fire," but they might have seen the effect of the whirlwind which carried Elijah into heaven.

Elisha, left alone, took hold of his clothes and rent them in two pieces. He took up also the mantle of Elijah that fell from him and went back and stood

by the bank of Jordan. He took the mantle of Elijah that fell from him, and smote the waters and said "Where is the Lord God of Elijah?" and when he had smitten the waters they parted hither and thither, and Elisha went over. Here we would like to say that the mantle of itself had no power or charm. The double portion of the Spirit of Elijah bestowed upon Elisha was that which caused faith to be mixed with the words spoken. It was the like precious faith of which Jesus spoke to His unbelieving disciples, a grain of which could remove a mountain. Matthew 17:20. No doubt those men who were put to watch saw Elisha come across Jordan and knew from what they saw that the spirit of Elijah rested upon Elisha, "And they came to meet him and bowed themselves to the ground before him."

Though they had seen wonderful things, yet without the Spirit, they showed the lack of faith, for faith is a fruit of the Spirit. Thus we see them begging the prophet to send men to look for Elijah, fearing that the Spirit of the Lord had taken him up and cast him upon some mountains or into some valley. Elisha said, "Ye shall not send," but they urged him till he was ashamed, and at last he said, "Send." While he tarried at Jericho, the fifty men went and sought three days but found him not. Although we see unbelief in these men, as in Christ's disciples, yet the prophet dwelt among them and there he performed a miracle, he healed the waters with a new cruse in which he put salt, and he declared that the land there should be no more barren.

At Bethel the little children (echoing no doubt the unbelief of their parents, who probably had expressed freely before their children that the testimony of the man of God was just a myth) mocked Elisha, saying, "Go up, thou bald head, go up, thou bald head." What a solemn and a w f u l judgment upon those who despised God's servants and made light of their testimony to have their children torn by two she bears out of the wood.

"His wrath let us fear to provoke
To dwell in His favour unite.
His service is freedom, His yoke
Is easy, His burden is light."

Each chapter in Elisha's life shows how true it was that he received a double portion of the spirit of Elijah. In the chapter from which our text is taken we find the sons of the prophets telling Elisha that the place where he dwelt with them was too small. They suggested Jordan as the place where they should build, he told them to go and do so. "One said, Be content and go with thy servants, and he answered, I will go. So he went with them, and when they came to Jordan they cut down wood. But as one was felling a beam the ax head fell into the water: and he cried and said, Alas, Master! for it was borrowed. And the man of God said, where fell it? and he showed him the place. And he cut down a stick, and cast it in thither; AND THE IRON DID SWIM. Therefore, said he, Take it up to thee. And he put out his hand and took it."

The Word of God cuts close and is sharper than any two-edged sword. Hebrews 4:12. The Word of God in the mouth of His prophets was a word of judgment. "Therefore I have hewed them by the prophets, I have slain them by the words of the mouth." Hosea 6:5.

It was a borrowed ax! Twice in Deuteronomy Moses tells Israel that she could lend to other nations but she should not borrow from them, but in the family of Israel, "If a man borrow ought of his neighbor, and it be hurt or die, the owner thereof being not with it, he shall surely make it good." Exodus 22:14. Perhaps this was what made the man feel it so keenly when the ax sank in the water. To get to our subject. Were not all the utterances of the prophets borrowed? They spoke the words, but it was the WORD OF GOD. They uttered promises and words of judgment, and the prophets, to the last one, testified of Jesus, of His sufferings

and the glory that should follow. The prophet Malachi was the last prophet of the Old Testament, and we find utterances of a judgment to come and of a messenger who would prepare the way before Him, and the Lord would suddenly come to His temple.

For four hundred years this testimony, as the testimony of all the prophets, was sunk in the judgments that came upon Israel. (Jordan means judgment). Elisha was with them when the ax sank. Elijah never died. As Moses personified the law, so Elijah stands for the prophets. Their testimony was a living testimony, yet they, as Jews, testified not for themselves but for those who should BE heirs of salvation. Elisha, coming after Elijah, is a type of Jesus Christ. If Elisha had not been there, the ax would never have come to the surface again. If Jesus had not come, and He came for judgment into this world, the testimony of the prophets, as of the law, would never have been heard of again.

It would interest the reader to read the life of Elisha and to compare his miracles with those of our Lord. We find Elisha healing the Gentile leper, Naaman, and feeding the multitude with twenty barley loaves and full ears of corn in the husk thereof. He had a "THUS SAITH THE LORD, they shall eat and leave thereof." He it was who often passed by the Shunammite, who is spoken of as a great woman. She had kind thoughts of him, seeing him pass her way, so they built a little chamber and prepared it for the prophet, on the wall. They placed in it a bed, a table, a stool and a candlestick, for, said she, when he cometh to us, he shall turn in thither. Are there still a few little chambers with their bed, table, stool and candlestick amongst us today, are they on the wall and does the PROPHET turn in thither? She, though of herself could not believe such a thing, was promised an increase! "Thou shalt embrace a son." "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given." She could say this, as a type of the Gospel Church.

What a wonderful type we see in the prophet as he goes into the room where the mother had laid her dead son, and he shut the door on them twain. He put his hands upon the boy's hands, his eyes upon the boy's eyes, his mouth on the boy's mouth, and his body upon the boy's body, and the boy's body became warm. Our Lord, Prophet of prophets, had to come where we lay dead, had to come in the likeness of sinful flesh and suffer for us that we might live unto God.

After the silence of four hundred years, John the Baptist came, whom the angel had said would come in the spirit and power of Elijah, and many of the children of Israel should he turn to the Lord their God. Six months after his mother Elisabeth had conceived, the angel Gabriel was sent of God into a city of Galilee named Nazareth to a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David, and the virgin's name was Mary. Prophecy comes alive again. The angels named these two boys and told why they had come into the world. Jesus, the Son of God and the son of man became a little child, yet was worshipped as the Son of God by the wise men. When of age, He must needs be buried by baptism in Jordan, and John, who had already testified of Him, declares that he knew Him not, but he said, "He that sent me to baptize by water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on Him, the same is He which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost. And I saw and bare record that this is the Son of God."

The apostle John tells us "The Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth."

It can be said that our Lord came at the darkest part of the night of Judaism. The Law and the Prophets were the two witnesses that prophesied in sackcloth. The last chapter of 2 Chronicles tells us "The Lord God of their fathers sent to them by His messengers,

rising up betimes, and sending, because He had compassion on His people and on His dwelling place. But they mocked the messengers of God, and despised His words and misused His prophets, until the wrath of the Lord arose against His people till there was no remedy."

"But who shall abide the day of His coming? and who shall stand when He appeareth?" Malachi 3:2. John received the ax from our Lord through His blessed Spirit, and so John could with the boldness of Elijah, when he appeared before wicked Ahab, say, when he saw the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism in Jordan: "O, generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance: and think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father; for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham. And now also THE AX is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down and cast into the fire." Matthew 3:7-10. Our Lord is the true Israelite who lendeth but does not borrow. It was His own word that He declared to Satan when He said, "It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." All those prophets spake of Him, His sufferings and the glory that should follow. At the salutation of Elisabeth to Mary, John leaped with joy in his mother's womb: and as we have already mentioned, he was assured by God's Holy Spirit that Jesus was the Son of God; but when the ax fell in judgment, and he was left to himself, sunk in distress and gloom, he sent his disciples to Jesus, saying, "Art Thou He that should come, or look we for another?" Jesus said, "Go and tell John again." Yes, we must be told again and again, that the impossible is true. Thomas was told by his brethren that Jesus had risen from the dead, but only our PROPHET could make him believe that. The words from

His mouth caused him to cry "My Lord and my God." HIS WORD was the ax that did swim. Elisha cut down a stick, also when Israel murmured because the waters of Marah were bitter, Moses cried unto the Lord and the Lord showed him a tree which when he had cast into the waters, the waters were made sweet. Just as Elisha cut down that stick, so Jesus, the stick or rod out of the stem of Jesus; must be cut off out of the land of the living. The law condemned Him in our stead, for as by man came death, by man must come the resurrection of the dead. The Son of God willingly gave His body, which, during His life upon earth, rendered a perfect obedience unto God's law, then sinking down under God's righteous frown, suffering the hell due unto us.

He sank just in the place and condition that the law and the prophets had testified. Thus the testimony of Moses and all the prophets, like an iron ax, fell into Jordan (meaning judgment) and was brought up from the depths by our Lord when He arose from the dead. After His resurrection the cutting things that He had spoken against that generation came to pass. The Priest and the Levite were cut off and died. One of the prophets had declared, "And it shall come to pass that in all the land, saith the Lord, two parts therein shall be cut off and die; but the third shall be left therein. And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried: they shall call on My name, and I will hear them: I will say, it is My people: and they shall say, the Lord is my God." Zechariah 13:8-9.

G. R.

VOICES OF THE PAST
"He being dead yet speaketh"

Leesburg, Va., March 21, 1911

THOUGHTS ON MERCY

(Aroused by reading Exodus XXV. 17-22)

Transgression is the occasion of mercy, for without the former the grace of the latter cannot prevail, and while man is not justified in doing evil that good may come, God is perfectly honorable in all he does, even in creating the wicked for the day of evil, and in preetermining the death of his Son at the hands of wicked men. Without sin there can be no manifestation of grace; without transgression, no revelation of mercy. Is it not true then that the Almighty's plan of creation as it was conceived in the divine mind in eternity embraced in its purpose the entrance of sin into the world, and death by sin? Evidently so, for He chose his Son and anointed him High Priest and Savior before ever the earth was, and elected unto the salvation and glory the church in him. Why all this exhibition of divine wisdom in securing the welfare of the church against all odds if he did not foreknow the threatening of that welfare by the entrance of sin into the world? And if the foreknowledge of God to this extent is granted, then it must follow that the jeopardizing of the welfare of man by the entrance of sin was beforehand certain, since an uncertainty cannot be absolutely foreknown, and that the foreknowledge of God is absolute we know, because he declared the end from the beginning and from of old things that are not yet done. This certainty of things foreknown carries unavoidably with it the foreordaining of all foreknown things, and since there is only one God, supremely sovereign over all worlds, he it is who ordained as well as foreknew the entrance of sin into the world, and all its consequences. This does not at all make God the author of sin, for sin is the transgression of law, and God, being under no law, cannot therefore disobey it. Whatever God does is right because he does it; he can do no wrong, let him do what he will. His very superlative nature, sovereignty and supremacy make it impos-

sible for him to be the author of wrong. For a human being to take human life is criminal, because he outrages the laws of God and man in doing so, but for God to send a shaft of lightning across a man's path and strike him with death is all right, because in doing so he outrages no law to which he can be held accountable.

The plan of redemption is gloriously wonderful, reaching as it does from eternity, before time, down through all the ages of time and throughout eternity beyond. In this plan are many items hard to be understood in themselves, but when faith views them all as one comprehensive and extensive whole, it becomes a plain path, with no crooks in it. Sin, with all its horrors, is embraced in this wonderful plan to make way for grace and mercy, and the revelation of the fullness of the Son of God. Without a sinner there can be no Savior; without Adam, no Jesus, since without the total depravity of the one there is no occasion for the perfect righteousness of the other. God is equal and coextensive in all his attributes; he is as just as he is merciful, and as merciful as just. Neither will he exert any one of his attributes at the expense or sacrifice of any or all attributes.

Mercy is seen in the election of the church in Christ before the foundation of the world and in the divine anointing of him as the High Priest, Redeemer, Surety and Head of the church. Justice is displayed in the banishment of the man and woman from Eden after the transgression, in the cursing of the ground for their sakes, and in passing the sentence of death upon Adam and all his posterity as the consequence of his transgression. God will not alter the thing that has gone forth out of his mouth; it is never revoked, and no commandment of his is ever annulled. Hence when God placed Adam under law to him, and Adam disobeyed, justice demanded his death, since death was the penalty named in the law for disobedience, and the changing of the penalty to any lighter punishment would not

have been just, and would have ill consisted with the nature of the Godhead. In this disobedience are included both elect and non-elect, and since the sentence of death is irrevocable, has justice outwitted mercy? Has the adherence of God to his justice prevented his achieving the covenant of mercy? Perish the thought. But God will not be merciful at the expense of his justice. Rather his mercy will be exhibited so as to magnify and carry out the ends of justice. How? The church being included in disobedience through Adam's transgression was dead in trespasses and sins, and so utterly without ability to make good her breaches of the law and thus bring herself into favor with God. Neither can God extend mercy to her in such a state so long as the breaches of the law are not repaired, without dishonoring himself. Therefore the necessity for Christ to suffer, he being the Surety and Head of the church, and as such responsible for all the obligations of his body, the church, so he takes upon himself the likeness of sinful flesh, and all the sins of the church are imputed unto him. He fulfills the law in every iota and every fine point, so that the law is not revoked to make way for mercy, but is satisfied, exalted and honored, and passes not away only as it is fulfilled, repaired in all its breaches.

So great is God in justice that, his people being unable to satisfy it themselves, he condescends to clothe himself in flesh and manhood to carry out every purpose of justice in order to open the way for the coming of mercy to those too destitute to achieve anything for themselves. Herein is mercy seated, and here is the mercy-seat. The Lord Jesus Christ is the seat of God's mercy, its base and resting-place. He is the ark or container of the covenant of grace; in him is the fullness of the Godhead bodily. The ark of the covenant as prescribed by the Lord to Moses in Exodus, twenty-fifth chapter, held the stones of the law, the pot of manna and Aaron's budded rod, thus signifying that in

Jesus Christ, the spiritual ark of the new and better covenant, is kept the law of God, and only in and by him is it kept. In him also is kept the spiritual manna of the church, grace sufficient for every need, for the nourishing of every part of the body. In him, too, are the life and safety of the church, for he is the spiritual Aaron or High Priest, who alone can prevail with God to remit the sins of the church. Upon this ark of the covenant is founded the mercy-seat of God. Mercy flows to the sinner through the mediatorial work of the Redeemer, never through any merit or effort of the creature.

Upon each of the two ends of the mercy-seat was a cherub, or angel. The faces of the cherubs looked inward toward the mercy-seat, hence they saw eye to eye, and with their wings they overshadowed the mercy-seat. Now angels are ministering spirits, sent forth to minister unto them who shall be heirs of redemption. So these cherubs each represent ministry; on the one end, that of the old or legal dispensation, and on the other, that of the new or gospel dispensation. All holy men of old spake as moved by the Holy Ghost, and to testify beforehand of the sufferings of Christ and the ensuing glory. The work of the Holy Ghost in this gospel age is just as much the testimony of Jesus, of his pain and of his glory. Thus these cherubs looked toward the mercy-seat; the law and the gospel both look to Jesus and testify of him. They also see eye to eye, because Moses and the prophets looked to the gospel age, while the apostles and the ministry of today round out prophecy, interpreting it and the law so that there is accord between both dispensations, and the messages or wings of both overshadow the seat of mercy. Here is where God meets and communes with his people — from above and from between the cherubim. Between the two dispensations is Christ and his work of propitiation. It is in this man Jesus, his life, death and resurrection, God and his people meet, are reconciled and commune sweetly to-

gether.

Throughout the experience of the child of God every new sense of the preciousness of Jesus is a renewal of communion with God. The cherubs and the mercy-seat were all of pure gold; so through the fiery furnace of severe trials, persecutions and afflictions was purification wrought, and the seat of mercy reared, and the testimony of the cherubs rises out of the depths of woe, whither were led to descend the saints of God, that they should sound forth the testimony of Jesus, looking toward the mercy-seat. This was all of beaten gold, gold that had been scourged. So we see the mercy-seat is not reared save through sore agony on the part of Him who was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. He was wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace being upon him, with his stripes we are healed. So was the faith of Moses, of the prophets and of the apostles sorely tried; hence even the cherubs were of beaten gold. Now the cherubs were not made of separate pieces of gold and then attached to the mercy-seat, but the seat and the cherubs were all of one piece, beaten out together. The same faith that was in Moses was in the prophets, was in Jesus, was in the apostles and is in the church today, and the same Spirit runs through and animates the whole, so they are all one piece of gold; perfect unity throughout, and vital, too. Again, not only is the work of Jesus the seat of God's mercy to his poor, lost sheep, but the ministry of the law, the spirit of prophecy and the ministry of the gospel are all of mercy. Throughout the darkness of the ministry of condemnation which the church justly deserved, God in his mercy placed the moon (law) and the stars (prophets) in the firmament of the legal heavens to shadow forth the coming of a better day, so the church was not without a glimmering of hope even then. So, too, it is by the mercy of God the church in this age is given the gospel ministry and the comfort ensuing from the liberty of the

gospel. The seat and the cherubims are all of mercy, all one piece. It is all of mercy from first to last. Amen.

H. H. Lefferts

OBITUARIES

MINNIE DeBRULER BROWNING

Oh, may we be reconciled to the will of God and say, O Lord, thy will be done. I feel Minnie (as she was affectionately called) would have wanted it that way when she suddenly and cheerfully headed home May 6, 1961. Tired, I'm sure, but happy in the consciousness of her work here was finished and was well done. Her last moments, I feel, were her sweetest moments because she was blessed to feel the touch of the Master's hand.

Her many kindnesses to her beloved church, her family, neighbors, and even little children whom she loved very dearly will be cherished and linger long in the hearts of her many friends.

She was such a faithful companion to her ailing sister whom she had lived with since her husband passed away in 1940, and, without complaining, she so willingly and tenderly cared for her even in her last moments of life.

She was 70 years old and united with McCray Primitive Baptist Church June, 1950. The church she had always loved and attended from childhood and was baptized by the pastor, Elder W. Curry King. It was one of her great pleasures to fill her regular pew in her church, also to visit with other churches of like faith. Always showing interest in the care and upkeep of the church and its financial problems, she desired in her will that McCray Church be given five hundred dollars from her estate.

Her funeral was held at McCray Church and conducted by her pastor, Elder W. Curry King and Elder Ernest Oakley, with burial in church cemetery.

Sister Browning was survived by an only sister, Miss Maggie DeBruler, and three brothers — Andrew, Lester and Edward DeBruler, all of near Burlington, N. C. She was the wife of the late Lewis Browning, and the daughter of the late Chestina Oakley DeBruler and Joseph DeBruler.

It has been a joyous privilege to have known the deceased. A privilege I shall always prize and appreciate because my life has been made richer from the sunshine she scattered with deeds of kindness and inspiration. He alone can make us understand.

Written by a friend who loved her,
Ruth Jeffreys

THOMAS RANSOM PLYBON

We deeply mourn the death of our dear brother, Thomas Ransom Plybon, who gently fell asleep in Jesus May 29, 1961, at the home of his daughter Nancy Haynes, Rocky Mount, Virginia. He was born November 21, 1875, the son of the late Elder and Sister S. O. Plybon and was twice married; first to Cora E. Altice on August 9, 1900, who bore him fourteen children, of whom the following survive: Antholine Howell, Fred T. Plybon, S. Hatcher Plybon, Julia Cannaday, Janie Giles, Raymond D. Plybon, Nancy Haynes, May Campbell, Edward R. Plybon, and Dossie Martin. Also surviving are three brothers: J. S., C. N. and P. L. Plybon; three sisters: Julian McGuire, Emma English and Leslie Bailey; thirty-five grandchildren and twenty-eight great grandchildren. Sister Cora Plybon passed away January 22, 1955, and Brother Plybon later married Rosa P. Philpot Williams, daughter of the late Elder A. B. Philpot, who survives to mourn the loss of her husband.

Brother Plybon at an early age was arrested by a super-natural power, and was exceedingly distressed on account of the depravity of his heart. He tried to hide his troubles from the world, but the words of divine truth proved as barbed arrows, and convinced him of the utter insufficiency of his own righteousness, and his awful condition in the sight of a holy God. He fled to the law for refuge and safety, and resolved many times to live a more moral life, but found all his fine resolutions and deeds were as filthy rags. It was while thus dispairing of salvation by the deeds of the law, and finding no way of escape and deliverance, and while bowed in secret at the throne of grace, Christ Jesus was presented to his understanding as being the end of the law for righteousness to the believer; so that the believer is freely justified from all things — from which he could not be justified by the law of Moses; and that the perfect obedience of Christ is imputed without money or price to every poor convicted soul. Then and there he felt the burden of sin removed, and he felt a joy unspeakable and full of glory. At this time, being a hired boy, he was asked if he wanted to go to the home of Sister Susan Basham, near Stewartsville, Virginia, where Elder T. M. Walton was to preach. At the close of the meeting Brother Plybon was received for baptism, and was baptized November 10, 1897, by Elder Walton, having his membership at Lynville Church. The doctrine of Election, Total Depravity, Particular Redemption, Effectual Calling, and preservation of the saints to Glory, was at this early period firmly settled in his mind. He was ordained deacon of Lynville Church May 17, 1906.

Brother Plybon was a farmer and sawmill

operator, and was also in the mercantile business many years. He suffered heavy losses from his debtors not fulfilling their promises, yet he preferred to suffer loss rather than grind the faces of the poor.

On the first Sunday in March, 1961, he selected the closing hymn: "Thou dear Redeemer, dying Lamb, we love to hear of thee." That evening he suffered an heart attack from which he did not recover, and was in a hospital until his passing.

His funeral was held at Lynch's Funeral Home, Rocky Mount, Virginia, May 31, 1961, conducted by Elders J. P. Helms, J. E. Burgess and Rufus Brown. Many friends and brethren were gathered around the body of our father, brother, husband, friend, and he was gently lowered into its receptacle and covered with earth, at Old Center Church. On the morning of the last day, the body thus sown in weakness will be raised in power and glory, to join its companion spirit; and the devoted servant of Christ will be welcomed to a blissful and everlasting association with his God. May divine grace prepare us to follow him to that sinless and tearless state.

Done by order of the Church at Camp Branch in conference July 1, 1961.

(Elder) Rufus Brown, Moderator
Nancy Haynes, Clerk

MRS. MARY ELLEN DILLON

Our mother, Mrs. Mary Ellen Dillon, departed this life February 21, 1961, the day after her 87th birthday. She was born near Gladehill, Virginia, the daughter of Andrew Hopkins Hunt and Wilmoth Perdue Hunt, February 20, 1874.

At the age of twenty, in 1894, she joined Old Bethel Church, and was baptized by Elder A. B. Philpot. On February 4, 1909, she married Jesse Lee Dillon in Roanoke, Virginia. After their marriage they moved to Missoula, Montana, where their three children were born; all of whom survive. During their eighteen years in Montana she was away from her church, but was ever faithful to it and her belief. After returning to Virginia in 1927, and after the death of her husband, she settled in Roanoke, and had her membership moved to the Roanoke Church.

Her surviving children all live in Roanoke: Jesse Andrew Dillon, Mrs. Oscar Heyman, and Woodrow Hopkins Dillon. She is survived also by eleven grandchildren and three great grandchildren; three sisters: Mrs. Zetta Ashworth and Mrs. Isa Byrd, both of West Virginia, and Mrs. Clara Harrison, of Gladehill; and three brothers, Isaac Hunt, of Redwood, Buchanan Hunt, of Roanoke, and Ben Hunt, of Ennis, Montana.

Our mother answered the summons that

sound for all people, for we are but sojourners upon this earth, and our times are in His hands. In this she believed, and at the coming of this hour she was ready and unafraid. She had written instructions for her funeral, even the songs she wished sung; and had chosen Elder Tench for the service. Thanks to him for his appropriate and lovely words.

Mother was a devoted member of her church, and looked forward to meeting days. During her last weeks, when she was kept in with a broken hip, she was blessed with visits of some of her church members, which meant so much to her. Thanks to them! She loved people and they loved her, as was shown by the large crowd at the funeral service, and by the many beautiful flowers. Many had sent her birthday cards and remembrances, which she loved. We couldn't write everyone, and we want all to know that you made her last day with us a happy one. The money she received in her cards, with some added by friends rather than flowers, was used to purchase a pew in the new church in Roanoke, in her memory.

We miss her greatly, but know she has but passed through the gateway of the grave into the peace of life that endureth always. May the beauty of her life abide among us as a loving benediction.

Her body was laid to rest in Cedar Lawn Cemetery in Roanoke County, Virginia.

Her daughter,
Ethel Dillon Heyman

SISTER LAURA JONES

Sister Laura Jones passed away July 9, 1961, at the home of her daughter, Miss Mary Jones, in Dunn, N. C., after a long illness, at the age of eighty-seven.

She was born in Johnson County, N. C., October 16, 1874, the daughter of the late Mr. and Mrs. Alex Hodges. She united with the Primitive Baptists several years ago, and on the first Sunday in October, 1956, she was received into Liberty Church by letter. Due to her condition she was not able to attend church many times during the last few years, but when she did, she came rejoicing.

Her funeral was conducted at Grove Presbyterian Church, (with that of her grandson, who passed away the same day she did) by her pastor Elder Lester Lee, assisted by the following ministers: Mr. C. W. Kirby, Mr. Leslie Tucker, Mr. Rufus Cromartie, and Mr. Creech. Both were buried in a family plot near the church.

WHEREAS, We bow in humble submission to God who doeth all things well, and desire that God may comfort and bless the bereaved; be it

RESOLVED, That we send a copy of this

memorial to the family; a copy be recorded on our church records, and a copy sent to the Signs of the Times for publication.

Done by order of the church in conference the 1st Saturday in August, 1961.

Committee, Brother James G. Young
Sister Liddie Tart
Sister Hattie Denning

W. B. RHODES

W. B. Rhodes was born in July, 1887, and died April 18, 1961; making his age more than seventy-three years. For many years he lived in Junction City, Arkansas. He was the husband, first of Miss Nora Johnson Rhodes, who preceded him in death about twenty years, and to which union the following children were born: Mike, of Farmerville, La.; Milam, of ElDorado, Ark.; Mrs. Inez Woolley, near Shreveport, La.; Mrs. Immojene Johnson, Ruston, La.; and Mrs. Eleese Gainor, ElDorado, Arkansas. After the death of his first wife, he married a cousin of hers, Miss Owney Johnson, who became a very devoted step-mother to the children. He is survived also by ten grandchildren, and the following brothers and sisters: A. B. Rhodes and R. W. Rhodes, of Spearville, La.; G. W. Rhodes and Minor M. Rhodes, of near Spearville; Mrs. Maude Spooner and Mrs. Manie Upshaw, Junction City, Arkansas; Mrs. Carle Swilley, ElDorado; Mrs. Ruth Teagle and Mrs. C. N. Patterson, Ruston, La.; Mrs. H. A. Patterson, Farmerville; and Mrs. Lillie Bell Robertson, Sulphur, La.

He became a serious cripple early in life, but was very active in teaching school, farming, Notary Public and Constable for several years. He was a devoted member of our home Primitive Baptist Church, and was most beloved as one of the humble children of God, and though handicapped, he was at one of the churches nearly every Sunday. He had a deep experience and good hope in the blessed Lord and Saviour, and was warmly devoted to the brethren and sisters.

Elder E. J. Lambert was called to conduct the funeral, and both Elder W. A. Speer and Elder J. L. Smith were there also. The large crowd of people and the many beautiful flowers gave evidence of the high esteem in which he was held by those far and near. The funeral was held at Old Scotland Presbyterian Church, where his first wife was buried, as were many of her relatives. May the Lord bless and comfort the greatly bereaved children and his very dear wife, and his brothers and sisters and other relatives and friends.

Written by his brother in close bonds spiritually as well as naturally.

(Elder) R. W. Rhodes

C. W. UPSHAW

Brother C. W. Upshaw was born April 2, 1887, and passed away July 18, 1961, making his stay on earth more than seventy-four years. He died suddenly, and we believe that according to God's will, he was to go at that time.

He is survived by his widow, Mrs. Manie Rhodes Upshaw, and eight children: Hardy, Farmerville, La.; David, Silbee, Texas; Harold, Los Angeles; Sikes, Los Angeles; Mrs. Grace Gardner, Crossett, Ark.; Mrs. Mildred Hall, Junction City, Ark.; Mrs. Vera Hopper, ElDorado, Ark.; and Mrs. Fannie Mae Hall, ElDorado. Also surviving are twelve grandchildren and three great grandchildren; and the following brothers and sisters: Loney and Claude, Spearville, La.; George, Crossett, Ark.; Grady, Pine Bluff; Mrs. Ollie Knight, Spearville, La.; Mrs. Annie Culp, Bastrop, La.; Mrs. Unis Wesson, Wilma, Ark.; and Mrs. Ople Noble, Hamburg, Ark.

Brother Upshaw was a member of our home church, New Hope, not far from Spearville, Louisiana, and was a believer in the precious doctrine of salvation by the grace and merit of God through Jesus Christ our Lord, and not by the works of the creature.

Elder W. A. Speer conducted the funeral at Caanan Church, where a large congregation was present; and the many flowers gave evidence of the esteem in which he was held. His body was laid to rest in the Cannan Cemetery, until Jesus our Lord comes again without sin unto salvation, to gather his people unto himself in heaven.

May God bless the widow, my dear sister, and all the children and grandchildren, and comfort them by his holy and blessed Spirit, is my humble prayer.

(Elder) R. W. Rhodes

OTTO LEATHERWOOD

Otto Leatherwood was born January 14, 1894, in Hunt County, Texas, and passed away April 20, 1961, at his home near Rising Star, Texas. In 1902 his parents moved to Brown County, Texas. He was united in marriage to Miss Hattie Lee Chambers November 8, 1914. To this union one child was born. He is survived by his wife and daughter, Mrs. Wayne Garms, Brownwood, Texas; two sisters, Mrs. Virgie Hodnett, Rising Star, Texas, and Mrs. J. C. Jones, Littlefield, Texas.

Though he joined the Missionary Baptists years ago, he was an Old Baptist in belief. The writer visited him in his home and conversed with him many times, and he always affirmed that salvation was by grace, a gift

of God and not by anything that man can do. It was Otto's hope that he was numbered among those chosen in Christ before the world began. He is missed in his community as a friend and neighbor.

Services were conducted at Higgenbotham Funeral Chapel by Harry Hames, Missionary Baptist minister, and the writer before a large crowd of relatives and friends among many beautiful flowers. To those who are left we would repeat the words of our Lord, "Let not your hearts be troubled, ye believe in God, believe also in me."

Written by request.

C. U. Landers

STELLA (HINES) DODSON

Stella (Hines) Dodson was born near Ardmore, Oklahoma, March 15, 1893; and passed away April 3, 1961. She was united in marriage to Vernon A. Dodson August 28, 1910. One of their sons is deceased, and four children survive: P. A. Dodson, Rosenberg, Texas; Eugene Dodson, Dustin, Oklahoma; Mrs. Christine Yeats, Holdenville, Oklahoma; and Mrs. Jo Ann Gray, Ada, Oklahoma. Surviving also are 16 grandchildren, 7 great grandchildren, one brother and two sisters.

Sister Dodson united with the Shilo Predestinarian Baptist Church in 1919, and was baptized by the late Elder W. P. Snider, of Okemah, Oklahoma. Surely she could repeat the 23rd Psalm with David; and it was good to converse with her. It seemed her mind was carried to the heights of heavenly things, and she manifested that, "The Lord is my shepherd." Believing in salvation by grace, and having a hope that she was one of those chosen in, and promised eternal life in, Christ Jesus our Saviour before the world began, she looked unto Him, and could say by faith, "I will dwell in the house of the Lord forever."

Another mother in Israel has passed on, which the little church at Dustin certainly misses. One by one we pass on. There is a time to be born and a time to die; and it is written, "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints." We have a taste here in this life, and will receive the fulness at His second coming.

Services were conducted at the First Baptist Church, Dustin, Oklahoma, before a large gathering of relatives, friends and brethren. Interment was in Dustin Cemetery to await the second coming of our Lord, who shall change these vile bodies and fashion them like unto His glorious body, so shall we ever be with the Lord.

Written by request of her husband and children by her unworthy pastor, who is made

sad by her empty chair. May the grace of God be with all His saints.

C. U. Landers

MEMORIAL

WHEREAS, in the providence of our gracious Heavenly Father, our dear sister, Dora Vannoy was called to her eternal home December 26, 1960, and

WHEREAS, Our sister, although a member of the Welsh Tract Church for a very short time, manifested her walk and her talk that she had been with us in spirit for many years, therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, That we acknowledge the Lord's will as best for us and pray that His will be ours, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That we extend our sympathy to our dear departed sister's family, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this memorial be made a part of the minutes of this Association, a copy sent to *The Signs of the Times*, a copy to *The Old Faith Contender* and a copy to our sister's family.

Done by order of the Delaware Association in session with the Church at Welsh Tract, May 13 and 14, 1961.

MEMORIAL

WHEREAS, On August 10, 1960, it pleased our Heavenly Father to remove from his earthly abode, that old soldier of the cross, our beloved brother, Charles H. Jarmon, and

WHEREAS, Our dear departed brother so graciously manifested a faith unshaken by trials and afflictions and ran with unfaltering patience the race that was set before him, and

WHEREAS, This Association, as well as the church of his membership, feels to have suffered a great loss and deep sorrow at his departure, but

WHEREAS, We rejoice in the midst of our sorrow, in that our dear brother has been delivered from the afflictions of this life and is forever with the Savior whom he loved, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, That we render praise to our God for our dear departed brother's life and for his death, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That we extend our love and sympathy to our brother's family and mingle our tears with their, and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That this memorial be made a part of the minutes of this Association, a copy sent to the family, a copy to *The Signs of the Times* and a copy to *The Old Faith Contender*.

Done by order of the Delaware Association in session with the Church at Welsh Tract, May 13 and 14, 1961.