

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON'

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No. 1

SUBMISSION

"Tis hard when we are sick and poor
And they who loved us, love no more;
When riches, health, and friends are gone,
To say, O Lord thy will be done:
Yet Lord I would to thee resign,
And say, my Father's will be mine.

'Tis hard, when in our soul's distress,
All, all around is wilderness;
When herbs and quenching streams there's none,
To say, my Father's will be done;
Yet Lord, I would to thee resign,
And say, my Father's will be mine.

And yet, how light our sorrows be,
To his in dark Gethsemane;
Who drank the cup, with stifled groan,
And said, my Father's will be done:
Dear Lord, may I to thee resign,
And say, my Father's will be mine."

Submitted by (Mrs.) JENNIE CLIFFORD

CORRESPONDENCE

WHERE IS THE CHURCH?

An inspired writer has said, "As the lily among thorns, so is my love among the daughters." None who are born of God and taught by his Spirit can doubt that this figure is intended to describe the condition as well as the superior excellence of the church above the daughters. She is called the "Love, Dove, and Undeiled" of her Beloved. The figure of a lily not only describes the modest beauty of the church, but shows, according to the instructions of our Lord, that her exceeding glory, although surpassing that of the regal splendor of Solomon, is not the result of her own labor. She toils not to procure it, she spins nothing that would

answer for warp or for woof; her life is derived from an invisible Root, and her head is bowed under the genial rays of the sun. But she is not only like the lily as that flower stands gracefully in the field, or among other beautiful flowers, but she is like the lily among thorns. How truly does the church of Christ answer to the figure in all its fullness of illustration! God has chosen her in a furnace of affliction, and she has ever, in her militant state, been among the rude briars and thorns. The earth, groaning under the curse of the righteous Creator, is destined to produce thorns and thistles, and while this world remains the temporary abode of the church she must encounter them. One of her most prominent sons prayed no less than three times that the thorn might be removed, but was referred to the sufficiency of the grace of God to sustain him and bear him through all the buffetings of Satan. To those who have discernment in spiritual things how admirably does the church contrast with that by which she is surrounded. All that the lily is of itself is merely grass of the field which today is, and tomorrow is cast into the oven, but God has so clothed her as to challenge comparison with the most exalted glory of the earth. All flesh is as grass, and all goodness thereof (that is produced by human power, or the flesh, for all that is born of the flesh, whether physical or mental, is flesh) is as the flower of the grass; the grass withereth, the flower

thereof fadeth away, but the Word of the Lord abideth forever. While the flower thereof, that is, the goodliness of the flesh, or grass, may adorn the meadow, but, in common with the grass with which it is connected, it cannot survive the dissolution of the flesh, or grass; but God so clothes it (the church) in the garments of salvation as to secure the glory as an inheritance which is incorruptible, undefiled and cannot fade away.

"Defiled and loathsome as we are
He makes us white and calls us fair;
Adorns us with that heavenly dress,
His graces, and his righteousness."

Consequently the church is enabled through grace to sing, "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul shall be joyful in my God; for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, he hath covered me with the robe of righteousness, as a bridegroom decketh himself with ornaments, and as a bride adorneth herself with her jewels." Isaiah 61:10. She "is all glorious within: her clothing is of wrought gold, she shall be brought unto the king in raiment of needlework." Psalms 45:13. All human beauty and creature excellency, compared with the church of the living God, which is the ground and pillar of the truth, is but as thorns. Zion is pronounced in the language of inspiration the perfection of beauty; it cannot, therefore, be improved. Earth has no colors, nor has creation charms to lend which would not obscure her beauty. And although her peculiar excellency appears not to the eyes of an adulterous generation, for except a man be born again he cannot see her, because the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God, for they are foolishness to him, neither can he know them because they are spiritually discerned; still all her attractions are

clearly apprehended by those unto whom the Spirit of God reveals her. To them she appears as the New Jerusalem, descending from God out of heaven adorned as a bride for her husband. She looketh forth as the morning, fair, as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners. Understanding these to be some of the general characteristics of the church of God, may we not inquire, where may she be found at this day? We cannot consistently believe that Christ has no church on earth at the present day; and if he has a church now upon earth she must bear the lineaments which are drawn in the New Testament. We shall not find her at the corners of the streets, in harlot's attire, seeking for a lover; from her lips will not be heard the silly boast, "I have peace offerings with me; this day have I paid my vows." Prov. 7:14. She cannot be recognized in any other dress than the garments of salvation which her Lord has given her. The daughters spoken of, Isaiah 3; 16-26, with their haughty carriage, stretched forth necks, wanton eyes, and mincing walk, making a tinkling with their feet, with their cauls, and their round tires like the moon, their chain, and bracelets, and the mufflers, the bonnets, and the ornaments, and the headbands, and the tablets, and the ear-rings, and the rings, and nose jewels, changeable suits of apparel, mantles, and wimples, and crisping pins, glasses, fine linen, hoods, and veils, are only the thorns by which the lily of the valley is surrounded. "There are threescore queens, and fourscore concubines, and virgins without numbers. My dove, my undefiled is but one; she is the only one of her mother, she is the choice one of her that bear her." S.S. 6:8-9.

In order to demonstrate the existence of the church of Christ on earth at the

present day, we must find a community of saints corresponding to the primitive pattern, of eighteen hundred years ago—a people whose only beauty consists in the comeliness which Christ has put upon them—a people saved by the Lord who is the shield of their help and the sword of their excellency, and whose enemies are found liars unto them. Deut. 33:29. A people dwelling alone and not reckoned among the nations, with no governmental patronage from the powers of the world—a kingdom that is not of this world, nor visible to the world, because they are the sons of God; the world knoweth them not because it knew him not—a poor and afflicted people trusting in the name of the Lord—a persecuted people; for if any man will live godly in Christ Jesus he shall suffer persecution. Their names shall be cast out of men, and they shall be hated of all men for Christ's name sake. They are regarded as the offscouring of all things, accused and slandered in like manner as their divine Lord and Master was; for if these things were done in the green tree they shall be repeated in the dry; if they called the Master of the house Beelzebub they will also call them of his household so.

These are only some of the outlines of the church of Christ. She is also characterized by her "one Lord, one faith, and one baptism." Her faith is as radically different from that of every other professing people on earth as her Lord and her baptism. Of her faith Jesus is the Author and Finisher; but that of all other religious bodies either originates with themselves or is derived from the doctrines, traditions, and instructions of men. But blessed is she, for flesh and blood hath not revealed these things to her, but her heavenly Father has taught her by his Holy Spirit. She is the opposite of all other sects in regard to her food, her appetite, and the source from which all

her supplies are received. Others can and do eat their own bread and wear their own apparel; but she must eat the flesh and drink the blood of Jesus. Nothing short of the true bread which came down from heaven, that kind which Moses never gave, can satisfy her; but her neighbors, or the thorns among which she is situated, do not see why the bread that Moses gave is not good enough.

Christ's church is a peculiar people, in all respects essentially different from the religionists of this world. She comprises a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, and a holy nation, and shows forth the praises of him who hath called her out of darkness and translated her into the kingdom of his dear Son. The doctrine which her faith takes hold of is that which cannot possibly suit anybody else under heaven, and if there be any who have not passed from death unto life, who fancy that they can understand and love the doctrine by which the church of God is distinguished, they are deluded. As none knoweth the things of a man but the the spirit of a man that is in him, (for the spirit of man being taken away from any man but a dead and unconscious corpse remains,) neither knoweth any man the things of the Spirit but the Spirit. And unless we be born of the Spirit, and that Spirit abide in us, we are as dead to all spiritual things, as the human body is to natural life after the animal spirit has departed. It is therefore, quite as practicable to teach the tenants of the tombs the English grammar, or any science, as to teach the things of the Spirit of God to unregenerate men. The church of God, if found at all, will be found in possession of doctrine which cannot be taught by every or any man to his neighbor, saying, Know the Lord; it cannot be taught nor learned in Sabbath schools, or what are called theo-

logical schools; nor can it be derived from reading the Bible, or hearing it expounded even if Paul himself were the expounder, for the natural man cannot receive it; it is spiritually discerned. Every organized body of professors of religion who hold a doctrine which they can teach their unregenerate fellow-men is a branch of antichrist; and the nature and attainableness of their faith proves that they have not the faith of God's elect, and that their faith stands in the wisdom of men, and not in the power of God. See 1 Cor. 2:5. The primitive church acknowledged Christ as the only spiritual King, the true and only Potentate, who only hath immortality dwelling in the light which no man can attain unto. That church cannot now be identified where Christ is not so regarded: nor is he so regarded by any church, sect, or people who hold that there is spiritual life anywhere else, or that the light in which he dwelleth can be approached. To approach is to make some advance towards the object; but this no man can do, as the members of the church of Christ know right well. The true church now, as in her primitive days, depends on God to raise up, qualify, send forth, and sustain the ministers of the gospel. Those who heap to themselves as teachers, having itching ears, are not the church of Christ. To him who ascended up on high, who led captivity captive, and received gifts for men, they look for all the gifts which the church can need,—to him who reigns, being exalted a Prince and a Saviour, to give repentance to Israel and remission of sins, and to him alone they look to bring sinners to repentance and to cause the redeemed of the Lord to return with singing to Zion with everlasting joy upon their heads. To him who opened the doors of death, and rose triumphantly from the grave, who

conquered sin and hell, they look for support, comfort, deliverance and victory.

Finally, the church of our Redeemer *is the circumcision who worship God in the Spirit, rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh.*

(Elder) L. P. HARRIS

Duquoin, Ill.

Perrin, Texas

DEAR ELDER DODSON: I have a mind to write you as it is our meeting day at the church and the weather is so bad I cannot go, but my mind is at the church and it goes out to all the brethren everywhere. In this day of wars and rumors of wars men everywhere are crying peace when there is no peace, not even among our people. We hear men crying lo here and lo there instead of trying and striving for peace. We want to see how many will follow us. Oh, brethren why can't we live together in peace and enjoy one another and do as Peter said, "Brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently." If brethren could do this they could see good in one another and not evil.

I was thinking this forenoon of the fortieth chapter of Isaiah and of the wonderful things he declared for the comfort of the Lord's people. "O Zion, that bringest good tidings, get thee up into the high mountain; O Jerusalem, that bringest good tidings, lift up thy voice with strength; lift it up, be not afraid; say unto the cities of Judah, Behold your God! Behold the Lord God will come with strong hand, and his arm shall rule for him: behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him." "All thy works shall praise thee, O Lord; and thy saints shall bless thee. They shall speak of the glory of thy kingdom, and talk of thy power." In all our talking on those heavenly

things of our God we have tried to bring those glad tidings of good things of this kingdom that Daniel said should never be destroyed but shall stand forever. This kingdom is an everlasting kingdom and it is set up in God's people and they are made kings and priests unto God. So dear brethren, let us see to it that we love one another with a pure heart fervently, knowing that it takes the new birth to bring about all our obedience in the faith for Peter said, "Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the brethren." Being born again this new birth must come in order for us to walk in newness of life.

I surely enjoy reading the *Signs of the Times*. It does my soul good to have those good old brethren write of God's goodness and bring those good tidings when they are up in the high mountain, raised up together and made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ. Oh, what a wonderful God the Old Baptists have. He can tear down kingdoms and build them up for he does as he pleases in heaven above and in the earth beneath. May the good Lord be with our people everywhere the world over is my desire.

(Elder) C. Y. OSTEEEN

223½ So. 10th St., Mt. Vernon, Ill.

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON AND EDITORS:
DEAR BRETHREN IN CHRIST I HOPE: I am sending two obituaries to publish in the dear old *Signs*, my husband's and brother J. T. Meredith's when you have the space. I am writing you with a sad and broken heart. I cannot tell you the sorrows I have gone through in the last three months. Sometimes it seems more than I can stand, but I realize and know God does all things well according to his will and purpose and none can stay his hand. It was

his will to take my dear husband. He called him at the appointed time and the call had to be obeyed and leave me to mourn his passing. I do not mourn as one without hope for I feel it is my loss but his eternal gain. He is at rest in his Savior's arms where I hope to meet him around that great dazzling throne of God, where all will be peace and happiness, no sickness, sorrow or dying there where we can be with Christ and be as he is.

Elder Dodson, my husband was sick in bed three weeks and two days with heart trouble, but oh, I feel I have lots to be thankful for. He knew everything to the last, called me by my name and knew I was with him to the last breath. It was so hard to part and know I am left alone. I have one stepson who is good to me and I love him.

It was time for the Soldier Creek union meeting to be held at our home church, Rock Springs Church, beginning Friday before the first Sunday in July. My husband had talked and planned all winter for us to go down to Simpson, Ill., and help take care of the union meeting. He was so interested in it and when he was taken sick tried so hard to get well to go. He had his plans all made to take care of the meeting and when he saw he was not going to be able to go he wanted me to get some one to stay with him and for me to go and take the things. I got everything ready to go and was to start July 1 for Elder C. O. Kerley's home where we had made arrangements to stay and help with the meeting. On Sunday morning, June 29, he said to me, "Willie I am too sick for you to leave me, you will have to give it up as I want you to stay here with me. Send them word you cannot leave me." I said to him, "Kerley I am not going to leave you, brother Walter is going to take the things and go on the truck

with them and will help them down there." He looked up at me with contentment in his eyes and said, "Well." He never said any more about the meeting. He was so much worse on Tuesday morning when my brother came to get the things I would not let him go into the room for fear he would worry. They had hardly gotten out of town when my husband passed away, July 1. He had told me for us all to go on to Rock Springs Church, enjoy ourselves and treat all the people nicely, he would not get to go with us but he might get to come before the meeting was over. He said, "Willie I never wanted to go to Rock Springs Church as badly in all my life as I did this time as I felt it would be my last time, but I guess my time has been."

About two months before he was taken sick he told me if he should pass away to call Elder J. T. Henson and Elder Paul Poyner to preach his funeral which we did. He had been in failing health for the last twelve years. Never uniting with the church but was a strong believer in the Primitive Baptists and interested in helping to finance the church. He believed in an all wise God and salvation by grace and grace alone. He was well posted on the Scriptures, had a gift to remember and quote them. He enjoyed reading and writing about them and talking with his friends and was interesting to listen to. Many, many times he has preached good sermons here in our home when no one was around him. I have kept quiet in another room and listened, and he would stop when I entered the room. I wanted him to unite with the church so badly but it was not God's will. He had been given a light to feel that God's children were not all in the visible church, but the ones out of the visible church were the ones that gathered crumbs from the Master's table. He often said the

saints were all in the temple. It seems the affliction he had to suffer was great, he had carried a burden for years but God had a purpose in it. He shed many tears of sorrow while going through such fiery trials. When he seemed so low in the dark, feeling his unworthiness I have been so sorry for him at times, but God moves in a mysterious way, his wonders to perform. His ways are higher than ours and past finding out.

Elder Dodson, I have written this to you as it seems a relief to my mind. If you consider it worth the space you can publish it, if not cast it aside. Soldier Creek meeting was a grand meeting. Everything was carried out peaceably and we had wonderful preaching by Elders, J. T. Henson, Paul Poyner, W. O. Perkins and R. L. Biggs. It was all a wonderful feast. I enjoyed the glad tidings, and feel that God was in our midst. Our little church is in peace for which we are thankful. We are few in number but try to meet the first Sunday in each month. When we met the first Sunday in August, Elder C. O. Kerley, our moderator, preached a good sermon and we sang songs of praise to God's dear name. We feel to be the least of all the dear Baptists. I must not take up your time, have written more than I intended. An unworthy sister, if one the least.

(Mrs.) WILLIE IRENE KERLEY

Route 2, Chewelah, Wash.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: I would like to write a few thoughts about baptism. You may do with them as you see fit, cast them aside and I will feel no offense. My reason for writing is that I have thought about it for some time and I would like a little relief. They may be too simple and childlike to be of value.

There was no baptism until John the

Baptist came as the voice of one crying in the wilderness. I believe it was like a seed all through the Old Testament. Does it not speak of the seed of Abraham? It was then the promise though lying dormant as a seed planted in the earth (and wasn't that just what it was?). All the earth lay in darkness. Even the disciples could not understand Christ must needs be crucified and rise again from the dead; they could not understand he was here on earth and among them. Why did he not set up his kingdom and carry on from there? Because that seed had to be watered before it would grow.

I have often wondered why we need to be baptized. Some have told me it is the answer of a good conscience towards God. That is good and I like it, but still why? Some say it is a visible entrance into the church, that also is good, but still I ask why? Some say we are buried with him in a watery grave to arise with him at the last day, but still why? These things are all right to me, but why cannot this be just between my God and me? No, I believe that when Christ was here on earth, walked here and bled and died, that seed that was spoken of in Abraham was immersed in water and sprang forth into life everlasting for truly he says I am the tree of life. Here is the first resurrection and all who have a part in this one need not fear the second. "God moves in a mysterious way, his wonders to perform." His people are a peculiar people, poor in spirit and the things of this life. They believe different from any one else; they believe there is nothing we can do to inherit eternal life; they do not believe in works to obtain salvation yet strive hard to live upright in the sight of God and their fellow-man. It is said of Christ he was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; he was numbered

with the transgressors, yet he was holy and spotless; the Son of the true and living God, and yet he was baptized, he went to John and desired it. God was well pleased with what he had done. Yes, here is the shadow of that great spiritual resurrection. How can I put into words what I mean? Here the church was born, here the seed sprang forth with life and grew; here was God's word returning unto him fulfilling all things that he had purposed and decreed from the beginning of time; and I believe that seed that was planted in eternity is the spiritual body of Jesus Christ, that tree of life that grows over and out of the river of life, is surely just as alive to-day as God is, for it is his plan of salvation to a poor forsaken people. They are such a people because it is his will they should be for out of such is their spiritual growth made manifest in the flesh. So in our own experience when we come to be baptized we wonder why?

Christ said, "A city that is set on an hill cannot be hid. Neither do men light a candle and put it under a bushel." No, and neither does God do this. That city he is building is set on a hill and it cannot be hid, and that light is not put under the measure of man. No, not under a bushel for it cannot be measured or comprehended in our minds. They are marked and set apart for that seed must be immersed and it must grow, and it does grow though we cannot realize it. God sees all things and not one part or particle of that building will be weak or incomplete for it is of God and therefore sure.

(Mrs.) MARY L. ECKARD

Star Route, Naches, Wash.

DEAR KINDRED IN CHRIST: I have been asked to write an account of the annual three days meeting we attended at Riffe, Wash., Aug. 15, 16, 17, so

that others may know of our welfare here in the Northwest. There were less than one hundred people present, but there was much love and rejoicing manifested. Elder I. F. Coleman is pastor of this church. Two of the sisters who usually do much of the entertaining were bedfast, but every one present was made welcome and well cared for. Sister Fannie Davis was sick at her daughter's home in Oregon. Sister Rosa Coleman was also sick, but the usual number of people were entertained in her home by one of her sisters and a granddaughter. There was preaching in her home both Friday and Saturday nights.

Sister Effie Parke, who lives sixty miles from Riffe was sick and unable to be at the meeting. Friday afternoon after services at the meeting-house Elder A. D. Hughett of Yakima and Elder Seth Bynum preached there that night.

Most of the people present had come some distance some of them being old and feeble and hardly able to be out of bed. There is, we hope, the love of God shed abroad in our hearts which draws us together, and hardships and sickness are as nothing when God strengthens us and makes a way for us to go. One man traveled nearly 2,500 miles (round trip) to be with us, although a stranger in the flesh. He had never heard an Old Baptist sermon before. The following letter tells his impressions of the meeting. His experience was published in the March 1946 *Signs*. Yours in hope of eternal life.

(Mrs.) BEATRICE HAAN

Marshall, Sask., Canada

MRS. BEATRICE HAAN, DEAR SISTER IN CHRIST: I promised some of the good brothers and sisters I would write, but you are the first and I am sure they will all understand just why I wrote you first. First of all I must say that

I am somewhat bewildered since returning home. I met so many nice Old School Baptists that I fear my line of conversation deceived them. I left home seeking evidence that I was one of them, and unless badly deceived I surely found it. I think I told you how I read and re-read Elder Seth Bynum's letter and then to meet him on the bus while I had his letter with me. Surely God works in a mysterious way his wonders to perform.

The first morning we went to church, when I heard the singing outside, I realized I had found the true church, but my heart was so heavy laden I could not speak. If I am permitted to enter that wondrous city that God has prepared for those he loves, and I hear and see a band of angels singing around the throne—well then and not until then do I expect to hear sweeter singing. I may also add there will be no heavy laden hearts there.

On Saturday morning at the close of the services while they were singing "Must I be carried to the skies on flowery beds of ease," I burst into tears. Sister Eckard came forward and shook my hand and I could read in her face that she, too, had traveled the same road. We are told not to quench the spirit. Well on that occasion I could not, neither did I want to. You know we like to have evidences. Although the Bible is full of admonitions as to how we should live, yet we know we have not kept them, so it is all of grace from first to last.

Again on Sunday morning I had a similar experience just before you partook of the Lord's supper when Elder Hughett said, "This is my broken body." The Holy Spirit was surely in that house. Several of the Elders offered to baptize me but I told them I did not feel good enough. I think we were baptized into that heavenly home in our

first experience whatever it was. I wanted to go and leave all behind and was disappointed because I could not go.

I am looking forward to the time when I will be selling my farm and locating near Old School Baptists so that I can attend church regularly for there my kindred dwell. It is doubtful if I will be able to come to your meeting at Touchet. However, if I do not come I will be with you in spirit. I do not remember whether I wrote you this before or not, but I believe every child of grace was given a cross to bear. In other words God sees fit to withhold a portion or part from us in order to cause us to search and inquire, "for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for?" Be sure to remember me to Mildred. Yours sincerely,

JOE MACKENZIE

Calion, Ark.

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON, EDITOR.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: I am enclosing an article on prayer for the editorial section of the *Signs*. You will also find money-order to cover new and renewal subscriptions for *Signs*.

I have enjoyed the fellowship of brethren over a wide territory during this past summer and fall. I have noted some minor differences in custom and expressions and some mis-understanding among brethren. However, I am glad to see brethren uniting and laying down petty theories and differences for the sake of peace in Zion. I have observed the restoration of lay-members, elders, churches and associations into the sweet fellowship of Old Baptists in general who have, for some time, been cut off from a chain of fellowship. This has impressed me to believe that God is wonderfully operating in the hearts of brethren to strive for peace. I am made happy to note a closer relation-

ship that exists among editors and writers of our periodicals contending for salvation by God's grace.

I trust it will be our province to meet face to face next summer and have a long heart to heart chat. I was minded very seriously to attend your yearly mid-week meeting this month but was unable to do so as some members of our churches here were at the point of death and we were requested to stay close by. Elder Rhodes and I planned to attend the Kehukee Association but as we were arranging to leave the families of the sick requested us to stay close around so we attended the Sulphur Fork Association in Texas at that time.

May God's richest grace and blessings be yours to guard and direct your walk and thoughts is my prayer if I am not deceived in my desires. When at the throne of grace could you stoop low enough to remember this poor sinner in your petitions? A sinner depending solely upon God's grace for salvation in time as well as eternity.

(Elder) E. J. LAMBERT

(In addition to the foregoing personal letter by Elder Lambert, will be found an Editorial by him in this issue on the subject of *prayer*. Elder David Spangler wrote on this same subject in the December number and Elder Griffin has an article coming out in the February issue on it, and we feel quite certain that neither of the three knew that the others were writing on it. All three articles are very good and we hope our readers will read and ponder them carefully. We are confident that our readers will be particularly pleased to note from Brother Lambert's letter his conclusions, after having traveled over a wide area during 1947, that there are definite reasons for believing that the Lord is working

wondrously in the hearts of his people by bringing them into closer union and fellowship. What Brother Lambert says is borne out by our own observations, after visiting among the brethren from Maine to Virginia, and meeting brethren from various other parts of the country. We trust that our gratitude to God is deep indeed for such manifestations of his infinite love, and we are happy to know that others confirm our hopes in this matter. Ananias had heard by many of the evil done to the saints at Jerusalem by Saul, of Tarsus, but God told Ananias that "he prayeth," and he further said, "Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel." Ananias went his way, and when he came into the house where he was, he put his hands on him and said, "Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost." Our God is able to bring his people together and humble them before his throne of grace, if it be his will, and cause them to seek peace and pursue it, and we truly hope that God will bless our beloved Zion as only he can. If all of us could only be brought into full fellowship with the poet, we would have much smoother sailing ahead. He said,

"My soul shall pray for Zion still,
While life or breath remains;
There my best friends, my kindred dwell,
There God my Saviour reigns."

R. L. D.)

Route 3, Coleman, Texas

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: The enclosed letter was handed to me by a sister and I was asked to send it to you for your consideration for publication. I under-

stand this brother, the writer, is a member of Liberty Hill Church near Lillie, La., where Elder R. W. Rhodes is pastor. In hope of eternal life.

C. U. LANDERS

205 S. Liberty St., Bastrop, La.

VERY DEAR SISTER: Wonder how you are feeling now, do hope you are better. I believe we are all in pretty good shape except for colds, it seems that I take cold so very often. We had all the children here for Christmas except Hazel and Don. All seemed to enjoy it very much.

The greatest gift that this world has ever received or any individual has ever received was nearly two thousand years ago, yes a child was born a Son was given. God caused his only begotten Son to be born of woman that he might be verily God and verily man, sacrificed his life on the cruel cross of Calvary, that we might have eternal life. He took on all the sins of a sin cursed world, bore them all on himself, in as much as the flesh was weak and could not satisfy the law, Christ did the thing that no mortal man could do. He paid the price, won the victory, and came out triumphant over death, hell and the grave and said, "It is finished." I do not believe there can be one thing added to this or one thing taken from it. I believe that after the third day when this angel came and rolled away the stone that barred the way to Joseph's new tomb where Christ had been buried, he ascended to heaven to the Father who sent him, and I believe he is there now at this present time sitting on the right hand of our God the Father, making intercession for all his saints. What greater gift could there ever be than this great and wonderful gift of God that we might have life everlasting. I believe that it is wholly and solely a free gift and that we have

nothing at all to do with the giving.

I know it is a common saying and belief that God gave every man an equal chance of salvation, and all you have to do is to give Christ a chance, let him come into your heart and accept him as your Savior and he will take you in. This is far from the way I understand and believe this salvation comes. They are chosen out of the furnace of affliction, they are found in a waste howling wilderness, and in a desert land. This wilderness is the awful heap and mountain of sin that we see ourselves to be in when we are found, (or when our eyes are opened to the awful sinful condition that we are in) and we go mourning with heavy hearts searching every avenue of escape, trying to get away from this lost and ruined condition. This desert land is barren, it is dry, there is no food, no comfort there. We come to the end of our strength, spend all that we have, every effort that we can imagine fails, and we are forced to fall down and beg God to have mercy upon me, a sinner. Then when it pleases God to remove this burden, and give us a little light, oh how sweet and how marvelous is that light and we are bound to praise God for everything. All this darkness is necessary in order to bring out this wonderful light so sweet and brilliant. In this we are forced to know that within us (in the flesh) dwells no good thing.

Sister, I do not know that I may be enlightened to give you even one thought of comfort on the things you mentioned. If you knew what an awful sinner and how unworthy of anything I am, surely you would say, no. Some things, or I will say the same thing, happens to different people at different times. It is not always the same and in the same exact manner, some have a deeper ex-

perience after they unite with the visible church and some before they unite. It seems to me that I am experiencing many things I probably will not have time to mention here.

Several years ago, about 1915, if I have ever seen any light it was then, and that was after about three years of the darkest darkness that it seemed to me any human being could experience. After this I thought of uniting with the church and fully intended to do so the first opportunity, but on this wise something came over me and seemed to restrain me from doing so, inasmuch as to do so I felt I would be blaspheming for I knew I was not fit to belong to this grand and wonderful body of people, and if I went on I might deceive some of the very elect of God, and I felt that of all things on earth I would rather not do that. This together with other feelings that are probably not worthy of mention followed me on until some two years ago, then I put it off as long as I could. I had thought several times when I would leave to go to church that I might offer myself and would go prepared for baptism and it would be put off, so when the time did come it was unexpected or unplanned on my part and this is the working of the Lord. It is when we are least expecting. I still do not feel myself to be equal or fit to be in this band, but I surely do appreciate a home with them and would not take anything in this world for it. "It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." "The steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord: and he delighteth in his way. Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down: for the Lord upholdeth him with his hand." "He is ever merciful, and lendeth; and his seed is blessed." "For the Lord loveth judgment, and forsaketh not his saints; they are preserved forever: but

the seed of the wicked shall be cut off. The righteous shall inherit the land, and dwell therein forever." Psalms 37.

It has been several days since I started this, but I had to stop so I will try to say a few more words on this subject. It seems to me some, after they have seen some light or born some fruit, turn against themselves or their better judgment; rather do evil than good; set their mind on things of this world and worldly things, forgetting the salvation of their own soul; lose respect for the truth trying to justify themselves in the things they know are wrong no matter what it costs. This is where the devil moves in and takes charge and steers the helm straight to destruction, and if they are not very careful he surely will get there. They become as a Pharisee trying to justify himself in that which he knows is wrong, laying the blame on predestination and blaming God for his unrighteous acts. I would think he would be likened to one who received seed among the thorns. They hear the word but the cares of this world choke it out and they lose respect for it (the Word) and become unfruitful. One has to bear some fruit before he can become fruitful. He is cast out into utter darkness then and everything seems to be gone for him; the world seems to turn against him, but if the seed is there the branch will spring out again. He is forced to fall down and call on the name of the Lord for his strength and to guide him out of this awful state. The devil will carry him just as far as the Lord will let him go. The Lord once said, "Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat." Jesus was led of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. Here he bruised his head, but we poor creatures cannot stand the wiles of the devil. If the Lord

loosens us for any time at all the devil moves right in and drags us down to destruction. All of our self-righteousness has to be taken from us for it is as filthy rags in the sight of God. Peter had to learn by experience that his self-righteousness had to be taken from him, although the devil had led him to the point of denying Jesus. He cursed and swore, he knew him not, but when the Lord looked at him he remembered all the Lord had told him. We, within ourselves, are not able to fight off or withstand the wiles of nature, or the devil, and if the Lord does not strengthen and uphold us we all must fall. We suffer for righteousness sake, we learn obedience by the things that we suffer, if we suffer not with Him we have no part with Him for he says, "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten." I believe that all the suffering we do in this life is ordained of God that it might be for our good for it is written that "all things work together for good to them that love God." We do not know what our portion might be and how much we may have to suffer here in this world, but the one thing I do most earnestly hope and pray is that I may have all of my suffering here in this present world, and after this veil of life is over that I may wake in that morn of the resurrection and there be with Christ Jesus, and praise God the Father in fullness and completeness in that world that knows no sorrow, in that world that shall never end is my prayer for Jesus' sake.

The Lord said to Nichodemus, "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth." This wind, when it blows, it is forever for the things that are done of God are forever. It may blow hard as in the case of Paul, he was completely knocked down all of a sud-

den, or it may blow just a tiny, little breeze that you hardly feel the effects thereof, but it is just as secure and certain as the hardest wind that blows and all honor and praise must be given God for everything.

I do not feel that I have given this matter justice at all, but I do hope some things have been mentioned that may offer you a little bit of food, for it is all hope with me. I do not seem to know anything, I just live in hope and hope is something we have not seen but have a foretaste of and a longing to see. I trust this finds you improving and feeling much better and I hope to see you soon.

Now may the goodness, grace and mercy of God be with you, strengthen your hope in Christ Jesus and help you to withstand your afflictions. May he comfort you and make your pillow more restful. We know not our shortcomings and how long our pilgrimage here in this low ground of sin and sorrow may be. When this journey here is over all mortal help must flee and we must lay this armor by, may we then be in perfect peace with God, and if possible with all just men, and may thou, O God, receive our souls to thyself there to await the morning of the resurrection, and this mortal shall have put on immortality and our spirits unite with a spiritual body, and may we be there on the right hand of God our Savior, consistent with the will of God is my prayer for Jesus' sake. Lots of love to you. Your brother.

JASPER H. CALK

Route 3, Box 193, Dallas, Texas

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: Enclosed find money-order for which please send me the *Signs of the Times* for one year beginning with the July issue if possible. I am an old lady living alone

and will soon be seventy-three years old. I have no Old Baptist neighbors except my oldest son who lives next door and is such a comfort to me, so sweet and kind. I have had the sweet privilege of attending four communion meetings this summer. All had several visiting preachers who preached with power and demonstration a God that is able to do his will in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand or say what doest thou? It was my happy privilege to see three of God's little ones come home to their friends and tell what great things the Lord had done for them, and again it was my happy privilege to hear several times one of God's witnesses—a mere boy—preach with power a God that is able to do all things; and the old soldiers of the cross, how well they fed the flock with that food from on high and the crumbs from the Master's table that is always so sweet and nourishing.

I was all down and out last year in and out of the hospital until the 17th of December. I had a major operation, spent Christmas in the hospital and came home the 28th. I have gotten along fine ever since. Several doctors said I could not stand the operation and would not operate at all. This sweet boy of mine who takes care of me was so worried about it he would not consent for me to be operated on. They told him in the hospital it was the only chance for me so he sent to California for my other son and all my people. They had a consultation and agreed to leave it up to me. They all came in my room and told me what they had agreed to do. That was good news to me. I felt so happy that I was going to get rid of the pain that was sapping my life out. I believe it was shown to me that I was going to get

well and I was not afraid any more and told them that I was coming through all right and not to worry. While being wheeled down that long hall to the operating room I passed the long line of my friends, relatives and children with set grim faces and I saw a few tears trickling down. I thought what manner of woman am I to be given so much love. I had been given a light anesthetic and could not talk but tried to give each one a smile of encouragement. I was so happy for I had been shown by my Father above that he had more joys in store for me.

"Now, my remnant of days

Would I spend to his praise,

Who hath died my poor soul to redeem;

Whether many or few,

All my years are his due,

May they all be devoted to him."

Pardon me, dear brother, I did not mean to write at such length and burden you with my troubles for we all have those more or less. Yours in hope of eternal life.

(Mrs.) SALLIE NEEL LUCE

6915 Laredo St., Houston 10, Texas

DEAR ELDER DODSON, BRETHREN AND SISTERS IN JESUS CHRIST: If I am one at all it is by grace and only through his mercy, nothing I have done or can do. Find enclosed my renewal to the *Signs*. In them I find benefit and enjoyment from reading the good letters and articles of the able writers as they are given ability to write of God's mercies. We hope we are thankful for our blessings from him who cares for us, knows our every need before we ask for it and doeth all things well. God has all power and everlasting love, and none can hin-

der or question his plans in sending his blessings to his little ones. Sometimes it is chastisement for he chasteneth whom he loveth. It is indeed a great blessing to be chastened of or by the Lord. We are brought nearer to him and away from the world.

The privilege of hearing the preached word and the reading matter contained in the *Signs* and other papers is, I hope, precious to me when he gives me an ear to hear and a heart to understand. So little of the time do I feel his presence if at all, but I do feel to love the Old School Predestinarian Baptists far and near as their testimony is common to those who are led and enlightened of the Lord. Our heavenly Father has blessed us with meetings here in Houston which I hope we are thankful for, and now we hope to organize a church militant soon if it be his will. His judgments are unsearchable and his ways past finding out. Your unworthy sister saved by grace if at all.

(Mrs.) IRENE WISENBAKER

AID FOR SENDING "SIGNS" TO INDIGENTS

J. R. Jackson, Ga., \$1; Mrs. H. Fisher, Mich., \$1; H. H. Faulk, Tex., \$1; H. C. Johnson, W. Va., \$3; Eld. R. L. Biggs, Tenn., \$3; Mrs. L. Holloway, Md., \$1; Mrs. B. Dryden, Md., \$1; Mrs. T. H. McColl, Can., \$3; Eld. G. L. Weaver, O., \$1; Mrs. M. Miller, Pa., \$1.

Big Sandy, Tenn.

DEAR EDITOR: Please find \$2 enclosed for my subscription. It is good to see *Signs of the Times* has not changed any in its doctrine in over a hundred years. It is about the only thing I know of that has not changed in my time but God and truth never changes, so be it. Yours truly,

E. P. CROCKETT

EDITORIAL

RUTHERFORD, N. J.

JANUARY, 1948

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Rutherford, N. J.

NEW YEAR'S GREETING

At our associational gatherings it is thought by some that the introductory sermon should set forth some one or more points of doctrine believed by the churches composing said association. According to this line of reasoning it should be perfectly proper in greeting our readers for the New Year for us to stress a point of doctrine which we hope will serve as a theme for those who write and those who speak all through the year.

We have chosen for our text on this occasion and for the aforesaid purpose the tenth and eleventh verses of the second epistle of John, the reading of which is as follows:

"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."

In quoting the Scriptures, either verbally or in writing, it is of the utmost importance that it be done in such a manner as not to wrest them to their own destruction. A late Editor

of the *Signs of the Times*, Elder H. C. Ker, used to say we could prove anything by or from the Scriptures provided we play fast and loose with them, and he would then show how we could prove that suicide was authorized by the Scriptures by quoting concerning Judas that he "went and hanged himself," and then quote Jesus where he said, "Go, and do thou likewise." No one who loves the truth will maintain that the Scriptures were intended to be used in any such manner. Our purpose in thus illustrating the point is to emphasize the need of carefully examining the Scriptures and their connections and so apply them as not to divert or change their proper meaning. The apostle Paul admonished Timothy to "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." All who speak and write would do well to take heed unto this admonition. While no man by searching can find out God, or break through the seven seals which bind the hidden meaning contained in the book called the Bible, a true understanding of which comes only through the revelation of God, we can nevertheless profit much by studying and familiarizing ourselves with the letter of the written word. Elder Spangler treated upon this point in his editorial in the August, 1947, issue of the *Signs*. His article reminded us of an incident which occurred at one of our Southern Associations during the lifetime of the late Elder Frederick W. Keene, who was outstanding in his knowledge of the Scriptures. An Elder arose before a large audience and stated that he would not take the time to look up his text in the Bible, but would quote it from memory. He then quoted the following words: "Consistency, thou art a jewel." Elder Keene who sat immediately back of said Elder said,

"Brother ———, that is not scripture and is not in the Bible." The Elder insisted, however, that it was the truth, and said he was going to preach from it regardless of the fact that it was not in the Bible. Such incidents do not lend credit to the high and holy calling of God's truly called and qualified ministers, or to the cause of truth which we profess to love, and they should be avoided.

From time to time we hear good brethren give their version or understanding of some particular point of doctrine, such as Predestination or the Resurrection, and then they will follow it up by quoting John and saying, "If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God Speed." In our humble opinion there is no justification for making this application indiscriminately. While John was undoubtedly in fellowship with Paul and the other apostles, who very ably explored and set forth various other points of doctrine, we do not believe that John had reference to them when he wrote these words. The subject which enveloped John's very heart and soul in writing these three epistles was that of LOVE, as we shall attempt to show more fully later. Even though the great apostle Paul covered other fields ably and more or less completely, he subordinated them all to John's point of view when he wrote the thirteenth chapter of I Corinthians. He said, "Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal." We need not quote further in support of our conclusion.

Let us now consider particularly the subject matter contained in John's epistles. He begins his first epistle with a reference to the "Word of life," which was made flesh and dwelt among us,

in whom there was a fulness of grace and truth. John was an actual eye-witness to the things to which he testified. He said "(For the life was manifested, and we have seen it, and bear witness, and show unto you that eternal life, which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us.)" When God's dear children have declared unto them those things which they have heard, which they have seen with their eyes, which they have looked upon, and their hands have handled of the "Word of life," they have fellowship one with another, and there is such unity among them that they can say, with John, "and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his son Jesus Christ." Such preaching and writing gives them a fulness of joy, and when they are caught up by the Spirit they can in unison join John again in saying, "This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all." John continues by saying, "If we say that we have fellowship with him, and walk in darkness, we lie, and do not the truth: But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." Farther on John says, "And hereby we do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments," and "whoso keepeth his word, in him verily is the love of God perfected." He declares that "He that loveth his brother abideth in the light, and there is none occasion of stumbling in him. But he that hateth his brother is in darkness, and walketh in darkness, and knoweth not whither he goeth, because that darkness hath blinded his eyes." John repeatedly refers to his beloved brethren as "little children," which truly typifies, according to our way of thinking, those who

are devoid of malice, envy, strife, hatred and like such things, and if differences arise among them they are soon banished and forgotten. They are all as branches abiding in the true vine, and they bear fruit to the honor and glory of the meek and lowly One. John told them he wrote unto them not because they knew not the truth, "but because ye know it, and that no lie is of the truth."

The well known apostle of LOVE, ascended up into the heights of sublimity of his subject when he said, "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," and lest we should conclude that this refers only to the future, he says, "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." We need to be kept mindful of the fact that *now are we the sons of God*, and conduct ourselves accordingly. The future will be taken care of by Him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, and it should be enough for us to be assured that "we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." It is in the fourteenth verse of this third chapter of his first epistle that we find a portion of Holy Writ which is most precious to every vessel of mercy. We refer to the words, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." Can we really say in truth that we know we love the brethren? There have been times in our experience when we were persuaded that we could truly say this. According to John, however, we must need do more than simply repeat his words. The balance of the same verse says, "He that loveth not

his brother abideth in death." Neither does he leave his subject at this point, but goes on to say, "Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. But whoso hath this world's goods, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue; but in deed and in truth." How we do wish and pray that God's dear people might be given to take these things to heart and verily live them. Is not this what Jesus had reference to when he said, "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." God in his providences provides for the testing of our love and our faithfulness to him. He may sometimes afflict his children, or withhold from them the necessities of life, to show us how cold and hard-hearted and miserly we are one to another. Oh, may we, when the Son of man shall come in his glory be found on his right hand as having given meat to them who were an hungered: drink to those who thirsted: took in the stranger: clothed the naked: visited the sick and those in prison, but if so it will be all of his grace. May it please him to give us the unction of the Holy One whereby we may do with all our might whatsoever our hands find to do pertaining to his kingdom, and may we also be kept on the alert to try the spirits whether they are of God, giving no ground to those who deny that Christ has come in the flesh and finished the work of redemption for his people, remembering the words of John where he says, "Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world. They are of

the world: therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them. We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us; he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error. 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. In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another." And now listen to what this same apostle says in the twentieth verse of this fourth chapter: "If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar; for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen?" In beginning the fifth chapter he says, "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him. By this we know we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous."

John addresses his second epistle, in which is found our text, to "the elect lady, and her children," for whom he professes an undying love. She is none other than the Gospel Church and, if indeed we are numbered among her children, this message is addressed to us, collectively and as individuals, and we should accept it in truth. John desired that grace, mercy and peace "from God the Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father, in

truth and love" be with her. How well suited these are to our condition and needs! He then beseeches this "elect lady and her children" that they "love one another." Then he defines love by saying, "And this is love, that we walk after his commandments. This is the commandment, That, as ye have heard from the beginning, ye should walk in it. For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist." Having thus warned them he then says "Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward. Whosoever transgresseth, and abideth not in the doctrine of Christ, hath not God. He that abideth in the doctrine of Christ, he hath both the Father and the Son." If we can rightly discern what the *doctrine of Christ* is it is the doctrine of love, and if any come unto us bringing not this doctrine, we are to receive them not into our house, and neither bid them God speed. To so receive and treat them would encourage them to continue in their course, which would also involve those who do so as partakers of their evil deeds. Paul said, "Some indeed preach Christ even of envy and strife; and some of good will: The one preach Christ of contention, not sincerely, supposing to add affliction to my bonds; But the other of love, knowing that I am set for the defence of the gospel. What then? notwithstanding, every way, whether in pretence, or in truth, Christ is preached; and I therein do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice." Phil. 1:15-18. As we understand John's teaching, however, even though one might come among us preaching the truth, if the spirit manifested is such as to engender strife, confusion and hatred among the brethren, he should not be received and bidden God speed.

As a final word, we would say that the truth should be preached in love, and where this is done we are convinced that the peaceable fruits of righteousness will follow.

We wish to greet our readers in the spirit of true love and fellowship, and in conclusion will leave with you for your consideration the words of the apostle Paul, Hebrews 10:24-25, "And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching."

R. L. D.

... P R A Y E R ...

One subject of vital importance to the child of God is prayer. True prayer is a sincere desire of the heart prompted by the Holy Spirit. One prays sincerely for that to be done for him that he has learned by sad experience that he cannot perform himself. When you are brought down to feel your dependence and inability and you are sinking in despair, and God reveals himself to you as being willing to save to the uttermost; you are then blessed to pray. Hypocritical prayer would be an attempt to ask God to do something for you that you feel able to perform of your own strength, or to ask for something you do not believe he will perform. I believe all true prayer inspired by the Holy Spirit is answered. The promise is, "Ask, and ye shall receive." Many times we ask in vain, but this is because our desire is prompted by a selfish spirit. We are so ignorant that we do not know the things we stand in need of, but our heavenly Father knows and the spirit itself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.

When we realize our infirmities we pray God to do according to his will and to reconcile us to our lot in the matter. Sometimes tribulations are best for us even though we may feel they are against us. Afflictions are grievous to us while being experienced but afterwards yieldeth the peaceable fruits of righteousness to God's people. Then we are made to "glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience, And patience, experience; and experience, hope: And hope maketh not ashamed: because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost."

I believe all the disciples of Christ pray the prayer Jesus taught his disciples to pray in full faith that every syllable will be answered. They may not utter the words but when that Spirit intercedes they desire the essence of it and are confident of it being answered.

Now let us examine this prayer. "Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name." In the salutation we acknowledge him as being supreme. Those who have been blessed to believe Jesus is the Christ is born of God. That Spirit in us makes us cry "Father." What a wonderful relationship to be enabled by his Spirit to feel that we are his children. We realize his name is to be hallowed rather than ours. No one who feels to deserve any credit or praise whatsoever can pray for God's name to be praised. Yes, all things praise him. Even the wrath of man shall praise him. The things that would not be to his praise God will prevent. "Thy kingdom come." We do not pray for our kingdom, but we pray for his kingdom to come. There is a king who reigns over the subjects of a kingdom. God is king of this kingdom. He is the supreme ruler. When he speaks it is done. When he commands it stands fast.

The words that go forth out of his mouth shall not return unto him void but shall accomplish that which he pleases and prosper in the thing where-to he sends it. This King spake through his Son concerning this kingdom when he said, "Upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." There is a kingdom of men and there is a kingdom of God. The kingdom of men is built by men and will come to naught but the sole builder of God's kingdom is the LORD and it will stand. 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." God's people are confident that his kingdom will not fail for he is the builder and the keeper and he makes his subjects obedient. He has the power to make them willing and enables them to perform. "Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven." According to the scripture, "He doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?" He "worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." Yes, he has 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." God's children are consoled with the fact that God rules over all things and the devil with all of his hosts cannot frustrate nor interfere with God's will and purpose. Those things that men and devils ordain for the ruin and destruction of that peculiar people of God, God has ordained them for the good of his people and for the ruin and destruction of men and devils.

"Give us this day our daily bread." If we feel competent to acquire this bread by the work of our own hands it would be hypocritical to ask him for

it. If we felt to deserve this bread we could only ask him to reward us with it. But our feeling of unworthiness as well as our inability prompts us to ask him to GIVE us this day our daily bread. Our confidence, that he will never forsake his children but will give unto them daily the things they stand in need of, suffices us with faith to believe that he will administer unto our needs. God is not only mindful of our spiritual needs but is also mindful of our temporal needs. When treating upon the natural necessities of life Jesus said to his disciples, "But rather seek ye the kingdom of God; and all these things shall be added unto you." Luke 12:31. God will provide his people sufficiently with the natural necessities of life as well as the Spiritual bread which is Christ and his righteousness in them.

"And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors." According to Luke the wording is, "And forgive us our sins; for we also forgive every one that is indebted to us." God's children realize that they are transgressors of the law. They are made to exclaim, "when I would do good, evil is present with me." They realize that with the mind they "serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin." We are made to acknowledge our sins. Faith and trust in the merits of Jesus Christ and in the sufficiency of the atoning blood of Jesus to pay the penalty imposed because of our sins and to satisfy justice, emboldens us to believe that God will forgive us our sins. The people of God are blessed with a forgiving heart. God has taken from us the stony heart and has given us a heart of flesh. This heart forgives a brother his trespasses. One characteristic of a child of God is to forgive. Jesus said, "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." The fact that you can behold a mote in your brother's eye makes manifest that you have a beam in your own. If God has forgiven me of so great sins how shall I not forgive a brother his trespasses seeing that they are so little and insignificant in comparison with my sins.

"Lead us not into temptation." James says, "Let no man say when he is tempted, I am tempted of God: for God cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man: But every man is tempted, when he is drawn away from his own lust, and enticed. Then when lust hath conceived, it bringeth forth sin: and sin, when it is finished, bringeth forth death." God does not lead his people into temptation. It is the agreement of the man with the lustly desires of the flesh that produces sin. It is the enticement of the lust which is the temptation.

"But deliver us from evil." When we would do good evil is present with us. This causes us to desire to be delivered from evil. Because of our many infirmities we are made to cry out as Paul, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Our trust in the efficacy of the merits of Jesus Christ enables us to thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. Evil is present with us yet, but we hope some day to be delivered from it. We trust that when this mortal shall have put on immortality and when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption then we shall have been delivered from evil. When this natural body shall have been raised a Spiritual body then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?" I believe it pleases God to deliver us from evil continually in this

present life but the climax of that deliverance will be the resurrection.

"For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen." In closing this prayer we acknowledge that the kingdom belongs to him. We grant that he has all power to enforce his decrees concerning this kingdom. At last we think of him as eternal. He is ever the same and changes not. The subjects of his kingdom will finally abide with him forever and ever on the sunny banks of sweet deliverance where no one hungers for bread no sin shall be there; no other kingdom to contend with, and no evils to molest a life of joy, peace and happiness.

E. J. L.

OBITUARIES

JAMES T. MEREDITH was born Oct. 29, 1862 in Johnson Co., Ill. He was the son of James B. and Martha (Sharp) Meredith. He was one of a family of eleven children, all of whom preceded him in death. He was stricken on Sept. 2, 1946, and confined to his bed until 8:45 P. M., May 5, 1947 when he passed away, having attained the ripe old age of 84 years, 6 months and 6 days. He was united in holy matrimony Sept. 16, 1886 to Sarah Bella Hadden. To this union were born eight children; Twins that died in infancy, Silva, Allen, Elden, Avery and James preceded him in death. He leaves to mourn his passing, his loving companion, one daughter, Mrs. Zetta M. Stockton and husband, Marshall Stockton, Chicago, Ill., one son-in-law, husband of Silva (Meredith) Shelton, deceased, one granddaughter, Ada (Shelton) White and husband, Willis White, Simpson, Ill., one grandson, Eldon Stockton and wife, Chicago, Ill., two great-grandsons, Meredith Wells White, Simpson, Ill. and Raymond Leroy Stockton, Portsmouth, O., also a host of other relatives and neighbors.

His house was ever open to all lovers of the truth. He united with the Primitive Baptist Rock Springs Church on Saturday before the first Sunday in May, 1906, and was baptized by Elder John M. Perkins, Mayfield, Ky. He lived a faithful member until death. He was elected Deacon of Rock Springs Church July 21, 1921, and also served as clerk of same until his eyesight failed him.

The funeral of brother Meredith was held from the Primitive Baptist Rock Springs Church, one and

one half miles east of Simpson, Ill., May 8, 1947 at 1 P. M. The services were conducted by Elder W. O. Perkins, Mayfield, Ky. in the presence of a large number of friends and neighbors who came to pay their last tribute of respect to this aged citizen. The floral offerings were profuse and beautiful, showing the esteem in which Uncle Jim was held. After the funeral services the body was conveyed to the Kerley Cemetery for burial. Pall bearers were: Monroe Simmons, Chas. Shelton, Eldon Stockton, Harold Waters, C. V. Kerley and Willis White. We feel that the church has lost a dear member, but we realize our loss is his eternal gain.

Brother Meredith enjoyed reading his Bible and talking on the Scriptures with his brethren and sisters, friends and neighbors whom he always welcomed in his home. He was a faithful companion and a loving father. We hope God, in his rich mercy, will bless sister Meredith and all who mourn. Our sympathy goes out to dear sister Meredith. God's call came which had to be obeyed, and he doeth right in all things. Written by request of sister Meredith.

(Mrs.) WILLIE IRENE KERLEY,
Church Clerk

It is with a sad and lonely heart I attempt to write of the death of our kind and loving grandmother, MRS. MARY ALICE STANLEY, who departed this life January 5, 1945. She would have been 91 years old on January 24. She was the widow of Elder W. R. Stanley who died March 5, 1926. She lived with me for some time and then for seventeen years with her daughter. She leaves to mourn her loss one daughter, one daughter-in-law, nine grandchildren, thirty-three great-grandchildren, seven great-great-grandchildren and many friends besides her church.

She had been a member of the Baptist Church a long time. She, her husband and my father were baptized the same day at the Baptist church in Asheville, N. C. by Elders Gold and Ashburn in 1885. When they came to Reidsville they moved their membership to Macedonia Church. She was a devoted member and always filled her seat unless providentially hindered. She was greatly afflicted with throat and other troubles but all was done for her that loved ones could do. She bore her suffering patiently and uncomplainingly, being submissive to her Master's will. She would often say she was waiting for the call, "Child come home." She was confined to her bed for several months.

She was a good mother in Israel never speaking harmful of any one. We realize that a true and faithful mother has been called from this earthly clay to a home above. I believe she has gone to that home prepared for the children of God where sorrow, sickness and death will be no more to

await the coming of our blessed Lord and Master to gather his jewels home. Her seat is now vacant at the old church where she loved to go in and out. Her body was laid to rest in the cemetery at Macedonia to wait the resurrection morn when her body will be fashioned like the dear Savior. "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." We are looking to him for comfort who is the only one from whom comfort can come.

She is gone but not forgotten,

Never will her memory fade;

Sweetest thoughts will always linger

'Round the grave where she is laid.

Written by her granddaughter.

(Mrs.) J. R. SOMERS

ANNOUNCEMENT

We regret to state that our supply of books on the Resurrection of the Dead is about exhausted. Therefore, we will have to withdraw our offer to send one of these books FREE for each new subscriber at \$2, or to supply the books alone at \$1.

We are, however, glad to announce that we have made arrangements whereby we will send FREE to each new subscriber, or to an old subscriber who will send in a new subscription at \$2, a copy of SHOWERS OF RAIN. This is a 40 page booklet containing the Christian experience and 25 poems by our late sister, Flossie I. Faulkner. If the book alone is desired we will send single copies for 50c; six copies for \$2.50, or 12 copies for \$4.50, providing they all go to the same address.

Some of these poems have been published in the Signs and many of our readers know they are good. The book will make an interesting addition to any library or collection of books. We hope each reader will obtain a copy as outlined above. R. L. D.

BOOKS

Elder R. W. Rhodes, Lillie, La., will be glad to send his latest books (Rhodes-West debate, and Jones-Rhodes debate) to the same address for \$3. If the books are desired separately, the price is \$2 each. Some of our readers are finding these books very interesting. R. L. D.

PRICES FOR EXTRA COPIES OF THE "SIGNS"

We will furnish extra copies of the *Signs of the Times* at the following prices: 1 copy, 20 cents; 3 copies, 50 cents; 6 copies, \$1; 12 copies, \$2. These prices do not apply to our regular subscribers who fail to receive their paper, and if they will notify us of the failure we will mail them another copy free of charge.

MEETINGS

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Seclusia Predestinarian Baptist Church meets 4th Sundays, 11 a.m., 9616 South Vermont Ave., Los Angeles, Calif. W. L. SLUSHER, Pastor, Route 3, Box 800 G, Stockton, Calif.

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

The Old School or Predestinarian Baptists meet for worship first Sunday of each month, 2:30 p. m., third floor Pythian Temple Building, 1012 Ninth St., N. W., Washington, D. C. Elder John D. Wood, Minister. For information write FRANK T. SIMPKINS, 5210 - H St., Dillon Park, Washington, D. C.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Hopewell Old School Baptist Church, Hopewell, N. J. meets every Sunday 10:30 a.m. in the meeting-house. Pastor in regular attendance except first Sundays.
C. W. VAUGHN, Pastor

Olive and Hurley Old School Baptist Church ASHOKAN, N. Y.
Meetings every first and third Sundays 11:00 a. m., 2 p. m.

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

ARNOLD H. BELLOWS, Pastor.

**Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church
in NEW YORK CITY**

Meetings every first and third Sundays at 143 East 35th St., Manhattan, between Lexington and Third Aves., 2nd floor, 11:00 a.m., 1:30 p.m.

R. LESTER DODSON, Pastor.

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

D. V. SPANGLER, Pastor

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

(Mrs.) M. R. FOSTER.

Salem Old School Baptist Church
1626 Arch Street Philadelphia, Pa.
(GRAND FRATERNITY HALL)
Meeting first Sunday, each month

10:30 a.m.

Take Elevator to 5th Floor

C. W. VAUGHN, Pastor

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

E. H. LANIER, Clerk

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

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

W. A. LITTLE, Moderator
Sister SIMMONS, Clerk

Saints Rest Predestinarian Baptist Church meets each first Sunday 11 a.m. and Saturday before 2:30 p.m., 4614 Sylvester St., Dallas, Texas. C. B. Teague, co-pastor, G. E. RUSHING, Pastor.

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

C. Y. OSTEEEN, Pastor.

Shepherd Fold Church meets every fourth Sunday at Civic Club, 1419 N. Shepherd St., Houston, Texas. W. O. Beene, Pastor, Ben B. Walston, Ass't Pastor. (Mrs.) IRENE WISENBAKER, Clerk.

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

C. Y. OSTEEEN, Pastor.

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

E. B. AULT, Pastor

The Old Salem Church of Old School Baptists, 4 miles south from Teague, Texas, meets the first Sunday in each month and Saturday before.

MAGGIE ELMORE, Clerk J. F. BRIGGS, Pastor

Mt. Zion Church, Weslaco, Texas, meets on the fourth Sunday of each month at E. B. Ault's home, three and one-half miles south of Weslaco, on Progresso Highway.

E. B. AULT, Pastor.

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

W. R. DODD, Pastor

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

D. V. SPANGLER, Pastor

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

R. B. DENSON, Pastor

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

R. B. DENSON, Pastor

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

C. M. FISHER.

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

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

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

PETER JONES, Pastor.

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

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

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

HARVEY J. BIRD, Moderator.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON'

VOL. 116

RUTHERFORD, N. J., FEBRUARY, 1948

No.2

CORRESPONDENCE

Experience and Call to the Ministry
by Elder W. N. Green, Altus, Okla.

DEAR BROTHER IN HOPE OF ETERNAL
LIFE THROUGH JESUS CHRIST OUR LORD:

I am submitting to you a sketch of my unprofitable life. If you think it worthy of consideration or notice of the dear readers you may publish it, but it will be all right if it finds its way to the waste basket for I know, if my life was before them as it is, they would have no fellowship or confidence in me.

I was born in Blunt Co., Ala., Sept. 23, 1866. My first remembrance of anything pertaining to worship I suppose was when I was about eight years old. At this time my parents lived in Tenn. within almost a stones throw of a Campbellite church, but as my father and mother were believers in the Primitive Baptist doctrine we did not attend much. Occasionally we children were allowed to go, but from hearing my parents talk I did not put very much confidence in their religion. It seems I thought there was a reality in religion, and it seemed to me a preacher was the greatest human on earth. I thought he was a good and perfect man, and I said in my heart when I become a man I am going to be a preacher. There was a Primitive Baptist church in the community also and my parents attended that church, it was located about four miles from where we lived. Very often they would walk to and from church. Very often they would bring

the preacher home with them and have services at our house Saturday night. Those preachers that visited our home when I was a child live in my memory to-day. My parents never talked to us children very much about the Bible or what it taught. So as I grew up I became more and more interested in worldly things, and less interested in church affairs, but would go to the different churches for pass time and to be with my associates. Sometimes when I would hear the preacher describe heaven and hell and how easy it was to gain heaven and shun hell, I would get interested and think I would do that and would give the matter considerable thought.

I had ignored the Old Baptists by this time and their crowds were too small only on special occasions like communion and foot-washing. I would be there at that time to make fun with the balance of the young folks, however, I always respected them for I thought they were good, old foggy people, just ignorant, but I always did enjoy those old songs.

I was a cripple from what the doctors called white swelling in one of my limbs for about ten years and I was a favorite among my associates, especially among the girls, and that made me very vain. Sometimes the thought would come, you better change your life, then it would follow, I am not going to die I will do that in plenty of time. In attending the big meetings I

very often went to the mourners bench. Not expecting to be benefitted but for different reasons; sometimes to keep the meeting running so I could take my girl, other times I would feel sorry for the preacher and the good folks so when they would sing, "I will arise and go to Jesus," I would start and then others would follow. Sometimes I would get serious about my condition but I did not expect any change in it. These conditions just repeated themselves until I was about twenty-five years old. One night very unexpectedly I became interested in my condition. At that time I was living with my oldest brother. When I went in from work that night brother John said, "Will, Will Brooks is dead." He was a cousin of ours we had left in Tenn. It seemed it struck me like a thunderbolt. I knew in my condition I was doomed for hell. My brother's house was a two story and I slept upstairs. The rest of the family down stairs. I went up to my bed trying to pray. I undressed, laid down on the bed trying to pray but did not know how, all I could say was, "Lord forgive my sins." This impression came, is it necessary for me to get out of bed and get on my knees? The thought followed, He can forgive in one position as well as another, and at that instant an impression came, your sins are forgiven. Oh! the glory, the rejoicing, the sweetness of those moments will never be told. I lay there weeping for joy. I was impressed to go down stairs and break the news to the family, but the thought came, no, I will wait until morning and finally went off to sleep. When I awoke next morning what had taken place in the fore part of the night was on my mind but I was not so happy and sure about it as when I went to sleep. I felt more like myself and thought I might be mistaken,

so I was truly glad I did not give the alarm and arouse the folks as I minded to do. I got up and went about my work as usual, pondering in my heart, is this experience a reality? I could not deny it but was afraid to accept it. My father was dead and mother was living among her married children. In about three weeks after this occurred she came to stay with us awhile. All this time I had kept this to myself, desiring with all my heart for those sweet, happy moments I had had to return. I could not experience them again, at the same time I could not deny there had been a change wrought in me in some way. My desires were different, my mind ran in a different channel, language was changed or rather disposed of. I longed now for Christian association rather than my former associates. I desired to shake hands with Christian people. I did not seem to have any choice of denomination. The Primitive Baptist was not numbered or even thought of while I was enjoying in meditation the sweet association with Christian people, but I would find myself humming on those old spiritual songs I had heard them sing, and oh they were such a consolation and comfort it seemed to me. The tears would flow down my cheeks while humming them in secret. They just came and I could not keep them back.

With these three weeks of a different life I took courage and broke the news to mother when she came. Oh! well do I remember the occasion in detail. It was after supper and she and I were in the family room alone, my sister-in-law and children were in the kitchen, my brother had gone to carry some slop to the hogs. When I told her what I thought the Lord had done for me she raised the alarm with shouts of joy and praises to God for his mercy,

and the evidence of an answer to her prayers. The family was soon assembled to learn what the commotion was all about. I sat in the corner with my face in my hands and my mouth closed. Mother related the story to them saying, "God has heard my prayers." Words can never express how I felt. I was afraid I was mistaken, and how I wished I had kept it to myself, and to make that thought more forceful to my mind when my brother turned to leave the room he said, "I guess Will is mistaken." That was what I was afraid of, I cannot tell what a chill those words brought over me, and oh how often they have re-echoed in my ears even to this present moment. How true they may be. I am yet wondering "Am I His or am I not?"

So the story goes, I set out to live a life that God would honor and that those that were about me would be proud of. I was honest and sincere in the matter, but have I complied with that resolution? No, a thousand times no. About that time I was visiting a girl friend pretty often, she too, was very much interested in my salvation and was delighted that I had been converted. She was a member of the Cumberland Presbyterian Church and I often attended with her. I remember on one occasion I took her to an Old Baptist meeting. I do not know why unless it was because of distance and out of her community, just for a trip. When we got to the meeting-house a very small crowd had gathered, mostly old folks. It was a miserable two hours for me. My mother was there, and let me say here I would give the world, if it were mine to give, if I could call back those two hours and be permitted to sit with her under the drippings of the sanctuary of her God, and feast with her upon the good word of God

as I now believe she did. That was the last time I ever saw her at church. Precious mother has gone to her reward and that was the last Old Baptist meeting I attended for many years.

This girl friend afterward became my wife, and as I had no special preference as to church relation, I thought just so it is a church, one is as good as another, I united with her church the day we were married, and became very active in church affairs. My pride was encouraged and I strived for popularity and the applauses of men. This kind of a life was perpetuated for about twenty years to a great extent. I was satisfied with the life I was leading, perfectly so, so far as my relation with God was concerned, in fact that part was the least meditated upon. I loved the applause and honor from both men and women and I am not sure that the good Lord has been pleased to take all of that desire out of me yet. Brother, how about you? While I was in such a rampage for honor from men, I could almost hear them whispering, "Isn't he a good and useful man in the community? I do not see how we could do without him." I would swell up so I would almost burst the buttons off my trousers and shirt. I must deviate here just a little. "Canst thou draw out leviathan with an hook?" "Upon earth there is not his like, who is made without fear. He beholdeth all high things: he is a king over all the children of pride." Surely I was under the influence of that king. I was very zealous in Sunday school, in family prayer and in keeping the Sabbath. During this ungodly career my good wife was afflicted in childbirth and lay an invalid for eleven years or until it pleased God to remove her from earth. During her illness I had a terrible time. God only knows what I went through. A poor man, with four small children to raise,

and a helpless woman to care for. Under a strain for eleven years trying to regain her health, it seemed that my life depended upon the regaining of her health so we could get back into church work again that we might raise our children right. That was my daily prayer. I do not know whether I was honest in it or not, if I was it was of the devil for I hardly even thought of God. I was just trying to evade the devil by my own works, and at the same time gaining a wonderful reputation for myself among the people. Killing two birds with one stone, but the greater of the two was that reputation I was building. During my wife's sickness I did not entirely give up my works. I would hold family prayer. I do not know why for before God I realized it was only a custom and was practiced by church people. I never felt any relief or comfort in the work or after it was done, it was all dry as shucks—just a custom. No God fearing sensation whatever. Just the suggestions of the devil, and the same influence is prevailing to-day among the work mongers of the world, and they do not know it, nor will they until the God of heaven sees fit to shine into their hearts that light to give them the knowledge of the glorious liberty of the children of God.

(To be Continued)

... P E A C E ...

DEAR READERS OF THE SIGNS: I feel an inclination to offer a few thoughts, whether of the spirit or of the flesh I know not—God knoweth. I hope, of course, the things I might offer would in some little way at least edify the believer in Jesus. I know so well unless I am guided by the Spirit of my blessed Lord what I might offer will be profitless, therefore, I am in a strait.

In I Peter 2:1 we read, "Wherefore

laying aside all malice, and all guile, and hypocrisies, and envies, and all evil speakings." Quite an urgent reproof is it not? To the guilty at least, and all of us from time to time are more or less guilty of one or more of the said named elements. That is, of course, probably because we are human, more so than divine. That in no way is encouraging but rather depressing to me at least. The above said named elements I feel are a handicap to every child of grace. Evidently Peter thought so, therefore, he advocated the laying aside of things. To what extent to go, in the laying aside of malice, guile, hypocrisies, envies and evil speaking, Peter leaves us in no doubt for he uses new born babes to illustrate along with their desires.

In this category Peter places the children of God, the heirs of promise, the blood bought of Jesus, on the planes of new born babes. Meditate if you will gentle reader, the absence of malice, guile, hypocrisies and evil speaking in the activity of new born babes? Now can you not see, the reality and the great benefit in laying aside these elements aforesaid mentioned? I call your attention to the desire, the sincerity of new born babes. Note their desire alone for the sincere milk. Could an heir of promise regenerated of God, having laid aside all malice, all guile, all hypocrisies, all envies and all evil speakings be content and happy with anything less than the sincere milk of the word? Indeed not, for it is the substance upon which they thrive and grow. Malice, guile, hypocrisies, envies, evil speaking have never promoted growth, neither furnished nourishment in the heart and mind and soul of a child of grace; neither do either of those promote growth, neither furnished nourishment in the heart and mind and soul of a child of grace; neither do either of

those promote growth in our churches of to-day organically speaking, but in stead destroy peace and sweet fellowship. Malice, guile, hpyocrisies, envies, evil speakings do promote dwarfishness, sickness and all manner of ungodliness among us, even stupidity, the greater part of which I attribute to the state or condition our churches are in, organically speaking, throughout the realms among us. And now what is the remedy? I have read several suggested remedies; I have listened to several orally, but for some reason the sponsors of these remedies are fearful for their own medicine. An Elder who is very precious to me remarked a few days ago like this: all seem to know that Old Baptists everywhere are sick unto death, but the fellow he was most interested in was the fellow who had the remedy.

In my opinion pitched peace conferences are not the remedy, or are they? Fasting is not the remedy, or is it? Prayer without faith is not I am sure. I have noticed some things of late in regard to the necessity of a leader. At this critical hour among us I am definitely sure we are nicely fixed up as pertaining to leadership. It is the followers where the rub comes in for Jesus is yet with us ample, able as ever to lead. If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious, then another taste of the graciousness of the Lord and another and so on have never failed and will not fail now to bring the heartfelt desired results. Remember we are a people, as a people heady, high minded, though forgetful, very much so, and have to be reminded again and again. Were I to pray, I would pray now, that all of those troubled in spirit and perplexed in mind could be given a taste, just a taste, of the graciousness of Jesus our leader and our troubles would all be over. Were that

prayer answered a taste of the graciousness of Jesus is the antidote for all our ills. In our ills we act too much like men and endeavor to work out our own salvation before God has worked in. It is so easy to work out that which God hath worked in so I suggest we wait until God works in before we begin working out.

I am conscious of the situation, at least in part, that now exists among the people of God everywhere. I am human, very much so. I like to preach to a house full of folks, but I do not do so every time. Do you believe if it was the will of God that all of our houses would be full of folks every meeting time? I do. I have thought of the situation as it now exists along this line that probably we were experiencing an ingoing or low tide. A time when the waters are treacherous and the undercurrent strong, and none but old *salters* dare venture the voyage. I do know it is no time or place now, if ever it was, for malice, guile, hpyocrisies, envies, evil speaking, but it is time, high time, that all take oars in hand and with an eye of faith mixed with hope wrapped in sweet charity pull and tug for peace, love and sweet fellowship, and as much as in us is lay aside all malice, guile, envies, hpyocrisies and all evil speaking, and pray and beg that our desires be alone for the sincere love of God in Christ Jesus exercised by faith in precept and example. May it be the will of God to keep us all close to the foot of the cross of our blessed Lord. (Amen. R.L.D.)

(Elder) F. A. COLLINS

Hartford, Ala.

"O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself; It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." Jer. 10:23

For quite some time it has been haunting my mind to write again. I

hope I am not deceived. I have had many endorsements on my article in August *Signs*. Yesterday morning as my attendant placed me into the bath tub it struck my mind as quick as lightning, the eternal and absolute fixedness of all things. My mind kept going until I had finished the whole routine through the bath house. It seems if I could then have had my pen I could have written much better than now. Yet I might not and may not be able to write at all. If God will lead my mind along I can think of no better text than Jer. 10:23. I have my own way and manner and I have to write as it comes. I have to take life as it comes.

We hear God talking to Jeremiah, "Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations." God did not have to wait until Jeremiah was born, grown up and tried out, to see if he would fit into his program. I take the position that all the events of time unfold or bring into manifestation that that God purposed (fixed) before the morning of time. I have heard it preached, written and boasted from my earliest recollection that God is omnipotent, omnipresent and omniscient. This means God hath all power, is everywhere and knoweth all things. We hear God saying, "As I have purposed, so shall it stand." On the night of the ninth of April last year (1946) my wife and I retired as usual, talked and planned our next day's activities. In about ten minutes after we ceased to talk she called for her medicine and was dead in thirty minutes. If I could have had my way I would have had it otherwise. How helpless, how helpless was poor me, how helpless! I had to take it. It was God's appointed time, al-

ready fixed and all the powers of heaven, hell and earth could not unfix it. It was not only God's appointed time for her to go, but it was the fixed way and place. How can we believe the three attributes of God mentioned above and not believe this?

Once we set some plants in the churchyard. After father had taken a look at them he told mother those plants would not shade him. He had a premonition that he must soon go the way of all the earth, and he did. It has come to my mind to mention myself. I have never had a premonition that my time was near at hand. On the other hand if I have had any premonition it is that I have quite a long time yet, but please remember it is all fixed. Not long ago I had a vision. (I do not think it was a dream.) In my vision I looked toward the West. It was the most beautiful scene my eyes ever beheld, no cloud, no sky. The elements were seemingly closed, a mixture of silver and gold, the sun was bright as silver. When I came to myself I exclaimed, "How wonderful, how wonderful!" And how wonderful is God. There is no God but the living God, our God. My hope is anchored that I can say, my God, yes, my Father. "A word fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver." Proverbs 25:11. The thought came to me that the distance from the sun to the western horizon is the remainder of my journey here in this world in the ratio of twelve hours. I do not know how it will be. It is all fixed. If this be true I have fifteen or twenty years yet. But I do get so tired of my nothingness, my sinning, until I wish I could clip the cord that holds me here and go home, and as we used to sing, "Sit down and rest a little while."

As tired as I get of my sinning and as much as I wish I could quit it, I am

comforted with this thought that I will not sin any more than God is able to overrule and bring order out of chaos. "Heal me, O Lord, and I shall be healed; save me, and I shall be saved: for thou art my praise." Jer. 17:14. After Nathan, the prophet, had come unto David and after grace had found him out he could acclaim, "Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow." Psalms 51:7. David had in mind the perfect work of redemption. Jesus did not say to those disciples, clean the fish you have caught, fry them and give me some to eat. "As soon as they were come to land, they saw a fire of coals there, and fish laid thereon, and bread." John 21:9. Peter had said before, "I will never forsake thee." Peter wanted to help the Lord, but the Master taught Peter, I am taking care of myself and you, too, Peter. Fish and bread already prepared! Who did it? The answer is Jesus. The great draught of fishes we have caught is worth nothing. This brings our mind to the thought that when we think we are helping the Lord grace shines in our soul until we can acclaim, "I will pay that that I have vowed. Salvation is of the Lord." The neighbors and cousins gathered in to rejoice with Elizabeth. They said we will name him Zacharias after his father. Elizabeth said, "He shall be called John." It is so common after the flesh to perpetuate family names. The neighbors and kindred contended it will not do to name him John because there is not a John in the family. Somebody must settle the contention. "And he asked for a writing table, and wrote, saying, His name is John. And they marvelled all," Luke 1:63. After the manner of the flesh we would say Zacharias had a desire to agree with Elizabeth. The truth is he was named John before the foundation of the world, before the morning of time. This is

another instance of what God had fixed and cannot be unfixed. "His name is John." Already named. Before I began to write I thought of some things I thought I would write. I have written some things I did not think of until I began to write. My mind seems to snap. Time to quit.

(Elder) C. H. BYRD

Route 2, Box 89, Panama City, Fla.

Cascade, Va.

MR. LESTER CASSELL, BASSETTS, VA.
 DEAR BROTHER CASSELL: It is on my mind to write you this morning, hoping this finds you all well as it leaves us reasonably so. I am continuing to improve from my operation and hope to be able to go back to work soon. I have been so used to being active, this enforced idleness has been hard to endure. I hope the most of it is in the past and I will soon be able to be on the move, working and going to visit the beautiful lady to whom God has given my heart forever, the beautiful bride of Christ, the Lamb's wife, known by us as the Old Primitive Baptist church. Many, many times has my heart bounded with joy and echoed amen to the beautiful language of the poet.

"I love thy kingdom, Lord,
 The house of thine abode,
 The church our blessed Redeemer saved
 With his own precious blood.

I love thy church, O God,
 Her walls before thee stand,
 Dear as the apple of thine eye,
 And graven on they hand.

For her, my tears shall fall,
 For her, my prayers ascend;
 To her, my cares and toils be given
 'Till cares and toils shall end.

Beyond my highest (natural) joy,
 I prize her heavenly ways,
 Her sweet communion, solemn vows,
 Her hymns of love and praise."

So much of my time is spent in the prison of nature's darkness, shut up in a prison of doubts and fears. It seems like it is wrong for me to even hope that I have a hope, I fall so far short in every way it seems like all the evidence is against me. My thought so often is, if I was indeed a child of God, my manner of life would be more Christ-like, and being as I am so carnal, that is evidence that I am just a deceiver. To this I reply in Paul's language, "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." I feel bound to say that is my experience. The scripture says, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, *because we love the brethren.*" Brother Cassell, that love for the brethren and hatred of sin, both equal in depth and volume are two of the greatest witnesses we have that we are indeed little children of the most high God. Scripture again says, "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom." Paul speaks of some being made wise unto salvation, and I feel satisfied this is the wisdom under consideration. Now, what is the Bible definition of the fear of the Lord? Do we possess it? That is the vital question. Examine yourselves, your hearts and see, dear children for the scripture again says, "He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself." Here is the Bible definition of the fear of the Lord—"The fear of the Lord is to hate evil." May I now say in full assurance it is true, that if we can know anything at all we *know* we do hate evil, hate sin, and groan beneath the burden it causes us to feel sometimes, when we can see and feel our falling so far short of the way we *would* live, were it possible.

"'Tis seldom I can ever see
Myself, as I would wish to be,
What I desire I can't attain —
From what I hate, I can't refrain."

So sang the poet in harmony with our hearts to-day.

Now for the other great witness, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." God is unchangeable. He teaches all his children alike in substance. Although the manner of our experience may differ a little, the substance or essence of what he teaches us is the same. Having a like experience begets fellowship one with another. Not only for those we personally know, who are yet upon the earth, but we even have fellowship with the saints, prophets and apostles of ages past. Often we find our feelings told by them in scriptures. Do not these words of Ruth to Naomi express, far as words or language can reach, our love for the church to-day? "Intreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God: Where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried." I have often said, that I feel as a young man who loves a woman with a deathless love, that I run after her, (the church) crying, you have won my heart forever.

Brother Cassell, I have been made to get out of bed a number of times in the dark and silent hours of night, fall upon my knees and beg, implore God that his mercy and love may cover and protect the church, flowing toward and into her as a boundless river, desiring her welfare above everything else on earth. I have prayed for her, preached to her in my dreams so great is my love. I cannot feel it in the same depth of intensity all the time. Some-

times my heart is so cold, stony and dead I cannot feel anything. Again this love for the church melts this cold and stony heart of mine, and it just melts and runs out, embracing the whole church as rivers of waters. Then is the time of fulfillment in measure to me of the glorious voice of my Redeemer, crying. "Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away. 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."

Yea, when he thus speaks, it is calling us forth, our affections run out toward him and his bride, and it brings peace, for a little season, to our troubled souls. Truly, the voice of the turtle (dove) signifies peace, but not for long. As the earth is made, filled with hills and valleys, so is our experience. As the seasons roll, winter and summer, so is our experience until we have gone the last long mile of the way. Then, at the end of all time and time things, when Jesus comes the last time, we hope to be received home unto himself, a glorious church, without spot, wrinkle or blemish. May this be our happy lot is my humble cry for Jesus' sake. Amen. Your little brother in Christ, I hope.

(Elder) LAYTON WINGFIELD

Route 1, Merryville, La.

ELDER R. L. DODSON, DEAR BROTHER IN HOPE: I see from the little reminder on my paper that it is time for me to renew my subscription to the *Signs*. We have passed another milestone that has gone down in history. Some of the past may be remembered, but the future no man can know. I am short of being as fortunate as some claim. I cannot boast of any good that I have done.

Like the apostle the good that I would I do not, but the evil which I would not, that I do. Experience teaches me that it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps. This is quite different to what one can hear almost any hour of the day. They tell us that you can if you will. I had rather be a *cannot* than a *will not*. Every vessel of mercy has his pitfalls. The individual may not know why it is so, neither can he bring relief it matters not how hard he tries; but when the gentle breeze (the Holy Spirit) blows to cool his weak, hungry, scorching soul, it is then he can sing upon the mountain top. Nothing that the poor creature has done caused this blowing. Jesus compares his Spirit to the wind and my belief is that without this gentle breeze there is no obedience or rejoicing.

A few days ago I heard a man, who claims the name Primitive Baptist, say, while conducting a funeral service, that somehow he believed it was possible for a man to prolong his days on earth. To back up his belief he referred to the untimely birth spoken of in Psalms 58:8. To my mind the following scripture contradicts his belief. "To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven: A time to be born and a time to die." Eccl. 3:1-2. I see no reason to try to contradict the above. Job says, "All the days of my appointed time will I wait, till my change come." Job 14:14.

I believe there was a wise purpose for the horrible war we have just gone through. We lost one of our sons and a grandson in the defense of their country. If it had not been for the war I see no way they could have been at those particular places at the exact time their lives were blown out. I know this is not popular doctrine, but I am proud that the Lord has reserved unto himself a few who believe he is

supreme over all things.
Your unworthy brother in hope.

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

J .PAUL McMILLIAN

Route 1, Box 901, Auburn, Wash.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: Yesterday the *Signs* came to me and how thankful I was to get it. I get so lonely for the things I believe in. I sat down at once and read it through. Those verses, "Just a whisper away," struck a loving cord in my heart. The article on charity and all the others were a feast to my hungry soul. Nearly every day I read the eleventh chapter of Hebrews. Your article on Hebrews was good. Then the obituary of sister Parke's husband. It was he I told you I rode with and he died that night. I never saw him but the one time.

I have had so much trouble this year so far, trouble with my head, I get confused, but I thank God I have been able to carry on. I do not think people can realize what one lonely person endures unless they experience it themselves. I never knew before what it was to be in such a condition. This is a lovely day, "An anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast." Heb. 6:19.

"We travel through a barren land,
With dangers thick on every hand;
But Jesus guides us through the vale;
The christian's hope can never fail.

Huge sorrows meet us as we go,
And devils aim our overthrow;
But vile infernals can't prevail;
The christian's hope can never fail.

Sometimes we're tempted to despair,
But Jesus makes us then his care:
Though numerous foes our soul assail,
The christian's hope shall never fail.

We trust upon the sacred word—
The oath and promise of our Lord;
And safely through each tempest sail:
The christian's hope shall never fail."

I hope these verses will be my guide to the end of my life. Sometimes I feel the end will not be far off for me as my strength is going. I hope some one will let you know when I am not here to receive my *Signs*. I know my neighbors would not care for it. The old couple that used to live across the highway from me are gone. He died and she went to live with her son.

The world is in a turmoil. I tried to listen Sunday morning to radio programs of some of the churches but they made me tired. They are always helping the Savior. "We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; Persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed. Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body." Love is the one word that we should stand for. The Savior loves his children, we should give him all the glory. We are poor, imperfect mortals and without his love and protection we must surely perish. May you be spared many years to minister to the children of God. Your unworthy sister.

(Mrs.) JENNIE CLIFFORD

West Hurley, N. Y.

DEAR SISTER POTTER: Often as I think of our interesting meetings in Maine, my thoughts flow out to you in bonds of love and fellowship. I have greatly enjoyed reading your letters in the *Signs of the Times* and noting your spiritual exercises of mind as you are led along this wilderness road with its trials and deliverances, its sunshine and shadow, its darkness and light. Much as I feel unworthy to write you, I can not repress the desire to express some thoughts which I hope may be of comfort.

The priesthood of Jesus and our ap-

proach unto him through prayer is a subject that greatly interests me. The work of the high priest in old testament times was symbolical of the work of Christ in his dispensation of suffering as well as in his dispensation of glory. When the high priest under the Levitical rites offered prayer he took a live coal of fire from the brass altar where the sacrifices were offered and placed it upon the incense on the golden altar. The application of fire to the incense caused a fragrant cloud of vapor to rise and perfume the sanctuary. There could be no fragrant cloud of incense without the fire thus applied to it, and there can be no true prayer flowing out of the believer's heart unless and until God himself kindles a fire in the soul and indites a supplication. "Is not my word like as a fire? saith the Lord." It is always a fire of God's kindling, not man's making, that causes true prayer to rise to the throne of God. In the midst of fiery trials the people of God pray more fervently. Beautifully worded utterances in prayer books, polished phrases uttered with rhetorical fervor and effect by religious professors not taught of the Lord do not constitute real prayer. It must proceed, if it is true prayer, from a heart made broken and contrite by the power and work of the Holy Spirit, and the cry of a broken heart the Lord will not despise. When one truly feels a load of guilt that burdens the conscience; when one senses the condemnation of God's holy law and experiences utter abasement of self; when one writes bitter things against himself and realizes that everlasting damnation is his rightful portion, and that God in his ineffable holiness seems afar off and there is no help in man; when one feels the very wrath of a justly offended God about to consume him; it is then that he is fit to pray and

it is then that he pours out a heartfelt supplication for mercy, knowing that only grace can save him. To feel the power of sin with all its damning effects is to agonize, to cry helplessly, to cling imploringly, and with faith to persist till the blessing comes, till pardoning mercy is manifested, but this will not be until the supplicant has ceased to wrestle, but can only cling, like Jacob of old, with his natural strength to walk exhausted. It is then that the blessing comes.

Not only in deliverance from nature's darkness and the possession of a good hope is prayer a vital need, but each child of God needs a daily savior from daily sins. How prone we are to sin! The sins of hand and heart and lip and thought would cut us off from the presence of our Redeemer except for the intercession of our faithful high priest who makes intercession for us with groanings that can not be uttered. There is a woe to them that are at ease in Zion. The treacherous calm is more to be dreaded by the child of God than the roaring, raging billows of sin. It is in time of trouble that we pray, and it is then that the Lord comes experimentally near us. We read in John that immediately after supper, after the partaking of a meal that suggests his broken body, Jesus washed his disciples' feet. He rose from the table to do this, suggestive of resurrection. He took a towel of linen, signifying service, and water denoting the word and washed his disciples' feet. The basin contained a limited amount of water. The washing of regeneration is limited only to the people of God. All of us need to have our feet (our walk) washed by the word applied by the Holy Spirit to the doorposts of our consciences and hearts as we mortify the deeds of the body through the Spirit and live. And for all our backslidings and wanderings

there is a gracious restoration provided by the grace of God through repentance and prayer.

We have in heaven a faithful High Priest who can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities. The third and fourth verses of the eighth chapter of Revelation read as follows: "And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all the saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne. And the smoke of the incense, which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel's hand."

This is a beautiful figure of the intercessory work of Jesus in heaven as typified by the work of the high priest of the legal dispensation in making intercession for Israel, as on the day of atonement he stood between the living and the dead, the blood representing the life of the soul before him on the mercy seat and the dead sacrifice outside the gate testifying to the penalty for sin. The high priest stood within the vail in the holy of holies which is a type of heaven itself, the vail denoting the flesh of Jesus Christ, for he entered through the vail, that is to say, his flesh, now to appear in the presence of God for us. It was the blood of the sacrifice that ceremonially cleansed from sin, but the blood of Jesus possessing the power of the Godhead actually purges the conscience and cleanses the soul. The high priest stood within the vail in the presence of the cloud, the presence of God, that dwelt between the cherubims over the mercy seat, approachable only on the day of atonement by the blood of a sacrifice. The holy of holies represents heaven where God dwells in his un-

dimmed and fadeless glory, where Jesus intercedes with all the effectual plea of his sinless life, his atoning death, his justifying righteousness, his rising from the dead, his virtue as the God-man in satisfying the justice of God, in fulfilling for his people every divine requirement in bringing salvation to the believer and clothing him with his own spotless righteousness. Therefore he presents his bride holy and without blame before the father in love. The prayers of all believers go up unto God with the intercession of the great Mediator, the risen and glorified Christ. The shed blood of Jesus and the holy fragrance of his person give merit to our prayers. Incense is added to the prayers, not merely of some saints, but unto all the called of God. In the holy place there was a continual burning of incense, denoting that the intercession of Jesus is perpetual. On the cross Christ represented the sinner and endured the curse of God for him so that in heaven he is the believer's righteousness, advocate, and surety.

The fact that Jesus is represented as standing by the altar typifies him as our counsellor and intercessor, for in the temple service under the law the high priest always stood when engaged in prayer or in other priestly duties. Jesus is also sometimes represented as seated at the right hand of God. Here his office as judge as well as king are represented. A mediator stands, but a judge sits. How beautifully harmonious is all the word of God when rightly understood! In the temple service there was a golden altar made of incorruptible wood all overlaid with gold and around it a crown of gold. Here the divine glory, the incorruptible humanity of Jesus and his kingship are symbolized, for the crown suggests a kingdom and Jesus is the King of kings as well as the Lord of lords. May

the God of all grace be your guide, your preserver and deliverer. Your brother in covenant bonds.

(Elder) ARNOLD H. BELLOWS

1406 Randolph Ave., Greensboro, N. C.

MRS. BEATRICE HAAN, MY DEAR AND ESTEEMED SISTER IN THE LORD: I have just re-read your last letter which I received some months ago. Each time I have read it love has filled my heart, which causes me to feel and believe that Christ washed me also in his precious blood. I have thought many times of writing you, but I always feel that writing to the saints of God is far too great a task for me to undertake; but I hope I am sometimes blessed to tell in part that the Lord has been merciful to my unrighteousness, and has blessed me to love his people with a love that causes us to be drawn together by the sweet cords of his mercy, for his mercy endureth forever.

I cannot begin to tell just how I feel for I cannot find words to express my feelings, but I do feel that all our trials, crosses, sorrows, tribulations, temptations and persecutions come to us the perfect way. We read in 2 Tim. 3:12, "Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." In 2 Cor. 4:7-11 we read, "But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us. We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed; always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body. For we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh."

Again we read in Matt. 5:10-12, "Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for their's is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice and be exceeding glad: for great is your reward in heaven: for so persecuted they the prophets which were before you." "There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it." I Cor. 10:13.

My dear sister, I feel that I have enjoyed the delivering hand of God in trials, crosses and temptations. I believe it is just and right that the Lord's people are tempted and hated. The world hated Christ and it hates his people also. Jesus was led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil; and the Lord's people are never tempted by any other than the devil; and it always proves a blessing unto those who are tempted. In this we see a beauty and are thus blessed to glory in the Lord, that all which come to pass work together for good to them that love God. I believe the devil was made for no other purpose than to fulfill the Lord's purpose in doing the very things that he does do. God made the devil and he did not make anything in vain. I do not believe Satan has any more power of himself than a dead animal; but he, like all beings, consists of just what was given him by Him who made all things, and without him there was not anything made. I believe his wisdom, purpose and predestination are perfect, and in this he caused to come to pass

(from the beginning to the end of time, and on into eternity and in hell) all things just as he saw and thought. All things that are, are for his glory and for the benefit of his children, including Satan and all his works which God purposed that he do, and he does nothing except by the power of God.

I feel persuaded that none but a child of God has ever been tempted in the manner which Christ was; and what a blessing it is to be blessed to know Satan in the sense of being a tempter. For if we know God in the pardon of our sins, we also know the devil as the father of all lies, as a tempter, as a deceiver and as everything which is contrary to the church of God. Until one is quickened into divine life, I believe there is no knowledge of Satan except by the letter, and the scripture says the letter killeth. When we are made alive to the fact that there is an all-wise God, who holds the key of life and death, then we also know there is in our flesh, Satan, that serpent called the devil; and we find the two spirits continually warring, one against the other. But we read the elder shall serve the younger, which is Christ born in us the hope of glory, and which has already gained the victory through our Lord and Savior. This victory brings the elder, which is our flesh, under subjection: (and notwithstanding our thoughts and acts which to us seem so terrible) we walk as our lot has been cast and are not disobedient to the great and eternal purpose of God.

I feel that I have only hinted at what I have tried to tell. I hope we are all blessed to look to Him who is able to guide and protect us in tribulations, temptations and persecutions. A sister I hope. (Mrs.) MARY E. WRAY

Riffe, Wash.

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON, DEAR BROTHER IN A PRECIOUS HOPE IN CHRIST JESUS: After reading brother Overstreet's letter in October *Signs* I have a desire to write you a few lines. I do not have the ability to write for publication, but wish to commend you and your capable editorial staff for your faithful labors to give us such a dear messenger as the *Signs* has proved to be since I first read it, which is more than fifty-five years now. I do believe my spiritual life, if not deceived, has been made richer and more understanding by this great blessing which is given us by our dear Lord. He gives us so many precious blessings, and sometimes we seem to pass them by almost unnoticed, so now I wish to express my hearty appreciation to you and all the writers for your sincere labor of love for the cause of our God. How unspeakably great his wisdom, his love, his longsuffering, his grace, mercy and power, and how less than nothing am I, only the very least of his little ones, if one at all. Yet if I know myself I do glory in his perfection and can truly say with Cowper: "Deep in unfathomable mines of never failing skill, He treasures up his bright designs, and works his sovereign will." All along the way we see his ruling power and wonderful way of bringing to pass whatsoever he will. No trouble for him to close the mouths of the lions when his servant was cast into their den to destroy his life; no trouble for him to temper the fierce heat when his faithful children were cast into the furnace, so that not even the smell of fire was found on their garments; no trouble for him to make a fog dense enough for a London cabby to lose his way when God was preparing Cowper's mind to write one of our best loved

hymns, and one that often comforts us when we are in the depths; no trouble for him to teach a little spider to weave a web so perfect over the mouth of the cave so as to deceive wicked men and save one who had not completed his work; nor to teach the ravens how to feed his faithful prophet; nor to make the cock crow at the right time when Peter denied him.

When we see these things in which he proves his care over us in *all* things do we not take comfort and feel in our inmost heart the beautiful truths expressed in the beautiful 23rd Psalm. We feel constrained to say, "All the way my Savior leads me, cheers each winding path I tread," and when blessed with his Holy Spirit I think there is no more precious doctrine in all holy writ than that of predestination. I fail to see where there is anything hard about it. We parents who have raised children know how dear they are to us; we plan for their welfare; how we chastise them, not because it gives us pleasure, but that they shall become better men and women. Our arms are short, we cannot do what we would for them but His wisdom and power has no limit so He can say, *all things work together* for good to His little children. We may not understand it, but may, by his grace, afterwards see how he makes it to yield the peaceable fruits of righteousness.

Oh, how often the rivers of woe seem ready to engulf us in their dark muddy waters, when in that still small voice he speaks to our troubled hearts and says, "Be not afraid, it is I." If we are his we need not be afraid for David says, "If I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there." So there is no place we can go to hide from him, and no depths but he can bring peace even

to the martyr Stephen. He could look into heaven and pray, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do," and other martyrs who he gave grace sufficient to enable them to sing hymns of praise while flames consumed their natural bodies. Did he not temper the heat, though their natural bodies were consumed, the glory within was so great they felt not pain for they were given dying grace for dying hours?

Brother Dodson, this letter is becoming too long. Your time is too precious to be taken up with my weak efforts. May God in his mercy and loving kindness watch over you and all other writers, and grant that you may be enabled to write the things that will comfort and encourage His little children while here, and may nothing enter our precious family paper but the truth as it is in Christ Jesus. In Christian love, your unworthy sister.

(Mrs.) ROSA COLEMAN

SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT

Our Associate Editor, Elder C. W. Vaughn and Sister Vaughn, Hopewell, N. J. will celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary on February 13, 1948. They will be at home to their friends Feb. 14 and 15. Letters and cards will be appreciated from any unable to call.

AID FOR SENDING "SIGNS" TO INDIGENTS

Middletown & Wallkill Church, N. Y., \$25; J. H. Calk, La., \$3; Mrs. S. Bailiff, Tex., \$1; Mrs. G. McGuire, N. C., \$3; W. G. Hutchens, N. C., \$1; Mrs. R. M. Blair, La., \$1; J. H. Miles, Fla., \$4; W. M. Rushing, Ala., \$1; R. C. Wood, N. C., \$2; G. G. Turner, Tex., \$1; Mrs. S. L. Hutchens, N. Y., \$5; Mrs. S. L. Midgett, N. Y., \$1; Mrs. B. H. Shearon, Tenn., \$1; Mrs. J. W. Grimes, Ala., \$1; J. F. Lax, Ill., \$3; Mrs. L. M. Pulliam, N. C., \$1; Eld. P. Jones, Wash., \$5; Mrs. V. Machesney, Cal., \$3.

EDITORIAL

RUTHERFORD, N. J.

FEBRUARY, 1948

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES

P.O. Box No. 70

Rutherford, N. J.

... P R A Y E R ...

No subject of the Bible holds more interest than this. Perhaps we do not understand much about it. I am sure that I do not, and I realize how presumptuous it is for me to think I could teach any one how to pray. This world professes to teach that and some theologian has gone to the trouble to write a book called "God's Minute." In the book he has a short prayer for each day in the year. Not being able to pray *once* I certainly do not feel able to give you that many in advance. While I do not know that I have ever prayed, and if I have that I will ever be blessed to do so again, it does not mean that it is not a gospel subject. If it is, it certainly is profitable, under spiritual guidance, for our discussion and examination.

By way of encouragement to the dear saints I want to say to you that none of our leaders have a monopoly on prayer. Although prayer is a gift it is not one we *can* use any time men call on us to pray. If I am mistaken about it do not follow me, but I believe that any minister feels a great hesitancy in offering prayer at times.

Prayer is, after all, a close-up with God, a veritable talking face to face. When we are really and truly given to see our sins, it is enough to cause a trembling in body and spirit to ask God for anything, seeing that it is the prayer of a righteous man that avails anything. In this connection let me say that I have impressions to pray just like I trust I do to preach. At these times it is the sweetest yielding and compliance to his blessed command as it is in standing in the pulpit and preaching the doctrine of grace. Trying to pray is like trying to preach—it is mighty hard work—in fact it cannot be done. While *trying* to pray, we invariably are in the flesh and our object is selfish, begging for the things that we want. But that is not all, trying to accomplish a thing not only shows a lack of *how* but of *what* and *why*. I believe we pray as we preach and live and die, depending on the eternal fixed purposes of God. It is in faith that we come to him at all. This faith, at all times, is the substance of the things hoped for. This has never been changed and, although it moved Abel, Daniel, Jacob, Paul and all those gone before and will move every communicant that is yet to come, it is as unchangeable as God. In every step of our obedience to his commandments, it is faith that goes before, revealing the eternal perfection and sovereign purpose of God in disposing of all created things. Faith does not go before, bringing to light the unfinished things of God, as though he was a little undecided as to his rule of conduct, but it is the substance of our hope.

Now come hither little child and let us look at our hope. We do not hope that we will exercise faith to the end, but we hope that God eternally arranged for our salvation in Jesus Christ.

Our prayer is not an effort to change God, but it is because he is unchangeable. The world (that is, the ungodly world) may swerve and tauntingly tell us that if they believed everything was fixed they would not pray, we know better things than that. We know our eternal destiny is fixed and that all of our spiritual blessings are as settled and stable in the mind and purpose of God as is his choice. Furthermore, we are assured that he has given us all things pertaining to life and godliness. It is according to this knowledge that every prayer is uttered. If we must *try* to pray then we must guess as to what to pray for. Guessing, we are told is all right when it hits, but unless we ask according to his will, our will would, if permitted to pray, ask for things that would forever remove us and land us away from every providential and parental blessing. If we must try to pray (that is, if we must pray more, or oftener, or more fervently) then we must guess as to what to pray for and, on that conditional basis, we would have a right to ask *why* if it was not answered.

A prayer is not something excited in you by the wisdom of this world. Just think of the prayers (that is, words called prayers) addressed to God (as they suppose) for favor in converting the heathen. That is a conditional, selfish, carnal utterance. If it was asked according to the will of God he would certainly grant it, because God answers that kind. We sometimes are motivated in like manner in the dear old church. We get over zealous and ask God promiscuously to bring the regenerated into the church. He does not answer this kind of prayer because it is not prayer.

This is a wonderful subject, it is a blessing from God. We cannot pray unless blessed in spirit, yet the apostles

commanded us to pray. We are told that we ought to pray. Now we realize that it is a gift from God. Would God give us a gift to ask that any will be done except his own? Is not all prayer a complacent acknowledgement of his will being done in heaven and in earth? Having been taught his sovereignty, and being kept by his power do we not have a desire to see and *feel* the doing of that will?
W. D. G.

ISAIAH 45 : 7

"I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the Lord do all these things."

A sister in Texas has asked that we present our views on this verse. The longer we live and the more we search the Scriptures, the more firmly we become convinced of the fact that the context of whatever is under consideration should be taken into account in order for the proper exegesis to be given. Whatever else may be said concerning our text, a careful reading of the chapter in which it is found should convince any one that practically every single verse savors of the sovereignty of Israel's God. It seems to us that every child of grace needs to be reminded, from time to time, of the absolute sovereignty of our God. The blessed assurance which it gives often affords comfort and consolation while making this earthly pilgrimage. "Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth." Rev. 19:6.

In the beginning of this forty-fifty chapter of Isaiah is recorded the prophecy of one of the outstanding events of biblical history. God was foretelling of the time when Israel would be in Babylonish bondage; how he would raise up and anoint a Persian king to liberate and deliver them. This was referred to in more detail in the next

chapter where the prophet said God 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: Calling a ravenous bird from the east, the man that executeth my counsel from a far country: yea, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it." God was to endow Cyrus with sufficient power to subdue all nations. He said he would loose the loins of kings, to open before him the two leaved gates; and the gates shall not be shut, which indicated that those who were held as captives behind their walled cities would be set free. God further said, "I will go before thee, and make the crooked places straight: I will break in pieces the gates of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron: And I will give thee the treasures of darkness, and hidden riches of secret places, that thou mayest know that I, the Lord, which call thee by thy name, am the God of Israel." This showed that God would enable him to recover those things which they had taken from Israel and hidden away, and this was all to be done for Jacob, his servant's sake, and for Israel his elect, even though Cyrus had not known the Lord. God was thus to show that he doeth his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand. In order that Cyrus might know that there was none like him, God declared, "I am the Lord, and there is none else, there is no God beside me: I girded thee, though thou hast not known me." The end to which God had purposed this was "that they may know from the rising of the sun, and from the west, that there is none beside me. I am the Lord, and there is none else." Now we come to our text wherein God says, "I form the

light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the Lord do all these things." We can but feel that some of our brethren, perhaps for fear of impugning His honor, come short of declaring the whole counsel of God in their efforts to explain this text, and we know that we, too, shall come far short of what we would like. We would much prefer that our brethren err, if err they do, in this respect, however, rather than have them reflect in any way whatsoever upon God's holiness. We sincerely hope that no one is more zealous of scrupulously maintaining His highest honor than ourself, for we abhor and reject any and all expressions that would bring God in disrepute by accusing him of being the author of sin, or that would in any way call into question what he does. We trust we have received the same message that John received, "that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all." But we hope we are equally zealous of God's sovereignty, and we do not wish to detract one iota from it. In the second verse following our text, we read, "Woe unto him that striveth with his Maker! Let the potsherd strive with the potsherds of the earth. Shall the clay say to him that fashioneth it, What makest thou?" Man may strive with his fellow man, but he should not be found to be striving with God. God said to the Psalmist, "Be still, and know that I am God." It is written, "In the beginning God created, the heaven and the earth," and we understand that all that in them is was made by God, and that without him was not anything made that was made. Paul wrote, "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: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist." Col. 1:16-17. Quoting from the same apostle's epistle to the Romans we read, "Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor? What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much long suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he afore prepared unto glory." Jesus said "in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and of silver, but also of wood and of earth; and some to honor, and some to dishonor." Solomon said, "The Lord hath made all things for himself; yea, even the wicked for the day of evil." And in Isaiah 54:16 we find these words: "Behold, I have created the smith that bloweth the coals in the fire, and that bringeth forth an instrument for his work: and I have created the waster to destroy." Job said, "By his spirit he hath garnished the heavens; his hand hath formed the crooked serpent," and in Genesis 3:1 we read, "Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made." God also commanded Moses to say unto Pharaoh, "For now I will stretch out my hand, that I may smite thee and thy people with pestilence; and thou shalt be cut off from the earth. And in very deed for this cause have I raised thee up, for to shew in thee my power; and that my name be declared throughout all the earth." Ex. 9:15-16. All that God has ever done, or will ever do, was and will be for the glorifying of himself and the lifting of the name of Jesus, his Son, on high. Egypt and Ethiopia were truly typical of darkness, but God said to

Jacob, "I gave Egypt for thy ransom, Ethiopia and Seba for thee." In view of the wonderful manifestations of God's great love and power in delivering Israel at the Red Sea, and destroying Pharaoh and all his host (representative of the powers of darkness) will any dare presume to question the right of God to do whatsoever he will with his own? David said, "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. In creation, as well as in the experience of God's people, we believe darkness is just as important, in the purpose of God, as light. Day and night in this agree; they are both alike great God to thee. It is in the nighttime that vegetation does most of its growing, and it is in the time of darkness of the soul, while passing through the deep waters, that God's children are made to cry unto him to undertake for them, to make straight the way before them, and lead them in a plain path. We like the expression of the Psalmist where he says, "There is no speech nor language, where their voice is not heard." This is all-embracing and plainly says that nothing can be left out or is in vain. In all of his various and numerous experiences (with whom none can compare) he was enabled to see the sovereign hand of his God preserving him, unworthy though he was of the least of God's mercies. Even in his great sin, which he by no means attributed to God, but confessed openly that it was he himself who had sinned and made his bed in hell, he discovered that he could not get away from God, for he said, "If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; Even

there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me." When the awfulness of the night had passed, and by the grace of God the glorious light of day had shown round about him, he could then see how the inscrutable wisdom of God had designed to overrule his own wickedness for his glory by raising up Solomon through this union of himself and Uriah's wife, who was to be a link in the golden chain of lineage through which his only begotten Son would enter into this sin cursed world and open a fountain for sin and for uncleanness, by the sacrifice of himself. We cannot see God's mysterious purpose in advance, for he declared that no man should see his face and live, but when he has passed by and we can behold his backparts, then we can say with John, "Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints." Adam as he was originally made, while upright and without sin, was only a natural man, and as such was not fit for the kingdom of heaven, but it was in the purpose of God that he should transgress his law by partaking of the forbidden fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, otherwise there would have been no propagation of the human race upon the earth, and neither would there have been any occasion for God's manifesting the great love for his people which was embodied in his blessed Son, our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, all of which had been determined upon and provided for in that covenant ordered in all things and sure. The poet said, "The fall wrought the channel where mercy should run, And it was all for the lifting of Jesus on high."

The next thing said by God in our text is, "I make peace, and create evil." We know all too well that without the

privations, hardships and sufferings occasioned by war, we could not in truth long for and properly evaluate peace. The word declares that there is a time for everything under the sun. There is, therefore, a time for war and a time for peace, and only those who know the terrors of sin and its awful consequences will yearn after that peace which passeth all understanding. There must first be warfare in the soul, the flesh lusting against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh, so that we cannot do the thing we would, before there can be a longing for real peace. How amazing that one conceived in sin and shapen in iniquity should have revealed to him among the names by which our Lord should be called, "The Prince of Peace." He came into the world to suffer and die in the stead of his people that he might thereby make peace between them and their heavenly Father. Jesus said, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." It is by and through him, and him alone, that we have everlasting peace with God, otherwise there could be no peace between God and man.

In addition to the words "I make peace" in our text, we also have the words, "and create evil." God being above all law, he cannot be arraigned before any court or tried by any jury, either of angels or of men. He dwelleth in the heights to which none can attain, and his ways and his thoughts are declared to be as high as the heavens are above the earth above our ways and our thoughts, and Moses once asked, Shall not the Judge of the whole earth do right? Let us discover if we can what is written concerning these

deep things. In Amos 3:6 we read, "Shall a trumpet be blown in the city, and the people be not afraid? shall there be evil in a city, and the Lord hath not done it?" The prophet Jeremiah in his Lamentations asked, "Who is he that saith, and it cometh to pass, when the Lord commandeth it not?" In the Acts of the Apostles is found written, "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." In Romans 8:32 "He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things." Again, Acts 4:26-28 we read, "The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against his Christ. 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 thy counsel determined before to be done." God's blessed Son, of necessity, had to be offered as a sacrifice for sin, in order that sin might be remitted, or put away, otherwise there could have been no salvation for God's elect people, and while it was by wicked hands he was crucified and slain, we are told that the eyes of them that did it were holden and that they could not have crucified him had they known he was the Lord of glory. Jesus said concerning Judas Iscariot, "Have not I chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?" There was work for a devil to do, and there had to be a devil to do it. God is holy, and is of too pure eyes to even look upon sin, and James declares that he cannot be tempted with evil, neither tempteth he any man. In the year that king Uzziah died the seraphims cried, saying, one to another, "Holy, holy, holy, is

the Lord of hosts: the whole earth is full of his glory." We simply have to confess with the poet that

"Deep in unfathomable mines,
Of never-failing skill,
He treasures up his bright designs,
And works his sovereign will."

We are aware of the fact that many of our good brethren feel that by *evil* in our text is meant adversity, trials, afflictions and the like, and we will readily agree that these things are embraced in it. When Job rebuked his wife for speaking as one of the foolish women, he then asked, "What? shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?" We are persuaded that he had reference to God's dealings with him in depriving him of all his earthly possessions and in his being afflicted from the crown of his head to the soles of his feet, at the same time being held in derision by those who had previously been pleased to do him great honor, but in the following words he acknowledged God's absolute supremacy and right to do whatsoever he desired: "Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." Some have appeared to think that the Devil works independently of the Lord, and it is with this sentiment that we cannot agree. We like Job's summation of the matter, for he recognized no power but that of God, and we also like the poet where he says, "Not a single shaft can hit, 'Till the God of love sees fit." We hope that it is because of our unshakable belief in God's absolute sovereignty that we can at times adopt the saying of Paul 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."

In the seventeenth verse of the chapter in which the text is found, we find these words: "But Israel shall be saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation: ye shall not be ashamed nor confounded world without end." And we wish also to quote the twenty-second and twenty-third verses, as follows: "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else. 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."

"I the Lord do all these things." We have endeavored to hint at some of the wonderful things which the Lord hath done, but hint is the most that we can do, and we hope that a hint to the wise will be sufficient. When Paul comprehended something of the unbounded mystery of God in cutting off the Jews and grafting in the Gentiles, he burst forth by saying, "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!" Can any more be said? R. L. D.

ORDINATION

Pursuant to request of Providence Church to her sister churches of Sulphur Fork Association to ordain brother S. O. TATUM to the work of the gospel ministry when assembled with Good Hope Church, October 4, 1947 did proceed as follows:

1. Providence Church requested that all ordained brethren of same faith and order form a Presbytery which was formed by electing Elder S. C. Davenport, Moderator and Elder E. J. Lambert, Clerk.
2. Deacon C. E. White was appointed spokesman for Providence Church who presented brother Tatum to the Presbytery.
3. Elder W. O. Beene questioned spokesman for church concerning qualification of brother Tatum as Elder.
4. Presbytery being satisfied of qualifications in brother Tatum did proceed to ordain by prayer by Elder R. W. Rhodes and laying on of hands by Presbytery.

5. Elder J. T. Everett delivered charge to Elder Tatum.

6. Right hand of official fellowship was given Elder Tatum by members of Presbytery.

7. Elder Tatum was presented back to Providence Church by Moderator and was received as an ordained Elder.

Other members of the Presbytery: Elders W. O. Beene, E. B. Ault, J. B. Reid, R. W. Rhodes, J. T. Everett, T. A. Wall, B. B. Walston, and Deacons L. S. Hill, W. J. Bartlett, T. P. Wilson, J. B. Burkhalter, R. H. Cobb, B. T. Green, D. C. Shelton and Jake White.

(Elder) S. C. DAVENPORT, Moderator
(Elder) E. J. LAMBERT, Clerk

RESOLUTION

Whereas, it has pleased our heavenly Father to remove from our midst by death our dearly beloved brother and Pastor, ELDER GEORGE F. DYER, who has served us faithfully and well for many years past, may we, the church, bow in humble submission and say, Thy will, O God, be done.

Resolved, that a copy of these resolutions be spread on our church books, a copy be sent to the bereaved wife, one to the OLD FAITH CONTENDER and one to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES.

Done by order of the church in conference, Oct. 18, 1947.

(Elder) J. P. HELMS, Moderator
SYLVANUS CARTER, Clerk

RESOLUTION

Acting by appointment of the Lexington-Roxbury Association, a committee with Elder C. W. Vaughn as chairman prepared the following resolution:

Whereas, it has pleased Almighty God to call from our midst our beloved Elder, D. L. TOPPING of the Baltimore Association, at Linthicum Heights, Md., causing our hearts to feel a great loss, but feeling that the eternal God hath done right, we bow in humble submission to His will, and be it

Resolved, that we order this resolution printed in our minutes of the Lexington-Roxbury Association, a copy sent to the SIGNS OF THE TIMES, the OLD FAITH CONTENDER and to his widow, our dear sister Bessie Topping. We pray God to comfort all who mourn our loss. Signed by the committee.

Elders

C. W. VAUGHN	ARNOLD H. BELLOWS
GEO. L. WEAVER	H. M. BENNETT
AMASA J. SLAUSON	R. LESTER DODSON
D. V. SPANGLER	JOHN D. WOOD
E. C. JONES	

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

Whereas, the Lord in his infinite wisdom and mercy has seen fit to remove from our midst our dear brother and deacon, VICTOR H. LAWS, on Aug. 28, 1946,

Resolved, that we bow our heads in submission to His divine will, asking that we be reconciled and to be given grace and faith to ever look unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith.

Resolved, that the Salisbury Church has lost a faithful member, but we feel our loss is his gain.

Resolved, that a copy of these resolutions be recorded in the church book, one to the family and one to the Signs of the Times.

Done by order of the church at Salisbury, Md., June 28, 1947.

(Elder) D. V. SPANGLER, Pastor
MAUDE T. LAWS, Church Clerk

OBITUARIES

It has become my duty to undertake to write a short sketch relative to the passing of our dear brother in the Lord, J. A. DUNSON, also a Deacon for many years. He was born into this world in Mississippi, Aug. 15, 1860, given back to mother earth from which he was taken April 22, 1947, making his natural life on earth 86 years, 8 months and 6 days.

He was married to Mary Jane White who preceded him in death 16 years. To this union were born twelve children, nine of whom survive him. After losing his first wife by death, he married Mrs. M. E. Peden who preceded him in death four or five years.

I was brother Dunson's pastor nearly thirty years. He was always found at his post endeavoring to do what he thought the Lord had required of him. He was one of the old tried and true; his counsel was true and worthy; a man who took time for consideration before speaking; always giving God the glory. I believe I can truly say of him what Paul said of himself, for he, like Paul, was ready, prepared to be offered for the time of his departure was at hand. He had fought a good fight, he had finished his course, he had kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for him a crown of righteousness which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give him at that day, and not to him only but all them also that love his appearing. Oh, if I could feel that worthy, that I could make that statement when I am called to depart; it would be enough but oh, I am so vile so full of sin, I fear that I am not born again.

When young, brother Dunson lost one of his arms in a gin. He reared this large family although being deprived of the help of that arm,

but I am glad to say those children revered their father. Those that are left to follow on stand as a living monument to his honor. At his meeting time only sickness kept him away. I suppose, next to his family, we miss him most for he was so situated that he always came on Friday and stayed until Monday. Our home was his home and oh how we miss his visits. Brother Dunson leaves behind him a record that honors his God, and will be long remembered by all that knew him. May God be thanked for this character. Written by his pastor.

(Elder) W. N. GREEN

God in his infinite wisdom saw fit to call from this pilgrimage journey our dear sister in Christ, FLOSSIE J. FAULKNER, of Allaben, N. Y. on June 14, 1947. She passed peacefully away, with a lingering heart trouble, while eating her breakfast in bed.

Sister Flossie, as she was known among her brethren, was the daughter of Addison W. and Ella T. Traphagen of Hunter, N. Y., and was born at Hunter, N. Y., December 1, 1891. She was united in marriage to Leon E. Faulkner, April 8, 1912. She leaves to mourn her loss besides her husband, two brothers, Herbert and Paul Traphagen, Hunter, N. Y. She united with the Olive and Hurley Old School Baptist Church, Nov. 1, 1925 at Shokan, N. Y. and was baptized by Elder George Ruston.

Sister Flossie composed a book of poems entitled "Showers of Rain," which also included her experience of grace. This book is now on sale through The Old Faith Contender and Signs of the Times. Each poem is taken from a scripture, and some of them were written when she was sick in bed, telling much of the travel and security of God's people in Christ, and also much of her travel. She was greatly gifted in understanding of the word of God, and also in expressing views on the scriptures. Her passing is a deeply felt loss to her brethren, but we feel that our loss is her eternal gain. To depart and be with Christ is far better.

The writer saw her a few days before she passed away when she said she did not want to be raised up again, but wanted rest. I have heard her say many times she thought death was a most glorious thing. She loved her church and was always at meeting when able to get there. Her theme was Jesus and his love, and she was ever ready to praise God and abase man. The word of God was the man of her counsel.

Her remains were laid to rest in the cemetery at Hunter, N. Y. to await the resurrection morn. The unworthy writer tried to speak to the comfort of the mourning friends as the Lord gave him utterance from Romans 10-4.

(Elder) AMASA J. SLAUSON

A life of marked usefulness and of devotion to husband, family, church and friends came to a close with the death of sister ACHSA BELLE DILL, wife of Charles Dill of Gardiner, Maine, who passed from this life September 22, 1947, after a long illness at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Harold H. Harriman in Farmingdale near Gardiner, Maine. The deceased was the daughter of Benjamin and Thelia Peacock, and was born June 8, 1869 at Richmond, Maine. She was, therefore, past 78 years of age.

She is survived by her husband, Charles E. Dill, Gardiner, Me., three sons, Charles H. Dill, Gardiner, Me.; J. Prescott Dill, Prentis, Me.; Earl Dill, Litchfield, Me.; six daughters, Mrs. Ralph E. Day, Machias, Me.; Mrs. Paul P. Emerson, Gardiner, Me.; Miss Anna Dill, Bound Brook, N. J.; Mrs. Walter Miller, Richmond Me.; Mrs. Warren Cates, Machias, Me.; and Mrs. Harold H. Harriman, Farmingdale, Me.

Sister Dill possessed an appealing personality which radiated cheer and thoughtfulness of others. Her exemplary life is a fitting monument to her memory. She united with the South Gardiner Old School Baptist Church in 1901, and during nearly half a century as a baptized believer her interest in the church reflected her zeal in the expression of her convictions and in ministering to her brethren and friends. She was a noble mother, a faithful wife and a sympathizing friend. She will be greatly missed by her brethren, her family and the community where she spent her long and useful life.

The funeral services were held Wednesday afternoon, September 24, at the Amesbury-White Funeral Home in Gardiner and the writer endeavored to speak words of comfort to the bereaved.

(Elder) ARNOLD H. BELLOWS

THEODORE ADOLPHUS LAX was born October 8, 1870 and died March 29, 1947, age 76 years and 5 months. He was the son of John and Elizabeth Wade Lax and spent his entire life on the farm where he was born in Henry Co., Tenn. He was married to Tennie Ella Wilson Dec. 25, 1898 and to this union were born ten children. His wife preceded him in death in 1932. One son, Allen, also passed away in 1937. Brother Lax is survived by nine children and twenty-three grand children. Sons: John and Wade, Chicago, Ill., Stonewall and Travis, Buchanan, Tenn. Daughters: Mrs. Maggie Adams, Puryear, Tenn., Mrs. Lora Smith, Chicago, Ill., Mrs. Bedie Losel, Memphis, Tenn., Mrs. Earline Dill, Buchanan, Tenn., and Mrs. Leodie Rowlett, Paris, Tenn.

Brother Lax joined the Primitive Baptist Church at Hephzibah Church between the years of 1885 and 1890, and his name appears in the minutes of the union meeting as delegate in 1891, and every year from that time until he was too feeble to attend. He was chosen as a delegate to attend the Association and traveled extensively among the Baptists in Tenn., Ky., Ala., Ill., Ark., Miss., and Ind., and was ever faithful to his obligations. In May 1907 he was elected clerk of his church and served until his death. Brother Lax was firm in his views and strongly contended for the doctrine of salvation by grace and the absolute predestination of all things. He was a good father to his children and was ever willing to support any improvement of his community and worked faithfully for better schools and roads in his district.

The writer was called to attend his funeral and tried to comfort those that mourned by telling what brother Lax believed, why he believed and the certainty of the covenant of grace. The attendance at the funeral attested the standing of brother Lax among his neighbors. May the Lord bless all that mourn and bring us together in that place where there is no death.

(Elder) R. L. BIGGS

SPECIAL NOTICE

Beginning with the month of January, 1948 there will be held, the Lord willing, on the first Sunday of each month at 2:30 p. m. a meeting of Old School or Predestinarian Baptists for worship, third floor of Pythian Temple building, 1012 Ninth St., N. W., Washington, D. C. Elder John D Wood, Minister. Those desiring to meet with us are welcome. For further information, call or write to

FRANK T. SIMPKINS,
5210 - H St.,
Dillon Park,
Washington, D. C.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

Due to certain Post Office requirements in mailing the SIGNS, we find it necessary to discontinue the practice of enclosing subscription blanks just before subscription is due.

We sincerely hope our readers will closely watch the date on their wrappers and send in their renewals promptly.

R. Lester Dobson.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON'

VOL. 116

RUTHERFORD, N. J., MARCH, 1948

No. 3

THE PATH

The path through the dark valley
We tread both night and day;
No one to hear our groans and cries,
All help seems far away.

We travel on in darkness,
No ray of light in sight;
When sin and Satan bind us
We pray to God for light.

We feel we are forever lost,
And hell must be our doom;
We pray to him for some relief,
That true and Holy One.

We feel to be a castaway,
It seems that God don't hear;
We want to walk that narrow way,
But the Holy One we fear.

We feel there is no hope for us,
O God! thy will be done;
The road that we must travel
Is that broad and lengthy one.

When we're cast down in darkness,
With sin and sorrow fear,
We want to pray in secret
When none but God is near.

When we feel we're sinking down
Not knowing help is near
We hear that still, small voice
I am with thee, do not fear.

If we can reach that heavenly home,
With God forever reign
Before we see that Holy One
We must be born again.

When the day dawns bright and clear
No darkness glooms the sky;
God whispers deep down in our heart
"Be not afraid 'Tis I."

When God reveals himself to us
Amazing grace we sing;
Then we feel we surely have
Indeed been born again.

A child of God is never lost
Only in carnal mind,
They surely will be blessed of Him
At His appointed time.

The power of love and mercy,
No sadness, sorrow, tears;
When God withdraws the comfort,
We are left in doubts and fears.

If we can reach that happy place
And be forever blessed,
Then we can see that Holy One,
With Him forever rest.

(Mrs.) MAUDE A. MORAN

1516 Patterson Ave., S. W.,
Roanoke, Va.

CORRESPONDENCE

"And of His fullness, have all we received,
and grace for grace." John 1:16.

The writing of this article on the above scripture is connected with a rather peculiar circumstance. A few days ago I received a postal card post-marked Woodward, Iowa, which, besides my address and the name of the sender, contained only the above quotation from John's gospel. The writer signed his name W. J. Kimbro. It seemed evident to me that the writer had either known me personally or that he had heard of me, but he made no request that I express my views on the scripture quoted, nor gave any explanation whatever of his sending the card with just that quotation. At once I began searching my memory whether I had ever known brother Kimbro, and I remembered having met with an Old Baptist named Kimbro in my early ministry who, as I recall, was a member of one of the churches of the Bethel

Association here in southern Illinois. Although I was somewhat puzzled over the matter on reading the card, my mind seemed instinctly stirred up to write my views on the scripture quoted on the card, and now I am attempting to follow the lead of my mind feeling surely the hand of the Lord is in the matter. Trusting God from whom all my help cometh, I shall express what thoughts I may have as to the teaching of the text for the readers of the *Signs of the Times* to judge whether my understanding and interpretation of the words of John are in keeping with the inspired word of God and Christian experience.

According to the context John is speaking of Jesus, and he presents him to us as being a vessel or container that is filled with something which I shall mention in due time, and represents God's chosen and redeemed people as receiving of the fulness in Jesus, and that what they receive is grace and that they receive because of grace. The things with which Jesus is filled; and of which we receive, are mentioned in the New Testament scriptures by different writers. In the first chapter of John it is written, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same (Word) was in the beginning with God." The word "beginning" designates a particular time. John could not have meant the beginning of eternity for eternity had no beginning. Then he must have meant what we call time or measured duration for time did have a beginning. So in the beginning of time was the Word (LOGOS), and the Word (LOGOS) was God. And the Word (LOGOS) was made flesh and dwelt among us, and we beheld his glory as the glory of the only begotten Son of God, FULL OF GRACE AND TRUTH. Grace and truth are some of the things that go

to make up the fulness of Christ. God's children receive of the grace and truth that is in Jesus, and because of God's favor or grace, and there is no other fountain source of grace and truth besides Jesus, the great Vessel containing all the fulness of God, his Father. He is the fountain from which living water flows, yea, even the river, "the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God."

Israel, as it is written, forsook the fountain of living waters, and hewed them out cisterns: broken cisterns that could hold no water. Blindness in part happened unto national Israel, you know; none but those who are blinded would undertake to substitute a broken cistern of their own making for Christ, the living fountain, in whom all fulness dwells. Spiritual Israel, in their blindness, have been found doing as did national Israel, and we can trace their history by the broken cisterns they have made and had to discard some of them along the way. Yes, grace and truth, Jesus, was full of these, and it pleased the Father that in his Son, Jesus, all fulness should dwell; that is, the fulness or sufficiency of all spiritual blessings. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us (his children) with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as he hath chosen us in him (Christ) before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." So, the fulness of electing grace is in Jesus, and in him dwells all the fulness of the godhead bodily. God was manifest in the fleshly man, Christ Jesus, and was in him all of his divine fulness from his conception in his mother's womb. It was God, as the Logos, or Word of his (God's) power, that was in and with the man, Christ Jesus, enabling him to perform his

mighty works and the many miracles Jesus performed. Jesus acknowledged this as true when he said, I can of myself do nothing, and, my Father, he doeth the works. "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" Rom. 11:33.

The finite mind of man can no more sound the depth of the riches of the fulness of Christ than it can the fulness of God; for the fulness of Jesus is the fulness of God. God is manifest in the flesh of Jesus, in the fulness of all that God is; in all of his divine attributes, God, the Father, was in his Son in the fulness of divine power; in the fulness of divine love, mercy and truth, as well as divine wisdom and knowledge. No wonder the prophet of God said of Jesus, "He shall not fail." Isa. 42:4. How could the Son of God fail, "in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge." Col. 2:3. And dwelling in him was the fulness of the godhead bodily. Jesus was not an empty vessel; he was filled full of everything that pertains unto life and godliness, and that fulness is given to us poor, undeserving sinners by reason of divine power, and, the same as eternal life, it is given us in Christ Jesus our Lord, "and of his fulness, have all we received, and grace for grace." I have to believe that every one in whose behalf Jesus was filled with all the fulness of God, will surely receive every grace and every blessing that is in Jesus for them. What wonderful love and grace bestowed upon poor, sinful man, that we are on the receiving end of this wonderful ministration of God's grace in all its fulness that is in Jesus! And do you not remember, dear child of God, the time when you first experimentally received of the fulness of Christ? When he whispered sweet peace

to you; when you had given up all hope and expectation of being delivered from the thralldom under the curse and condemnation of God's broken law; and as you verily believed were trying to pray your last prayer calling upon God for mercy? O, wonderful, wonderful peace; sweet peace the gift of God's love! That sweet peace was in Jesus for you, and you received it as the gracious gift of God's love and all sufficient grace. One wonderful thing about the fulness that is in Jesus is, that all his children, daily and hourly, receive and partake of his fulness, and yet he remains filled full and he is the fountain that can never be exhausted or his fulness diminished. This fact gives us the blessed assurance that he will supply all our needs out of his unwasted fulness. O how blessedly sweet and comforting to a poor wayfaring pilgrim, as he journeys on his weary way and encounters the fearful storms of life, to find in the fulness of Christ a refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Then can we sing with the spirit and with the understanding also;

"Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in thee!
Let the water and the blood,
From thy wounded side which flow'd,
Be of sin the double cure,
Cleanse me from its guilt and pow'r."

I shall never forget the time and place I first, experimentally, received of the fulness of my blessed Lord, and felt my sins forgiven. Just a little ragged boy, twelve years of age and fatherless; my father having died one year before. I have never been able to fully express with words, the joy and peace that came to me out of the God-prepared vessel of mercy. Day after day have I gone back to that happy, hallowed spot, in mind, to get a few crumbs to help me on my way. Now as I wait in

the late evening of my fast receding earthly day at the age of eighty-one (almost), I feel the need of what a poor sinner receives of the fulness of Christ even more than in younger days. As our mortal powers begin to fail; so many of our kindred both in the flesh and in Christ are taken from us by death and we feel so lonely. O what would life mean to me were it not that I know that my Redeemer liveth, and with his fulness at the right hand of the Father, he is my Advocate with God and intercedes for me according to his Father's will. We may be called upon to drink from the bitter chalice of human experience, and wring out its dregs of sorrow and grief; but when the hand of divine power and mercy brings to our lips, experimentally, the God chosen and ordained vessel, full of everything we need to make life sweet, and the Spirit takes of the things that are in Jesus and sheweth them unto us, and we hear him saying, take of the water of life freely; receive of the fulness of Jesus and grace for grace. Yes, then hope revives thank God. My resurrection life is part of the fulness that is in Christ for his bride. Some sweet day I hope I shall receive that life and live again when I am, by the power of God, ransomed from the power of the grave, and redeemed from death as God has promised. Then all the fulness of Christ will fill the kingdom of God, prepared for his chosen people from the foundation of the world, and "when we've been there ten thousand years, bright shining as the sun; we've no less days to sing God's praise, than when we first begun." Throughout eternity the redeemed of the Lord will continue to receive of his undiminished fulness to the glory of God, the Father and our Savior Jesus Christ. A poor sinner.

(Elder) C. M. WEAVER

(Continued from Feb. issue.)

I once moved into a strange community with my family. Soon found out that they had no Sunday school in the community. I set out at once to organize one. My neighbor said, "there was no use trying for they had tried different times but failed to accomplish anything." So I said, "we will make another effort. I will not live in a community where there is no Sunday school for my children to attend." He said, "all right I am for you." So I went to work, called the neighbors together, gave them a little talk and we organized a Sunday school. They made me superintendent, and that was just what I was fishing for so it moved along nicely under my management. During the reign of this Sunday school my brother that was in my first experience, who was an Old Baptist in belief, sold his farm in Texas and wrote me he was moving to Arkansas and would visit me on his way. I was delighted to have him come and spend a few weeks with me. I thought a great deal of him. I lived with him a number of years before I was married. I knew he was a better man than I was if he was an Old Baptist so I was bothered about how to manage my Sunday school while he was visiting me. I knew he would not attend nor did I want him to. He came and we enjoyed visiting together. Nothing much was said on religious subjects. I took my children and attended my Sunday school and he stayed at home. I was very careful when my neighbors would come to stay off of religious subjects. I did not want them to know that my brother believed in the Old Baptist doctrine. I was not ashamed of him but I was ashamed of his doctrine. He spent all the fall with me. We would sometimes have a little religious spat, but I thought I would wind him up in short order, take

the glory to myself and go on. My brother did not go to Arkansas as he had planned but we both located for another year in the same community. During the time we were neighbors my dear wife passed away. Oh! great and marvelous are the ways of Him who set the ways of the events of time before time was born. Strange to say in a short time after my wife died a Predestinarian Baptist preacher came to visit my brother, and through respect to my brother and my mother's religion I went up to meet him. I heard him preaching the damnable doctrine, as I thought, to the folks before I got to the house and he did not seem to get the least excited when I got there. That man later became my father-in-law, but at that time I hated him and his doctrine with all the power that was ordained to Satan to administer to me. I told my brother if he was not so old I would whip him.

One day he and I took a stroll together to investigate some Sunday school literature, and from some cause I told him my experience when I hope the Lord appeared unto me. He looked at me and said, "Brother Green, (the first time he had ever addressed me as brother) I do not see how a man with the experience you have can hold to the rotten doctrine you do." In a few months he visited my brother again and I arranged an appointment for him at our school house for Sunday. I had not been to an Old Baptist meeting for more than twenty years. When I started to church I went to my brother's house. I asked the preacher when he opened the service if he would sing "Children of the heavenly king." He said, "I cannot sing, you can sing if you want to" so I did the best I could. I loved that old song and had since I was a child. The song was all there was to the service as far as I was

concerned. This song is a great factor in my experience. On Monday following the meeting I went to the field to work. I was plowing cotton. About nine o'clock, I guess it was, I noticed myself humming this song. It seems that it passed from my mind. I plowed on for about an hour. I noticed again I was still humming that song. The same thing occurred again, then about eleven o'clock I was aroused and began to inquire, what is the matter I cannot forget this song? It kept pressing my mind until I became alarmed, and with great fear and trembling I said, "Lord, what is the matter?" Something said, go tell your experience. I said, where will I go? I stopped my team and as fast as thought could rehearse, my life pertaining to my church activities was all before me. It does not seem that I stopped to reason or consider what had taken place, but at once I began to loose my team from the plow and on my way to the house I said, "if that Old Baptist preacher is still at brother's I am going to have him baptize me." But he was gone. Oh, let me say here is where my troubles began. Surely the great apostle knew something when he said, "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." Yes, I was made willing to lay down all my works, in fact I was loosed from any connection whatever with any and all denominations. It seems I was freed from everything, just waiting for God to direct. While in this condition the words that came to me in the field, "go tell your experience" came again, this time with the interpretation, "go preach." I ignored it. I said, "no, it cannot mean that." I plead old age, ignorance, poverty and everything I could muster up, but the harder I would plead the tighter the impression would stick. I began to pray and try to reason with God, asking him to let this

impression pass a way or give me a bright evidence. Right there in the belly of hell for weeks and months I stuck (and I may not be out yet) seeking places to hide that I might fall on my knees in secret before God to plead with him for relief some way. Often-times sending my precious children from home that I might be alone. Many times have I resorted to a cornfield between my house and brothers, there falling upon my face, vowing to God I would never get up until some kind of relief came. Did it come? No, I was forced to get up in shame and acknowledge myself defeated.

During this time of unknown suffering this Old Baptist preacher came back to visit my brother again. I did not know there was a soul on earth that knew anything of my suffering or the nature of it. I had learned that day that this preacher had come. I had put over a miserable day. My suffering was greater than I could bear. Late in the evening after my children had retired I thought I was going to die or lose my mind. Did not think I would ever see another sunrise. I had presence of mind enough that I went to the telephone and called my brother and asked him if he and the preacher would come down? He said, yes, and it seemed to give me a little relief. I took my seat in front of the door, and when they arrived after passing a few words the Old Baptist preacher said, "Brother Green, you had just as well give up, you will have to preach." Oh, how those words pierced my poor heart. My mouth was closed, I could not speak a word, but in the moonlight I could see the tears flowing down my brother's cheeks, and while the preacher talked to me these words came to me, "Get thee behind me, Satan," if it is God's will for me to preach I will do the best I can, and the load was lifted from my heart

and soul, and immediately I said, "I am all right now, you can all go back home," so they did. I laid down, I do not know whether I was in a doze of sleep or not, but I saw before me a dormant man God had made and the sight was so beautiful that these words came, "I know that my Redeemer liveth." It was so glorious it seemed there was something in me that must come out. My mouth was closed, my face and jaws apparently began to swell. I arose out of bed hurriedly thinking something would burst. I rushed to the back end of the house praising God for what I had seen. How long this lasted I do not know. Some months later an opportunity presented itself and I united with the Primitive Baptist church.

On returning from the water to the church I was asked to open services which I did and the same day was licensed by the church to preach the gospel. Oh dear reader from that day to this I have been trying to preach and trying to quit. Sometimes on the mountain top but most of the time low down in the valley. Often-times vowing I will quit, but as the old prophet said, "his word was in mine heart as a burning fire shut up in my bones, and I was weary with forebearing, and I could not stay."

Dear children of God this is a true story of my experience. Can you fellowship my experience? I know you could not fellowship my sinful life. Do you think I am His or am I not? A word of encouragement from the least of God's children would be appreciated. "Now unto Him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, to the only wise God our Savior, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever, Amen." (Elder) W. N. GREEN

Route 7, Box 820, Memphis, Tenn.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: Enclosed you will find a letter written by James M. Cox of Memphis that I offer for your approval for publication in the *Signs*. I believe you and all that may read this will agree it is a message of truth as it so evidently seems to me to be. I hope he will not mind my saying he is my uncle by marriage, and I feel of a truth one that Jesus died for. He came forward during the two days annual meeting here in August, offered to the church Saturday night, was received and baptized Sunday morning by the much beloved Elder O. W. Perkins of Mayfield, Ky. You and all the dear children of God wherever they may be will be happy to know he has gone home to his friends telling what great things the Lord has done for him.

Uncle Jim, to most all that know him he is thus addressed, is seventy-five years of age and has the greater part of his life followed after the Old Baptists and is a strong believer in the doctrine of truth as it is in Christ Jesus. The meeting here to me was wonderful, the church being blessed to have Elder O. W. Perkins present as well as Reuben Harrison of Crane Creek Church near Martin, Tenn., and the much loved pastor of the little church, Elder H. G. Brown and many dear visitors and friends.

Dear Elder, your last letter to this poor one I hope always to keep among my dearest treasures. Only God knows how much comfort it was to me as well as all received from you. May God bless you always is my desire. Remember this little church here in your prayers, and if not asking too much if you can feel it in your heart to do so remember this poor sinner. Hoping in the mercy of a merciful God I am,

(Mrs.) LOUISE NEWMAN

938 Blythe St., Memphis, Tenn.

DEAR BROTHER: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." There seems to be two versions of this text, and I would like first to consider very briefly the more popular version. God so loved the world, meaning the entire Adamic race of mankind, that whosoever believe in him should have everlasting life. We are taught from our youth by parents, Sunday school teachers, and preachers throughout the land that there is a Christ, a Savior, and we are also taught that it is necessary to give our hearts to God, accept Christ as our personal Savior, be baptized and we shall be saved. This seems to be very reasonable and easily acceptable, and I can see no reason why all of the human race should not be saved, except possibly a few who are too stubborn to accept the Lord's pleadings, notwithstanding the Lord said that only a remnant should be saved. Then may I add—remain faithful to the Lord, attend church regularly in order to help the Lord to save lost souls, and in the end you may be housed in heaven.

Now I do not mean to criticize this plan of salvation in the least. Jesus speaking said, "And other sheep I have which are not of this fold; them also I must bring." I believe there are good, honest, Christian people in all the many churches, however the Lord did not intend that we should all see these things in the same light. Consequently our opinions may differ to some extent.

Now we would like to consider the other version by people who practice and believe in an all wise God, the Creator and builder of all things, and who declared the end from the beginning; who created the heavens and the earth, and

the fulness thereof saying, "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." "God so loved the world" I believe mentioned here is the world that Christ came to save and not the entire Adamic race of mankind. We find that God had an elect or chosen people before the foundation of the world, possibly thousands of years before man inhabited the earth. Why the Lord chose a part of mankind and did not accept all to be saved is known only to God, and we have no right to question him or his authority or to say unto him why doest thou. "For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." John 6:38-39. "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you." John 15:16. You see man has no part in this choice, it is all the work of the Lord. Poor puny man is unable to control his own thoughts for one fleeting moment. Man is nothing, less than nothing and altogether vanity. What power has such a man to control his own destiny? I would like to make a little comparison. We will send a man to an orchard to gather a basket of apples. He may gather any apples that he desires, red, yellow, green or what have you, and bring them in. Now we will say to this man select from this basket any of the apples you may choose. The apples left in the basket are just like the ones chosen. They are no better or no worse than when they were all brought in. Is this man unjust because he did not choose all the apples? It does not seem so.

Man's mission in the world is to seek health and happiness and the means of sustenance. He is born in sin but the

natural man does not realize that he is a sinner, and goes through life in this condition unless or until the Lord causes him to realize his condition. The spirit of the Lord is upon him. He realizes for the first time that he is a sinner and that he is in a lost and ruined condition without the helping hand of the Lord, but when the Lord is revealed to him it is then he is made to rejoice with an unspeakable joy, and it is then he can and does believe on the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ whom He has sent, as in the text. I may have been wrong in my ideas on many points on this subject, but am just following my mind and am submitting same to your judgment or criticism.

I would like to express a few thoughts of a more personal nature if permitted. I have had many questions from time to time as to my church affiliations, and must say that I do not have a membership in any church. However I am usually called "Hardshell" or Primitive Baptist by people that know me best and I am glad to accept this challenge. They have been good to me and I have a love for them that cannot be expressed in words. Distance is scarcely too great for me to go to be among them and hear them speak of the great work of the Lord. I sometimes think that perhaps I am imposing on them, occupying space among them that could be occupied by others more worthy than I. Then I think of what Ruth said, "Intreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God." I have no way of knowing whether I am among those that the Lord remembered in that selection before the foundation of the world

except by that little unexplainable feeling within me that sometimes causes me to rejoice when meditating on the wonderful work of the Lord. Yet there are many times that it seems I am in a bottomless pit from whence no light can penetrate until that guiding hand lifts me out. For many years I have felt to be as one among them, and have had a desire to have a name with them, but always felt too unworthy to even ask to have a name with them.

I am leaving this little message with you to meditate on when it goes well with you. I feel that the Lord has been good to me, and has spared my life through these many years of toil and tribulations. I believe that according to nature I cannot be with you a great while, being past seventy-five years, but I have a little hope that when I am done here below that the Lord may have a place prepared for me. A friend.

JAMES COX

Route 8, Box 447, Tampa 4, Fla.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: I enclose money-order for \$3, two of which to renew my subscription to the *Signs of the Times*, and the balance to use as you see fit. I enjoy the *Signs* very much and find good gospel truth in it. I want to thank you for your book on the Resurrection of the Dead and I can agree with you on your view of it for I am not looking for my old clay body to be resurrected, but it will be fashioned like unto His glorious body and all of my carnal principles will be left in the earth for they are only for this time world. I do not see anything to quarrel about over the resurrection any way for Paul, the apostle, wrote, "It doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we

shall see him as he is." If he did not know, and it was a mystery to him, I do not think we are more enlightened than he on the subject. As for the new birth, Elder Seth Bynum wrote my views, conviction and experience on it in your February 1947 issue of the *Signs*. I was so carried away with his article that I wrote him and received a nice letter from him filled with truth.

We are having some good meetings and I will say we are at peace. God is good to us and blesses us to have our meetings each month although there are only a few of us. Our small Association, the Mt. Enon, has had several splits we are sorry to say, but God had a purpose in that also. We stand for salvation by grace and grace alone. He does his will in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth and there is no one to stay his hand. He has never wanted for anything because he is all power, the powers that be are ordained of God and he saves to the uttermost. What makes me quake and tremble is, am I one of his? I am so vile so prone to sin but yet I have a hope and as Paul said, "But by the grace of God I am what I am." I have never done anything good, I have been a vile persecutor of the faith. I was reared in the home of Old Baptists but how I used to hate it and how I did belittle it to my dear old mother and now it is all I have. My father and mother were both of that faith and I do not know why but it worried me from my youth up. I went with them to meeting and would hear the preacher speak and I could see his face shine and be illuminated by the Holy Ghost. Then I would say if I could preach like that I would not mind, but then I would go off with the devil and abuse the faith.

I tried to help the Lord, but one time he opened my eyes and I saw myself as I was and what I must be by grace. Then I begged for mercy and that is what every one of his tried ones will cry for—mercy not justice for they do not want justice, they want mercy. I left that country, that of my youth, and came down here and it was almost a year before I was made willing to go and ask the people for a home. I did not feel like they would have me, but when I saw all of my works destroyed I had nothing to lean on so I had to go and they received me for baptism. I have been with these people ever since and they have been so good to me and placed too much confidence in me. I hope God will keep me and that I will never bring disgrace on these people for they took me in out of the cold and gave me a home when I had no place to lay my head. Will close with these scattered remarks. May the God of grace keep you and yours is the prayer of the unworthy. I am sending you one of our minutes and invite you one and all to visit us.

S. D. MURPHY

1008 E. Allen Ave., Ft. Worth, Texas

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON, EDITOR: Enclosed find \$3 for our subscription another year and \$1 for the Poor of the Flock. We want to tell you of the wonderful meeting we were permitted to attend the third Sunday in Sept. beginning the Friday before.

My husband, Elder W. A. Little, and I left home Friday morning and were met at Abilene, Texas and conveyed to the meeting-house near Lawn, Tex. The preaching was all with one accord to give praise and glory to the God of all grace. We heard twenty-four sermons in those three days. We felt like saying, "And in this mountain (church)

shall the Lord of hosts make unto all people (all his elect) a feast of fat things, a feast of wine on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined." Our hearts leaped with joy as we heard His wonderful truths proclaimed. It seemed the day was here when the prophet had said, "In that day shall this song be sung in the land of Judah (*or the gospel church*); We have a strong city: salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks." We felt strong and that the Lord had remembered Zion and had given her a strong defense. The brethren and sisters were so strongly knit together in love and sweet fellowship.

A dear, precious brother, Elder John Shipman, was received into the full fellowship of Pilgrims Rest Church and did some able preaching, also Elder C. Y. Osteen and Elder C. U. Landers. Oh, that our people would be humbled down to confess their wrongs one to another and come in humbleness of Spirit to be reconciled one to another, and not to be backbiting and trying to bring some new invention that will divide the flock. We are commanded to "Remember the days of old, consider the years of many generations: ask thy father, and he will shew thee; thy elders, and they will tell thee," but with fear we may say something not prudent, we should be careful.

We only wanted to tell you of our lovely meeting. We returned home Sunday night and found all well. My mother who is eighty-four years old and is a cripple was waiting for me at home. She fell and broke her hip three years ago and can only walk on crutches which makes it very hard for me to leave her and be gone any length of time. She lives with us. The dear Lord opened up a way for me to attend this meeting and I feel so thankful for all

his wonderful mercies, that is I hope I do. May the Lord bless Zion in bringing our people in love and sweet fellowship. We are few in number in this part of Texas, but we feel we want to be contending for the truth as it is in our dear Savior. He is the way, the truth and the life, and without him we can do nothing. Yours in hope.

(Mrs.) MINNIE C. LITTLE

1406 Randolph Ave., Greensboro, N. C.

MRS. BEATRICE HAAN, MY DEAR AND ESTEEMED SISTER IN THE LORD: Somehow I feel that you are, regardless of your trials and sorrows, reconciled to God's will. When blessed to do so, I believe that all things which come to pass, even what men call evil and wicked, are only fulfilling God's purposes. I have said that I dreaded meeting the dangers which are before me and mine, but I hope I am conscious of this truth, that when I am afraid of the tribulations which God in his mercy promised his people, I am not reconciled to his will. When we are reconciled to his blessed will we also feel reconciled to every trial and cross, remembering that God's children are chosen in a furnace of affliction. It is only when we are reconciled to his will that we can say with Paul that, "We glory in tribulations also: that tribulation worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope; and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost."

The Lord alone knows what his children need. I often feel that it takes the rod always to keep me anywhere near where I should be. Sometimes I feel satisfied, and not only satisfied, but desire, if not mistaken, that he do with me and mine according to his holy and righteous will in everything and all is well. It is then I feel to confess that

"Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." In nature it is impossible for one to love the rod. These words are sometimes sweet to me.

"When I am made in love to bear
Affliction's needful rod;
Light, sweet and kind the strokes appear,
Through fellowship with God."

When we can see and understand that the rod is sent in mercy, in correction and in refining his chosen in Christ, we are, by the grace of God, prepared to say, "All things work together for good to them that love God." We feel a desire to thank him for the bitter as well as the sweet, because we cannot separate the "all things." They work together for good to those who are chosen in the furnace of affliction for Christ's sake. When I am blessed to believe this I am perfectly satisfied with my lot, hoping and trusting that all is well even with me, who am not worthy to claim kin with God's people, who are dearer to me than my own life or anything the world affords. May this great and awful God remember us in mercy. Your sister in hope.

(Mrs.) MARY E. WRAY

Route 4, Fayetteville, Tenn.

DEAR EDITORS, SIGNS OF THE TIMES: It has been a long time since I wrote you but now I find myself, unworthy though I am, trying to write you, thanking you for being so kind to me by sending me the *Signs* which has been enjoyed so very much. You, together with the Associate Editors, write so wonderfully of Jesus and his love toward poor sinners. That is all the preaching I have had for so long for during mother's long illness I did not leave her to go anywhere I could help. I wanted to be present to wait on her in case she needed something. Now that

God has seen fit to take her unto himself I hope I may go to church again although I am not well. I have had high blood pressure which has caused me much suffering.

I want to be submissive to the will of Him that is the way, the truth and the life. To him be all praise. I am enclosing mother's obituary and will appreciate its publication very much. Brother and I are so much alone without her. Pray for us when at a throne of God's rich grace that we may live as she would have us do and honor the God she loved. May God's richest blessings be with you. A poor girl saved by grace if at all.

(Miss) WILLIE SISCO

6915 Laredo St., Houston 10, Texas

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, DEAR ELDER DODSON: In the notice sent you for publication in the *Sign of the Times*, October issue, an error was made in the name of the church which should read Shepherd Fold instead of Shepherd Flock. Will you please make the correction and make revision in the name of the clerk. Since the church was constituted a change has been made so that Mrs. Irene Wisenbaker is permanent clerk. We would like these changes made so that when the church directory is published everything will be correct.

Elder W. O. Beene is our Pastor and Elder Ben B. Walston, Assistant Pastor. We have bought a lot to build a meeting-house on and will appreciate any help that it pleases the Lord to send us. If you see fit, please make a notice of our appeal. All contributions can be sent to Elder W. O. Beene, 1005 Vincent St., Houston, Texas.

We are few in number. Have had one addition. We will be very glad to have a building of our own as it will give us more meeting privilege. Please remember us in your prayers when it

goes well with you. Your sister in bonds of love if one at all.

(Mrs.) IRENE WISENBAKER

Route 2, Box 124, Forest, Miss.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: I am enclosing \$2 to extend my subscription for another year. I do not want to miss a single copy for there is so much comfort in the *Signs*. I also want to thank you for the book "Resurrection of the Dead." I have read it through and enjoyed it so much. Respectfully,

(Miss) MARTHA G. McWHORTER

330 White Oak Drive, Minden, La.

ELDER R. L. DODSON: It is time for me to renew my subscription to the dear *Signs*. I must say it is food and drink to me, a poor needy creature, a sinner wholly and solely dependent on the grace and mercy of an all wise, all sovereign omnipotent God. I have just finished reading Elder C. W. Vaughn's wonderful article on Acts 8: 18-21. Surely if I know my heart it is exactly what I believe or hope I do. I do not think I could believe it otherwise. I was made to rejoice and felt so glad to read the poetry written by Elder C. M. Weaver as I had the privilege of meeting him and hearing him preach many years ago. I do not want to be without the *Signs* as long as I live and can pay for it.

(Mrs.) C. SHACKELFORD

Written by

MRS. LEONA TUTTLE

3379½ - 30th St., San Diego, Cal.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON:

"Hark! don't you hear the turtle dove,
The token of redeeming love?
From hill to hill we hear the sound,
The neighboring valleys echo round;
O Zion hear the turtle dove,
The token of your Savior's love."

My Savior has been so close to me recently and my mind led to dwell, to

search, to study and meditate upon those deep things revealed only by and through him. I would like to share it with those of like faith. Because of circumstances beyond my control, and certainly against my wishes, I find myself far from my church (militant). Arriving in this southern city my son had provided a beautiful place for me to live, and for the past two weeks I am awakened by the call of a turtle dove nearby my window. Who can doubt that in all the diversified steps of the children of God, each step is ordained? And so, although separated in the flesh I know I am as one in spirit with you and in the hope of his mercy, and to me it is significant that the flesh cannot be reconciled to God. We must all travel through the land of Esau, and only at the final resurrection is the body joined (reconciled) to the spirit. In God's wisdom and eternal plan he orders the steps that faith might have her perfect work. Christ himself came not to do his will, but the will of the Father who sent him, and so we are taught that lesson in the garden of Gethsemane with Christ—"not my will, but thine, be done." He ordained of old the plan for salvation, and he knew and purposed that no human flesh could, of his own efforts, reach forth and live forever; that eternal life is a free gift by the mercy, love and grace of the one true and living God. He gave a law and we find in Deut. 5, "For who is there of all flesh, that hath heard the voice of the living God speaking out of the midst of the fire, as we have, and lived?" We find in Daniel the hand writing on the wall, every one weighed in the balances and found wanting, and Peter says in Acts 10,

"Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons." The Lord told Peter, "What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common." In Colossians second chapter we learn that Jesus is the one who blotted out the handwriting of written ordinances against us and took it out of the way, nailing it to the cross. Then I would say to those who persecute their brethren read Rom. 14:4, "Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up: for God is able to make him stand."

(Continued in next issue.)

Laurens, Iowa

EDITOR SIGNS OF THE TIMES, DEAR BROTHER: I am enclosing \$2 for subscription to *Signs of the Times*. I have been a subscriber to this good Baptist paper for a number of years. So thankful for the Lord's watch care over me all these years. Hope you and family are well. Your sister in faith.

ANNIE E. PUTNAM

AID FOR SENDING "SIGNS" TO INDIGENTS

Mrs. L. Campbell, Tenn., \$1; Mrs. S. S. Kerley, Ill., \$1; J. Bratten, Md., \$2; Mrs. M. J. Ege, N. J., \$3; A. S. Roberson, N. C., \$1; J. A. Beard, Fla., \$1; Mrs. C. Twilley, Md., \$2; W. J. Kimbro, Ia., \$1; Mrs. M. E. Holloway, Md., \$3; Eld. R. L. Biggs, Tenn., \$1; Mrs. H. E. Danks, Cal., \$2; D. H. Bradley, Tex., \$8; Mrs. S. E. Shortridge, Ill., \$10; L. B. Hylton, W. Va., \$1; Mrs. L. Young, Tenn., \$2; Eld. L. D. Rose, Tex., \$3; Mrs. C. M. Richardson, Va., \$3; M. F. Dunlap, Me., \$2; G. S. Weider, Va., \$1; Mrs. R. S. Craig, Va., \$1; E. C. Dean, Mo., \$1; A friend, Mich., \$3; Mrs. R. C. Wright, Tex., \$1; G. A. Paul, Ala., \$5; Eld. W. D. Griffin, Ala., \$1; Mrs. D. Deal, Mo., \$3; C. Willard Dodson, Va., \$3; J. C. Beard, Tex., \$1; A. B. Yelvington, Fla., \$1; Mrs. D. S. Reid, N. C., \$2; Mrs. M. Finch, N. Y., \$1; Mrs. S. L. Taylor, Pa., \$3; L. M. Stephenson, N. C., \$1; Mrs. B. L. McCoy, Del., \$1; Mrs. L. M. Beebe, N. Y., \$10; Mrs. S. O. Wilson, Tenn., \$1; Mrs. J. C. Whidden, Fla., \$3; Mrs. D. Yeisley, Wash., \$1.

EDITORIAL

RUTHERFORD, N. J.

MARCH, 1948

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

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P.O. Box No. 70

Rutherford, N. J.

"John bare witness of him, and cried, saying, This was he of whom I spake, He that cometh after me is preferred before me: for he was before me. And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace. For the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." John 1:15-17.

John, in writing the testimonies of Jesus and God manifest in the flesh, takes up the matter from the beginning and relates what God was in the beginning, and also the relations that were in the Trinity and by whom all things were made, where life was and the life was the light of men.

We have the declaration that the law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ, and when the end of the law came for righteousness God sent a man whose name was John to bear witness of that light, that all men through him might believe. All men that believe are quickened by him, and it is God's work that men believe on Jesus Christ whom the Father hath sent, which embraces every kindred, tribe and tongue to as many as are called out from the world to serve

the living God. I will call my sheep by name and lead them out. All we have expressed was grace given in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, to every one whose name was written in the Lamb's book of life for an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled and that fadeth not away, but is reserved in heaven; and according to that grace Jesus quickeneth them, and for that grace they are manifested in the exercise of faith and grace, for that grace is given that every one that is born of God has Christ in them and the hope of glory. "For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily. And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power." Col. 2:9-10.

We note the apostle Paul said, "I thank my God always on your behalf, for the grace of God which is given you by Jesus Christ; That in every thing ye are enriched by him, in all utterance, and in all knowledge." I Cor. 1:4-5. "Who hath ears to hear, let him hear. And the disciples came, and said unto him, Why speakest thou unto them in parables? He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given. For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath." Mat. 13:9-12. The grace of God makes the child wise unto salvation, and he hears what the Spirit saith unto the churches; the Holy Ghost takes of the things of the children of God and shows them unto the child of grace, which is the fulness of him, grace for grace. The unregenerate can only perceive with the natural or carnal mind, and from him shall be taken away even that he hath.

We believe Jesus was having direct reference to the sons of men having carnal minds and natural perceptions to behold the works manifested, but could not enter into the realities of the life that produced the power to live in them, and the apostle said, "It is not expedient for me doubtless to glory. I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord. I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) such an one caught up to the third heaven. And I knew such a man, (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) How that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter. Of such an one will I glory: yet of myself I will not glory, but in mine infirmities. For though I would desire to glory, I shall not be a fool; for I will say the truth: but now I forbear, lest any man should think of me above that which he seeth me to be, or that he heareth of me. And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong." 2 Cor. 12:1-10. We believe the apostle Paul was made an ensample to the gospel ministry that God appointed to go in

and out before the church of God throughout all generations; and our experiences prove to the hearts of all that are exercised by the realities of the Spirit that openeth to them, and showeth unto them the beauties and glory of God, which are not animations of the flesh, or to appear before men and be popular; but in fear and trembling the servant of God will meet with the people of God feeling to be the least of all saints if one at all; and when the time comes, and the necessity laid upon him he is driven to the task, and to his surprise a door of utterance is opened to him and he speaks from the abundance of his heart to the edification of the church of God; when the meeting is closed that servant is made to praise God from his heart, for He was a present help to him and delivered his soul from the horrors of being a castaway, and tuned his heart to sing God's praise which was embraced by the apostle John in our text—grace for grace—which was given in the fulness of God's grace in Christ Jesus.

For over fifty years we have experienced and tasted the Word of life, and often we are much encouraged to press on for the mark of the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus, ever looking unto him who is the author and finisher of the Christian's faith. We feel to express to all the *Signs* family that the blessings of God rest with you all in this New Year, remembering us in your prayers.

C. W. V.

.... NOAH AND THE ARK

Brother J. H. Calk, Bastrop, La., has asked that we write on Noah and the Ark and what they represent; he also wants to know if the raven represents the sin of man and the dove the Spirit of God that dwelleth in his children.

We do not know whether we will be able to answer all of his questions satisfactorily or not, but such as we have, give we unto our brother and our readers in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. We know of a truth that without him we can do nothing. Our understanding is that Noah was a true prophet of God and a preacher of righteousness. Paul tells us that "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: by the which he condemned the world, and became heir of the righteousness which is by faith." Heb. 11:7. When "God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually," (Gen. 6:5) he said, "I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them. But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord." Gen. 6:7-8. For purposes of his own God determined to preserve a posterity on the earth after the flood had destroyed every living creature upon the earth, and this was to be brought about by the building of an ark which would keep securely all that he would command to go into it. God supervised the building of the ark and prescribed not only the plan and dimensions, but also specified the kind of material of which it was to be built, and it was to be pitched both within and without with pitch. Knowing how complete the destruction of the flood would be, the ark must be made secure in every sense of the word, so that when Noah and his three sons, and all of their wives, together with two (male and female) of every kind of living creature entered

the ark, "and the Lord shut him in," there could be no question whatever but what they would be preserved safely, even though the flood waters would cover the highest peaks of the highest hills and mountains, and being pitched within and without with pitch the waters would not be able to seep in to do harm to a single one of his creatures.

The Ark was undoubtedly a type of Christ, and God's foreknowledge embracing all things, as it did, he foresaw the awful and complete destruction the floods of sin would bring upon the human family, and therefore, determined to glorify himself and lift the name of Jesus forever on high by choosing his people in Christ before even the foundations of the earth were laid. In this way they were to be preserved in Christ Jesus and kept safely in his bosom despite all that devils could do. Those who are made aware of the security that is in God's blessed Son will never cease to sing his praise and to laud it above everything that this vain world has ever known. As God made a covenant with Noah in that antediluvian age whereby he was to save him and his house, a type of God's elect people, who were to be preserved in the ark, which as before said was a type of Christ, so following the end of that age, there was to be "The Ark of the Covenant" under the law age. This sacred object was a chest of acacia wood overlaid with pure gold. A wonderful description of this ark appears in the twenty-fifth chapter of Exodus, in case our readers wish to refer to it. Here, again, it beautifully typifies Christ. While it was made of soft wood, it is claimed that it was incorruptible and would not rot, thus portraying in a most wonderful manner the humanity of our Lord, which knew no sin and saw no corruption. And the fact that this

wood was overlaid within and without with pure gold, signified that the humanity of our Lord would be clothed with his divinity. An ark or a chest is designed to contain valuable treasures. How true it is that all of our treasures of wisdom and knowledge, and the riches of God's grace, are stored up for his people in Christ Jesus. We can only hint at some of the most outstanding significations of this ark. In it was to be placed the testimony, showing that only Jesus would be able to keep the law; and on this ark, in the same identical dimensions, rested the mercy-seat, made of pure gold. This shows conclusively to us that every particle of mercy which will ever be extended to a poor sinner in this world will have for its foundation Christ Jesus the Lord. There is no other basis for mercy to rest upon, for other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

In the two ends of the mercy-seat was to be made two cherubims, and of beaten gold were they to be made. This *beaten* gold is full of significance. The cherubims were to be so placed as to be facing each other, both looking down upon the mercy-seat, which rested upon the Ark of the Covenant, and there God told Moses he would commune with him "of all things which I will give thee in commandment unto the children of Israel." Do not these cherubims portray in some wonderful sense the Old and the New Testament Scriptures, one looking forward and prophesying of the coming of Christ and testifying before hand his sufferings, death and resurrection, and the glory that would follow, while the other looks back and declares that he came and fulfilled in every jot and tittle all that was foretold of him, and do they not both agree that Jesus is the one and only mediator between God and man. We rejoice to

know that as God looks upon his people as they are presented unto him by his Son, there is none that can lay anything to their charge, for in the complete and finished work of Jesus they stand perfect, and without spot, wrinkle or any such things, before God in love. Is it any wonder then that this Ark of the Covenant was held to be so sacred by the Israelites? And when it was captured by their enemies and taken away from them, they were in great distress and could have no peace, day or night, until it was back in their possession. We believe it beautifully represents Christ, who is the true substance to his people here in this gospel age. When Christ, crucified and risen, is preached in demonstration of the Spirit and with power from on high, as the way, the truth, and the life, God's people are satisfied and contented, but where he is not presented as their all and in all, they are woefully disturbed and unhappy. The Ark of the Covenant while in possession of Israel's enemies was invariably a source of unending trouble among them. So much so that they would have to call a council for devising ways and means of ridding themselves of it. Likewise, when Christ is preached to-day as a complete Saviour, and the one and only means of salvation for sinners, cries of opposition go up all over Christendom against such preaching. The so-called religious world is constantly proclaiming that God has done all that he can to save the world from anguish and endless woe, and they insist that the only possible way of escape is for the creature to accept Christ as his personal Saviour, before it is too late. How sad, indeed, is the state of those who know not our Lord! Jesus said to his disciples, "Blessed are your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear. For verily I say unto you, That many

prophets and righteous men have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them." We are indeed most wonderfully blessed when we, by faith, can see clearly that the apostles in the New Testament have supplied us with irrefutable bulwarks of evidence that Jesus finished the work of redemption, once and for all time, for his people, who were chosen in him before the world was made, and even though the world pass away, never will they be separated from him, their glorious head. This is a precious doctrine to believe and be established in.

Among the questions asked by our brother are what does the raven and the dove signify. We cannot say that we have ever been given much thought on their significance in this instance, nevertheless, it would seem that since the raven is an unclean bird, it could well represent the unregenerate or non-elect. We are told that the raven "went forth to and fro" and did not return into the ark. As it feeds upon carrion it may well have lighted upon one or more of the dead bodies floating upon the waters, from which it received its sustenance and rested its foot and, therefore, it was not necessary for it to return into the ark. On the other hand, the dove is a clean bird. It feeds upon seeds found on the ground, and since the waters had not subsided there was no place for it to rest the sole of its foot, hence of necessity it had to return not only to the ark but had to be taken into the ark. This bird typifies regenerated souls, or the elect of God, hence it is said "she returned unto him into the ark, for the waters were on the face of the whole earth: then he put forth his hand, and took her, and pulled her in unto him into the ark." Gen. 8:9. We like this putting

forth his hand, and taking hold of her, and verily pulling her in unto him into the ark. Marvellous, ideed, is it when a heaven born soul, who is weary and heavy laden with the burdens which have to be borne by a Christian in this sin cursed world, at the very time when he feels dejected and undone and can find no place to lay his head, is taken hold of by the Holy Spirit and pulled in unto Him who is an hiding place, the ark of grace. David said, "I waited patiently for the Lord; and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry. He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings. And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God."

We trust what has been said will prove thought stimulating upon the glorious things which are presented to us in the gospel, and that our readers will have the blessed assurance of their final acceptance with the Father, by and through the atoning blood of his beloved Son who is the ark of salvation to all who believe on his most precious name.

R. L. D.

CIRCULAR LETTER

Written by Elder H. H. Lefferts and adopted by the Delaware River Association May 29-30, 1947.

DEAR BRETHREN: The Lord being our helper in the way of wisdom and understanding, we shall attempt to set before you some thoughts on the subject of Christian charity. The thirteenth chapter of I Cor. is the most outstanding scripture on this subject, yet there are many texts throughout the gospels and the epistles bearing on the same. It is to be regretted that in all the versions of the New Testament since that of 1611, the word "charity" has been changed to read "love." While true charity and love are inseparably

joined, there is a distinction; and it is a distinct loss when "charity" is translated as "love" in our Bibles. Charity is love in action. It is the outflowing of love to the redeemed people of God, and of goodwill even to those not in the covenant of grace. It is very much as that river which John saw flowing from the throne of God and the Lamb, blessing all wherever it comes; and likewise as that river whose streams make glad the city of God in Psalms 46:4. It blesses him that gives and him that receives. Further, it is sad that in these days now present, the word "charity" has lost its ancient savor and has been debased to mean giving away something. The mere act of giving something to somebody is nowadays taken for charity, no matter how disinterested, cold and indifferent may be the motive of the giver. It is very possible to do much giving and yet be utterly devoid of true charity. "Though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing." Plainly Paul believed one could possibly give away all their worldly goods in what would seem a good cause for humanity's sake, yet be without true charity altogether. Likewise, one might suffer martyrdom for some good cause, yet charity be not at all concerned in the matter. Charity is not self-seeking nor self-pleasing. It rejoices not in iniquity but in truth. It isn't suspicious, thinketh no evil. Charity cannot be given away. It enriches him who gives as well as him who receives. The giver is not made poorer by giving, but there is a stunting of one's soul in withholding. This very deeply searches all our hearts to know what spirit we are of in all association with our brethren in the church as well as in the ministry of the gospel. Charity singles out the objects that are most miserable. It "visits

the widows and the fatherless" and not the rich and prosperous, but those in affliction. Charity to the poor must be done as an act of worship, out of respect to God. Pure religion in the sight of God abounds not in ceremonies but in charity which is the bond of perfectness. (Colossians 3:14.) "When thou makest a dinner or a supper, call not thy friends, nor thy brethren, neither thy kinsmen, nor thy rich neighbors; lest they also bid thee again, and a recompense be made thee. But when thou makest a feast, call the poor, the maimed, the lame, the blind: and thou shalt be blessed; for they cannot recompense thee: for thou shalt be recompensed at the resurrection of the just." Luke 14:12-14. "To do good and to communicate forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased." Heb. 13:16.

True charity is sacrifice; not a sin-offering, but a thank-offering to God. One of the chief glories in the God-head, says one of the old Puritan writers, is the unweariedness of his love and bounty. He visits the widows and the fatherless, so should we. The spirit of our religion is forgiving. A cruel, hard heart is said by Paul to be a kind of "denying of the faith." I Tim. 5:8. "If any provide not for his own, and specially for those of his own house, he hath denied the faith, and is worse than an infidel." We cannot do the least duty toward God unless there is some self-aim in it. This is our infirmity. We make our giving many times to be a kind of selling, and mind our own advantage in our charity. To visit the rich widows is a courtesy; to visit the poor, and that in their affliction, is charity. Charity is the "bond of perfectness." It is the tie that binds all the ministrations of the Spirit. Paul, after speaking of the various gifts dispensed by the Holy Spirit to the church

in I Cor. 12th chapter, concludes with "yet show I unto you a more excellent way," and then follows that wonderful hymn to charity in chapter thirteen. All these gifts of the Spirit are perfect gifts, yet without charity outflowing from love to God, his truth and his people, the gifts are not profitable either to the church or to the giver. Certainly they are of no merit in the sight of God without his love permeating them. Hence, charity is the living bond uniting and tying together all the perfectness of his spiritual gifts to his people, which are for the edifying of the Body of Christ. Furthermore, while faith and hope now abide with us who believe, in this present world, charity exceeds them. This is because when faith shall give place to sight at the coming of the Lord when we shall then see him as he is and be like him, and when hope shall give place to fruition at the glorious appearing of the great God and our Savior Jesus Christ, charity shall not be affected thereby except to do way with partial experience of it to make way for all of its fulness, whence charity shall abide to all eternity with the redeemed of God in his holy and glorious presence where there is no further need for either faith or hope. Yet that is not all. Charity exceeds faith and hope because charity gives vigor to both even now. Faith works by love, without charity faith is not active. And hope is but speculation unless charity activates hope in a sincere and loving desire and expectation for the object of our hope, Christ Jesus the Lord. Brethren, how deeply do these things search our hearts? Let us examine ourselves whether we be in the faith. Hypocrites thrive on a bare profession but shun the light of truth which exposes their make-believe. Are we the doers of the Word or hearers only? Have we the theory of

true religion only, without its practice which is faith, hope and charity? Who is a doer of the truth? Jesus says it is the one who comes to the light that his deeds may be made manifest that they are wrought in God. (John 3:21.) The doer of the truth desperately desires to know how he stands in the sight of a just and holy God, is not primarily concerned how he stands with men. The doer examines himself whether he be in the faith, whether his works are wrought in God, whether he is accepted with God in the beloved Son, whether his love is real and fervent, whether the outpouring of his love in true charity is of a self-seeking, self-pleasing sort or is a denial of self's aims and pleasures in a real desire to serve God and do all to his honor and glory. If we be doers of the truth, by his grace, then have we his approval for Jesus said: "Whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him to a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: and the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock." Matt. 7:24-25. But to write these things to you and if, in so doing, we are paying lip-service to the truth, we are guilty of the rankest hypocrisy in claiming such "doing" for ourselves. Surely, we are admonished to speak the truth in love to him who errs. To speak the truth in love is to do three things: first, in love to God; second, in love to his word; third, in love to his people. To qualify us to speak the truth in love to his people, there must first be a sincere, fervent love to God, then a full-hearted devotion to his truth, which together will result in dispensing the truth in love to all them that believe.

May your associational meeting this year be one in which love to God and

charity toward the household of faith and all believers, may abound to the glory and honor of God, to the upholding of his Word, and to the edification and comfort and instruction to the children of God.

(Elder) C. W. VAUGHN, Moderator
M. W. RAULSTON, Clerk

MEMORIAL

Whereas, God has by death removed our Deacon, brother George F. Adkins, from this life: Brother Adkins was clerk of the Salisbury Old School Baptist Association for many years. He is sadly missed both by the Church and the Association and be it

Resolved, that we be reconciled to God's holy will. We know our loss is his eternal gain and be it

Resolved, that this tribute to the memory of our loved one be written in the minutes of this Association, that copy be sent to his devoted companion, Sister Laura A. Adkins, also a copy be published in the **Signs of the Times**.

Written by order of this Association convening with the Snow Hill Church, October 22 and 23, 1947.

(Elder) D. V. SPANGLER, Moderator
MAUD T. LAWS, Clerk
WILLIAM S. ADKINS, Asst. Clerk

MEMORIAL

MR. SAMUEL W. SHIPWAY, who died on June 3, 1947, had attended meetings of the Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church in New York City for many years. He was highly esteemed by the members of the church.

At a recent meeting of the church, brother Wm. D. Chapman read the following tribute to his memory. I am sure we all mourn the passing of Mr. Shipway. The thought that we will never have him to meet with us again is saddening indeed. Mr. Shipway and I always sat side by side at our meetings and of late years, when his health was failing, we were always glad whenever he felt able to attend. As I think of him the thought comes to me, when will we meet his like again? Let us remember him as a fine Christian gentleman and an humble follower of the dear Savior. I hope and believe he has entered into the rest that remaineth to the people of God.

W. D. CHAPMAN

BOOK WANTED

Will any one having a copy of Hassell's Church History they care to part with please write

BECKIE McLACHLIN
215 Colborne St.,
London, Ont., Canada

OBITUARIES

ELDER DOUGLAS L. TOPPING departed this earthly life suddenly, due to a heart attack, in the morning of September 18, 1947 at the home of his brother-in-law, our brother, C. Walter Norman, Herndon, Va. He was born Oct. 2, 1873 near Hallwood, Va., son of James and Hetty Ann Topping. He was married in early life to Mrs. Emma F. Smith. To them was born one daughter, Mrs. Mary Jeffrey who survives. Other survivors are two grandsons and three great-grandsons. Mrs. Topping died Feb. 4, 1942. March 20, 1943 Elder Topping married sister Elizabeth Norman who sorrowfully survives him.

He was baptized in May 1899 by the late Elder J. T. Rowe into the fellowship of Ebenezer Church, Baltimore, Md. He served the church as Deacon for a time and was ordained to the full work of the gospel ministry in May 1928 at the close of the session of the Baltimore Association held that year with church of his membership. After the death of Elder John G. Eubanks, July 18, 1926 he supplied the Rock Springs Church in Lancaster Co., Pa. until called to the pastorate of that church May 27, 1928. His first appointment with that church was during the absence of Elder Eubanks, the regular pastor, June 27, 1926. The last time Elder Topping was at the Rock Springs Church was during the session of the Delaware Association held with that church in August 1947. Rock Springs was the first to call for his services after his ordination, and his last visit to them was when he served as Moderator at the 1947 session of the Delaware Association held with that church.

For a number of years he served Salem Church in Philadelphia, Broad Creek Church in Delaware and Shiloh Church in Washington, D. C. In June after the death of Elder Rowe in Feb. 1936, Elder Topping was called to the pastoral care of the Ebenezer and Black Rock Churches, which together with Rock Springs, he served until the time of his being taken away from the earth. He was faithful in every relationship of life in his family, in his business or in the church. His services were not confined to the pulpit, but as well in the homes of his brethren and of those who loved the truth. He not only preached the Word but lived it in his life, walk and conversation. His deportment shed forth a goodly savor which evidenced the fact that he had been with Jesus and learned of him.

Funeral services were held in the meeting-house in Baltimore, Sept. 20, 1947. Ministers present were D. V. Spangler, R. L. Dodson, H. M. Bennett, C. W. Vaughn and J. D. Wood. Appropriate remarks were made by each of them. Elder Spangler spoke from 2 Timothy 4: 7-8. The hymn "Asleep

in Jesus" was sung. Interment in the Glen Haven Cemetery to await the appearing in glory of our Lord Jesus Christ who, at his coming, will change our vile bodies and fashion them like his own glorious body, at which time we shall see him as he is and be like him, perfectly happy and satisfied forever. What a wonderful hope for believing mortals to possess!

Elder Topping was firm and well established in all principles of the doctrine of God our Savior, preaching the truth in love to God, in love to the church of God and in love to all who believe and love the truth as it is in Jesus Christ. He was patient, but unwavering, with all who differed from him. I have myself met with a sore personal loss in the going away of our dear brother. He and I had many sweet and precious communings together in the Scriptures and in our experiences. Though weak and not well, he drove from his home to Leesburg to see me the afternoon before he died, having heard I was not well and wishing to see for himself just what was my state at that time. From our home, he and sister Topping, drove to Herndon to pass the night with brother and sister Norman and their family, and there he passed away. His going was indeed a great shock to me as it was much more to his wife, his churches and all their friends. We do not grieve for him. He had indeed finished his course, we have no doubt his departure was a glorious transformation to him. Our heart goes out in love and tender sympathy to our beloved sister Topping, to his bereft family and to the churches of his care. May the Lord grant us complete reconciliation to his holy and righteous will.

(Elder) H. H. LEFFERTS

In loving memory of our highly esteemed brother and Deacon, WILLIAM BRANTLY HOUSTON. He was born Sept. 20, 1875, and departed this life August 25, 1947. He was the son of brother J. T. and Julia Houston of Duplin County. He united with the Primitive Baptist church at Sand Hill in Duplin Co. of the White Oak Association, Dec. 12, 1918, and was ordained Deacon the second Sunday, Dec. 13, 1925. He served his church and filled his office faithfully for twenty-nine years. His motto was "be sure you are right and stand to it." We feel that he was a Deacon indeed and knew how to handle church affairs; that he purchased to himself "a good degree, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus." To know brother Houston was to love him. He was a friend and neighbor to every one in and out of the church, and was sound in the doctrine of salvation by grace.

He first married sister Octavia Kennedy who preceded him in death twenty-five years. To this union were born ten children, six daughters and

four sons, W. S., Isaac E., F. H., and Ashley A. Houston; Mrs. J. B. Miller, Mrs. L. K. Kennedy, Mrs. J. A. Miller, Mrs. L. A. Robinson, Mrs. Jennie Quillen and Mrs. C. W. Johnson. He raised a family of obedient children and ruled his home well. His second wife was sister Mary Hollen Himby who was a faithful wife to him. He was confined to his bed eleven months and endured his affliction with much patience. He seemed to have the patience of Job. His burial service was conducted Aug. 26 by two ministers that he loved, Elder S. Gray and Elder L. E. Bryan at 4 p. m. at Sand Hill meeting-house. A large congregation attended his burial in the church cemetery beside his first wife, under a mound of beautiful flowers to awake on the morning of the resurrection when all the saints shall rise, and their bodies be changed and fashioned like the glorious body of Christ, to be in the presence of God at his right hand, where there are pleasures forever-more. We all loved him but we feel that Jesus loved him best.

(Elder) SYLVANUS GRAY
Box 81, Kinston, N. C.

MRS. FANNIE SISCO was born Dec. 15, 1862, and passed away May 6, 1947, aged 84 years, 4 months and 21 days. She was born in Lincoln Co., Tenn., the daughter of Edmund C. and Martha Whitworth Walker, the youngest of a family of twelve children. She was married April 7, 1880 to John E. Sisco who preceded her in death fourteen years. To this union were born eight children: E. A. Sisco, L. J. Sisco, Mrs. Josie Tucker, Mrs. Lulu Bates, Mrs. Nannie Ross, Miss Willie Sisco, Walter A. Sisco, and Alton W. Sisco. Six of these are married and have families. Alton, the youngest child and myself, the youngest daughter, stayed with mother, taking care of her and keeping her home. We did all that loving hands could do all through her affliction and loneliness. She suffered much for over eight years, but tried to be patient and submissive to the Lord's will. At times she would say she longed for ease and wanted to go home to her blessed Savior, realizing she could never be well again.

Mother received a sweet hope when quite young, but feeling so unworthy did not unite with the church until a few years after her marriage. I do not remember the date of her baptism but will say it was God's appointed time to bring her into the fold. She so much enjoyed hearing the sweet sound of salvation alone by the grace of God. She attended her meetings as long as she could, and read the Signs for many years before she was a member of the visible church.

Besides the children there were thirty-six grand children, twenty-two great-grandchildren, several nieces and nephews, and a host of friends to mourn the loss of one near and dear to all of us, but our

loss is her eternal gain. About thirty-six hours before she passed away she called for all of her children and as we gathered around her bed she talked to each one separately, beginning with the oldest. This was a most beautiful sight. She was so happy she would clap her hands and praise the Lord, asking him to bless her children, especially the two that had stayed home with her. We were heartbroken yet we know "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

We laid her to rest May 7 in the church-yard at Old Pleasant Grove beside our dear father, who was also a member of the Primitive Baptist church for a long time. Being unable to get the minister of her choice, and some of the older children being of different faith, Alton and I yielded and Dr. John J. Milford of Huntsville, Ala. conducted the service very nicely. He spoke comfortingly to us, making it very beautiful although we were heart-broken.

Mother dear, we miss you more than tongue
can tell,

Yet God in his wisdom doeth all things well;
So with our hope and trust in the God we love,
May it be his will for us to look forward,
To being carried home to be with you in
heaven above.

Written in sorrow by her youngest daughter,
(Miss) WILLIE SISCO

MRS. ROSA V. GARRETT, our beloved sister in the Lord, departed this earthly life October 20, 1947 at her home, Leesburg, Va. She was born April 25, 1869 near Middleburg, Va. Her father was the late James A. Cox of the Mt. Zion Old School Baptist Church, Loudoun Co., Va. Her mother was Catherine Dodd. One brother, William S. Cox, died some years ago. She has one brother living, H. R. Cox of Roanoke, Va. Her only daughter Miss Catherine C. Garrett of Leesburg, Va. survives her mother. Sister Garrett was married to W. Frank Garrett October 17, 1888. He passed away in December 1919. Sister Garrett was baptized July 21, 1907 by the late Elder John G. Eubanks into membership with the New Valley Church, Loudoun Co., Va. and was a consistent and faithful member during all the 40 years of her membership in the church. For several years, she served faithfully as Church Clerk. She was a person of high integrity and noble principles as her life proved. As God works in his children to will and to do of his good pleasures, so he wrought in her and maintained her in a life and in a walk of obedience to the faith of Jesus Christ. I shall greatly miss her for she was true to all my interests and welfare as her pastor, and she will be sadly missed in the church at all our meetings for she always attended when at all able to do so.

Especially will her devoted daughter, Miss Catherine Garrett, miss her mother, but we should not wish her back in this sinful world. We know that our loss is her eternal gain. The Lord has taken but his own. "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away." Let us bow our hearts before him and heartily say, "Blessed be the name of the Lord." Funeral services were held from the home in Leesburg. Interment in Union Cemetery. May the Lord comfort all who truly mourn, as only he can. We may not see how we can go on with our every day life when our beloved are removed from us by death, but the Lord has promised that as our days our strength shall be. May all of us prove his word to be ever faithful in all our times of need.

(Elder) H. H. LEFFERTS

WILLIE BRADFORD RHOADES, son of Nan and Jim Rhoades was born Sept. 23, 1875, and departed this life Aug. 31, 1947 at his home in Mt. Vernon, Texas. He was united in marriage to Bettie Evers, Feb. 2, 1903, who preceded him in death Nov. 25, 1918. To this union were born six children, five boys and one girl: Jimmie and Jack, Mt. Vernon, Texas; Bill and Sol of Good Hope Community, Fred, Winnsboro, Texas; and Mrs. Audie Williams, Mt. Vernon, Texas.

He was a firm believer in salvation by grace although he never united with the visible church. He was always the first one on the church grounds on meeting days as long as his health permitted him to go. He loved the church and admonished the brethren and sisters to keep at each others feet. He gave gladly and freely of what the Lord blessed him with of this world's goods to the cause and upbuilding of the church. His home was always a welcome place for any visiting brethren and sisters, and a warm hospitality was shown his friends. I have heard him say he could not have too many of his friends to visit him. In their talks his conversation would always turn to the blessed words in the Bible of an all wise, all powerful God who works all things according to the good pleasure of his will. He never tired of talking about the blessed truth. I feel that he was one of the blessed of the Lord and precious in his sight. We are not told that by uniting with the church you shall know them (although that is a sweet privilege), but it is said, "By their fruits ye shall know them." He wanted but little for himself and received pleasure out of giving to others. He loved little children and enjoyed giving to the unfortunate ones and the needy were always remembered by him. Could he see this writing he would say he did not deserve praise and we know all the praise is due the most high God for all things.

He was a great lover of peace and was always

working to bring it about. Many of his friends went to him for advice. I have thought this scripture well applied to him, "Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God." He was in declining health about three years before being confined to his bed, but he never complained and was patient throughout his illness. His children and stepdaughter, Mrs. K. P. Tibbs, were with him during his illness, and they, with relatives and friends, did all that loving hands could do. He seemed ready to go when the Lord called him home and was merciful to him to the end for he said he never suffered any.

The great host of people and beautiful flowers spoke more than words of the love his relatives and friends had for him. Funeral services were conducted by Elders W. O. Beene and S. C. Davenport who spoke words of comfort to a large and attentive audience, after which he was laid to rest in Good Hope Cemetery by the side of his beloved wife. The singers were from Hopewell Church who sung the wonderful songs he had requested, namely: "O, sing to me of heaven," "How firm a foundation", "Amazing Grace", and some others. His request was that he be buried in overalls, and spoke of it to his children over twenty years before his death. While they would rather have dressed him differently they carried out his request. We say to them, his brethren and friends, let us not grieve as one having no hope, but bow our heads in humble submission to a God who never errs, and realize our loss is his eternal gain. Although it is hard to say it at a time like this, let us try to say as our blessed Savior did, "Not my will, but thine, be done."

(Mrs.) MYRTLE RHOADES

ELDER GEORGE WASHINGTON GOIN was born in Claybourne Co., Tenn., Jan. 11, 1856, and departed this life Jan. 1, 1947 at the age of 90 years, 11 months and 20 days. In 1876 he was married to Celia Odell. To this union were born three children. One child and his wife preceded him in death in 1885. In 1886 he was united in marriage to Sarah Malinda Wilder of Bell Co., Ky. To this union were born six children.

At the age of eighteen he became a member of the Primitive Baptist church, and at the age of twenty-two he entered the ministry, devoting sixty-nine years of his life to this cause. He led a straight and upright life and was much admired by all who knew him. He moved to his farm in the Roll Community in Roger Mills Co., Oklahoma in 1911 where he resided until his death. He leaves to mourn his passing, his wife and eight children. Mrs. Emma Williams, Raymond, Wash., Mrs. Charity Wallace, Tucumcari, N. Mex., Mrs. Esther Miller, Portales, N. Mex., Mrs. Mary Springer, Crawford, Okla., E. L. Goin, Crosbyton, Tex., J. W.

Goin, Crawford, Okla., J. R. Goin, Riffe, Wash., B. B. Goin, Crawford, Okla., thirty-three grandchildren, forty-four great-grandchildren, five great-great-grandchildren and a host of friends. Six children were present for the funeral. Written by a member of the family.

Supplementing the above: Elder and sister Goin united with Hopewell Church, Mangum, Okla., Sunday, Oct. 15, 1939 from Little Flock Church, Roger Mills, Co., Okla., the said church having disbanded for some reason unknown to the writer. He was called as co-pastor of our church Nov. 19, 1939 with our pastor, Elder W. N. Green. Elder Goin was a most wonderful character in many respects. I once heard him give a narrative of his call to the ministry, which to me, was very interesting. The reason that I believed so strongly that it was the truth is that I do not think a man on earth could of himself have made up such a thing. Then to confirm the whole thing he followed it by preaching a sermon that came nearer taking me (so to speak) out of this world than any I had ever heard before or since.

He was past ninety years of age and I have heard him tell on several different occasions that he never struck a man in his life and that he was never struck by a man, and that he had never seen one man strike another. I thought it very remarkable. On account of the severe cold weather there was only a short funeral service. Elder W. N. Green was unable to be present on that account so a few near neighbors gathered in and sang a song, and had prayer after which his body was carried to its last resting place by wagon as the roads were impossible for cars.

R. L. BUCKNER, Church Clerk

SPECIAL NOTICE

Beginning with the month of January, 1948 there will be held, the Lord willing, on the first Sunday of each month at 2:30 p. m. a meeting of Old School or Predestinarian Baptists for worship, third floor of Pythian Temple building, 1012 Ninth St., N. W., Washington, D. C. Elder John D. Wood, Minister. Those desiring to meet with us are welcome. For further information, call or write to

FRANK T. SIMPKINS

5210 - H ST.,

Dillon Park,

Washington, D. C.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

Due to certain Post Office requirements in mailing the SIGNS, we find it necessary to discontinue the practice of enclosing subscription blanks just before subscription is due.

We sincerely hope our readers will closely watch the date on their wrappers and send in their renewals promptly.

R. LESTER DODSON

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON'

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NO. 4

THE PRODIGAL SON

In the parable of the Prodigal Son, as Jesus told it, there were two lost sons, not just one, as I see it. The prodigal was flagrantly wicked, ungrateful and lost through hot passion and wild living; the other was morally obedient to his father, yet lost through selfish respectability, yes, very self-righteous, spiritually. How base and inhuman! The prodigal took his money and went into a far country, forlorn, he was a pitiable object when he came shuffling home a wreck. People go to the devil with full pockets, but they never turn to God until hunger hits them. You have to shoot many men's eyes out before they can see; you have to crack their heads before they can think; knock them down before they can stand; break their hearts before they can sing, and bankrupt them before they can be rich.

Listen to the testimony of some shining examples: David said, "Before I was afflicted I went astray: but now have I kept thy word.*****It is good for me that I have been afflicted; that I might learn thy statutes." Jonah the great fish-man said, "I cried by reason of mine affliction unto the Lord." Remember also the man, Moses, trying to argue the Lord out of sending him to bring God's chosen people out of Egypt. Then what about the great apostle Paul who persecuted and wasted the church of God saying, "I verily thought with myself, that I ought to do many

things contrary to the name of Jesus of Nazareth." Do you remember that Saul of Tarsus would never have been remembered had he lived the life of luxury planned for him? He had to be blinded before he could see the way to real success. He had to be scourged and fettered to become the apostle to the Gentiles. He, too, had to be sent to prison to write his immortal messages to humanity. Even our sinless Savior learned obedience through suffering.

The elder son stayed at home, prim and proper as you please, but as hard as nails and so cold that one could skate all around him. No wonder that his brother went away! Alas for the envy and coldness which the elder brother in the true self-righteous spirit of the pharisee exhibited! How base and inhuman! The real Christian cannot feel anything but joy when a sinner is brought to Christ. He is himself a sinner who has found mercy, and glad indeed is he when others find it too, but to the prodigal now. The most striking feature is the prodigal's ingratitude. Instead of being grateful for his daily bread and his shelter beneath his father's roof, he claims fortune as a right saying, "Father, give me the portion of goods that falleth to me." This is our spirit by nature. All men, without exception, have a fallen nature inherited from our fallen parents, and instead of being overwhelmed with a sense of God's wonder-

ful goodness, we conceive ourselves entitled to further gifts but behold the *consequence* of the conduct, *the prodigal comes to poverty*. He has at last spent all. It is well when we discover *before* death that we have spent *all*, that we have wasted our hopes and affections upon the world and have obtained no lasting satisfaction in return. But what will be the despair of those who never discover their poverty until they are removed to the place where the uttermost farthing is *required*, but not one drop of water is granted? Perhaps the prodigal in days of his revelry looked forward to the time when he should have spent all, and he may have *intended* then to enter some service that would have preserved him from want, but God defeated his design and caused a mighty famine to arise at the *very moment* when he was destitute. How easily God can disappoint the sinner (as he did me nearly thirty years ago) and blast all his devices! The thoughtless companions of his mirth remembered not the prodigal in his distress—no man gave unto him. Those who had gladly partaken of his riotous feasts forsook him in his poverty as mine did me. Accomplices in guilt are not comforters in sorrow. Can the world console the sin-sick sinner in want and in sickness? Can it receive him to glory after death? God greatly blessed the prodigal's affliction to his soul, "he came to himself." God not only designs the end, but the means to the accomplishment of that end in his infinite wisdom and power. If God promises riches the way thereto is poverty, "whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth." Whom he exalteth he casteth down; whom he saveth he damneth first; he bringeth no man to heaven except he send him to hell first; when he buildeth, he casteth all down first. He is no patcher,

he cannot build on another man's foundation; he will not work until all be past remedy and brought into such a case that men may see how that his hand, his power, his mercy, his goodness and truth hath wrought altogether. He will let no man be partaker with him of his praise and glory.

God's word teaches that when God comes to work on the scene he sets nature aside; that when he intends to give any special blessing to his people, he first writes a sentence of death on that blessing as he did on Abraham's body and on Sarah's womb. Everything was against Abraham. His great age, natural inability to have a son, the powerful kingdoms of the Canaanites, the very absurdity of the expectation on his part acted against him. What does it all teach us? Does it not teach us that God is all powerful, and does his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth and none can stay his hand? It also teaches, as I see it, that Abraham *believed* the promise of God without any help from nature or man, and even in spite of all opposition of nature, of man and rank unbelief in Sarah, the church—that faith would triumph, that he would have increase—Issac's and Jacob's and Canaan, and simply because of the promise of God. Had Abraham, in the face of the promise, turned away to study science: to look into the laws of nature; to ask the opinion of some competent medical men; why, there was not a scientist in all Canaan, nor a philosopher in all Egypt but would have told him, in the face of that dead body of his, the thing cannot be, but back to the prodigal. No, He is no patcher. The weakness of God is stronger than men, and the foolishness of God is wiser than men. He does not deal with the human race by bargain but by promise. Surprising wisdom! Match-

less grace! The prodigal's first act when light dawned on his darkness was to converse with *himself*. In the midst of his distressing thoughts a ray of hope broke in. The remembrance of parental kindness raised an idea in his mind that possibly he might yet be received at the home from whence he had wandered, and at least be saved from perishing. "I will arise and go to my father." The change had come at last! And what a change! The goodness of God had led him to repentance. Couched in terms of such exquisite simplicity and power as if it was expressly framed for all heart broken penitents. Not only did he resolve to go but he *went*, went promptly too, suffering in his soul, capacitating him to obey. The kind hearted father no sooner saw his returning son, *a great way off*, than regardless of his own age and dignity, *he ran to meet him*, and instead of upbraiding him for his faults, *fell on his neck and kissed him*, giving every evidence according to the custom of the East of a cordial and welcome reception. "I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight." Note that it is after and not before the kiss of reconciliation that his honest confession finds place. The more the sinner knows and tastes of the love of God, the more he grieves ever to have sinned against the love. This is why the sinner repents and turns to God. The ray of hope breaks in and the light and love of God enter his soul *producing action*. Then follows the evidence that the prodigal is received with rejoicing. Mark the train of blessings he received. His rags were exchanged for the family costume; the best robe was put upon him; the ring of acceptance was placed on his finger—the sign, token and pledge of pardon and reconciliation which would remind him both of his wanderings and adoption. Shoes were

placed on his feet to show that he was received as a son and not as a hired servant, and to serve as an emblem of fatherly and never ending love. A banquet was prepared, the tidings of the returned prodigal were soon spread abroad, and neighbors and friends were invited to share in the thrilling joy that the *dead was alive*, and the *lost was found*. What a contrast! The unconverted man began to be in want through grace, mercy and the unconditional love of God. Converted he began to be happy. What was the difference between the two sons? There was no difference as both were wicked as we shall plainly see, but their sins were of a different nature at it were. The prodigal son was no worse in heart, it seems to me, than the elder son. Both were very wicked by nature and far from God, really very dead to the light and life of God. The father's glad welcome of his *lost* son home, and his not approving of the elder son's conduct did not cause the elder son to be wicked, but it only brought forth and manifested the wickedness and viciousness of his already proud and fallen nature. Temptations and occasions put nothing into a man, but only draw out what was in him before. So evidently it was God's redeeming, discriminating and purposeful grace which caused the approval to be made between the two sons. "It is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy." Rom. 9:16. Why God calls some (whom he will) of Adam's fallen race in mercy, and leaves others to reap the just reward of their evil deeds is too profound a mystery for me to explain unless it be for the honor and praise of his violated justice. Remember we have only to do with the divine testimony and not the grounds of the divine procedure, so let us beware of quarreling

with God, rejecting what we cannot understand, and trying to destroy what does not commend itself to us intellectually. "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts." Isa. 55: 8-9. Also consider this well in connection with this parable: "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 that are mighty; And base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea, and things which are not, to bring to naught things that are: That no flesh should glory in his presence." I Cor. 1:27-29.

To my view this parable sets forth very forcibly and plainly these truths: (1) The doctrine of redeeming grace, love and mercy to poor fallen mortals (yea, the basest of mortals) that leadeth to repentance and justification rather than a thin skinned morality which deceiveth and leadeth to death; (2) That there is no respect of persons with God, else he would have respected and chosen the elder son who was very obedient outwardly and morally to his father, even to the point of boasting of his loyalty, yet angry at his *lost* brother's good fortune. Self commendation operates against us rather than for us, "For not he that commendeth himself is approved, but whom the Lord commendeth." 2 Cor. 10:18. Proud human nature is never willing (until made willing) to be saved for nothing. Fallen man would have salvation as a natural right and not as a forfeited gratuity. He would earn it and claim it as a *debt*, not condescend to take it as an *alms*. Human nature is never willing to be saved for nothing—to return, a

ragged prodigal, a naked pauper to the banquet house of love. (Notice the elder son pleading his merits!) Notice the wild son's, the lost son's willingness, but not until after he was tamed by the grace and providence of God!

Which crime now—open wickedness or self righteousness—was more heinous in its nature in the eyes of Him who looketh on the hearts of all men? God looketh on our hearts whilst we look on the outward appearance. Note this very closely too, "I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight," also that it is after, not before, the kiss of reconciliation that this honest confession finds place. "Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight, and am no more worthy to be called thy son." Does this not prove conclusively that that poor returning prodigal had a felt sense of his father's pardoning love, and condescending mercy in his breast before he confessed his faults so grievously? Such faith and love in the heart is the cause of real repentance and not the results of it. Suppose on the other hand, the father had treated the prodigal surlily and coldly when he saw him coming back? Would it have produced the same effects—filial love and obedience in his son's breast? I say no, a million times no. He would have begged to his father through a slavish fear and confessed his wrongs for black policy's sake, yet that warm love towards his father would have been absent; he would have dreaded his father and shunned his company don't you think? There are sinners who are good through fear and are monsters at heart; people who give lip service and their money but who refuse to be merciful, just and kind. Now he really and truly loved him, trusted him and felt he was a good and gracious father, and wanted to be near him and obey him.

This parable shows forth with great clearness that God is the Author and Finisher of our faith, love and salvation, and that man is a piece of lifeless clay, spiritually, in his hands until God visits him with his lifegiving Spirit which not only gives life, but enables him to come to himself, giving also a great and burning desire to leave the swine's trough and return to his father's house, hoping to find some bread to spare. Yea, moreover it teaches, above all things, the need of man in his highest cultural attainments to be saved from himself, lest he through avarice and wickedness of his own heart destroy both himself and his neighbor. (Remember the elder son's anger at his lost brother's good fortune as well as the prodigal's hot passion and wild living!)

Poor Adam ruined sinners, flee to the hills of salvation! Run away from the deceitful, damnable and free-will doctrine of self sufficiency, self-righteousness, yea, self damnation. "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else." Isa. 45:22. Reformation is but varnished hypocrisy unless it proceeds from grace. Too many are trying to cleanse the soul of its stains with the tears of sorrow; scrubbing it with the soap of good resolves, rubbing it with the chamois of morality. Yes, too many of us, too often, like the fool, examine others but never examine ourselves. Notice this was a part of the elder son's religion, but it did not work. He has had food who feeds on other's faults. The father knew all the time that he was never considerate, merciful, just and kind, but cold, bitter, covetous and hard. Our religion should be our steering wheel, but too many of us, too often treat it as a spare tire useful only in a "blow out."

Poor sinner, cease from thine own

wisdom; lean not unto thine own understanding, beware of men! Do not forget this, if you go through life sowing criticism and sarcasm you will reap discord and enmity. Beware of self! Keep thy tongue a prisoner and your body shall go free. Nay, sunshine Christians are not safe to trust! Put your trust alone in Jesus. "Give him no rest, till he establish, and till he make Jerusalem a praise in the earth." Isa. 62:7. Flee to the hills of salvation! Man is the only creation who persists in changing the order of the world. The birds, the animals, the flowers of the field have their work and their tasks and they carry them out too, but man is never satisfied, has never been since the fall. He wants to dominate and when interfered with he starts to destroy. What he cannot understand he rejects. He never takes time to give himself a good talking to. Most of the time is spent watching other people, hearing what they say and wondering what they think. He is a great watch-dog over other people. We seldom watch ourselves. Nothing, I am very sure, but the infinite pity of God in Christ Jesus is sufficient for the pathos of human life. Come! come! Lord Jesus! Save us from our selfish selves. Up! up! my heart from self and Sinai to Golgotha! Sinner this is all you need. Watch Him climb Calvary's brow! Look and live! That is all! A sinner saved by grace.

(Elder) MILFORD HALL, Sr.
McDowell, Ky.

Route 1, Box 180, El Dorado, Ark.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: Enclosed find \$2 to renew my subscription which is overdue. I am sorry I am behind but have neglected it, thinking of course that I would send it in a day or two. As I am a newspaper salesman and very often impress upon my readers the

necessity of paying on time, this makes mine all the more inexcusable. I would like to call to the attention of your readers, as well as those of all sound Baptist publications, that it is the subscriber who pays when due that makes it possible to publish the paper at all. Without him there would be no paper. Let us all keep this in mind and thereby lessen the burden on our publishers. (We hope our readers will remember this. R. L. D.)

Brother Dodson. I have never written anything of a religious nature for publication, and this may or may not be fit to publish—you be the judge. I know if it is not attended by an unction from on high that it not only will be worthless, but detrimental to the cause of Christ, and in that case will expect you to toss it aside. I did write a little poem, which you published, in which I tried to show those who have not, to their knowledge, had an experience of grace or a change of belief (many having believed from their youth the doctrine of salvation by grace, and thereby think perhaps it was caused by their parents believing before them that they have absorbed this belief, and that it was not due to a work of grace in the heart, therefore they doubt their faith and think those acted upon as was Paul have a much better hope than themselves) that the sure and final requirement is the love for the brethren, without this all else is vain. I would like to state that the eunuch believed that Christ was or is the Son of God, and that Phillip baptized him more readily on this testimony than Ananias did Paul. In fact he had an argument with the Almighty before he would even go to see him.

"On Christ the solid Rock I stand,
All other ground is sinking sand."

This in my opinion is what John meant when he said, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren," that it was by love that we have knowledge of our hope, and not by great or bright experiences, dreams or visions, etc. To the extent we doubt we love the brethren, to the same extent we doubt we have passed from death unto life and for the same reason; and since I do not believe that any of us can truly say at all times that we know we love the brethren, we cannot say beyond a doubt that we have passed from death unto life, or at least I cannot; it is very often with me that I cannot find any evidence at all that I love the brethren, and agree with Satan that I hate the truth, the brethren and the Lord himself; he accuses me of this at all times,

("Save me, O God, the swelling floods

Break in upon my soul;

I sink and sorrows over my head

Like mighty waters roll.")

and when it pleases the Lord for me to turn mine eyes within, and I behold all the corruption and sin and everything except love, then I agree with him and hang my harp upon the willow and say, what a fool I was to ever think I had a hope or to base my hope upon such little evidence; surely no one but you would have ever put his trust in so little, says Satan; and if some one will tell me how, or rather show me how to avoid these afflictions I will appreciate it more than words can convey, and will be forever grateful, and will join up with those who say that you can, by obedience, avoid these chastenings, yet acknowledge that they, themselves, do not. I heard one say while preaching recently that "You can be obedient to anything God commands you to do; that he gave you power to be obedient and that the only

reason you were not was the weakness of your flesh." I agree perfectly as to the reason we are not obedient but how for this weak flesh to overcome its own weakness I find not. "O wretched man that I am!" and I stay in this deplorable, wretched condition until, as Paul put it when in a great storm at sea, all hope is gone; then the Lord returns and oh what joy! all the former evidences of grace that appeared as mole-hills while I was in bondage suddenly become mountains; and the sins that cast me down just as suddenly become mole-hills, and the rapture I experience then is so sweet that I feel I will never doubt again; that the next time I am cast into the pit it will be different; that I will remember the former deliverances of old and beard Satan in his den—NEXT TIME. What delusion!

'Tis then I look but cannot see
Christ stands between the law and me,
And realize, with sickening dread,
The law revived, we thought was dead.

Its bands seem stronger than before,
Our all we give; it asks much more,
We find we can't it satisfy,
And without hope give up to die.

'Tis then I look again and see
Christ stands between the law and me,
Once more my rapture knows no bounds,
Once more I'm healed of all my wounds.

Once more I climb to mountains height,
Once more thick clouds obscure my sight,
Once more the law claims legal prey,
Once more I sink in miry clay.

Again I rise, again I fall,
First honey taste, then bitter gall;
O tell me brother, tell me pray
Is thus your walk from day to day?

If thus it be then let me, pray,
Go with you in this narrow way;
'Though in myself no good I find
Fain would I leave this world behind.

Fain would I quit this house of clay
Where conflict rages night and day;
Fain would I soar to worlds above
Where naught there is but peace and love.

Fain would I cross bold Jordan's shore,
Where doubts and fears molest no more;
Where, when I look, I always see
Christ satisfied the law for me.

Yours in a little hope.

C. B. BRITT

(Continued from March issue.)

The church declares (militant) that she keeps herself separate from the world. Is there any evil more worldly, more grossly presumptuous or more indelicate of Satan's workshop than malicious, deliberate and poisonous gossip, done with intent to tear a brother or sister to pieces? To the church is given the law, satisfied, made just, holy and pure by a loving Savior. Those in the church know or should know the doctrine. "Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, whosoever thou art that judgest: for wherein thou judgest another, thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same things." Rom. 2:1. Paul in First Corinthians says, "Now I beseech you brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye shall all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment." God is no respecter of persons, therefore, there is no foundation for jealousy and envy among the brethren. The God of heaven in his wisdom considers the natural or Adamic nature as nothing. The spirit of man, if he be quickened and called, is all beloved of Christ, one not whit more than another, and the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men who hold the truth in unrighteousness. Backbiters, maliciousness, haters of God without understanding, covenant breakers—implacable unmerciful; This does not mean that man can break the ever-

lasting covenant of Christ, but that malicious and gossiping, tale bearing people in the church have violated the holy sanctuary of God just as surely as if they took a part in any other wordly affair; love, compassion, sympathy, kindness and understanding is what God gives to the church. Would we be holier than God? What a blessed privilege to belong to the true church of the living God! What a costly purchase she is—she should be a place of sweet rest, holy ground.

In the divine wisdom of God mercy is seen in judgment and the riches of grace displayed in the fact the brazen serpent was exalted conspicuously upon a pole in the very midst of the dying Israelites, placed just where they were, so in like manner did Jesus come just where the lost are and lifted up before all on the cross, a spectacle to men and angels as the great remedy provided for sin. He is also exalted on the gospel pole as the Savior, the life giving Redeemer of poor, undone, ill and hell deserving sinners. "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth." It is a command by God himself, and those bitten must look to the brazen serpent before they experience the sweets of healing and restoration. Life comes with the look, "Every one that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, shall live." The Lord is faithful and keeps his promises. Faith never looks to Jesus in vain. Now we see it is love, mercy, grace, pity all the way from Genesis to Revelation—how he loves his church, his bride! He loved her so much he went down with her, came up highly victorious, and lifted her up with him, one with him and in him. Is Christ divided? God forbid. He has placed a vineyard in a very fruitful hill and Judah is his pleasant plant. "Moreover, thou son of man, take thee one stick, and write upon it, For Judah,

and for the children of Israel his companions: then take another stick, and write upon it, For Joseph, the stick of Ephraim, and for all the house of Israel his companions: And join them one to another into one stick; and they shall become one in thine hand." Ezek. 37:16-17. "But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us: Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby." No place for enmity, envy and jealousy in the church for he came and preached peace to you which were afar off and to them that were nigh. There is no place for any creature to feel himself above his brother. The grace and faith are of Christ only, and only by the blood of Jesus can any be saved, thus humility is the theme, compassion, love and understanding, for the militant church to live in peace. "I have put off my coat; how shall I put it on? I have washed my feet; how shall I defile them?" When Jesus died on Calvary he forever put away the flesh and put on a new coat of righteousness, untouchable by flesh as he told Mary Magdalene at the tomb when he had risen. He forever washed his feet, the church, and they are no longer under the law but under grace. He has satisfied the law, then by what divine authority does malicious gossip and destructive mischief use her poison darts to destroy a brother or sister in the church? He is clothed and has clothed his church in immaculate purity and it is holy ground, a solemn place to worship and

to praise him, and the rule of discipline never should condone gossip at the meetings or away from the service. Christ is his own interpreter and we see the rod (law) given to Aaron blossom forth into the sweet fragrance of grace. Aaron was made to wash his feet, new robes were provided for him and his sons, the oil of grace and the perfume of God's love anointed them. A sign of holiness to the Lord. What a wonderful God! His hand has laid the foundations of the earth and his right hand has spurned the heavens; "Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever;" "He only is my rock and my salvation; he is my defence; I shall not be greatly moved;" "In Judah is God known; his name is great in Israel;" "He spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast;" "Unless the Lord had been my help, my soul had almost dwelt in silence. When I said, my foot slippeth; thy mercy, O Lord, held me up;" "The Lord hath made known his salvation: his righteousness hath he openly showed in the sight of the heathen;" "He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill;" "Tremble thou earth, at the presence of the Lord, at the presence of the God of Jacob;" "God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints." What price, O humility! "To speak evil of no man, to be no brawlers, but gentle, shewing all meekness unto all men. For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another. But after that the kindness and love of God our Savior toward man appeared. Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy

Ghost; Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior. That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life." Titus 3:2-7. What beauty, what love, what mercy!

The commands of the satisfied and justified law is to the church, not the world. We of ourselves cannot do good work, but after he has quickened and made alive it is his good works "for we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." What are some of these works for church members? Visit or write to the sick, physically sick or soul sick; visit the widows and orphans, and we would do well to meditate upon the thought that it is not only a natural visit, but those who profess an experience of grace can really go to dwell with the ones who feel to be an orphan or widow spiritually; give generously to the needy regardless of creed (and do not broadcast it); give a kind word if nothing else to the less fortunate than yourself; never try to tear down anyone, but help them up; examine ourselves before maliciously hurting a member, and there will be less time for mischief or desire to do it. "Great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised in the city of our God, in the mountain of his holiness. Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is Mount Zion." What cost the pearl of great price; What beauty the church! What a privilege to drink at her fountain! "A garden inclosed is my sister, my spouse; a spring shut up, a fountain sealed.***** A fountain of gardens, a well of living waters, and streams from Lebanon." He sweetened the waters of Marah. Oh that we would prize her and watch and catch the little foxes that spoil the

vines for the vines have tender grapes. (The foxes of malicious gossip sly and deadly.) She is priceless, let us strive to keep her in peace. Oh, holy dove. His vineyard, how fair and how pleasant art thou, O Love for delights? The church in peace! In bonds of love and fellowship, and in the hope of his mercy, to the saints of God. Humbly,

(Mrs.) LEONA TUTTLE

DEAR SISTER ALICE: My heart seems to be with you all this morning and I see you over at sister Allen's gathered to worship the true and living God, the young and the old, the sick and feeble ones. Those who profess the truth as it is in Jesus, (those also who are without the visible church) who through the grace of God have been able to come home to their friends and tell what great things he has done for them whereof we are glad. I wish I could be with you that we might feed together on the bread of life. There are no people like my people, no God like my God. He alone rules in the armies of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth; none can stay his hand or say unto him what doest thou. When we are made to consider that this great source of life has deigned to look upon us as his children we are lost in wonder and amazement. The light had to be put into the pitchers, pitchers of clay, something that had to be broken before the light shone forth. They were to blow their trumpets and say, "The sword of the Lord, and of Gideon."

The word of truth is put into the hearts of his children to-day which is sharper than any two edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit and of joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Many are called but few are chosen to know and feel this great truth. We can but

say wonderful, one of the names applied to our great High Priest and King. This word of truth not only divides us from the world, but with the knowledge of it comes an overwhelming love for those who know and hold those precious things dear to their hearts also. "Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound: they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance." The same light shining in the pitchers of clay. It is then we mount up on wings as eagles, run and not weary, walk and not faint. These sweet unexpected seasons come to us when we bask in the smiles of our Beloved, and we find them sweeter than the honey and the honey-comb. The earnest of the inheritance is given to us, his chosen, so we do know whereof we affirm. Some feel it is a little hope, but if we have a hope at all it is not little, the love of God to usward has implanted it within our hearts and his work is perfect.

Dear sister, I have felt to write a few lines to you all this morning. When you meet together you may read it if you deem it worthy. I am only a poor sinner, saved as I have a reason to believe, by the blood and righteousness of Christ. On the cruel cross he cried, "It is finished," the work his Father gave him to do, save his people from their sins and we have entered into that rest. "There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God. For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his." Heb. 4:9-10. Saved by grace. There is nothing in us to merit esteem, or give our Creator delight. All love to us and the provision made when as yet there were none of us. I am so glad there are a few who can understand my language. If I were to talk it to the world they could not receive it. The Lord has been so good to us;

we have had a chance to worship under our own vine and fig tree with none to molest or make us afraid. When we consider the strife and commotion of the present time we can but ask—will it ever be so? God only knows, but one thing we do know, he will never forsake his own. Graven on the palms of his hands we are continually before him, and strength will be given us to bear all he sees fit to bring into our lives. What a wonderful helper we have, one who is able. I am so glad he has revealed himself to me, and like Mephibosheth when I feast at his table my deformities (sin) are all covered. We had such a good visit with you. Let me hear from you (when you can spare the time) if you were able to get Elder Vaughn. With love to you and all the household of faith. Your sister in hope of better things to come. NELLIE.

(Sister Alice Hall, North Berwick, Me., has requested the publication of this excellent letter from our late sister, Nellie Palmer. We are glad to grant her request. Ed.)

Box 185, Weslaco, Texas

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON, DEAR BROTHER: Your article in the February (1947) issue on the new birth surely was food to my troubled soul. That is the kind of doctrine that gives this poor sinner that does the sinning a little hope. I know there are some of our brethren that differ on this, they cannot see how a sinner can be born again of God here in time and still be a sinner. I have wished many times that I could explain it so they could see it, but I am not God, just a poor sinner, a beggar at mercy's door. I realize the words of our precious Jesus are true, "without me ye can do nothing." Yes, that holds good after regeneration as well as before, "without me ye can do nothing."

I knew a precious Old Baptist preacher that was blessed one morning with views on the scriptures so plain to him that he thought he could show his companion just how it was, and the more he explained the madder she got which developed into the worst wrangle they had ever had. He went to the field to plow, studying over what had taken place. The thought came to him, I am trying to take God's place. Feeling so condemned he quit plowing and went to the house and apologized to his wife. Yes, sometimes it just seems so plain to his little ones that they think they can make the unregenerated see what they see, but we find it is impossible, for except ye be born again ye cannot see the kingdom. Yes, that kingdom of our blessed Lord is hid from the world.

One time a precious brother got angry with me and it was about a year before I found out the cause of his anger. A sister gave me a hint so I went to see him, and after talking awhile I asked him what he thought the whole-man doctrine was? He replied, "you ought to know, you preached it at Mount Olive a year ago. I said, "Well, what do you think it is?" He said, "It makes a person holy and sinless here in time and ready for heaven." I said, "My dear brother, you know I do not believe that." After we had talked it over we were agreed and have been very close to each other ever since. I do not use the word whole-man in my discourses, no need of that. Just to say with John, "except a man be born again" is enough and gives me hope. It was man that sinned and it was man that needed something done for him; it was man that had the first birth and it is man that needs the second birth. The second birth quickens the man and makes him alive to sin, but not free

from sin. Yes, the second birth benefits the man here in time by giving him a hope that after this life and in the resurrection he will be given a glorious spiritual body free from sin. Sin will not be condemned in that body like it is here now, but it will be free from sin.

I am hoping that our brethren everywhere will show brotherly love one for another, and not let those differences on view points of scriptures cause any trouble; where they cross each other let it be a friendly cross. If our differences do hurt let us go to our brother and carry out the scripture where it says, "Come now, and let us reason together." That applies to brethren, they can reason together, keeping in mind that "without me ye can do nothing." We cannot reason with the world or unregenerated persons, but where love flows from breast to breast there is much good to come from reasoning together.

When I was about ten years old I had an impression that we would some day have to hide out in dens and caves to worship the Lord. That has more or less stayed with me all these years, but some time back I felt I was mistaken, that it will never come in my lifetime for here I am fifty-eight years of age and will soon be coming to my life's end; we still have our liberty to worship in public, however, lately I feel the events of world affairs are pointing to the time when our liberty will be taken from us and we will once more suffer persecution.

A few years back a precious sister told me that she dreamed a dictator from Europe was over here and had the Old Baptists all lined up and was shooting them one by one. When her turn came he raised his gun and shot,

her body fell over on the ground with a hole in the breast. She said, "Well life after death, here I am alive and there is my old body lying on the ground." What a wonderful dream! This sister has since gone on and while trying to speak at the funeral I could not keep from thinking of that glorious dream she had. Pages could be written along this line, it is so wonderful. Yes, the Lord's little ones have a life that the bullets cannot destroy. How blessed they are, and how precious in God's sight. Our blessed Savior had a body like ours, sin excepted, he suffered in our stead, paid the debt that we owed and set all of the little ones free; redeemed them out from under sin and condemnation; washed them whiter than snow and made them acceptable to the Father. O glorious condition that they are in, but yet a little longer we will have to go through the trials and troubles of this life. Love to all the household of faith, and remember a poor sinner in your prayers.

(Elder) E. B. AULT

Crawford, Okla.

DEAR BROTHER ELY: I will give you a sketch of my faith the best that God will enable me. "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." I believe that God worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, and that he hath a wise design in every event which he permitteth or causeth to come to pass; that each event and all transactions of men, even the vilest, are so many links in the great chain of providence by which the eternal purposes of God are connected together and drawn on to their ultimate and glorious consummation; that from eternity God drew the wondrous plan

of his government, viewed the operations and bearings of every event, and assigned each its place and usefulness. His will, purpose, decree and predestination are inseparable.

He viewed through time and declared the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, and this all tends to the honor and glory of the infinite, holy, eternal and unchangeable God. What he has declared must come the very way that he foresaw and purposed it should come and so divinely arranged, seeing the wicked of all worlds purposing that the wicked shall do wickedly, without forcing or infusing it in them to cause them to act, he overrules all events and acts of wicked men to the praise of his glory and the good of his people. His eye is in every place beholding the evil and the good, permitting nothing to take place that would tarnish his justice. Destruction being uncovered and hell naked before him, he stretched the north out over the empty place and hanged the earth upon nothing. Every wheel is moving in its designed direction, rolling in various ways, performing the purpose decreed, every cog meeting its place and all rendering glory to the most high, holy and infinite sovereign God.

Having willed and purposed every atom and particle of the earth, giving every creature of every kind its form and being, he feeds the fowls of the air and makes grass grow for the cattle. This is he who hath chosen a definite number of Adam's race and hath affirmed that they shall be holy and without blame before him in love, having bequeathed to them in his will all the graces that accompany their salvation, sending his Son, our adorable Redeemer, down from the shining courts to save this elect people, bearing their

sins in his blessed body on the cross and putting them away forever. We hear him who cannot lie cry with a loud voice, loaded with mountains of sin for the objects of his love saying, "It is finished," going down into the heart of the earth and rising triumphant the third morn.

All the transactions of this wicked work God's hand and counsel determined should be done by wicked men, but he rose a conquering King over death, hell and the grave, and ascended back to his native heaven which fills our poor heart with comfort and my eyes flow with tears to know that our blessed Savior this moment is making intercession for us with groanings within that cannot be uttered. He has fulfilled and rendered satisfaction, but his salvation to poor sinners is still going on, and will until the last one is delivered from the kingdom of darkness and robed in that spotless robe crowned with glory and brought in sweet fellowship with God himself. This is part of my views. My heart is so full I cannot write more. Your little brother in gospel bonds, saved by grace if saved at all.

(The late Elder) G. W. GOIN

Route 3, Coleman, Texas

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON, DEAR BROTHER: I enjoy reading the *Signs* also other Old Baptist papers I receive, though at times I may not agree with all that is printed in them, or perhaps I had better say I do not understand. This brings to my mind "Blessed are the meek." If we see ourselves sinners in the sight of God it is indeed a blessing of God through Jesus Christ our Savior. Then we are meek, the blessing comes first then meekness or obedience follows. Men would rather have obedience first, and the blessing to follow thus giving man something to do and a little honor

in this life, both of escaping chastisement and receiving a blessing. I used to believe it that way, but my experience, if I am not deceived in myself, teaches me differently.

Christ says, "Blessed are the merciful," not that you will be blessed if you will be merciful. When I see brethren or read the letters from brethren who are meek and merciful it means something to me. A man can be firm, unmovable and yet be meek, merciful and speak in love of God. I often think of the words of the apostle Peter, "Neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock." Surely meekness is one of the qualifications of an "ensample." One who is meek hears the voice of his Master and follows him not man, "a stranger will they not follow." One who is meek feels honored to be at his brother's feet. It is always "intreat me not to leave thee" and never you must do so and so if you want to go along with me. Meekness, showing mercy, peacemakers, to my mind are some of the qualifications of an "ensample" or example. We know our sufficiency is not of ourselves but of God. I ask myself the question, do we seek to please men or God? It is written if we seek to please men we are not the servants of God. Am I what I profess to be? Lord God of heaven and earth have mercy and give us a mind and understanding that we may both speak and act in a manner that is well pleasing in thy sight, showing kindness and mercy to those who may disagree with us, yet contending for the truth in meekness, having no man's person in admiration but ever looking to the author and finisher of our faith.

Two brethren may have different

opinions on some subject, but if both are meek, charity is manifested. If one lords it over God's heritage and tries to take the church his way there will be a division. The meek, the peacemakers and examples will not follow that haughty spirit who tries to lord it over the flock. I know of myself I am nothing and less than nothing, but I hope I am one of those who are "precious in his sight."

It does me good to read letters from brethren and sisters whom I have never met that advocate the same doctrine I believe—the gospel of peace. The gospel is the power of God, and he has given us the spirit of love and a sound mind, if so we be "born again." These peculiar people are as meek as a lamb if they are His lambs. They are lovers of peace, the peace he left with his church. They have experienced that peace within them, "Christ in you the hope of glory." They will not bite and devour and lord it over others, but are willing for all men to worship as they see fit and ask only the same privilege. They love order and discipline and believe it is shown by practice, by how we act and how we live. This, in a brief way according to my understanding, sets forth what my brethren and all the churches with whom we are associated believe and contend for. I did not intend to write so much but this word *peace* was on my mind, and I most certainly believe the peace the heaven born child enjoys begins within you for, "Behold, the kingdom of God is within you." That is where the "Prince of Peace" is now reigning, exercising the creature by faith. In hope of that world to come wherein dwelleth nothing but righteousness.

(Elder) C. U. LANDERS

Mardela Springs, Md.

TO THE SIGNS OF THE TIMES: I enclose check for \$2 to renew subscription for the *Signs* which has heretofore been sent to I. H. Evans, my father, and which was due in March 1947. I wish to announce his passing to the great beyond on May 20, 1947. Several months before his death he asked me to take over the renewals of the dear old paper that we have so loved and enjoyed. He was a subscriber for many years, in fact I cannot remember when its arrival around the first of the month was not an anticipated pleasure for father as well as mother who left us twelve years ago and most of the children of which there are seven.

I believe those that enjoy your precious paper are those that have tasted of the good things that God has prepared for his children; those that know they are sinners and learn it more convincingly every day they live; and that they are forever lost and utterly helpless to do a thing about it for all their self-righteousness is as filthy rags lest God has mercy on them; and only those that believe in a full and perfected, a finished salvation; that having been finished when Jesus on the wretched cross said, "It is finished." He could not have meant anything else other than the work his Father gave him to do, which was to save sinners from their sins of which I know I must be chief. Am I not right?

I surely do know that I enjoy reading the writings of those that are gifted that they can so ably write and so beautifully set forth the wonderful teachings of God our Savior. While I am not so blessed I hope I am thankful even to be permitted to go and hear God's word so ably expounded, and to be able to read, and I hope to understand, the Lord's dealings with his dear

ones. I do not know why I have made this so lengthy for I did not intend to. Please excuse mistakes, and if this has been boring I feel that it was or is lovingly submitted. I humbly beg of you when at the throne of grace remember a sinner saved by grace if at all.

(Mrs.) MINNIE E. GAMBRILL

(The foregoing letter will undoubtedly heartily recommend itself to our readers. While we realize that such knowledge as is manifested by the writer was neither inherited from nor taught by her earthly parents, it is most gratifying to know that the children of Old School Baptists are being taught of the Lord to know those things which are hid from the wise and prudent, and revealed unto babes. We desire to praise God for his manifold mercies to the children of men. We extend our heartfelt sympathy to our friend in the loss of her loved ones and will gladly send the *Signs* in her name. May the dear Lord lead his people forth by the right way, that they may go to a city of habitation, is our prayer for his own dear name's sake. R. L. D.)

Ingalls, Ark.

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON, DEAR FRIEND:

I hand you herewith my check for the renewal of my subscription. If not deceived the *Signs* sets forth the truth as I understand and believe it. If one such as I may express an opinion, it is in accordance with a thus saith the Lord. Sincerely your friend,

CHARLIE HARROD

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EDITORIAL

RUTHERFORD, N. J.

APRIL 1948

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES

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Rutherford, N. J.

.... THOUGHTS

I have read with much interest the editorial of Elder E. J. Lambert on prayer, in the January 1948 issue of our paper, the *Signs of the Times*, and desire to pen some thoughts also on this subject. When I handed my article to Elder Dodson for the December issue of the paper, I stated to him that I might write more on the subject later. I am looking forward to reading the article by Elder Griffin on the same subject, and hope that what I may say will not be a repetition of anything he will present, yet hoping that all the articles will be in perfect harmony, one with the other.

I have hesitated to express myself further at this time about prayer, knowing we have had several articles on the subject lately, yet I know it is an endless subject, and when we have all expressed ourselves there will be much that could still be said.

In my last article I tried to show that our posture in prayer was not the important thing; that the thing needful was to be humbled before the Lord and pray with the spirit and under-

standing. Now let us consider the difference in the praying of the Lord's people when first quickened by the spirit, and afterward when they are given faith to believe and Christ has appeared as their salvation. When God first touches the heart to reveal to a person a lost state in Adam and the depravity of their nature, they are as a man who has lived in darkness all his life, and has never known before what he was by nature. When this light shined on the apostle Paul he was on his way to put in prison people he would later be caused to love and fellowship, yet at that time he had neither for them, but rather hatred and malice, believing he was doing God a service in bringing them into bondage. His first movement was to fall upon the ground and say, who art thou? Suddenly blindness overtook him. He could no longer see where he was going, but was made to cry out, Lord what will you have me to do? Two things had happened to him: a light had shined about him and in him, and a voice had spoken to him.

When this voice first speaks to one, his own righteousness appears as filthy rags, and he is as one suddenly awakened to find himself surrounded by poisonous reptiles. The first movement is to save himself. To the law he flees hoping to find salvation there, believing there can be no salvation for him except by obeying its commands. Often the pages of the Old Testament are searched, hoping that he will find some ground for hope; resolutions are made only to be broken; good intentions fail to be lived up to. The word says the soul that sinneth shall die. "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them." Every effort that is made to improve his condition only

sinks him deeper, as a man trying to extricate himself from quicksand. Down, down he goes as one without hope. God is teaching such that, "Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm." The need of mercy appears as never before; the law is seen as holy, and the sinner carnal; sin has revived and he has died, died to hope of salvation; then he can adopt the publican's prayer, "God be merciful to me a sinner;" he likewise cannot lift his eyes to heaven; mercy does not seem possible for such a one; as a criminal standing before the bar to receive the penalty of death, so he has no hope; Jesus Christ is nowhere in the picture, he has died for some one but not for him; Toplady's hymn is not for him for he has no cross to cling to; truly the language of the poet that said, "If my soul is sent to hell, thy righteous law approves it well," is made known to him, yet he prays for mercy without any grounds on which to base his hope; the smoke of Sinai appears with thunderings and threatening; he cannot approach God because the one touching the mountain is to die; the smiting of the breast is his lot.

What a blessing that God does not leave us there. "When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the Lord will hear them." What a blessed promise this is. The prayer is answered. Mercy appears in the form of Christ Jesus; faith is given to look at him; he is the chiefest among ten thousand, altogether lovely, looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of his faith; the love of God for sinners appears in the blood; the soul can repeat with joy, Jesus died for me. How different is his praying now to what it has been, an intercessor has been given; a mediator, one to appear in the presence

of God for him. His prayer is now in Jesus' name. The precious one now draws nigh and says, what ye ask in my name ye shall receive if ye have faith. The answer is, yea Lord, I believe thou art the one that should come. The head is now lifted from earth toward heaven. Drawn by the everlasting cords of God's love for him in Christ, one can say, "I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help. My help cometh from the Lord." This is the bringing up out of the horrible pit and the miry clay, setting the feet upon a rock (Christ) and establishing the going. How drawing is this work in the heart, the praying is as a child talking to his father. The father's ear is no longer heavy because he always hears his son. Jesus is no longer one to read about. He draws nigh saying, "I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world." In times of trouble and distress he often gives the word to the heart, "It is I; be not afraid." No storm is too great for him to calm, no sea is too rough for him to still. Ah my friends, have you prayed to him when at times you felt he was near by, even in the room?

Such love causes one to want to live in honor to him, to adorn the profession they have made, to seek to know his will and to have his guidance and instruction.

"Oh that the Lord would guide my ways
To keep his statutes still!
O that my God would grant me grace
To know and do his will!"

The intercession is to one who maketh intercession according to the will of God, pleading his own blood as the justifying of his people. May God give us to lift our head believing our redemption is drawing nigh, and pray with the spirit and with the understanding.

D. V. S.

There is a path which no fowl knoweth,
and which the vulture's eye hath not
seen: The lion's whelps have not trod-
den it, nor the fierce lion passed by it.

Job 28: 7-8

We have a mind to present some thoughts in connection with the above Scripture for the consideration of our readers. Farther on in the chapter much is made of wisdom, and in the twelfth verse the questions are asked, "But where shall wisdom be found? and where is the place of understanding?" Job then proceeds to show how valuable wisdom is and how very difficult it is to obtain. He says, "Man knoweth not the price thereof; neither is it found in the land of the living." He then says "The depth saith, It is not in me: and the sea saith, It is not with me. It cannot be gotten for gold, neither shall silver be weighed for the price thereof. It cannot be valued with the gold of Ophir, with the precious onyx, or the sapphire. The gold and the crystal cannot equal it: and the exchange of it shall not be for jewels of fine gold. No mention shall be made of coral, or of pearls: for the price of wisdom is above rubies. The topaz of Ethiopia shall not equal it, neither shall it be valued with pure gold. Whence then cometh wisdom? and where is the place of understanding?" Job then declares that "God understandeth the way thereof, and he knoweth the place thereof," and concludes by saying, "Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding." It occurs to us there are two kinds of wisdom: one is earthly, sensual and devilish, and the other is heavenly, inscrutable and divine. According to the wisdom of this world, which is one of God's gifts to humanity, mankind has sought out many ingenious and wonderful inventions and is seemingly doing the impossible. Perhaps it has never before attained such dizzy heights as

in the age in which we are now living. We believe Job had reference to this earthly wisdom when he said in the beginning of this chapter, "Surely there is a vein for the silver, and a place for gold where they fine it. Iron is taken out of the earth, and brass is molten out of the stone." While man by his science can go down into the bowels of the earth and bring up the most precious of earthly things, such as silver and gold, his bounds are so fixed that he cannot ascend into the heights of heavenly wisdom and discover the things of God, for no man by searching can find out God. He dwelleth in the height to which none can attain. The things of God are hid from the wise and prudent and revealed unto babes. What is under consideration in our text are God's ways in dealing with his people, which are past finding out. The path which they have to tread cannot be discerned by those possessing the keenest and most far-reaching powers of vision of all earthly creatures. The eagle and the vulture of the fowl kingdom are the most famously noted for their powers of perception to sight their prey at long distances, but their eyes cannot break through or penetrate into the secret places of the Most High God. The Psalmist declares, "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him; and he will shew them his covenant." This was what Job, the servant of God, was made to know. The prophet Isaiah tells us that the way of the Lord is an highway, and it is called "The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it; but it shall be for those; the way-faring men, though fools, shall not err therein. No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon, it shall not be found there; but the redeemed (of the Lord) shall walk there." It seems to us that Job, above all others, had to walk in that path, which

no fowl knoweth, and which the vulture's eye hath not seen. God, according to his wise and infinite purpose, bestowed his earthly bounty upon Job to such an extent that he was declared to be "the greatest of all the men in the east." He had a perfect number of children, and besides he had sheep, camels, oxen, she asses, and a very great household. It would seem that he had all the wealth and honor that his natural heart could desire. The most that can be said of such things, however, is that they perish with the using. Like the flowers of the field, they all soon pass away and are forgotten. Job saw it all vanish, and when he did it is said that he arose, "rent his mantle, and shaved his head, and fell down upon the ground, and worshipped, and said, Naked came I out of my mother's womb, and naked shall I return thither: the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." As though this was not enough, he must suffer personal afflictions beyond anything that can be imagined by being smitten "with sore boils" from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head, but out of his extremity arose the cry of faith, the quality of which was only equalled by that of Abraham when he went forth to offer his son, Isaac, as a sacrifice unto the Lord. Hear ye him: "Oh that my words were now written! oh that they were printed in a book! That they were graven with an iron pen and lead in the rock for ever! For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: And though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me." He staggered not at the promise of God, but verily believed him, and it was accounted un-

to him for righteousness, for he lived to see the hand of the Lord in the land of the living. The record is, "So the Lord blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning: for he had fourteen thousand sheep, and six thousand camels, and a thousand yoke of oxen, and a thousand she asses. He had also seven sons and three daughters. And he called the name of the first, Jemima; and the name of the second, Kezia; and the name of the third, Kerenhappuch. And in all the land were no women found so fair as the the daughters of Job: and their father gave them inheritance among their brethren." This would seem to indicate that in the kingdom of God we are all one in Christ Jesus, and are joint heirs with him in that inheritance, which is incorrupt, undefiled, and that fadeth not away.

Job was also terribly taunted by his three workmonger friends (?) who came to mourn with him, but they understood not his case and had to stand afar off, for "his grief was very great." They accused him of restraining prayer before God, and propounded to him such questions as the following: "Art thou the first man that was born? or wast made before the hills? Hast thou heard the secret of the Lord? and dost thou restrain wisdom to thyself? What knowest thou, that we know not? what understandest thou, which is not in us? With us are both the grayheaded and very aged men, much elder than thy father. Are the consolations of God small with thee? is there any secret thing with thee? Why doth thine heart carry thee away? and what do thine eyes wink at, That thou turnest thy spirit against God, and lettest such words go out of thy mouth? What is man, that he should be clean? and he which is born of a woman, that he should be righteous?" Job answered by saying, "I have heard many such things:

miserable comforters are ye all." Again, he said, "What ye know, the same do I know also: I am not inferior unto you. Surely I would speak to the Almighty, and I desire to reason with God. But ye are forgers of lies, ye are all physicians of no value. O that ye would altogether hold your peace! and it should be your wisdom. Hear now my reasoning, and hearken to the pleading of my lips. Will ye speak wickedly for God? and talk deceitfully for him? Will ye accept his person? will ye contend for God? Is it good that he should search you out? or as one man mocketh another, do ye so mock him? He will surely reprove you, if ye do secretly accept persons." The Lord's people in this gospel dispensation are likewise taunted by workmongers with the doctrines of conditionalism and creature works, but like Job they know what others know, and even more for they are truly taught of the Lord.

Job felt to curse the day of his birth and to long for the day of death, but both of these having been appointed by the God of his life, with all that intervened, all that he could do was to stand in his lot and endure as a good soldier. God had set him up as a mark for his enemies to shoot at, and as our Saviour could not push aside the cup assigned to him, but had to drink it all, even to the very dregs, so Job had to accept what was wrung out to him. In the midst of it all, however, we hear him saying, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." On one occasion we hear him saying, "Even to-day is my complaint bitter: my stroke is heavier than my groaning. Oh that I knew where I might find him! that I might come even to his seat! I would order my cause before him, and fill my mouth with arguments. I would know the words which he would answer me, and understand what he would say

unto me. Will he plead against me with his great power? No; but he would put strength in me. There the righteous might dispute with him; so should I be delivered forever from my judge. Behold, I go forward, but he is not there; and backward, but I cannot perceive him: On the left hand, where he doth work, but I cannot behold him: he hideth himself on the right hand, that I cannot see him: But he knoweth the way that I take: when he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold." Wonderful, indeed, was his faith. How true are the words of the apostle Paul where he said, "For we walk by faith, not by sight." It was even testified of Jesus, who was "the author and finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." If it is to be manifested that we are the members of his mystical body we, too, shall have to look beyond the things of this transitory world and lay hold upon the hope which is set before us. At this point there comes to us the words of the poet in that wonderful hymn,

"Am I a soldier of the cross,
A follower of the Lamb?
And shall I fear to own his cause,
Or blush to speak his name?
Must I be carried to the skies,
On flowery beds of ease;
While others fought to win the prize,
And sail'd through bloody seas?
Are there no foes for me to face;
Must I not stem the flood?
Is this vile world a friend to grace,
To help me on to God?
Sure I must fight if I would reign;
Increase my courage, Lord!
I'll bear the toil, endure the pain,
Supported by thy word.
Thy saints, in all this glorious war,
Shall conquer though they die:
They see the triumph from afar,
And seize it with their eye.
When that illustrious day shall rise,
And all thy armies shine
In robes of victory through the skies,
The glory shall be thine."

Job was sent to be an example and a comfort to the flock of God, therefore he must partake in large measure of the afflictions of the saints in all ages of the world. He was a true witness to the sovereignty of God, and acknowledged his power to be infinite and unsearchable. God had made known unto him his wonderful works when he spoke to him out of the whirlwind, and said, "Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge? Gird up now thy loins like a man; for I will demand of thee, and answer thou me. Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? declare, if thou hast understanding. Who hath laid the measures thereof, if thou knowest? or who hath stretched the line upon it? Whereupon are the foundations thereof fastened? or who laid the corner stone thereof? When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy? Or who shut up the sea with doors, when it brake forth, as if it had issued out of the womb? When I made the cloud the garment thereof, and thick darkness a swaddling band for it, And brake up for it my decreed place, and set bars and doors, And said, Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further: and here shall thy proud waves be stayed? Hast thou commanded the morning since thy days; and caused the dayspring to know his place; That it might take hold of the ends of the earth, that the wicked might be shaken out of it? It is turned as clay to the seal; and they stand as a garment. And from the wicked their light is withholden, and the high arm shall be broken." This questioning of the Lord is continued on in the thirty-eighth and thirty-ninth chapters, and finally Job answered the Lord, and said, "Behold, I am vile; what shall I answer thee? I will lay mine hand upon my mouth. Once have I spoken; but I will not

answer: yea, twice; but I will proceed no further." He was overwhelmed with a realization of God's greatness, and made a frank and full confession before God when he said, "I know that thou canst do everything, and that no thought can be withholden from thee. Who is he that hideth counsel without knowledge? therefore have I uttered that I understood not; things too wonderful for me, which I knew not. Hear, I beseech thee, and I will speak: I will demand of thee, and declare thou unto me. I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee. Wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes." God showed his approval of Job and his disapproval of his three friends by directing them to take offerings to Job, to be offered up in their behalf, and said, "my servant Job shall pray for you: for him will I accept: lest I deal with you after your folly, in that ye have not spoken of me the thing which is right, like my servant Job." The Lord then turned the captivity of Job, "when he prayed for his friends: also the Lord gave Job twice as much as he had before." There was a home coming of his friends and brethren and a feast and gifts, and the Lord wonderfully blessed the latter end of Job's life. Do we need marvel that he should have said, "There is a path which no fowl knoweth, and which the vulture's eye hath not seen: the lion's whelps have not trodden it, nor the fierce lion passed by it." Truly, the wisdom of this world, as signified by the fowl and the vulture, and the strength of the creature, as signified by the lion's whelps and the fierce lion, can neither behold nor tread upon this highway of holiness whereupon the redeemed walk.

We have been made to ponder the course of our own little life, with all of its ups and downs, crosses, losses, mis-

takes, sorrows, joys and blessings, in the which there have been so many things which have been hard to understand. At times we have found ourselves fenced in as with hewn stone, and there seemed no possible way of escape; we had to be still and know that he was God, and wait the day of his deliverance and salvation. Life with all of its various and perplexing problems is bewildering, indeed. The way which seemeth right unto a man, the end thereof is death, but the way of God, which leadeth down into and through death, is that "path which no fowl knoweth, and which the vulture's eye hath not seen." The path we are travelling is most certainly one we never would have chosen ourselves, had it been left to us, but we are made to hope, at times at least, that it is the way which the Lord in his infinite wisdom has appointed for us to walk in. It is good to believe that the steps that we tread, and the station we fill, our Father determined, and wrote in his will. Sometimes we can take comfort in what Paul wrote to the Corinthians, when he said: "For all things are for your sakes, that the abundant grace might through the thanksgiving of many redound to the glory of God. For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day. For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory; While we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen: for the things which are seen are temporal; but the things which are not seen are eternal."

R. L. D.

OBITUARIES

ELDER W. L. SLUSHER was born in Arkansas, June 17, 1872, and passed away Dec. 27, 1947. He was the oldest of eleven children. He united with

the Primitive Baptist church at the age of seventeen, and at twenty-two he was married to Sarah Upchurch. One month later she united with the Primitive Baptist church and both were strong believers. They lived happily together for fifty-three years in Arkansas, Texas and Oklahoma until 1928 when they moved to Ontario, Cal. They lived around Claremont and La Canada until 1945 when they moved to Stockton, Cal. While living in Ontario he was ordained a minister by the Seclusia Primitive Baptist Church in the home of W. J. Berry, May 28, 1933. He loved the truth in its simplicity and purity, and was strong in the faith of Jesus and a firm believer in the extensive sovereignty of God. He lived an honorable, upright and religious life, having the confidence and esteem of those without. He was a good counselor, a kind husband and father, a good citizen and was loved by all that knew him. During the two years he lived at Stockton he was in bad health and the last three months I moved them to my home at Lindsay. Finally he had to go to the hospital at Lindsay where they operated on him Dec. 26, 1947 and he passed away the next day. I am glad he did not suffer except for weakness.

He left to mourn their loss his wife, five daughters and two sons, twenty-seven grandchildren, nine great-grandchildren and two sisters. Our love for him was great and words cannot express how we miss him. He was laid to rest in the Lindsay Cemetery until the morning of the resurrection. His daughter,

(Mrs.) NETTIE PATRICK

Our dearly esteemed brother, ANSON QUINT, died October 22, 1947, at the home of his daughter, Mrs. Mabel Estes, North Berwick, Me. after a brief illness. His birthplace was North Berwick and his parents were Daniel and Laomi Quint. In 1890 he moved to Sanford where he resided eleven years, returning to North Berwick for a few years after the death of his wife, sister Olive Quint. He was engaged in masonry and farming. After his marriage to Mrs. Myra Brackett he returned to Sanford where he was active in town affairs, serving as selectman for several years and Past Master of Bauneg Beg Grange. After retiring from public office he moved to his farm, remaining there and at the home of his stepson, Eben Brackett, until after the death of sister Myra Quint. He then made his home with his daughters who kindly ministered to him until his death.

Elder Frederick Keene, late pastor of the Oak Woods Church of which our brother was a faithful member, baptized him and his wife, June 23, 1885, also his second wife, sister Myra Quint, June 8, 1913. Deacon Quint loved the doctrine of salvation by grace, through faith and that not of himself, for it is the gift of God. He was deeply concerned

in the things of the kingdom, always testifying of his belief and love for the Scriptures and the elect church of God. So many of the good old hymns, "Rock of Ages," "All hail the power of Jesus name," and "Grace 'tis a charming sound" were very precious to him. For many years he conducted our monthly meetings and his regular attendance and interest in church matters gave evidence of his love for his Savior. At all times his walk was that of a true Christian, and his home was always a welcome place for the brethren and friends. We rest in the assurance that he has gone to be with Christ which is far better.

Services were held at the home of his daughter, Mrs. Evelyn Blanchard, with her pastor, Mr. Wm. Kerschbaum, officiating. Burial was in the family plot in Bauneg Beg. Surviving are the daughters, a son Raymond and the stepson, besides several grandchildren and great-grandchildren. The lovely flowers were an evidence of the esteem in which he was held by his church, friends and community.

(Mrs.) LYDIA R. NASON

In sad remembrance I record the death of my darling sister, NANNIE M. DILLON, who departed this life Oct. 10, 1947, making her stay on earth seventy odd years. She was a dear sister in the flesh and I truly hope in the spirit. This made her nearer and dearer to me. We could talk on the mercies and goodness of God, sit together in church and heavenly places and rejoice together over what we both believed to be the dealings of the Lord with us. She had been a member of the Primitive Baptist church nearly fifty years, was sound in the faith and said many times before she was taken sick "we have to die to live." She was sick only six days, stricken with paralysis and never opened her eyes, but could talk. The writer told her to try to trust God. She replied there is nothing else to trust and seemed to be satisfied. She often said she would be glad to be laid beside her dear husband who died about four years ago.

She dearly loved the doctrine preached by the Primitive Baptists and had a great experience of grace. She had many friends and leaves four children and three sisters with broken hearts over dear Nannie who has left us here to weep. We have that hope to meet her in heaven where we will never hear that awful sound that death has stolen our dear sister away never to meet with us again. We feel the Lord has called us out of darkness into his marvelous light May God bless all who mourn for dear mother and sister, and may we meet Jesus on the great resurrection morn and be fashioned like him. That will be enough and then to sing death has lost its cruel sting. When Jesus calls we must answer. Walking around the little mound we will say, sleep on dear Nannie, we loved you dearly but Jesus loved you

best. Her children did all possible but nothing could stay the icy hand of death. We hope all her children can emulate her walk and at last meet her in heaven.

Peaceful be thy silent slumber,
Peaceful in the grave so low;
Thou wilt no more join our number,
Thou no more our songs shall know.

Her broken hearted sister.

Redwood, Va.

(Mrs.) E. O. HUDSON

This has been a very sad season for us in this section. Sister EDDIE WHITE of El Dorado, Ark., passed away Dec. 22, 1947 and was buried in the Rehobeth Cemetery five miles northeast of El Dorado. She leaves to mourn her loss, her husband, L. R. White of El Dorado, one daughter, Robertene White, three sisters, one brother and many other relatives and friends, brethren and sisters.

Sister White was given to demonstrate great faith and patience in her long siege of suffering. She had been a member of the Old Baptist church about eight years and we feel very keenly the loss of this precious sister. Elders E. J. Lambert and W. A. Speer assisted the writer in the funeral services Dec. 23 at 2 P. M. We truly feel that she was in possession of that sweet hope that is the anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and that enters into that within the veil where Jesus has for us entered.

Sister IDA BELL of Alexandria, La., departed this life in the hospital at Alexandria, Dec. 21, 1947, her death resulting from a comparatively short illness, leaving to mourn her loss several daughters, sons, in-laws, grandchildren and other relatives and friends. She was a member of the Old Baptist church from forty to forty-five years; she was widely known and highly appreciated, well posted and much devoted to her church and the doctrine, reading the Scriptures and other Baptist literature extensively. She was outspoken in the things she loved and a devoted church member.

The writer conducted her funeral in the Hixon Funeral Chapel in Alexandria, La. Interment in the cemetery in Pineville, Dec. 22. She will be sorely missed by her family and church people. We hope her absence may be filled by the royal presence of the Lord himself.

Brother WESLEY B. DOUGLAS of Grayson, La., departed this life Dec. 22, 1947, his death resulting from a comparatively short illness. He died in the hospital in Columbia, La. Brother Douglas was about fifty-three years old. He leaves his widow, Mrs. Aquillia Douglas, his daughter, Wilbur, and a son (I do not recall his given name), one grandchild, his aged father and mother, brothers and sisters and other near relatives.

Brother Douglas was a member of the Old Baptist church for many years and was highly respected and appreciated among them. He was very much devoted to the cause, and will be greatly missed by his family, neighbors and friends as well as the Old Baptist people generally. The writer conducted the funeral at the Old Baptist church two and one half miles southeast of Grayson, La. Interment in a cemetery near the edge of Grayson.

Also, Sister **MARTHA BALLARD MURPHY**, departed this life Dec. 10, 1947 after a very long and painful illness. She was 72 years of age. She leaves to mourn her loss one brother and two sisters, three daughters and four sons, a number of grandchildren and great-grandchildren, nephews and nieces and other relatives and friends. Sister Murphy was a member of the Old Baptist church between forty and fifty years. She was widely known, highly respected and very much devoted to the cause. She was well read in the doctrine and faith held to and believed by our people. It was her privilege to travel quite extensively among the Primitive Baptists in a number of states which privilege she enjoyed very much. She was loved and appreciated by the brethren and sisters wherever she went. Her membership was at Rehobeth Church, where the funeral was conducted Dec. 11. The writer, together with Elder E. J. Lambert and Elder W. A. Speer, conducted the funeral services and she was laid to rest in the Rehobeth Cemetery. She will be sorely missed in her home which was with her daughter and son-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. O. E. Bishop in Eldorado, as well as among her other near relatives, friends and the Old Baptists.

All of what I have here related has served to make this a sad season to me rather than one of joy and gladness that most people seem to feel at this season. One of the most serious thoughts I have relative to the many deaths among our people is, that though there seems to be quite a number who believe and love the doctrine, yet for some reason they are not becoming members of the visible church as I would love to see them do if it could be the Lord's will.

(Elder) R. W. RHODES

In loving remembrance of our precious sister **FLORINE RILEY**. I do not know the date of her birth nor when she united with the church. She was the daughter of Elder and Mrs. E. L. Anderson. She passed away June 4, 1947 and had lingered and suffered so much since August 1946, growing so much worse she had to be carried to the hospital in Russellville. Just a short time prior to the beginning of her illness she prepared for visitors attending the August meeting and had preaching in her much loved home Saturday night and second Sunday at the Lebanon Church six

miles south of Russellville, Ky. where she was a member. Since young womanhood she was never as happy as when she was with the Baptists. The old Anderson home had for many years been a home for the "Hardshell Baptists." (Primitive Baptists). She loved to call them "Hardshells." She was a strong believer in God's sovereign grace and grace alone and was a useful and faithful member to the end. The meeting in Aug. 1946 was her last time to attend. We all hoped for her recovery as it seemed we could not do without her, but God had served his purpose with her on earth and was ready to call her to her long eternal home, where suffering and trials of this sin-cursed world will be no more.

She was a practical nurse and wore herself out trying to relieve suffering humanity. In early womanhood she was married to Tilman Riley who preceded her in death a number of years. To that union were born two sons, Milton and Edward who survive, together with one sister, Mrs. Emma Miller, Russellville, Ky., one brother, John Anderson, Detroit, Mich., and three grandchildren. The many beautiful flowers placed around her in the home proved her many friends.

Elder W. T. Clayton, her pastor, was called on to speak words of comfort to the sorrowing relatives and many friends. He beautifully commended her useful life. Her son's pastor opened the service with appropriate remarks and prayer. Beautiful hymns were sung. At the meeting-house a short while later brethren R. B. Jones and Elder L. P. Harris, DuQuoin, Ill. spoke so sweetly of her useful life all of which she was worthy. Oh, how we will miss her but all for her eternal gain. She was buried at the dear old Anderson home where she had made her home for a number of years. Written by a heart broken sister in the church.

(Mrs.) B. H. SHEARON

Two other members have also passed away in 1947 from Lebanon Church. Sister **MYRTICE MALORY**, April 1947, and Sister **MIGNIONETTE HERNDON**, June 1947. It seems the hand of death has visited us severely. May the few left, by the grace of God, continue faithful while God sees fit and has a use for the little church or band at Lebanon. — B. H. S.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

Due to certain Post Office requirements in mailing the SIGNS, we find it necessary to discontinue the practice of enclosing subscription blanks just before subscription is due.

We sincerely hope our readers will closely watch the date on their wrappers and send in their renewals promptly.

R. LESTER DODSON

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON'

VOL. 116

RUTHERFORD, N. J., MAY, 1948

No. 5

THE FOUNTAIN OF LIFE

Oft our thoughts in memory wander
To a time long, long ago,
When we were sure there was a fountain
Where the healing waters flow.

Where the healing waters flow—
Where the healing waters flow—
Power to raise a fellow sinner,
Wash and make him white as snow.

And so oft when tired and weary,
Comes this message, soft and low—
Jesus is of life the fountain,
Where the healing waters flow.

Though at times hope seems most gone,
Could I live past blessings o'er?
Are His mercies gone forever?
Will He be gracious never-more?

And it seems so little evidence,
Just a little here and there;
And I must travel backward—
But it seems I'm getting there!

Help me, though my footsteps falter
On this journey, as I go—
Ever looking to the fountain,
Whence the healing waters flow.

Time and place will soon pass swiftly,
When He calls, oh, may I go
To live forever at the fountain
Whence the healing waters flow?

Lincoln Ave., CORA B. POWELL
Salisbury, Md.

TRUE CHRISTIAN RELIGION

I would like to call the attention of the believing reader to the solemn fact that in the circles of Christendom to-day there exists the utmost confusion, disorganization and lack of certitude as to the criterions of true faith. It is

unnecessary to review the sad atrophy of the external church, with its degeneration into multitudes of sects, re-multiplying within themselves popes, councils of bishops, and unscriptural societies of all sort: these things stand as visible evidence of the perilousness of the times. Though we may be faint at heart over such things, for which our Lord gave no authority, our problem is more imminent, momentous and personal; it is indeed the crux of our whole experience as Christians in the material world; we must prayerfully seek the basis on which rest the true Christian religion.

First and foremost, as any recipient of grace will declare, the true Christian religion is wholly supernatural. "God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." John 4:24. This means that in no way whatever can the faith of the living God be instilled in the believer by material means. Access to heaven is not to be had through the instructions of men, or by meditating on the beauties of nature, or by handling sacred relics, or by any method whatever save the election of the unchanging God. If it were possible to gain faith from good works, or from any of the a-forementioned techniques, then faith would be open to natural access, and the words of the Mediator we have quoted above would be put to the lie: will any one who calls himself a Christian admit of this?

We cannot insist enough on the supernatural basis of our faith. To be supernatural means to be beyond nature—beyond the contingencies of physical and chemical change. "The fear of the Lord is clean, enduring forever." Psalms 19:9. What comfort is in these lines for the recipient of grace! Our fear (viz: our God-given faith) of the Almighty will not be one thing today and something else tomorrow; it will not be a solid fear if we have fair weather, only to pass to ashes if we fall into distress, but *on the assurance of God himself remains forever*. What is natural passes away, ergo our faith is not natural, but proceeds from a source beyond cognition.

"In the beginning, God." Gen. 1:1. How marvelous these terrible and awe-inspiring words are to the soul! There was a time when God was all alone: there was no heaven, no earth, no creation of any kind. God alone was in his essence throughout the void. Had he chosen he could have so remained, time without end, but according to the council of his *own will* (since there was none other with him) he freely decided to predestinate and consecrate the material universe of which we are a tiny and passing part. Christian reader, does not your heart leap at the contemplation of such a supreme God?

Our second criterion of the true faith brings us to the blessed truth that it is wholly unmerited: "***** which had believed through grace;" Acts 18:27, that is, God's people believe, not because they have intellectually examined the tenets of the religion and found them satisfactory, but because the unchanging One predestinated them to the glory of faith "according to the good pleasure of his will." Eph. 1:5. Such an assurance alone is sufficient to drive us to our knees in adoration, for if we

are bound up in such an election, then there is no shadow of a doubt of our salvation; it is not something we shall lose if we do not contribute heavily to the clergy or bestow good works lavishly; indeed, it is contingent on none of these things but solely on the "good pleasure of his will." The good pleasure of the will of an Infinite Being, who never has and never will change; what a blessed hope we have here!

Thirdly, the true Christian religion recognizes the Mediator as the fountainhead of our redemption. "Whosoever our confession of Christ before men. him will I confess also before my Father which is in Heaven." Matt. 10:32. God incarnate here tells us that our confession in heaven depends upon our confession of Christ before men. What a vastly different thing this is from the "confession" of the laymen to the priest, as is erroneously done by some! And how are we able to make this confession? The Master has previously told us in the 20th verse of the beautiful 10th chapter of Matthew: "It is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you." Even our confession is no product of our feeble personalities, but the inspiration of the triune God!

Space and time do not permit us here a more complete enumeration of the true tenets of Christian faith. God willing, in future copies of this magazine, the writer hopes to continue this perusal of sacred basis of belief. A word in closing, however, is imperative. No system which calls itself Christian is in any way sound which does not render all glory and honor to Almighty God *alone*. The best of human effort, the best of human personality is as transitory as dust, but there existeth One in whom there is "no variableness, neither shadow of turning." and it is to him whom we prayerfully address our petitions.

The writer hopes that these words, written in humility and unworthiness, have struck a responsive chord in your soul and caused you to render further praise to Almighty God. Yours in Christian bonds.

HENRY TOWNSEND, JR.

Edgemont, Pennsylvania.

(Recalling how much we enjoyed reading after the pen of our young brother before the war, when we were privileged to meet him at the Delaware River Association in May, 1946, we asked him to write again for the columns of our family paper. We believe that our readers will heartily agree that all such articles as the foregoing should be welcomed and published by us for the benefit of the household of faith. We thoroughly enjoyed said article, and hope that our Lord will give our young brother light and liberty in the things pertaining to His kingdom. It is indeed refreshing to read after his pen. R. L. D.)

3347 Tutwiler Ave., Memphis, Tenn.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON, ASSOCIATE EDITORS AND ALL WHO LOVE OUR FAMILY PAPER, *Signs of the Times*: To love the *Signs* is to love the precious doctrine it contends for, and to love that doctrine is to love the doctrine of the Bible that God inspired men of old to write down and be kept all these years. To love the grand and glorious doctrine of the Bible is an evident fact that God himself has made you to love it, therefore, I humbly hope that is also the cause of this poor, unlearned one desiring to talk with you by letters; and that it is because of His power who has the power to take of the same lump and make one vessel to honor and one to dishonor. Yea, in His mind and purpose before ever the hills were laid, he purposed to speak this earth into existence, form man of the dust of the earth, etc., and this man and the woman God gave unto him were to multiply and replenish the earth. All this was done

and all things worked together for the good of God's children: that was the object of his love. Love was and is the moving cause of all his works and ways. He has a purpose for the wicked, they are his sword for the days of evil, but they are not loose to carry on at random; they, too, are subject to the power of God; they have their bounds and cannot pass them. O, my soul, when we are given a little insight to view the perfection of our God, we are soon lost in amazement and joy, and find ourselves searching for words to express this grand and glorious truth. Why I say he makes us love this hard doctrine is because we once felt our freedom, going about in our own way seemingly, but when God's appointed time came something seemed to get in our way. We finally think we have found it and immediately begin to do something about it to put it out of our mind, but it returns. We begin to make amends to find we get worse all the time, worse and worse until we wish we did not even exist as human beings. Anything would have seemed better, standing before a great God who knew all our ways and thoughts before we had them.

The word of God says, "Ye must be born again." No possible way to know how this could be, nevertheless, "Ye must be born again." Then to arise one morning and find the burden gone and your whole being praising and shouting within us praises to our Savior who has so graciously blessed us and placed a new song in our tongue. Alas, this is to last for only a little season for there is much to be learned. We do not love the hard doctrine of the Bible then for we are babes in Christ and many things we hear our fathers and mothers in Israel say, we cannot take. We cannot understand how they could be right. This is the beginning of our learning to love this hard doctrine that the world hates so badly; they hate it in their homes, com-

panions, fathers and mothers for they have not been given to see the hidden beauties as these precious things are for a special people, a peculiar people and are hidden from the wise and prudent of this world; they cannot understand and my heart aches for them. I sometimes have been guilty of thinking, oh it is a hard doctrine and it would make me tremble and does yet when darkness hovers over me; I cannot see anything clearly, cannot feel anything; oh how miserable I do get, how ignorant and foolish I do feel yet I have not learned one little thing I can do about it. I cannot quit nor I cannot keep on, only as it comes to me, but the seasons of love, life and understanding also come to me along life's way; renews my hope and strengthens me; gives me faith to believe in God and beg him for mercy, and to be kept all through my journey here; to stand by me in death and take me in his arms and bear me away to be with him for-ever-more. This is my only hope.

Jesus stood as a Lamb slain from the foundation of the world and came born of the virgin, Mary. Yes, looked upon by natural men, walked among them, teaching them, was crucified by wicked hands, hanged on the cross suspended between earth and heaven; bled and died to finish the work his Father gave him to do, his own words were, "It is finished." "I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." How precious are these words! He rose again in spite of all the efforts of the guards and the king to make it safe, placing guards on each side. I do not believe those guards saw the resurrection of the Lord any more than the world can see and believe today until the Father who art in heaven reveals it to them. He walked with the two disciples after he arose; they saw him in the person of a man but did not see him as he

was, for they thought him a stranger in the country; they had heard how they had taken and crucified their Lord. These things are spiritually discerned and not taught by man.

People are begging folks to come to their church for just one hour. They take their names, addresses and donations saying, we had a thousand Sunday and our donation was a thousand dollars. I I hear it said of a church near me that they take in a thousand dollars each Sunday. All such things to me are far from the teaching of the Bible, but according to its teaching they are all fulfilling their place in this world as well as everything else, the elephant, the ant and all other of God's creation. "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." All things are here by the power of this great God that we love to talk about. I once heard Elder R. L. Biggs of Nashville, Tenn., preach from Psalms 24:1, "The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein." It was beautiful indeed.

Enclosed find check for \$3, two to pay for our subscription another year and one to use as you desire. May God in his wisdom and mighty power, love and mercy keep you and enable you each and every one to stand firm and declare the whole counsel of God. Pray for me and mine that we may be kept by the grace of God, ready to be revealed the last day. My husband joins me in love to you. He is also a member of the church and has served as Deacon since Aug. 1928. I feel the Lord has bestowed a special blessing on me in having my companion of the same faith and order with me. Of such I am not worthy and often wonder why things are as well with me as they are. One thing I know, it is not for anything I have done. Sometimes

when I am made to feel that, "He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me besides the still waters," and his banner over me is love, I am made to exclaim! "O for a thousand tongues to sing my dear Redeemer's praise." Yours in the hope of eternal life.

(Mrs.) LUTHER CAMPBELL

CARDINAL POINTS OF DOCTRINE

All along, since I have been old enough to notice, I have heard Baptists speak of the *cardinal points of doctrine* and I must confess that I do not know what they mean. I very seriously doubt if those who so freely use this expression could actually tell what they really mean. Were we to ask a dozen different Elders from different sections for an expression of just what they consider to be the *cardinal points of doctrine* I am pretty sure they would vary. If we are to judge by what is known as *articles of faith* as we find in the several different Associations in different localities of these United States I know we would find a very great difference. Some, in fact, differ to the point that there is but little resemblance between them.

In all these many *articles of faith* that I have studied I find almost no mention in any of them of the great doctrine of LOVE. Nowhere do we hear it stated that "LOVE IS THE FULFILLING OF THE LAW," or that "GOD IS LOVE," and we find but little if anything said about "MERCY." Are we to conclude by this that the rank and file of the masses of Baptists deem predestination of greater importance than love and mercy? Personally I am not aware that any one point of God's doctrine could possibly have any pre-eminence over another, or that any one point is better than all the rest. Our gracious Lord says, "I give you good doctrine," and far be it from me to say that one phase of that good doctrine is less essential than another. Nor would I

wish to be guilty of judging any man upon the assumption that some one point is better than another and especially if this one point happens to be my hobby. (We all have our hobbies.) How am I to positively know that what I think about predestination or any other point is infallibly right, or that I am to be consulted as the final authority upon any subject. Certainly if I were to take this ungodly position all would know that I was wrong, that I had overstepped my bounds and was setting myself up as a god. Hardly any two preachers could agree perfectly upon every phase of predestination were they to talk at length. This is equally true of every other point of doctrine as we have all witnessed over the past several years, especially the doctrine of the resurrection. There are perhaps a greater variation of opinions upon this than any other. Yet this does not mean to me that this one point of doctrine is of more importance than the new birth, salvation by grace or any other.

As we are fully aware, there is among our ablest gifts this manifest difference of opinion. It is because NONE! NONE! on earth fully understand it all. If we are honest with ourselves, we will have to confess that we do not know it all about any one point of God's good doctrine. We only see in part at best, and because this is true why should we continually have confusion, strife and division in our church? Is it not because of our carnal-mindedness and because we are lacking in love and have not come to the knowledge of the truth in its divine fulness? Paul very clearly shows us the more excellent way; "But covet earnestly the best gifts: and yet shew I unto you a more excellent way. Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal. And though I

have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing." 1 Cor. 12:31 and 13:1-2.

It does seem to me that the apostle is here telling us something of vital concern which we would all do well to take to heart and ponder these things. Our great and only Teacher, Christ Jesus our Lord, has commanded us to "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you." Matt. 5:44. Do any of us fully comply with the teaching of Christ? I fear not.

Paul still further explains the great importance of love by saying "Faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity" (love). I am persuaded that no matter what a great speaker men may think us to be, or however much wisdom they may ascribe unto us, or how much praise they may heap upon us, yet, without love we are as nothing. Without this love of God shed abroad in our hearts we have no real evidence that we are the followers of Christ, and after all, this is to me the greatest concern of all things else on earth. And I am so absorbed in this concern that I have but little time to find fault with my brother, or call in question what he believes or does not believe. Of greater importance to me is, am I right? We should sweetly remember, while God in his great love where-with he loves us has given us a measure of forbearance, tolerance and mercy, and at the same time he has given us much to forbear, forgive and have mercy upon. Why the need of mercy if there was nothing to forgive in those we love? Listen, "For God hath concluded them ALL in unbelief, that he might have mercy upon all." Rom. 11:32. Hence we ALL need the mercy of God, and the

mercy of our dear brethren as well, all our lifetime. We can never attain to that exalted plane that we cease to need both the mercy of God and the mercy of the children of God. If it were possible for us to attain to that degree of perfection (which it is not possible) we would have no company on earth, and our loneliness would be great indeed. Then, dear little children let us be glad that, while we are weak, ignorant and subject to vanity, and cannot do the things that we would, cannot live as we, from the very depth of our souls wish we could yet God loves us without end and his mercy and the loving kindness is equal to all our needs. There is no case too hard for him. Look and behold the ladder that reaches from the lowly earth unto heaven, (Gen. 28:12) and the angels of God *ascending and descending* on it. We are not all the time ascending, sometimes we are coming down and not going up. This indeed is my daily experience. Pray tell me is it thus with you. Yours in a blessed hope.

(Elder) G. B. BIRD

Canada, Ky.

Covin, Ala.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: I am sending a copy of a letter I received from Sister Astbury in England. She is a rich writer to the English papers and I feel that something from her pen would be acceptable to ours as she is anointed of the Lord to speak. The things of a providential nature that she speaks of were food-stuffs that I sent. I sent them because the God of Heaven has given us so much. I do not feel that it is mine, nor to withhold from his children. Yours in a blessed hope, (Elder) W. D. GRIFFIN.

Green Mount, Barrow, Whalley,
Blackburn, Lancashire, England

DEAR FRIEND: We do sincerely feel thankful to see the Lord's goodness passing before us as is evidenced by him graciously inclining your hearts to re-

member us in these solemn days, and most especially in the spiritual tokens. We enjoyed reading the *Signs of the Times*. God's sovereignty is most valuable for it gives his elect people a sure standing in Christ when God's Holy Spirit reveals it to their souls. God's love, power and unchangeability — an Eternal Being knowing all things. To him there is nothing new nor old. It is this wonderful eternal God who conceived the marvelous plan to save rebellious man; the glorious Trinity in unity, Father, Son and Holy Ghost work together in its accomplishment; all in perfect harmony and according to God's foreknowledge. Who can measure his mercy as one by one we sinful mortals, as born again of God's Holy Spirit, bow at his throne and confess our sin and iniquity like the publican — God be merciful to me a sinner — and, sooner or later to hear his gracious, forgiving voice saying, thy sins which are many are all forgiven you. Peace, sweet peace, through the blood of the Lamb.

Elder Burns is enabled to speak sweetly of his call to the ministry in verse form. God's blessing must surely attend the paper though not necessarily in the way expected. To us it was good reading for in these days so many are running without being sent. There is no true rest but in Christ; he alone is our Sabbath, and we enter in by faith as it is revealed to us individually, not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he has saved us. We have not the least power to contribute in any way to our salvation for it is of the Lord, and that is our unspeakable mercy for we are as a corrupt tree, utterly unable and incapable of producing the least good, and God demands perfection — he requires truth in the inward parts. This is the work of the Spirit in each of his redeemed. It is mysterious to us but we are made conscious of it by its effects on our

spirits as called out of nature's darkness into his marvelous light. Then we mind heavenly things instead of earthly, being born again from above, all our blessings and needs come from the "Father of lights, with whom there is no variableness, neither shadow of turning."

The providential supplies you sent are good and suitable to our needs. May God bless you and grant you his four fold reward. We received your parcel on Saturday, Jan. 10 (mailed about Nov. 26. W.D.G).

Though sundered far, by faith they meet,
Around one common mercy seat.

Our sincere desires for your welfare now and through eternal ages. For Christ's sake,

(Miss) E. A. ASTBURY.

Route 1, Kirksey, Ky.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON IF SUCH AS I MAY ADDRESS YOU AS BROTHER: Sister Effie Bowden is writing for publication an obituary of my wife, Lillie Chester, who was buried two months ago. She was my second wife. We lived together nine years and my first wife and I lived together forty-three years. Both died of cancer. I am now living alone in the house my father built about one hundred years ago. It has been sheltering Primitive Baptists ever since it was built. A few of the Elders entertained were J. M. Perkins, R. T. Davis, J. W. Wyatt, James W. Lynn, W. D. Griffin, J. C. Sykes, H. M. Brock and many others. Their visits have been very precious to me and I can but wonder why the gracious God would allow me to keep company with such as these. The *Signs* has been coming to this house at least seventy-five years. The February issue came recently and it was seemingly the best one of all I have read. I beg the prayers of all that may see this and if you come this way please hunt me up. I will follow this with some of my experience.

I was born Aug. 5, 1874 and raised by Primitive Baptist parents. I believe they tried hard to raise me in the right way. They would tell me to go to any church but to go in the house and behave myself. They never begged me to unite with any church, but admonished me to read and study the Bible and see what it meant to me. Most of my associates would call me a good boy and I really thought I was until I was about seventeen years of age. One night we had a company of several people. Sister Ida, who was two years older than I, had a friend named Omie Gingles and they seemed to take the lead while all were having a nice time. Suddenly something went wrong with me and I went upstairs to bed, crying most of the night. It seemed to me I was a great sinner. The next morning Miss Omie said, "What was the matter with you last night, Mr. Tommie?" I said, "Oh I am such a sinner." She said, "You are not a bad boy." I was then seventeen and I have felt to be a sinner ever since. At the age of nineteen, J. C. Chester, my brother four years my senior who was teaching school, came home the second Saturday in August and united with the church at Soldier Creek. My brother Hardin came to the field where I was working and told me. Oh how it cut me down. That was what I thought I wanted to do but did not think I was fit to unite with the church. I had never seen any one unite with the Primitive Baptist Church, but I pondered over the matter through the evening and night and next morning decided to take some extra clothes and be baptized also if I was accepted. Jimmie took his wife and I took his wife's sister. I do not know what I said or did but Jimmie and I were baptized together. That was in 1893 and now it is 1948 and I have just blundered along. It seems sinning has been the most I

have done, but I know there have been many times since I was seventeen that I have craved to do something good but did not know how. When I would do good evil was present so I am bound to say if I have ever done any good it was by the grace of God.

What a wonderful thought to even meditate on, dear Savior, that it may be one like me might be carried to that great home of all the redeemed. I hope I have a hope. Brethren, I felt I might write something worth while but have failed. I am as nothing and less than nothing. Farewell in the Lord.

T. S. CHESTER

Benton, Ky.

ELDER DODSON, KIND BROTHER: I am sending by request of the family of Mrs. Florence Bean her obituary, and by the request of Brother T. S. Chester an obituary of his wife, Lillie. God took from his garden of graces these flowers. Why? Were they not his any way because of his choosing? Then if his does he not do with his own that which is good? These did not live by sight but by hope. Zechariah says, "It shall come to pass in that day, that the light shall not be clear, nor dark." The light of the Son of God veiled by the flesh cannot see clearly. Sin is only condemned in the flesh, never renewed. So we have Jesus the Light, but we do not see clearly enough to say we know we are children of the Most High God, neither are we in the dark as to what light is. That text, Brother Dodson, has been a cup of cold water to this unworthy one many days; that and where it says, Put off the old man with his deeds, and put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. Have we not felt within, this old man, his deeds being put down and the deeds of the true and holy child Jesus being shown us? which deeds we

desired to stand up for and proclaim above all deeds, knowing at that time what was the desire of our heart, and believing we had been stirred and worked upon and, so it is, enough is given of the light of the knowledge of Him who is Light to keep us hoping. Some might say "putting off" and "putting on" is done by the creature. Well, this I hope I know—I have felt the "putting off" and "putting on." A sister in hope. (Mrs.) EFIE BOWDEN

Pink Hill, N. C.

ELDER S. GRAY, MY DEAR BROTHER IN THE LORD: I feel so unworthy sometimes that I do not know that I am right in addressing the dear old Primitive Baptist members as brothers and sisters. This morning I will try to write according to my impressions, whether it is of the Lord or not I do not know. I have been trying in my weak way to ask him to lead and guide me aright, and if it is of him that I should write to give me something that would be to his honor and praise, and would be comforting to you and also a blessing to poor me. If I could only write you such a letter as I have written in my mind since I heard you preach the second Sunday in September, I feel without a doubt you would enjoy it and I would enjoy writing, but I cannot find words to express my feelings. How much I did enjoy your sweet sermon. While you were praying I felt to be sure you knew something of what I had been passing through of late. What a blessing that there is One that does know and is able to impress it on your mind to remember to pray for just such poor little, weak ones of this world as I.

I often think of dear old Paul who felt that he was less than the least of all saints if one at all, and as you often say the older I get the less I feel both

naturally and spiritually. I feel to know that no poor soul has ever been or could have been much more cast down than I have been, and my dear brother, I am that way a good portion of my time. If a few minutes of praise I enjoy they are succeeded by doubts. I often look around me and every thing is going on all right and I think why should I be like this? Why can I not go on rejoicing and wait until trouble comes, but I cannot control my feelings. If I could I would feel different and it is a good thing I cannot, as you said the other Sunday, I want to be reconciled to the good Lord's will. Within myself I cannot for I have long since learned that no good thing dwells there without the Lord.

I hope, my dear brother, the day is coming and I feel not so many years off when sin will be finished in this old body of mine, and I can close my eyes and sweetly sleep in the arms of Him who has done all things for me, and forget this world that is so full of sin and sorrow. I have been through so many troubles, trials and disappointments in this world that I never look for anything else, and when I see some one passing through the trials that I have, my sympathy goes out to them and I mourn and grieve for them, because I know how it is and how heartrending it is, but we are promised such in this life if we be the children of God. Brother Gray, as you often say, I have that little hope that I am one that I would not give for ten thousand worlds such as this. It is more precious to me than all things else, without it I would be, of all people, most miserable. While as you say, I look on others as being so much better yet I would not exchange my little hope for theirs. I have tried in my weak way to ask God to take this burden from me for I did not know

what to write to such good people but it seemed to me that the burden got worse so I have tried to write and if anything I have written is of any comfort give God the praise and not this poor sinner. I am so nervous I can scarcely hold my pen and have only hinted at what I wanted to write, but may the dear Lord continue to bless you is my desire, and as you go traveling on and feel impressed, please remember this poor unworthy one, my dear children and also my dear old father and mother who you know are getting very feeble. Your little, unworthy sister if one at all.

(Mrs.) RENA FUTRELL

Rt. 4, Salisbury, Md.

DEAR ELDER SPANGLER: I have felt a desire for a long time to write you and tell a little of what I hope has been the Lord's dealings with me from my youth up. I was born and raised on a farm in Sussex Co., Delaware, near Gumboro and lived there for a long while. My parents were Old School Baptists and very true to their church at Smith's Mills, seldom missing an appointment. Elder E. Rittenhouse was their Pastor. He lived and was Postmaster at State Road, Del. He was a very quiet and humble man, cared for no foolishness and was ever looking to the interest and welfare of his churches. He would come on Saturdays to fill his appointments and stay over night with the brethren. He frequently stayed at my father's and after supper would talk on spiritual things and sing some good old hymns. I rather enjoyed being in the room with them. He and my sister, Martha, began corresponding and I thought it strange she wanted to be writing to him, she a young girl in her teens. I soon found she was interested in the church and soon went forward at Smith's Mills, was received and baptized by Elder Rittenhouse.

Her baptism seemed to have an effect

on me. I thought what a good girl she was and I what a bad boy. Yes, I was rude and full of life. When Elder Rittenhouse passed away the church called Elder A. B. Francis from near Herndon, Va. to serve them. His membership was at the Frying Pan Church. I thought him a wonderful preacher and he was. I seemed to get some comfort from him, but felt to be a condemned sinner, trying hard to be a good boy but to no effect. When Elder Francis' Association came around he, for some cause, insisted on my going. My parents consented and I went. Several ministers were present of which I knew but few. When Elder D. M. Vail was put on the stand I did not think he looked like a preacher and did not suppose he could say very much, but to my surprise he preached the best sermon at the Association. He seemed to be preaching to me and that was the first sermon I ever heard. I wanted to hear more of it but felt to be a miserable sinner before God. I returned home feeling glad I had gone to the meeting but my sins were ever before me and gave me much trouble. One night while riding my father's horse to Whitesville I was in so much trouble I did not think I could live. I was crying aloud like a child when all at once, in the twinkling of an eye, my trouble was gone and I was so happy everything around me seemed to be praising the dear Lord, even the little birds. I shall never forget the spot on the old mill-dam near where I went to school. I went on to the village happy and the people there seemed happy and glad to see me. I did not tarry long as I wanted to get home and tell my parents what a dear Savior I had found. Before I reached home something said to me, you had better keep this to yourself as you may be mistaken. I said nothing to my parents but went to bed happy. This season did not last very long, I was soon doubting again.

Soon after this I was married to Miss Nora E. Hearn near Salisbury. I soon found she was under the same conviction as I. We went regularly to and enjoyed the meetings but felt too unworthy to be with them. We stayed away as long as we could but on the third Saturday in March 1896 went before the church at Smith's Mills and tried to tell what we hoped the Lord had done for us. We were received and baptized the next day by Elder Francis. It was a happy day for us. The members all looked so dear to us when we came up out of the water. Elder Francis seemed like a father to us.

In 1933 my dear wife passed away leaving me all alone on the farm. I thought then my pleasures were all over, but in August of 1934 the dear Lord blessed me again with another good companion as you know. I feel to be a poor sinner and not worthy of such blessings. Yes, the dear Lord has been good to me all my life. I am making this letter too long but I want to say a few words about the dear old *Signs of the Times*. It comes to us regularly and we do get much comfort from its pages. The Editorials and good letters from the brethren from all parts of the United States, some of them telling my experience and exercises far better than I can. Dear Elder Dodson is a wonderful Editor and he has four good Associates to aid him with the work. Two of them I know well, the other two I have never seen with the natural eye, but sometimes when reading their Editorials I feel like taking them by the hand and saying God bless you, keep right on with the good work.

I have been taking the *Signs* more than fifty years and have never missed a copy to my knowledge. I have always been familiar with the paper as my parents took it as far back as I

can remember. It was once printed in newspaper form and at the end of the year mother would collect and put them in book form for future reference. I never knew her to destroy one. I have recently reread a good letter from a dear sister in Texas. It is one of the best I have ever read. I told Grace (my wife) it was well worth the whole year's subscription. She did not sign her name just "Your humble sister from Texas." It was in the June 1947 issue. Please excuse me for having made this too long and overlook my errors. It is like the writer, very imperfect. Hope you and sister Spangler are well. We are about as usual. Grace joins in love to you both. Your little, unworthy brother in hope of life everlasting.

ANANIAS HASTINGS

807 Pope St., Memphis, Tenn.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: Please renew my subscription to the *Signs* for another year, and I am sending a little extra to help send it to some one else or to use as you wish. I wish I could truthfully tell you that I am doing this with a pure and unselfish mind, but vanity and sin is so mixed with all I do that I fear even at this moment, although I sincerely want to do it, I may be doing it with the hope that the same would be done for me sometime, so you see if that be the case the motive is selfish.

I think I learned long ago that I could do nothing for which to glory in myself, and I believe I am fully aware of these facts "that in me (that is, in my flesh), dwelleth no good thing," and of myself I can do nothing. I do hope I have been taught these things by God himself, for there was a time, while I hope I was enjoying the sweet peace of God's love in my heart as a new and precious experience, that I sincerely thought I would so live and do good unto everybody the rest of my life and

that in return I would live a life of joy and peace in Jesus love. But while I was going about doing this as best I knew, this peace and love began to fade and grow dim. I began to read my Bible, search the Scriptures, to retain the sweet feeling of God's nearness, but try as I would it grew dimmer, and what had once seemed to be perfect assurance that Jesus was mine left, and in its place was only a hope that he is.

God inspired men to leave comforting words concerning hope, "which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast," and I believe it is sure (as Jesus is) for though even this hope has seemed to grow dim sometimes, yet I have learned by experience that as far as I have come I have not lost sight of it entirely; and that for no reason at all at times I feel to be lifted to great heights by it and am made to feel I will never again doubt that this hope is "Christ in you, the hope of glory." I am always glad to receive the *Signs*, brother Dodson, with its pages of truth. It seems to draw hearts together from various places in a bond of fellowship and love, and I am so thankful that it goes to those who for different reasons do not get to go to meeting or hear preaching. I think I know how lonely and hungry one can get to hear the truth *preached*, not carefully worded or modified to please the vanity of men's minds. I once felt while listening to Elder Paul Poyner preach the sovereignty and power of God, that even if I knew I was not included in this covenant of grace I would still believe that what he was preaching was the truth as it is in Christ. Hoping we are kindred in Christ,

(Mrs.) JAMES E. YOUNG

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS

We are particularly anxious to add a substantial number of new subscribers to our mailing list during the remaining months of 1948. We honestly feel that our readers will readily agree that the quality of reading matter which has been appearing in the *Signs* is deserving of commendation to all lovers of the truth. If this is so, many of our readers know one or more persons who would be glad to take the paper if they knew about it. Will you who do know about it be so kind as to spread the good news among your brethren and friends?

We wish to remind all of our Ministering brethren of the fact that we will be glad to allow them \$1.00 for every new subscriber they secure on the annual basis. Just send us \$1.00 and you keep the other \$1.00 for yourselves.

We also hope that our duly authorized agents will announce at the meetings which they attend that they will be glad to receive both new and renewal subscriptions. It is a real accommodation to many of our readers to be able to hand the money for their subscriptions to some one individual in person.

Please remember that any notices of meetings and changes of address should be sent in as far in advance as possible. We usually furnish the copy to our printer sixty-days before the paper is due to be mailed out.

Also, please watch the date on your wrapper covers and renew your subscription promptly when due. The co-operation of our subscribers and their continued support of the paper will be greatly appreciated by all sharing in the responsibility of its publication.

R. LESTER DODSON

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EDITORIAL

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Rutherford, N. J.

A FIRM FOUNDATION

“Wisdom hath builded her house, she hath hewn out her seven pillars.” The above scripture is found in the ninth chapter of Proverbs and if you will read the entire chapter you will find that two houses were under consideration. One house was the product of wisdom, and the other house was of the foolish woman. I think wisdom’s house is figurative of the Church of Christ, and the other represents the false church. All has been done to make the Church of Christ secure and firm, but the foolish will fall by the wayside. I believe this house to be composed of all the children of God as chosen in Christ before the world began. It is not our desire to consider the house at this time, but to consider the foundation upon which this house is built. Surely the foundation is Christ Jesus and all who were chosen in him will finally be blessed to view the seven pillars or principles of the doctrine of God, our Savior. The abstract of the faith of God’s elect may be summed up thus:

1. SOVEREIGNTY OF GOD. 2. TOTAL DEPRAVITY OF MAN. 3. UNCONDITIONAL ELECTION. 4. LIMITED ATONEMENT OR SPECIAL

REDEMPTION. 5. IRRESISTIBLE OR EFFICACIOUS GRACE. 6. PRESERVATION OF THE SAINTS. 7. RESURRECTION OR COMPLETE IMMORTALIZATION OF THE SAINTS. I believe these phases of the doctrine are experienced in the order named. The first six are experienced here in time and the seventh is to be experienced in the beyond.

The first lesson to be revealed to the child of God is His sovereignty. We are thinking in terms of seven so we think of God as eternal, omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent, holy, loving and triune. Yes, he is eternal. One day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. He is of one mind. He has never learned anything new nor has he forgotten anything. Everything that has ever taken place, is taking place, or that ever will come to pass is just as present and vivid in his mind as if it were (at this very moment) taking place. Things that we experience are past, present and future with us because we are creatures of time and finite, but all things are as present with God. We wonder what the future holds for us and forget things that are past, but God being eternal sees it all as now transpiring.

The second part of the first pillar of this firm foundation is the omnipotence of God. He is all powerful. God says through the prophet, “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.” “The Lord of hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass.”

In the Scriptures it is said of God; “He doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can

stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?" God spake this world into existence. He only had to say, "Let there be light: and there was light." "As I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand." He is God "who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will."

God is omniscient. He is wise to the extent that his knowledge embraces all things because he has decreed them and is abundantly able to bring them to pass. There is not a thought or act of man that God does not know about. "He is before all things, and by him all things consist." Though the world seems to run at random, and events huddled together in blind confusion to our finite minds, God is so wise that he knows the outcome of all causes and effects, and so governs them that he makes perfect harmony out of all those seeming jarrings and discords. He is so wise that all things praise him.

God is omnipresent. He is present at all places at the same time. He is at all times at the same place. There is no possibility of hiding from God. In him we live, move and have our being. He fills the universe.

Another characteristic of God is his eternal love. God is love. "I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee." He loved his people even when they were dead in trespasses and in sin. This love of God is the basis of their salvation. It is the characteristic that is planted in the hearts of God's people by the Holy Spirit.

God is holy. "The Lord is righteous in all his ways, and holy in all his works." Psalms 145:17. There is no unrighteousness with God. He is of purer

eyes than to behold evil and canst not look upon iniquity, therefore he consecrates the wicked acts of men to his own glory and praise and to the good of his chosen people.

The seventh phase of his sovereignty is that he is triune. God, the Father; God the Son; and God, the Holy Ghost. God the Father, chose his people unto salvation before the foundation of the world. God, the Son, accomplished this salvation by performing the requirements of the law, and suffered the penalty of sin and satisfied justice by shedding his precious blood on Calvary's tree for the remission of their many sins. God, the Holy Ghost, operates upon them here in time by taking from them the stony heart and giving them a heart of flesh; reveals to them the truth as it is in Christ Jesus; comforts and consoles them in this life; and will (in the resurrection) baptize them with immortality.

Now let us consider the second pillar of this firm foundation. According to my experience, I was given a glimpse of the sovereignty of God. This was the stimuli that made manifest the fundamental truth of the TOTAL DEPRAVITY OF MAN. Job had a similar experience as recorded in Job 42:5-6, "I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee. Wherefore I abhor myself and repent in dust and ashes." Isaiah speaks likewise in Isa. 6:5. "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." God, first, revealed himself to each of these causing them, secondly, to see their depravity. What a contrast! God is eternal; I am timely. God is all powerful; I have no ability. God is all wise; I know nothing as God knows. God is everywhere at all times; I can be no-

where at any time upon volition of my own will for I find myself a victim of circumstances over which I have no control. God loved us even when we were dead in trespasses and sin; I naturally love no one but myself. God is holy; I am unholy. God is triune in complete agreement; my natural desires war against the Spirit. I find myself totally depraved, not able to extricate myself from this terrible state. This experience agrees with Jeremiah 13:23. "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? then may ye also do good, that are accustomed to do evil." Jesus expressed this incapacity of man to recover himself from this fallen state he is in when he said as recorded in John 6:44, "No man can come unto me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him; and I will raise him up at the last day." As long as the skin of the Ethiopian is black and the leopard is spotted there is no reason to expect goodness to spring from man. It is just as possible for man to do good as it is for the Ethiopian to change his skin or the leopard its spots. We must look to some other source than ourselves for anything good. We are so naturally constituted that we will trust in our own ability until God sees fit to reveal to us our true condition by his Spirit. Then we are made to "cry unto God, the most high; unto God that performeth all things for me." In this state of mind it is with pleasure and heartfelt thanks to God that we view the third pillar of this firm foundation, UNCONDITIONAL ELECTION. "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world." Eph. 1:4. Paul trusted in the power and amazing grace of God as stated in his letter to Timothy, 2 Timothy 1:9, "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." Thus, it is not according to our works. Our finite minds would argue that surely it is according to our will even granting that it is not according to our works. The Spirit teaches us contrary to natural reasoning so let us see what Paul has to say about it in Rom. 9:11-18. "(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;) It was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger. As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated. What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid. For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy 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 WILLETH, NOR OF HIM THAT RUNNETH, but of God that sheweth mercy. For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might show my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth. Therefore hath he mercy upon whom HE WILL have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth." Jesus said to his disciples, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you." So we are unconditionally elected according to the good pleasure of God's will.

Let us further view this foundation by noting the fourth pillar or principle of truth, LIMITED ATONEMENT. God's people were chosen in Christ Jesus. Christ's life and death must have been for them only. Concerning Jesus before his birth the angel said, "And she (Mary) shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins." The work of Christ was for God's people, not for the entire Adamic race. Christ said in

John 10:14-15, "I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine. As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father: and I lay down my life for the sheep." Christ died for the sheep, not for the goats. Christ said in his prayer to God as recorded in John 17:9, "I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine." Christ did not pray for the entire Adamic race. Paul tells the ministers of Ephesus in Acts 20:28, "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all 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." His blood was shed for the church, not for the world. Christ said in Matt. 20:28. "Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many." He gave his life for many, not for all.

The fifth pillar is that of IRRESISTIBLE OR EFFICACIOUS GRACE. The teachings of the Scriptures is such that we must say that man in his natural state is radically corrupt. He is spiritually dead and must be saved by Christ if at all. He does not desire God; therefore, must have a new disposition before he can love God. He loves sin therefore can never desire to be redeemed from it until he is wrought upon by the effectual working of God's mighty power. Jesus said, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." John 3:3. This inward change wrought by supernatural power is termed in the Scriptures as "Called out of darkness into his marvelous light," 1 Peter 2:9. A passing out of death into life; (John 5:24) a taking away of the heart of stone, and a giving of the heart of flesh; (Ezk. 11:19) and the subject of the change is said to be a new crea-

ture. (2 Cor. 5:17) We had nothing to do with our physical birth but received it as a sovereign gift of God; we likewise have nothing to do with our spiritual birth but receive it also as a sovereign gift. Each occurred without any exercise of our own power, and even without our consent being asked. We no more resist the latter than we did the former. Consequently, salvation to whomsoever it may be granted is entirely of grace. The ones so wrought upon are made to see "Jesus the author and finisher of our faith." Heb. 12:2. There is no such thing as a "self-made man;" the highest type man agrees with Paul, "By the grace of God I am what I am." God said through the prophet Isaiah 56:11, "So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth; it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it." When God says *repent*, you repent; when he says *come*, you come; when he says *go*, you go.

The doctrine of election and efficacious grace logically imply the certain salvation of those who receive these blessings. Therefore let us consider the sixth pillar to wit: THE PERSEVERANCE OF THE SAINTS. Those who have been brought to Jesus for refuge have a firm foundation upon which to build their hope of eternal life. The iniquities of their own hearts together with all the satanic influences will never cause them to fail. The same amazing grace that has brought us thus far will lead us home. Paul said in Rom. 8:29, "Whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren." It is an evidence that God has predestinated the recipients of these gifts to be like him in character, destiny and glory and that

he will infallibly carry out his purpose. "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. This day of Jesus Christ will be the crowning work of immortality in the resurrection. Psalms 138:8 reads, "The Lord will perfect that which concerneth me: thy mercy, O Lord, endureth forever." Paul states that "The gifts and calling of God are without repentance." So God's dealing with his children are never ending, but will finally save them in Heaven without the loss of one.

In this life God's people may experience a close view of the seven fundamental principles or pillars of this firm foundation as God sees fit to reveal to them. The seventh, or that of the IMMORTALIZATION OR RESURRECTION OF THE SAINTS, is yet to be experienced in reality. Now we see as through a glass darkly but then face to face; now we know in part but then we will know as we are known. Now we look forward with deep anxiety and precious hope toward the reality of the seventh principle, THE RESURRECTION, which is to be the crowning work of salvation and is yet to be experienced actually and really by all the children of God. I desire to close this treatise by quoting 1 Cor. 15:51-58, "Behold, I show you a mystery; we shall not all sleep, but we shall all be changed, In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed. For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, than shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is

thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But THANKS BE TO GOD, WHICH GIVETH US THE VICTORY THROUGH OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST. Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the WORK OF THE LORD, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord." Amen. E. J. L.

WERE THERE NOT TEN CLEANSED?

BUT WHERE ARE THE NINE?

LUKE 17:17

The record informs us that "it came to pass, as he (Jesus) went to Jerusalem, that he passed through the midst of Samaria and Galilee. And as he entered into a certain village, there met him ten men that were lepers, which stood afar off: And they lifted up their voices, and said, Jesus, Master, have mercy on us. And when he saw them, he said unto them, Go shew yourselves unto the priests. And it came to pass, that, as they went, they were cleansed. And one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned back, and with a loud voice glorified God, And fell down on his face at his feet, giving him thanks: and he was a Samaritan. And Jesus answering said, were there not ten cleansed? but where are the nine? There are not found that returned to give glory to God, save this stranger. And he said unto him, Arise, go thy way: thy faith hath made thee whole."

One of the most terrible of all infectious diseases is that of leprosy. Once it gets into the blood, apparently there is no cure for it. Pitiful, indeed, are those who are afflicted with it. Under the law "the leper in whom the plague is, his clothes shall be rent, and his head bare, and he shall put a covering upon his upper lip, and shall cry, Unclean, unclean. All the days wherein the plague shall be in him he shall be de-

filed; he is unclean: he shall dwell alone; without the camp shall his habitation be." Lev. 13:45-46. While there was no hope of aid or healing by earthly physicians, the fame of the Great Physician, because of the miracles which he wrought, was being spread abroad, and "there met him ten men that were lepers, which stood afar off." Jesus was on his way to Jerusalem, and he must needs pass "through the midst of Samaria and Galilee." It is quite evident that in the "certain village" into which Jesus entered there were both Jews and Samaritans, and while the ten lepers had to be segregated, or separated and kept at a distance from all the rest, for it is said they "stood afar off," nevertheless "they lifted up their voices, and said, Jesus, Master, have mercy on us." So far as they were concerned there was help in none other but Jesus, and they realized that it would be a great condescension on his part to take any note of them in their terrible plight, but what else could they do, Therefore they cried aloud, for the record is "they lifted up their voices." Necessity was laid upon them, and being undeserving they cried for mercy. So far as we are aware, there is not a single instance in all of the Bible where Jesus turned a deaf ear to the plea of mercy. He heard their cries, "And when he saw them, he said unto them, Go shew yourselves unto the priests." They evidently had faith to believe in him, for they obeyed his command. "And it came to pass, that, as they went, they were cleansed." The priests had nothing to do with this cleansing, for "as they went they were cleansed." There was no virtue in the priests, as such; their mission was only to pronounce the case either clean or unclean.

How truly does leprosy typify sin, and the leper the sinner! One must realize that he is altogether vile and sinful, with no soundness in him at all, before he will look to Jesus for help. Like Paul, he has to confess, "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 must be completely bankrupt so far as creature good works is concerned, and have absolutely no confidence in the flesh, before he is fit for the Master's use. It is only when he feels to be the very chief of sinners, and justly condemned before God, who is altogether righteous and holy, that he is a fit subject for mercy and grace divine.

Our main thought in writing this article is to emphasize the characteristics of the one who, "when he saw he was healed, turned back, and with a loud voice glorified God." Since there is nothing in particular said about the nine who did not turn back to glorify God, as being "Samaritans" or "strangers," we are going to assume they were all Jews, and while it is true they were all lepers, because of the feeling which existed among the Jews towards the Samaritans, it would appear that the Samaritan, the blackest of them all, so to speak, was the only one who possessed sufficient gratitude to acknowledge how greatly he had been blessed. He "fell down on his face at his (Jesus') feet, giving him thanks; and he was a Samaritan." Jesus, answering, said, "Were there not ten cleansed? but where are the nine? There are not found that returned to give glory to God, save this stranger. And he said unto him, Arise, go thy way: thy faith hath made thee whole." This poor man was truly humbled and lay prostrate at the feet of his Master, giving glory to God. We

have sometimes wondered why so few of those who by faith have experienced the efficacy of the cleansing blood of the blessed Lamb of God, return to give him thanks and to glorify God by acknowledging him before men. We are persuaded that those who do are only a small percentage, comparatively speaking, of the total number who believe that Jesus is the Saviour of sinners. Perhaps those who do are the worst of all, the vilest of the vile, or see more clearly their sinful condition before a just and holy God. They are as "this Samaritan," "this stranger." The others, like the Jews, perhaps, have not felt their vileness so keenly and have not come to the place where they must fall at the feet of their Lord and give him thanks. We know it is written, "Many are called, but few are chosen," but at the same time we can but wish that it might be the will and good pleasure of our heavenly Father to bid them come unto him, that they might have rest. Jesus told one to "Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee." When Jesus was here in the world, "He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened he not his mouth: In his humiliation his judgment was taken away: and who shall declare his generation? for his life is taken from the earth." We can but feel that only those who are likewise led and humbled and have their judgment taken from them, will be made willing to leave their case to the judgment of the Church, and these shall declare the generation of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. We also feel that we know full well that no man, or woman, or child will chose this way when left to themselves, for this is the "path which no fowl knoweth, and which the vulture's eye hath not seen. The

lion's whelps have not trodden it, nor the fierce lion passed by it."

Jesus said to this "stranger," (and how well does that word describe such a character!) "Arise, go thy way: thy faith hath made thee whole." Yes, he had his way to go, and he must walk it by faith. It was his faith that made him whole, his unshakable belief in the ability of his Master to only speak the word, and he would live.

Matthew, Mark and Luke give an account of another leper who came to Jesus and was healed. Matthew says, "When he (Jesus) was come down from the mountain, great multitudes followed him. And, behold, there came a leper and worshipped him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. And Jesus put forth his hand, and touched him, saying, I will; be thou clean. And immediately his leprosy was cleansed." Here, again, was seen implicit faith in the ability of Jesus to heal the most loathsome of all diseases, for he worshipped him, saying, "Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean." The only question in the leper's mind was whether our Lord would be pleased to have compassion upon him, but whether he would or not he "worshipped him." Paul said, "without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." We are also reminded of another occasion when it was said of Jesus, that "he must needs go through Samaria." "Then cometh he to a city of Samaria, which is called Sychar, near to the parcel of ground that Jacob gave to his son Joseph. Now Jacob's well was there. Jesus therefore, being wearied with his journey, sat thus on the well: and it was about the sixth hour. There cometh a woman of Samaria to draw water:

Jesus saith unto her, Give me to drink. (For his disciples were gone away unto the city to buy meat.) Then saith the woman of Samaria unto him, How is it that thou, being a Jew askest drink of me, which am a woman of Samaria? for the Jews have no dealings with the Samaritans." How glad we are it is written that He did not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. He came eating with publicans and sinners, and when the Phārisees were astonished at it, his reply was, "They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick." The woman at the well needed to be taught who he was, and of his works and ways. He said unto her, "If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water." At that time, she only knew of the water that had to be drawn from Jacob's well, but Jesus told her that, "Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again: But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life. The woman saith unto him, Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw." Jesus continued to reveal himself more and more to her, and while at first she perceived him to be a prophet, ere long she "left her waterpot, and went her way into the city, and saith to the men, Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?" He had unfolded to her the inadequacy of the law, which she bore witness to, for while she had had five husbands, she confessed that she now had no husband, meaning thereby that she had reached the point where the law could no longer avail for her or supply

her need. While her fathers had worshipped in the mountain of the law, Jesus told her that the hour cometh, "when ye shall neither in this mountain, nor yet at Jerusalem, worship the Father. Ye worship ye know not what: we know what we worship: for salvation is of the Jews. But the hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth: for the Father seeketh such to worship him. God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." How we all need to be taught this most precious truth! Among the last words to be uttered by our Lord while journeying in the flesh, were these: "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou has sent." Such knowledge is wonderful, indeed! Like the leper and the woman at the well, we must go our way, and while there are countless thousands who never turn back to give thanks or to glorify God, we would like to emblazen his praise, and his honor and his glory, across the canopy of the heavens, that all of his creatures might see it, and bow before Him that sitteth on the great white throne, and adore him world without end. Gratitude towards God is a rare gem, and we earnestly hope that many of our friends among our readers will be given to turn back, and with a loud voice glorify God, rendering unto him the praise that is his just due.

WERE THERE NOT TEN CLEANSED?

BUT WHERE ARE THE NINE?

R. L. D.

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Elder George L. Weaver requests that all communications for him be addressed to Route 2, Amelia, Ohio.

The Old School Baptist Maine Conference, assembled at the Oak Woods Church in North Berwick, Me, Oct. 11-12, 1947, to the associations and churches with which we correspond by ministering brethren, messengers or by letter.

DEAR BRETHREN: In again addressing you it is with a sacred pleasure, because of the unity of the faith in which we hope we are one people through the household of God. As of old we thank the Lord for his manifold blessings toward us as a church in preserving us and causing the light of his countenance to shine upon us. "Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound: they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance." Psalms 89:15. The love and interest manifested by our sister churches is appreciated by us, and we desire a continuance of your correspondence, and hope to see your messengers at our next yearly conference which we trust, God willing, to hold at North Berwick.

At all times we are reminded of the goodness of God to us. "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." James 1:17. How assuring to know that the heavenly Father changes not. We are as the waves of the sea or slender reeds driven and tossed about by the wind, but the Savior maketh the storm to cease and the waves to be still. Oh, the height and the depth of his mercy toward us!

Though few in number we have endeavored to meet in conference, each one telling of his experience along the way, reading the Scriptures, prayer and singing the good hymns written by inspired poets. In Mal. 3:16 is the promise, "Then they that feared the

Lord spake often one to another: and the Lord hearkened, and heard it, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name. And they shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels."

How pleasant that the four Old School Baptist churches in Maine are near together, thus enabling some of us at least to attend the yearly meetings and other services when some ministers can be with us. We have lately been made to rejoice for a dear sister has come to the church, expressing her love and fellowship for this humble people, yet feeling her unfitness to be with those she loves for the truth's sake. May God establish our hearts in the truth as it is in Jesus and make us to rejoice in his salvation.

(Elder) R. LESTER DODSON,
Moderator

(Mrs.) ALICE M. HALL, Clerk

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

Whereas, it has pleased our heavenly Father to remove from our midst our much esteemed Sister, MRS. PEARL REBECCA (DUNCAN) CLARK, who passed to the great beyond, Oct. 20, 1947, having been a faithful, zealous and ardent member of the Saints Rest Church for the past fifteen years, and who has been identified with the church since she was thirteen years of age, more than fifty-one years united with the church, often speaking of her hope in the greater life, expressing her willingness to depart and be with those gone before, and be with the Lord forevermore.

She was the widow of our late Brother and Deacon Walter Lewis Clark, who preceded her in death, February 1, 1947. Therefore, be it

Resolved, that we, Saints Rest Church, trusting to be followers of the meek and lowly Lamb of God, feeling that he had given this precious Sister to us these many years as a star in the elements of the church here on earth, that it was his will and pleasure to take her from us, and that we do bow in humble submission to his just and holy will. Be it further

Resolved, that the Saints Rest Church extend to her bereaved children our deep and abiding sympathy, pointing them for solace to Him only who can heal the earthly wound and bring peace to their souls. Be it further

Resolved, that copy of these resolutions be sent to the sorrowing children, also a copy be sent to our family paper, **Signs of the Times**, for publication. Done by order of the church while in conference, Sunday, November 2, 1947.

(Elder) C. B. TEAGUE, Moderator

(Elder) L. D. ROSE, Acting Clerk

Whereas, our heavenly Father has removed from the walks of life our much esteemed sister, Mrs. E. L. (POWELL) DRURY, whose presence at our meetings for the past many years was so much enjoyed, and whose faith was so strengthening to the membership, and whose absence is so much deplored we feel that we have sustained a great loss. Therefore, we record this weak memorial to express our love and respect for this much esteemed sister, and bow in humble submission to the Lord's will, believing that she is at rest and hoping to meet her in a better world.

She was a native of Alabama, coming to Comanche Co., Texas when young. She was converted in her youth and joined the Primitive Baptist church. She was a member of Antioch Church in Comanche County. She came into Saints Rest Church in Dallas, Texas, April 22, 1938 and has been a faithful member since, always at church meeting unless providentially hindered, although she lived one hundred fifty miles away. She was a strong believer in the doctrine of the Primitive Baptists and proved her faith by her work.

She passed away at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Will Kerley, Dec. 15, 1947. Her funeral was at the Comanche Funeral Home, Dec. 17, with Elder A. R. Swearengin in charge. She is survived by her estimable family of three sons and two daughters: Dayton Powell, Comanche, Tex., Bill Powell, San Francisco, Cal., J. L. Powell, McAllen, Texas, Mrs. Ivan Couch, Dallas, Tex., and Mrs. Will Kerley, Comanche, Tex., together with a host of friends who mourn her passing, and to whom we extend sincere sympathy and commend to them the grace of our God. Be it

Resolved, that we send a copy of this memorial to the bereaved family, write one in our church record and send one to the **Signs of the Times** for publication. Read and approved in Saints Rest Church conference, Sunday, Jan. 4, 1948.

(Elder) C. B. TEAGUE, Co-Pastor and Clerk

OBITUARIES

The most righteous God of love and mercy has by his wisdom seen fit to take from us our dear friend, WILLIAM H. HAMMONS, born August 24, 1893 in Ruskin, Nebraska, and died August 24, 1947, the son of Elder J. H. and Delila Hammons. From what I have heard his father, Elder Hammons, was of the Old School Baptists, a strong believer in the purpose and sovereignty of God in all things. He served churches in Nebraska and Kansas before coming to California. His obituary appeared in the Signs of the Times in 1927 written by Sister Mary Ellison. She paid great tribute to this faithful servant of God. William is survived by his dear wife, Alta, who was everything that could be expected of a wife; also four daughters, Mrs. Wilma Williams, Oakland, Calif., Mrs. Ila Shaw, Edna and Marnell of Yuba City, one son, Robert, is deceased. He also leaves five brothers and two sisters, John, Virgil and Earl of Yuba City, Pete of Los Angeles, Lee of Chico, Mrs. Carrie Burnette, Chico and Mrs. Etta Jones of Paradise, Calif. One brother, Cortie, is deceased.

Brother Will joined the Missionary Baptists some years ago but for some time before his death, he attended the Primitive Baptist Church and was not in the least backward in showing his love for the Old Baptists. Shortly before his death he requested the unworthy writer to conduct his funeral service which we tried in our weak way to do. We had learned to love Brother Will for the truth's sake. A large crowd attended the funeral at the Jarvis Funeral Home in Yuba City. After the service his body was laid to rest in the Sutter Cemetery to await the resurrection. The community has lost a useful citizen, the family a loving husband and father, and the church a faithful attendant. May the spirit of reconciliation reign in the hearts of those near and dear to him, is my prayer. One who loved him.

(Elder) T. R. JEFFERSON

JACOB ROBERT McAFEE, son of John T. and Pamela B. McAfee, was born near Redman, Macon Co., Mo., Nov. 30, 1863, and passed away at his home in Redman, April 30, 1947, being 83 years, 7 months of age. He began blacksmithing at Redman in 1887, continued in that work, adding gas and oils to the business in 1927. About a year before he died he was unable to work. Oct. 1, 1893 he was married to Miss Susan Clella Friday and to this union five children were born. Violet Belle preceded him in death Nov. 6, 1942. Those surviving are Rodney Bryan, Hannibal, Mo., Lloyd Wilbur, and Noel Sidney, St. Louis, Mo. and Cecyl Wayne, Mason, Mo. Other survivors, four grandchildren and two great-grandchildren; three

brothers, John F. of Montana, W. B. of Macon, Mo., and G. J. Atlanta, Mo.; two sisters, Mrs. Fannie Hawkins, Leonard, Mo. and Mrs. T. A. Perry, Peoria, Ill.

He never made a public profession but was a firm believer in salvation by grace and esteemed the Primitive Baptist Church as the true church, attending regularly and aiding materially. Having lived together almost fifty-four years I miss him so much, but God is a husband to the widows and his sustaining grace helps me to go on. Funeral services were held at Mt. Salem meeting-house, conducted by Elder J. Bryan Adair, assisted by Elder S. L. Pettus. Interment in a near-by cemetery.

(Mrs.) J. R. McAFEE

MRS. FLORENCE MATHIS BEAN departed this life Jan. 6, 1948 at the Mayfield Hospital, Mayfield, Ky. after several days of suffering and pain. Florence was the wife of the late Dr. Bean of Brewers, Ky., the mother of two girls, Mavis Lyles and Gladys Mason both of Brewers; one son, Forrest Bean of California, all of them are living. Florence professed a hope in early life but never united with the church. She was as much a member of the original Primitive Baptist Church at Soldier Creek as any member there. Her home was a home for the Baptists and she never tired or complained of how many visited with her at the same time. No one was ever turned from her door to hunt a home elsewhere. God had blessed her in basket and in store as well as teaching her that salvation was in him and not in the works of the flesh. Her daily walk was that of a tried and true saint of God; her patience was God given; her endurance was beautiful to behold. We who lived close to her feel she is not dead but just sleeping in Jesus from which none ever wake to weep.

She leaves besides her children several grandchildren, one sister, Mrs. Meta McPherson and an aged mother, Sister Emma Lou Mathis who had lived with her daughter, Florence, for the past several years. The church will miss her going in and out with them; her words of encouragement; her works of charity; her life of hope and love.

Her funeral was preached by Elder Paul Poyner of the Soldier Creek Association and Primitive Baptist faith. Her remains were laid to rest beside her husband near her old home in Brewers, Ky. We would say to the aged mother, to her family and to the household of faith weep not, she sleeps that night of rest, awaiting the call "come home," enter into that eternal place of abode where hope is lost in sight.

(Mrs.) EFFIE BOWDEN

On May 20, 1947 God called from this world of sin, sorrow and affliction our dear and beloved father, I. HAMILTON EVANS, to be with him where sickness and sorrow are not known. He was born June 15, 1868, the son of Ichabod D. and Eliza Ann Evans, near Mardela Springs, Md., making his stay on earth 79 years, 11 months and 5 days.

Father was married to Georgia Ann Horsman, daughter of John and Sally Horsman of Mardela Springs, Md., Feb. 14, 1888. Mother preceded him in death 12 years. To this union were born the following children all living: Minnie Gambrill, Victor M., Aquilla H., G. Dewey, Elderdice Evans and Emma L. Beach of Mardela Springs and Ruby Parsons of Salisbury, Md. Two children died in infancy. Grandchildren surviving are R. Allen Gambrill, Norman Lee Freeman, G. Dewey Evans, Jr., Betty Ann Elliott, also two great-grandchildren, Connie Lee Evans and Robert Freeman.

On Aug. 30, 1937 father was married to Pearl E. Hoffman of Crisfield, Md. who also survives. All feel our loss deeply but feel to bow our heads in humble submission to Him who doeth all things well and cannot err, realizing fully that our loss is his eternal gain. Indeed we feel it would be wrong to wish him to stay in his afflictions. Many times during the 11 months on his sick bed he expressed his great desire to go where pain was no more. One of his favorite hymns No. 571 in the Lester-Durand Hymn and Tune Book was beautifully read at the funeral service conducted at his late home by our friend and beloved pastor, Elder H. M. Bennett, who spoke comfortingly to the family and large gathering of family and friends.

While father was not a member of the visible church he was a strong and firm believer in the doctrine of the Old School Primitive Baptists, and contended for and upheld the doctrine of salvation by grace alone, having no confidence in self or creature works. He was always confessing himself to be a vile, wicked and wretched sinner, and helpless of himself to do anything about it, and could only say that as salvation is by grace, lest God have mercy on him he was eternally lost. His interest and thoughts were always for the welfare of the Rewastico Church that he loved so well and attended all his life. He never missed an opportunity to attend a meeting unless providentially hindered and was, we feel to know, loved and highly esteemed by the church that he had loved for the truth's sake for so many years.

The respect and esteem in which he was held was proven by the large gathering of relatives and friends, and the many beautiful floral offerings. Father was tenderly and well taken care of by his loving wife and companion, children

and in-laws. His body was placed by that of his first wife in the family burying ground near Mardela Springs, Md. Written by his loving daughter.

(Mrs.) MINNIE GAMBRILL

MRS. LILLIE MATTHEWS CHESTER, wife of Brother T. S. Chester of the Soldier Creek Church of the regular order of Primitive Baptists near Brewers, Ky., departed this life Dec. 16, 1947 after a lingering, painful illness. Lillie was one of our faith who remained on the outside of the church. She felt for years a deep hungering for the truth as it is in Jesus and having no confidence in the flesh religions of this day and time. She and her husband went to the meetings of the Primitive Baptists. Distances did not stop their goings in and out before us and they were helpful in seeing that others could go to the meetings. She also went when health was poor and her sufferings were great. Their home was a home for the Old Primitive Baptists, a place to rest, to feed and shelter these old bodies of ours, also a place where we met to sing, pray and preach. She was bedfast at our last Association and our visiting ministers, together with our dear old moderator and other Baptists visited at her bedside. She had them sing and each one talk and pray. This Jesus, whom these were determined to know and nothing else, was her meat and her drink. The Signs of the Times she carried around and studied and read each article. She often called for song in her last days of suffering and these songs were songs of truth and experience to her. It was a sad experience to her last summer when a very dear sister was baptized into the fellowship of the church and she could not go. Something seemed to say "no." Still in tears she said, I rather have hope than to stand up and say, "I know it" as some do. My hope is all I want, it is enough.

She leaves two brothers, Alex and Ronnie Matthews of Tenn., and an aged sister, Mrs. Nannie Edwards of Tenn. Also her husband who requested these lines be sent to the Signs, asking me to write them. He states, "I wish I might write something, she was such a good Baptist and loved them so much," but he added, "I feel this song this day:

Though cast down, we're not forsaken,
Though afflicted, not alone;
Thou didst give, and thou hast taken,
Blessed Lord, "Thy will be done"

She often asked me to sing, said it sounded so pretty to her."

Her funeral was preached by Elders Paul Poyner and J. H. Henson at the Soldier Creek meeting-house, and her remains laid to rest in the church cemetery. Her sufferings now have reached a close,

and we would say to those who weep, the joy prepared for suffering saints will make amends for all.

(Mrs.) EFFIE BOWDEN

Brother JAMES H. LAWS was born October 14, 1856, and died May 26, 1947. He was the son of William L. and Margaret Fooks Laws and reared near Powellville, Wicomico Co., Md. On Jan. 2, 1884, Brother Laws was married to Miss Leah Catherine Jarman and to them were born eleven children. His widow and eight of the children survive him.

In June 1887 he was baptized by Elder T. M. Poulson, uniting with the Indiantown Old School Baptist Church where his membership remained until God took him from this world. He was a very faithful and loyal member and a true witness of salvation by grace. He has been greatly missed by his brethren and sisters of the same faith, as well as by his family and friends. He was highly respected by all who knew him. Funeral service was conducted by the writer at his home and his body buried in the family burying ground.

(Elder) H. M. BENNETT

SPECIAL NOTICE

Beginning with the month of January, 1948 there will be held, the Lord willing, on the first Sunday of each month at 2:30 p. m. a meeting of Old School or Predestinarian Baptists for worship, second floor of Pythian Temple building, 1012 Ninth St., N. W., Washington, D. C. Elder John D. Wood, Minister. Those desiring to meet with us are welcome. For further information, call or write to

FRANK T. SIMPKINS
5210 - H ST.,
Dillon Park,
Washington, D. C.

SPECIAL MEETING

The Delaware River Old School Baptist Association will convene, the Lord willing, with the Hopewell Old School Baptist Church, Hopewell, N. J., Wednesday, Thursday and Friday, June 2, 3 and 4, 1948. Services will commence at 10 a. m. Wednesday. Our ministers, brethren and friends are invited. Trains will be met at Hopewell, Tuesday p. m. Those desiring more information regarding the meeting may write Elder C. W. Vaughn, Hopewell, N. J. or the undersigned at the same address.

(Mrs.) LETHA A. BLACKWELL

Church Clerk

HASSELL'S CHURCH HISTORY

This book has been republished and is ready for delivery. Price \$4.85. Send orders to Turner Lasseter, 919 North Highland Ave., N. E. Atlanta, Ga.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON'

VOL. 116

RUTHERFORD, N. J., JUNE, 1948

No. 6

WHATEVER IS, IS BEST

"Sometimes when storms of troubles roll,
And waves of trial beat
With all their fury o'er my soul
They bring me to defeat;
Till comes the calm, as come it will,
And looking back I see
That 'spite of either good or ill,
Whatever is, is best for me.

Sometimes deep shadows cross my path,
Down in the valley low;
Sometimes the billows of his wrath
Above me overflow;
Till comes relief, as come it will,
And looking back I see
His rod and staff my comfort still
Whatever is, is best for me.

Sometimes my faith grows dead and cold
No hope, no sure retreat;
And like a sheep without the fold,
I faint with thirst and heat;
Till spreads the feast, as spread it will
And looking back I see
His bounty filling all my soul—
Whatever is, is best for me.

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

AUTHOR UNKNOWN

Selected by Henry Townsend, Jr., Edgemont, Pa.

CORRESPONDENCE

A FEW THOUGHTS

Near the close of the days Jesus spent on earth he approached his Father in prayer, "And lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee." John 17:1.

In this quotation we are taught the right attitude, or position, in the reality of prayer. In view of the fact Jesus lifted his eyes to heaven, he evidently beheld God in all his power and glory, majesty and dominion. I seriously doubt we pray unless our eyes are lifted to heaven, regardless of what position our body is in, notwithstanding it is almost a breach of fellowship in some sections of the country if all do not get on their knees, and especially the one audibly speaking. I often think such criterion discipline might be hypocrisy, as now it is so clearly shown and proven by thus saith the Lord in an editorial in Dec. 1947 *Signs* by Elder D. V. Spangler that the position or attitude of the body has absolutely nothing to do with the prayer offered nor of the results obtained; but it is altogether exclusively as to where our eyes are lifted, and in this respect I am lead to feel we can see just as well in one position of the body as we can in another; it is all dependent upon what we see and not upon the position or attitude the body is when we are seeing. As a matter of fact the pharisee saw himself as a strict religionist, a result of which he prayed with himself; the publican saw God, he saw streams of mercy never ceasing, he saw himself condemned before God and the great mercy seat, he saw nothing good he had ever done, he felt within his heart mercy was the only cure, being a condemned sinner before God and the great mercy seat; then we hear his prayer, "God be merciful to me a sin-

ner." He never even asked to be changed to a Christian gentleman but was content being a sinner, but signified by smiting his breast with his own sinful hand he did so much need the mercy of God. I pause to ask here, do we need more?

Ah, my friends, I am fearful that much of our praying is only a public expression of our wants instead of our needs, and I find no promises along that line. The eyes of Jesus lifted to heaven, there beholding all the glory of God. Jesus evidently felt within, the great need of that glory in order to do justice to so great a God in that of glorifying him; so his plea is, glorify thy Son, not even for the sake of the Son, but only that thy Son also may glorify thee in face of the inevitable hour. Jesus never waned in his prayer acknowledging the great gift he possessed over all flesh, along with the great authority to give eternal life to as many as God gave him; never changed the status of affairs in his heart in respect to his inability to carry on of himself, but conscious always from whence all power and blessings come, Jesus having power over all flesh. I understand Jesus here to be dealing with mankind and not with birds and beasts and creeping things of the earth. My understanding does not limit the power of Jesus no more than the misunderstanding of some one else. The fact remains he is the Son of God with power and great glory, but I am endeavoring to pay tribute where tribute is due; honor where honor is due. I feel it would be so dishonoring to Jesus for me to say God gave him power over all flesh to the grand end in view that he should give eternal life to as many as God gave him, and the next breath say, the flesh under consideration was the flesh of birds, beasts and all creeping things of the earth as well as man-

kind, when it is not my understanding Jesus had any such in view, but did have under consideration all fleshly motives, interests and purposes, religious or otherwise to the end they should not intervene to prohibit, aid or encourage in any way, shape, fashion or form by act or deed the giving of eternal life to as many as his Father gave him for in the gift was also included Jesus to them, "Thou gavest them me." John 17:6. I feel the very arches of heaven are decked with the gates of the prayer of the Son of God purely upon the spirit and principal of the salvation of all those for whom Jesus suffered, bled and died, culminating the eternal purpose of God. A trembling sinner.

(Elder) F. A. COLLINS

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: John was commanded to write "The things which thou hast seen, and the things which are, and the things which shall be hereafter." Before writing these things he had to be turned to see what he was to write about. One of the writers said, "Turn thou us unto thee, O Lord, and we shall be turned." This turning signifies to me he knew nothing about this picture in the making for it was at his back, and until this time he only had eyes to look straight forward (law), knowing nothing of the wonderful working of God from before the world began. No wonder John fell to the ground at the sight of this magnificent picture. Naturally speaking, if we were to turn and see a great building completed, the making of which we knew nothing, it would be a great astonishment. John was in the Spirit on the Lord's day and could view something more wonderful than the natural eye is capable of beholding. Dear child of God, every time you are permitted to turn and see the immaculate Lamb of God and his holy angels it is the Lord's day with

you. What a glorious thing to know there is a Lord's day, so different from your dark and gloomy days. What a wonderful gift bestowed on the sons of men..

John first tells us he "was in (not on) the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ." It is generally said that John's enemies being tired of hearing him preach the truth banished him there to starve and die. Regardless of how history tells us he was put there, he himself in holy divine writing tells us he was there "for the word of God, and the testimony of Jesus Christ," and it was the Lord's day. It is true he was on a destitute island ready to starve and die so far as could be seen by natural understanding; stripped of all the wealth of this world; made ready for the word of God and the testimony of Jesus Christ; and it was the Lord's day, a day of knowledge. "I speak to them that know the law." Rom. 7:1.

This great voice John heard behind him seems to me to be the real voice of Him who spake and it was done, commanded and it stood fast. But the scene is a vision, as he says, "One like unto the Son of man," a shadow that blanketed the household of faith until the day of Christ. In this picture he saw seven golden candlesticks, the family of God, with each a minister held in the hand of Almighty God. No more comforting words could ever penetrate the ear of the child of God, who has fallen to the ground and sees nothing but hell and death, than these; "I am the first and the last: I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive forevermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and death." "Walk about Zion, and go round about her: tell the towers thereof. Mark ye well her bulwarks, consider her palaces; that

ye may tell it to the generation following. For this God is our God for ever and ever: he will be our guide even unto death." Yea John, after your walking about Zion and viewing her towers, seeing her many shortcomings, all the dark and gloomy days for every child of God because they are continually leaving their first love, going after Jezebel, Balaam, Nicolaitanes, etc., remember I am her God and will guide her unto death, that she may live in newness of life, "I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known: I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them." "The Lord is well pleased for his righteousness' sake; he will magnify the law, and make it honorable."

John was given language to rebuke the church for her idolatry, but every time the Spirit says hear, it is like unto this; "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna," etc. Every child of God that has been born of the Spirit knows how this overcoming comes about. Again we hear what the Spirit saith, "Come up hither and I will shew thee things which must be hereafter." Behold a throne in heaven, and he that sat upon it was like unto beautiful stones, and had the appearance round about of a rainbow in the day of rain which was the likeness of the glory of God. Round about this throne were four and twenty seats. Some one is going to quit work and be seated. I believe this to be the family of God that rests from their labor. Yes, four and twenty elders were sitting clothed in white raiment, decked with crowns of gold. Before this throne was a sea of glass which serves to show you your image and can be easily broken. Also round this throne were four beasts full

of eyes before and behind. I believe this to be the guiding spirit in all ages, from beginning to the flood, to Christ, to the end of this time world and on through death. It has no end. It is a circle round about the household of faith as complete as a wheel within a wheel. May I say the characteristics of these four beasts are *power, wisdom, justice and mercy*. The three in one God over all and in all. The angels of the churches first portrays the lion in power to rise; second, the calf slain for the feast by the shedding of blood, and sprinkling upon the lintels of the heart brings wisdom for the mother is bearing the ark, lowing as she goes; third, man, justice was met by the Son of man; and fourth, mercy, by the flying eagle as she "stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings: So the Lord alone did lead him, and there was no strange God with him." When power, wisdom, justice and mercy are displayed the beasts render glory, honor and thanks to Him that sat on the throne. Then the four and twenty elders, household of faith, fall down and worship him that sat upon the throne saying, "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." "For mine eyes have seen thy salvation, which thou hast prepared before the face of all people," "And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace."

I have not been able to be out for several days and in these quiet shut-in hours I have been given to, I hope, enjoy some of the blessings of God. Many times in my pathway do I see the beast with seven heads and ten horns coming up out of the sea. Yes, seven heads butting towards the seven divine attributes of God always placing before

me the ten commandments. As surely as I feel that I have defeated one of these there suddenly arises one nearer to me, right in this earthly body of mine, speaking as peaceably as a lamb but with the pronounciation "Siboleth." If left to myself I would be swept away as a whirlwind into the fabulous doctrines of man. I hope, to turn my course, I have been made to see the beauties of God's kingdom in the book written within and on the backside, not on the front side, but sealed from man's view, opened by the Lion of the tribe of Judah. "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be," and hear that still small voice, "Come hither, I will shew thee the bride, the Lamb's wife;" that great wonder that appeared in heaven, "A woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown of twelve stars." That great city, the holy Jerusalem descending out of heaven from God, that lieth four square, covering the four great eras I have before mentioned; the twelve gates are pearls bearing the names of the twelve tribes of Israel; her twelve foundations are garnished with all manner of precious stones bearing the names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb. The Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple. This city had no need of the light of the sun or moon, no need of any natural light nor the law for the glory of God and the Lamb lighted it. The gates of it shall not be shut at all by day for there shall be no night there. NO, no dear trembling child of God never fear of going to the Savior and of its being too late and the gates closed. An open gate and an outstretched arm figurates our God and this city. "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." "And he shewed me a pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb. In the midst of the street of it, and on either side of the river, was there the tree of life, which bare twelve manner of fruits, and yielded her fruit every month: and the leaves of the tree were for the healing of the nations." Nor need you be worried about the sin sick soul for there shall be no more curse. The physician is there with the cure. Such beauty! No natural tongue can tell, no eye can see, no mind contain the beauties of this city whose maker and builder is God, but as the queen of Sheba said, "the half was not told me." Although she leaves her first love and gets drunk on the wine of Babylon she has only to say, "Return, return, O Shulamite." "There are threescore queens, and fourscore concubines, and virgins without number. 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." As she hears the voice of her love she says, "Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth: for thy love is better than wine."

God's people are always a willing people in the day of his power. "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgements and his ways past finding out!" Yes, it is a secret that no one has been able to tell what they have seen and heard. When the seven thunders had uttered their voices John was about to write. It is evident he knew what was uttered or he wouldn't have started to write. God sealed those words not from John, but with him and did not allow him to write them. So it is with every child to-day when they are caught up to Paradise. They hear words unspeakable that it is not lawful for a man to utter. Child of

faith, try always to keep in mind that Michael, your Elder Brother and Savior victoriously fought your battle with the dragon and his angels, and their place was found no more in heaven, "For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell; And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven." Therefore, He could say, "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Wayfaring child, Joseph is still alive! Is it not enough? In this new heaven and earth is peace, love and happiness; without are dogs, sorcerers, whoremongers, murderers and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie. Oh, would you not love to know you were on the inside protected by the walls and bulwarks of salvation, sleeping on the downy bed of God's love, feasting at the banquet table under the banner of love?

'Tis a picture of silver with apples of gold,
 Drawn by the eternal pen;
 It neither can be bought nor sold,
 It is given to all the kin.

(Mrs.) MAGGIE LEE HAYES

(The following scrap of correspondence, from the pen of our late venerable and dear brother, has been kindly furnished by a friend, and will be read with profit by many.—Editor.)

Wallacetown, Ont., Feb. 2, 1864

MY DEAR FRIEND:—I received yours yesterday, and was glad to hear from you. With reference to my bodily health, I may inform you that I am gradually though slowly recovering. If ever I had been of any use to the church of God in my day, I feel that my usefulness is at an end; but if further spared, my day of sinning is not past. "O, wretched man that I am"—bearing such a corrupt *body*. Often in darkness, I know not

where I am, like a mariner at sea, when neither sun, moon nor stars are seen, having to calculate by the "dead reckoning," which is an uncertain and unreliable mode of determining our situations. I know that when I started the sun shone brightly, but did not know that the days of clouds and darkness were so near, and would be so numerous. Yet so they are. I do not at all desire to measure others by my standard, for I have seen, heard and experienced too much to warrant me in doing so; neither do I wish to limit the God of Israel to any human standard, for his ways are frequently dark and mysterious to our finite comprehension, "and past finding out." "His locks are bushy and black," &c. "We have a sure word of prophecy, to which we would do well to take heed"—take it as our chart and compass in our seemingly dangerous voyage, where there are so many obstructions—*infernal machines, half-tide rocks, sand-banks, &c., &c., &c.* If we have *not* the skillful pilot on board, our ship shall surely be wrecked, even at the entrance to the haven; but if he is at the helm we shall be safe at last, although we be sometimes fearful and unbelieving, and may charge us often with unbelief and hardness of heart. I know it is so with me from sad experience.

When we profess religion, the scriptures must be our rule of faith and practice in every particular—"To the law and to the testimony," &c., and not to our charity. When a man, professing religion, is unable to "give a reason of the hope" that he says he has in him, saying he left his experience at home, or behind him, we may safely conclude that he has not experienced the gracious work of the Holy Spirit in his heart, but deceiveth himself. Job would know what answer the Lord would give him. David would invite all that feared the

Lord to "come and hear what he had done for his soul." Jeremiah found the Word, and it was the joy and rejoicing of his heart. Ephraim could tell that he was instructed and chastised, and God had mercy on him. "The seed is the word of God," and where there is no seed there will be no fruit. "Of his own will begat he us by the word of truth," &c. Peter calls it "the incorruptible seed," &c. The prophets say, "The word of the Lord came unto me" at such a time and place. By the *word* we shall be judged, &c. True religion consists of doctrine, experience and practice. A person may have a clear head, but a dull heart. He may preach with the tongue of men and of angels, and still be without the work of saving grace in his soul. I contend that no one can prove the bible to be the book of God, but by the experience of the Spirit's work in him. 1 Cor. 12 &c.

Yours in sorrow, and yet in hope,
THOMAS McCOLL

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: Thank you for the kind words expressed in appreciation of my letter which was published in the June issue. Naturally I am anxious to read the letter from my old home state which you said would be published in due time, also any others which may be published that refer to my letter. I know I cannot keep my identity from those to whom God chooses to reveal it. It is easier for me to follow the Spirit when I lay aside all the flesh that I can "for I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing."

A few years after I united with the church I felt the impression that some day I would have to write to the Baptist papers for the comfort and edification of God's chosen people. I was willing to do my Master's bidding but what must I write? I was young and had not

passed through the school of experience so necessary to God's people. I did not feel that I even had an experience of grace that would interest any one, as it was not like many I had read in the Baptist papers. After attending the Associations or other good meetings I often wrote about them and sent my letters to the Baptist papers where they were published. Those who had attended the meetings, or knew the people mentioned, said they had enjoyed the letters. After my marriage I occasionally wrote to my home church telling about the Texas Baptists, etc. Some of these letters were published in different Baptist papers. However, the older I grew the more I realized that few people cared for my efforts. I then only wrote short letters expressing my appreciation of the writings of the *Signs* when I sent in my subscription. I wrote no more until I was moved by the Spirit to write you the letter, part of which you published in the *Signs* Nov. 1946.

If only I can write some word of comfort to God's humble poor, the little trembling children of God, that may help them along life's rugged journey, I shall feel that my life has not been lived in vain. It was that desire prompted me to write you that letter hoping some little sister might be helped in her hour of need to hold fast to that faith once delivered to the saints, regardless of her trials and sorrows along the way; and to keep pressing forward to the high calling of God, ever looking to Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith. Our Master told us, "In the world ye shall have tribulation." He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; and in his compassion wept with those that wept. He commanded his followers to love and to comfort one another as they traveled through life saying, "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye

have done it unto me." I have heard the still small voice of my Master in the wee hours of night speak these words to me; and I will never forget the sweet peace that came to me then for I knew that I had pleased my Lord whom I wish to serve. I thank God for the sweet comfort I have received in the past, through the effectual workings of the Spirit in the lives of his dear servants and hand maidens expressed through the medium of their friends and published in the dear old *Signs*. It is my desire to likewise help the shut-ins, the sad and lonely, and those who for any reason are deprived of the privilege of attending their church services. I know what it means to be sad and lonely, a stranger in a strange land with no loved one near me with whom I could discuss the affairs of the heart.

It was not through my own efforts for I knew not where to look, but through a copy of the *Signs of the Times* in the home of an afflicted sister that I was introduced to the Texas Baptists. I had read the *Signs* at home and I knew I was among friends but I did not get to attend any of the churches for many months. I know what it means to be kept away from my church for many months at a time. I do not know what I would have done but for the comfort I gleaned from the family paper, the encouraging personal notes of my precious sister and my beautiful dreams. I know what it means to have my heart bruised and torn because of strife and confusion in my church homes through no fault of my own. Even as a child I suffered because of church troubles, for when my parents suffered in their troubles I suffered too. I loved every one who professed to love the doctrine of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ whether inside or outside of the church. I never could understand why the people who professed to love God

and Christ most could not get along together without quarreling and hurting each other's feelings for "God is love," and "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." I have belonged to three different Primitive Baptist churches, and have lived to see some in each church, whom I had loved and trusted and with whom I had communed, cast from the folds.

I know what it means to be bowed down in sorrow and grief by the hand of God to have an only child snatched from me in a few short moments; to see my fine son, a happy youth, walk whistling away from home only to return in a few hours in a casket; and to have to cry out, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." Yet in a few years later we have both thanked God many times for taking our darling from the evil to come, and sparing him the horrors of war which his associates had to endure; and for sparing us the pains other parents endured during those trying years, but our hearts have bled for all who lost their valiant sons.

My heart was saddened when I read of the passing of dear Elder Bond. I never knew him in the flesh, but through the spirit have gleaned much comfort and consolation from his writings in the *Signs*. Yes, he will be missed by his fellow travelers and the household of faith who has read his writings. He was a true servant of God, a sweet peacemaker who spent the greater part of his life feeding his Master's flock and chasing away the wolves and trying to keep the rams from fighting within the fold. He has gone to his rest and has received the blessings of his Master who said, "Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God." May God's tender mercy rest upon the bereaved and all who mourn be-

cause of his passing, and if it be in accordance with God's holy will, may he raise up other servants and send them forth into that vineyard to carry on the work which was left unfinished is my prayer for Christ's sake, Amen.

I feel to thank God from the bottom of my heart for the privilege of attending a union meeting last week end. When I told my husband I desired to attend all three days he made no objection. He ate his lunches in town on Friday and Saturday so that I might take the car and stay as long as I wished. Not caring to go to church on Sunday he spent the day in the country with his grandsons while I went to church with a friend. What a sweet peace was mine to be able to go to and from my worship without fear of criticism from my dear companion! I have always considered it a great privilege to visit this old "Mother Church," the oldest church in the state of Texas. It was here, one hundred fourteen years ago, that the little band of pilgrims, in the primeval forests surrounded by savages and wild beasts, built their house of worship and worshipped their God in spirit and in truth. Unworthy as I am I am happy to have the love and confidence of my dear old "Mother in Israel" whose grandfather led that little band of worshippers from their old home—an organized church—through the perils of an arduous journey to this haven of rest and preached to them the rest of his life, and whose father carried on the work of his father in the ministry for many years until his death. I love to meet her smiling face in this hallowed spot. I feel thankful that the same sweet doctrine of salvation by grace and grace alone which has been proclaimed from the pulpit at this place down through the years was proclaimed at this meeting by the five ministers in attendance. Though the

church membership has decreased, so many of the older ones having passed away in the last few years, I was told that these were the largest congregations, during all three days, that have been at the June meetings in many years. Most of the congregation, members of other churches in the Association and of churches in three corresponding Associations, came many miles to attend these services. The interest was keen, the singing melodious and the preaching harmonious. Love and sweet peace abounded. The congregations assembled early—before nine o'clock on Saturday and Sunday—and sang God's praises from both the Sacred Harp book and the church hymnal until eleven o'clock when preaching began. Two services were held at the meeting-house on Saturday, and night services Friday and Saturday nights at the homes of the brethren. At the close of the services on Sunday the ordinance of the Lord's Supper was observed, followed by the washing of the saint's feet, "My cup runneth over." I pray God to ever keep me at the feet of my brethren and sisters that I may serve them in whatever capacity seemeth good in His sight. It is God that places the gifts in accordance with his own will in order that all honor and glory may be ascribed to his holy name.

As the parting hand was taken, a young brother presented himself before the church and asked for a home, saying he had stayed away as long as he could. He was not blessed with utterance of speech to relate his experience of grace, but simply said that he loved the brethren and the doctrine of God our Savior which had been preached and he wanted to be one of them. He was no stranger to the membership as his mother had been a member many years and he had lived in the environs of the church. After answering the ques-

tions propounded by the moderator he was received into the fellowship of the church and a candidate for baptism which will be administered to him in the near future. It was very encouraging to the older members to see so many sons and daughters of Primitive Baptists—some of whom are deceased—in attendance at this meeting. Judging from their countenances they were gleaning the crumbs that fell from their Master's table. Oh, that more of them might be given the courage and grace to take up their cross and follow their Master through evil as well as good report! Our Savior said, "My yoke is easy, and my burden is light." It is he with whom we are yoked and he has borne the heavy load. I feel that if they but knew the blessings they would receive in obedience, they would take their places with the old soldiers of the cross.

It was indeed gratifying to my poor soul to learn that my letter had struck a responsive chord in the hearts of my brethren and sisters here—those who know me best. All who had read it said they enjoyed it and others expressed their desire to read it. Most of them recognized my identity when they read it, though few knew anything of my early life. One visiting sister who had known me but a few years, came to me with tear dimmed eyes and threw her arms about me saying, she had appreciated my letter so much, and that she wished she could spend hours talking with me as she had borne a similar cross for many years during the lifetime of her husband, and she knew whereof I spoke. She said that when she had finished reading the letter my face was presented before her and she knew the author. I told her not to praise me, but God, for the comfort she had received. I feel that I have been doubly paid for the efforts I put forth in writing the letter by the knowledge of the

joy and comfort it has given my fellow travelers to say nothing of the rest I received in obedience.

Brother Dodson, I know you are surprised to get this letter as your letter required but a brief note in reply, but so many things kept surging through my mind day and night that I wanted to write and I could not rest until my mind was at ease. I knew the only way to get that peace was in obedience. I thank you for the corrections you made in my last letter, and will appreciate those you make in this if you desire to publish it. I hope I will not have to write you again soon, at least not until my nervous stomach gets well. It has not functioned properly since the days of that terrible disaster at Texas City, although I am many miles away from there, have not seen the ruins and did not know any one that was hurt. My heart went out in sympathy with the bereaved especially the parents whose children were lured to their death by that burning ship. May God comfort them in their sad hours is my prayer.

A few more lines to let you know that I received the sweetest peace and rest after finishing this letter that I have had in a long time, and had the best sleep last night I have had in weeks. I feel that it will not be long now before I can eat solid food.

"Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
Praise him, all creatures here below;
Praise him above, ye heavenly host;
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost."

Your little "Sister from Texas."

Castle Rock, Wash.

DEAR SISTER BAKER, DEARLY BELOVED IN THE LORD: This morning I will attempt to send you a few lines. If this barrenness of spirit and mind is not lifted, I am sure it will be a poor letter. The trials of this life sometimes seem to obscure any spiritual sense I may have

or have hoped to have. I have improved much in my lame trouble but have a frequent recurrence of the other trouble, which always seems to aggravate the heart symptoms. This keeps me so weakened that as yet I am still in bed. My little niece, Erma Attebury, is with me and has been for almost three weeks. For the first time in a year I am getting really good care and until the last few days have gained much.

Dear Sister, you spoke in your letter of how you would love to administer to my needs both spiritually and bodily, and the love it expressed was a wonderful comfort. You do indeed administer to my spiritual needs in each letter that you write and in the beautiful poems you write. I read them over and over, and do so wish I knew some one to leave them to when I am through with them. Some one who would get the comfort from them that I do.

I have not seen any Baptists since sister Simpson left me a few days after you were here. The time seems long and I am often made to say in all sincerity, "Oh! land of rest, for thee I sigh." Some younger neighbors and relatives sometimes say to me that I should not live so much in the past, but look to the future. Naturally speaking at my age and with what the natural mind calls three incurable diseases, I have no future worth looking to, but oh if they knew, if they could for one moment view the future I am looking to, they would indeed be astonished. Sometimes I myself am. When I try to imagine an existence with no illness, of which I have had years and years; no grief which has rolled over me in such immensity that I wonder I live; no discomfort of any kind, but rest, sweet rest for ages upon untold ages, in the warmth and light of God's gracious presence, which our spirituality will then be enabled to bear and delight in;

I am unable to think on it any further and must bow my head in humility and adoration that I even hope for it; that I have been blessed to have the almost sure knowledge of such an existence. Once upon a time I was often made to say, I think there is an eternal life and rest for the soul, but I have the sure witness within now that I can at times say, Yes, oh yes, I know there is a blessed, eternal rest for God's own, wherever or whatever they may be. If they are his that is all the necessary requirement. Redeemed with the blood of the precious Christ, the powerful, atoning blood! If only we may hope to be among the number for whom he shed that blood, not for anything we have ever said, done or left undone. Not by any merit of ours, not even by our desire for he must make us to desire his salvation or we never would, never could. I am waiting, not too patiently, I'm afraid, for his most welcome call, "Come home." I do desire to remain and suffer his will, all of it. But as an earthly child suffers parental chastisement, and is happy and glad when the tears are over, the last sob is sobbed and the dear parent smiles again and renews the close sweet love between them so will I be glad and more than happy when this occurs to me spiritually.

I am sorry that I did not get Sister Spikes' letter returned sooner. I was glad to get it for I haven't heard from her since she left Portland. I rejoiced to hear of their meetings with Brother Wolf, and do pray if God so wills that the little church (the late Elder Bond's church) may build up sufficiently at least, that those few dear saints may have a home to rest in from time to time. I was also glad to hear of the good meeting at Touchet and that so many were there from a distance. I am anxious to know the impressions all of you had of the young Brother

Wolf.

I feel the need of the meetings so much, but of course I do not need them else God would supply them. I feel the desire to overcome my grief all of the time and instead, to turn all my thoughts to God and his glories, his mercies and goodness to me, but I find this is impossible. I am at times lifted up, but I find myself sinking back into tears and lamentings and realize that in this flesh I must suffer as flesh and be content with whatever of prayer and praise the Lord sends to me, knowing my needs and having promised to supply them. If I receive little, it is because little is required. I see but through this veil of flesh darkly, but oh praise his name, this veil was rent at one time, and thereby it was made possible for us to approach him.

Very few were at our last meeting at Chehalis, Brother Fisher wrote me. Just he and his wife, Brother and Sister Cameron, Sister Owen and Brother Cameron's daughter, Margaret, and her family. No one stayed to dinner and to visit. Brother Fisher enjoys that almost as much as the meeting, so he said he felt cheated.

Will you give my love to the saints there? I love to think of each and every one of you, and long to see you again face to face; but whether I do or not is entirely in the hands of the Almighty. I have little hopes of it, only as you are blessed and able to come to me, but we do not know what God has in store for us, and I hope to be submissive to his will in all things. I hope you are blessed with your usual health and that the Lord sees fit to bless you spiritually whether he does naturally or not. I so often meditate on the spiritual blessings we need and the natural blessings we need that must come from the same hand. How indeed we are as a vessel to hold his mercies when he desires; to

be filled with grief when he desires. How indeed he is truly the potter and we the clay; how truly it is his divine right to fill each vessel to his desire. How utterly we have no right to ask "Why?" I have been spared the trial of asking my God why he took my husband. I felt to know it was predestined to be exactly as it was. True there was a purpose, for good to his own, and for glory to God. I do not see the good, nor do I yet see the glory, but hope to in God's own time. With much love.

(Mrs.) EFFIE PARKE

Route 1, Rives, Tenn.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: I have a desire to write a few lines to the *Signs*. I am not a gifted writer but have been a subscriber for a long time. The paper used to be in the home of my father and mother when I was a child. I read and reread the good letters. I truly believe these are Primitive Baptists for they are called a peculiar people. I hope I have been chosen and am one of the number. "Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people." How wonderfully this emphasizes the doctrine of salvation by grace and grace alone. So many times I have been made to realize that the Captain of our salvation went down into death and came forth victoriously. We are persuaded that when the time comes for us to quit the walks of this life we shall walk through the valley of the shadow of death and fear no evil.

In my loneliness and dark hours of deep sorrow and grief when there seemed to be no light, I find myself trying to look both ways. I try to think the Father above with that all-seeing eye is watching me. How sweet to look beyond. I had the privilege of attending four Associations this season. Able ministers came with the words of God's mighty power, and tears flowed from

eye to eye and joy from heart to heart. It showed sweet fellowship to me. How thankful I feel that we are situated in a country of religious freedom, some others have restrictions. Give God all the glory and honor, he has provided the way for our safety in this life, we have nothing to boast of in ourselves. It is a strait and narrow way to life everlasting. I picture that to be the most beautiful highway. No lion, no beast, nothing unclean will be on this path. The humble, poor and lowly saints of God are protected with a watchful eye. You and all the Associate Editors have been so faithful. May we all be kept by faith and the care and keeping of the great God above. "If God be for us, who can be against us." An unworthy sister.

(Mrs.) SOPHIA PRICE

Box 275, San Juan, Texas

DEAR ELDER DODSON: I am proud to send you a new subscriber to the best paper, the *Signs of the Times*. I had hoped to send two new ones but I failed to see the dear brother. Would like to send more but health prevents me from going very much, however, I will go to our good meetings for I realize it will not be long till the meetings here on earth will be over. I have just a little hope that I will be where meetings will never end, though I do get down in the valley so low I fear that I have never tasted the good word of love. If I am deceived I know it is just and right, and my greatest desire here is that I may be submissive to God's holy and righteous will for he alone knows best for me. I have a little hope sometimes that I am made to say, Thy will, not mine be done. Sometimes I feel to believe that I am reconciled to his will and am made to rejoice in tribulations, then again I doubt.

We were able to attend three Asso-

ciations this last summer and last Saturday and Sunday were our regular meeting days. The Pastor and my husband seemed to be given unusual liberty and such wonderful things were spoken. I do not have language to express it, but will say these things are the sweetest to me this side of heaven. I am still thanking you for sending me your good paper as it is such a source of satisfaction to read it. Please forgive all amiss as I am full of faults. I hope I am yours in much tribulation.

(Mrs.) JAMES B. REID

1472 Golf Club Lane, Clarksville, Tenn.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON AND ASSOCIATE EDITORS: Just a few lines in appreciation of our dear paper, *Signs of the Times*. I am seventy-five years of age and my eyes are very bad. I cannot do much reading, but still can read the *Signs*. I get great comfort from so many editorials, experiences, etc. The dear "sister from Texas" was food for my soul, also Brother Lefferts in July number if I know anything about any of it which I wonder about and doubt. I did so much enjoy and feel to say Amen to it all. Have always loved his writings and longed to hear him preach. His writings make me think of the way my dear uncle, Elder T. C. Herndon, used to preach. In my younger days he was pastor of our church, Lebanon, near Russellville. In October 1898 the Master called him home, leaving a wife and eight children and the church without a pastor. It seemed more than we could bear but we have to try to bow our heads in humble submission to God's will.

I am sending remittance for my renewal and a little extra to use as you see fit. Hope to be able to read the dear paper while I stay in this world. Dear brethren one and all, may God be ever ready to enable you to write in the

future as you have in the past for the comfort of God's poor, humble and hungering little ones, afflicted and poor the world over. May God be merciful to each and all of you. Pray for a poor, sinner and lonely one, the very least of all if one at all.

(Mrs.) B. H. SHEARON

TO OUR SUBSCRIBERS

We are particularly anxious to add a substantial number of new subscribers to our mailing list during the remaining months of 1948. We honestly feel that our readers will readily agree that the quality of reading matter which has been appearing in the *Signs* is deserving of commendation to all lovers of the truth. If this is so, many of our readers know one or more persons who would be glad to take the paper if they knew about it. Will you who do know about it be so kind as to spread the good news among your brethren and friends?

We wish to remind all of our Ministering brethren of the fact that we will be glad to allow them \$1.00 for every new subscriber they secure on the annual basis. Just send us \$1.00 and you keep the other \$1.00 for yourselves.

We also hope that our duly authorized agents will announce at the meetings which they attend that they will be glad to receive both new and renewal subscriptions. It is a real accommodation to many of our readers to be able to hand the money for their subscriptions to some one individual in person.

Please remember that any notices of meetings and changes of address should be sent in as far in advance as possible. We usually furnish the copy to our printer sixty-days before the paper is due to be mailed out.

Also, please watch the date on your wrapper covers and renew your subscription promptly when due. The co-operation of our subscribers and their continued support of the paper will be greatly appreciated by all sharing in the responsibility of its publication.

R. LESTER DODSON

Erwin, N. C.

DEAR SISTER MAE FANNIE DAVIS: I am writing you a few lines as you have been in my mind. We went to Hornet Church Sunday and enjoyed the day. I enjoyed speaking, using for my text Acts 7:22. "And Moses was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians, and

was mighty in words and in deeds." You can read it and probably will get just as much or more than I did. When I read it, it looked like the windows of heaven were opened to me. I went back to the birth of Moses, and I could see how the king and all the people were mystified at the child living in the face of the greatest law that could be passed by mankind to destroy all male children, yet when he grew to such a stage that he could be hid no longer he was cast out, when Pharaoh's daughter took him up and nourished him for her own son. This proves that the wrath of man shall praise him. God saw the children of Israel in the bondage of Egypt and there was a set time for them to be brought out, and the birth of Moses was in due time. It was God's purpose to raise up a law giver in the midst of all the wickedness of the land to accomplish this great purpose and to prove his power to the world. He raised up Moses in the midst of the people and proved the weakness of the king's rule, and made the child so beautiful that even Pharaoh's daughter overlooked the rule of her father. God rules in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, that is, no wickedness goes beyond his control. He can cause the wrath of man to praise him.

The same ruling was put into effect to destroy Jesus but it failed, and we, too, rebelled against God in our experience but it only accomplished God's purpose. Destroying the children in Moses' day was only to prove the work of God cannot be hindered. The same was proven in casting the three Hebrew children into the fiery furnace. It just proved the purpose of God cannot be overthrown. Also the same in the case of Daniel being cast into the den of lions. We know that God is unchangeable the same to-day and forever. He can protect us the same to-day as he did

in the days of these prophets and in the day every effort was made to destroy Jesus. Where Jesus is the fire does not harm and the lions are harmless too. Your brother in Christ I hope.

(Elder) LUTHER M. TURNER

Route 1, Winston-Salem, N. C.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: I mailed the *Signs* to you yesterday and hope you see fit to have your article republished. To me it is wonderful. I have read it several times, each time enjoying it more than before. To read this article no one would ever doubt your being a child of God or your call to the ministry. To know and feel these things must be worth more than all the wealth in the world. In April 1932 you wrote a wonderful article on "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God," etc. My brother, Joseph H. Gooch, Stem, N. C., who passed away in 1935 answered your April letter which is sweet to me. You will find this in the July 1932 issue. Both are wonderful to me.

I hope you are well and that the New Year may bring you much happiness. May you continue to be given strength from on high to feed the poor of the flock through the *Signs*. With every good wish to you and yours I am,

(Mrs.) ALLIE GOOCH REID

(See Editorial column.)

CHANGE OF ADDRESS

Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church in New York City holds services in Parkside Hotel, 18 Gramercy Park South. This is one block east of Fourth Ave. and 20th St. and is near the 18th St. Sta. of the Lexington Ave. subway. Take Elevator to Park Room, second floor. 11:00 A. M. 1:30 P. M.

R. LESTER DODSON, Pastor

EDITORIAL

RUTHERFORD, N. J.

JUNE 1948

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES

P.O. Box No. 70

Rutherford, N. J.

"As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby: If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious." I Peter 2: 2-3.

I have a desire to write on this Scripture to the household of faith. I want to remember that this household is composed of little children, some of whom are not able to understand the things we see promulgated in the pulpit and on the printed page. But while this is so, I want to be explicit and declare to you that that does not give me a right to change what I write just because of the inability of any to not see. The gospel is the gospel all the time; it is Jesus Christ and him crucified, and he is the same yesterday, to-day and forever. Not only is the gospel the same but the characters that it is for remain the same. As far as ability goes we never have any of our own, but all we have is just the measure of faith that is given us. We must keep in mind that this measure is not turned over to us; that dispensing grace is not the work of the children of God.

I hear a lot about not preaching so much doctrine, but rather to preach the

sincere milk of the word to the babes, for they cannot understand the hard doctrine. That is right that they cannot, but I trust I am thankful to Almighty God that he will teach his doctrine to them. These babes would not have any better judgment about milk than they would meat, would they? In fact if we are out to solve the problem by our observation of natural children, then my analysis would be that more babies would gnaw on a piece of meat than would try to drink out of a cup. Now to follow up the idea of this milk, let us remember that this milk has got to be handled by the mother instead of the baby. Just imagine a tiny babe holding its own cup. If you want conditions in this sincere milk of the word, here are all of them anybody can desire. Just turn the babe loose to get its milk. Now while you have given the little one over to the task of getting its milk, will you please remember that the Gentile church does not have any breasts. What a hard doctrine. What a dry, starving, husky doctrine! And what an awful thing it is to preach a theme to little, storm-tossed, sin-smitten children of God, that mocks them into believing they can find their mother and that she is well qualified for feeding her brood! The church has not milk, bread or any other nutrition for the children. She is barren anyway and it was all done that no flesh should glory in His presence.

Three times I have seen my wife go down into the valley, giving birth to a baby boy. One of them has long since passed on and the other two are now grown and by the time this appears in print will be men of their own. My mind is enraptured with the picture coming before me of the zeal and motherly devotion that has been given to them. Did she tell the first one that he could find his own food the best way he

could? We read in the book about some one having their part in the book taken away if they add anything to the words of a certain prophecy (Rev. 22), and I do not know of a greater adding or taking away than to mock a baby by telling him to help himself. That is the nucleus of conditionalism, and we cannot avoid the dilemma it places us in to talk about the sincere milk of the word, as though we could milk it out and give it to another. If one of the family is able to preach, it is not that God has given him more than some one else. But just as sure as a man has ever preached, it is just as sure that some one has been called to listen. Each of them has been fed from that soul-lifting milk of the word. Now I want to say that there is such a thing as sincere milk of the word, but you just cannot say that it is something we can handle. The church is often spoken of as a woman in the Scriptures, but she is not equipped for nourishing children. The whole family is fed alike; every age of the church has the same appetite, the same desires, the same need. The apostle could not, and did not, claim anything except that that comes from the Spirit; the patriarch David was led and made to lie down; the "lot of the inheritance" was touched in the place that made him a cripple the balance of his life. Time and space would fail us to cite the cases of the different saints in all times that were helpless except when led by the Spirit and grace of God.

Preaching practical godliness is another favorite pastime of people that seem to fear too much strong meat. I do not know just what kind of godliness that is, anyway the Bible does not mention that kind as though you preached that kind when you wanted to preach to the babies, but that you had another brand for the old sheep. Anyway now if you were going to experiment about which

were the nearest able, old soldiers of the cross or babes, to receive this "practical godliness business," do you not honestly believe that it would be better to preach it to the older ones than it would to be felling the little fellows about it? If a thing is helpless, are you going to tell it to milk out the fatness and grow? Now I do not mean that either the older children of God, or any other saint can do a thing apart from the Grace of God. No, I am not in sympathy with this idea that we are progressive in complying with the admonitions laid down in the Scriptures. If we can do better as we go along it would mean that we could get sanctified after awhile and there would not be any need for grace.

Let us read the text again. Before we do let us look back at some of the things Peter has said. We, the children of God, are born again of an incorruptible seed, by the word of God which lives and abides forever. This word is the same word that was made flesh and dwelt among men. This is a spiritual birth and there is not any way under heaven to make the two births related; one being flesh, earthly, the other spiritual, heavenly; the first getting its supplies from perishing sources, the other from living, eternal. Every sinner born of this spirit, knows very little about it; he cannot tell with any degree of certainty, where it came from; he professes to know but little, if anything, about what is going to be the end of it all. I thought at one time that our inability to tell about this birth was at the time of its taking place, but the very language forbids any such interpretation. It says "so is everyone that is born of the spirit," and that covers the ground from the time of birth until we quit the walks of men. Now child, this word endures, it remains the same yesterday, to-day, and forever. This

birth is as lasting as the source from which it comes. But this flesh is as grass, and *all* the glory of man is as the flower of grass. The best thing about us as men is about as lasting and dependable as the grass and the bloom of it.

Now this text does not tell us to get to desiring the milk of the word. It is not a thing that we can preach (as though we could preach without the nourishment of the milk) to the little children of God, thinking that this is something the unlearned can do and understand, and that they can take hold of it better than they can the hard points of the gospel, but this is the only gospel that has ever been preached for "this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you." This desire is in every heaven born soul; it is something given you in the birth, and had sin been taken out of our mortal bodies, instead of merely being condemned in the flesh, we would have never known the sorrow of warfare. There is in a wonderful sense two plants or at least two natures here, and this sincere milk of this living word causes, or makes, or produces, a growth in these new-born babes. I do not care how this is said as long as it is not a conditional growth. I do not want to strive about words nor to make any child of God an offender for a word, but I do want to, and, God being my helper I will, contend most tenaciously that salvation is of the Lord. I will not say, and certainly do not believe, that this growth is in sin. I had as soon have any other rotten or blasphemous doctrine as to have the kind that would say that this milk of the word causes the children of God to grow in sin. But they grow in grace and in a knowledge of the truth. Just as long as they grow, they grow away from self. They are grown in nature: they are grown in sin, but how little in

grace they feel to be. But that desire continues for the milk, and just as long as it continues, just that long will they be nurtured by it. Just as long as they are nurtured by it, they shall be growing. When they stop growing away from self, then they get strong in self. This old plant of nature will produce all kinds of wild fruit and bitter gourds, and sometimes it has a form of sweetness, (2 Tim. 3:5) but you had better watch it for it will even deny the power it comes from, claiming that bitter and sweet comes from the same place. Growing in ability to do the things of God, and growing in sin by this milk being given us, are neither caused by the milk but we are making manifest that we came into the world grown in nature, full of sin, completely under its power and influence. May it please Almighty God to give each child his portion in due season, that there be normal, healthy growth in the kingdom. W. D. G.

(The following letter was addressed to the late Elder H. C. Ker, Editor of the Signs of the Times, on Dec. 26, 1921, following our ordination in the previous month, and was published in the Jan. 15th, 1922, issue of the paper. R. L. D.).

REPUBLISHED BY REQUEST

DEAR BROTHER KER: As there were a number of things I omitted to speak of at the time of my ordination which I desired to mention, I shall attempt to write an account of what I hope have been the dealings of the Lord with me, and shall begin by going back very early in life. When I was but eight months of age my mother was removed from the scenes of this life, but through the care of my father, grandmother and others, and later my stepmother, I was brought up through boyhood. I was considered to have possessed a very stubborn disposition, and it required many thrashings at times to straighten me out, but along with that, about the age of ten

or twelve years, as I remember, was a desire to read the Bible and Zion's Landmark, though I did not wish any one to know I was interested in such literature. On one occasion my step-mother came down to a barn where I was reading the Bible aloud, as I was wont to do, and I well remember how ashamed I was that she had caught me reading. I was also fond of lining out and trying to sing hymns which I had heard ministers line out, which I would do as I attended the cattle in the fields. Educational advantages were rather limited in that immediate section of the country at the time, and I failed to make the best of the opportunities I had. Leaving home between the ages of seventeen and eighteen, I attended a business college in Richmond, Va., for about six months, after which I began my career in the business world. I still read the Bible and the Landmark, and occasionally would get to hear an Old Baptist sermon. In my travels I came in contact with all kinds of young men, some good and others bad, and on several occasions I recall having planned to do things which would have meant more or less my destruction, and which looking back now I can but regard as God in his providences having kept me from. Surely his ways are mysterious in providence as in grace.

In the fall of 1906 I went to Wilmington, N. C. to live and there my associates, both young ladies and young men, were mostly Methodist. They held their Sunday-school classes on Sunday afternoons, and when the time came for them to go I seldom could accompany them, my desire being to go to my room, get in the closet, shut the door, fall on my knees and try to ask God to have mercy on me. On March 1st, 1907, I returned to Richmond, Va., where I was associated in business with my eldest brother. He was held in high esteem

by the members of the New School Baptist Church where he was a member, and was a very active and conscientious worker, being president of one of their societies. A very short time following my return to Richmond a meeting of about two weeks duration was held at his "church," during which I was influenced to unite with them. I loved the Primitive Baptists then, but as there was no church near, and being told that I would not find any church in perfect agreement with all I believed, I cast my lot there. Instead of the satisfaction and relief I had hoped to obtain, my trouble soon broke out in a new and more deadly form than I had even known before. This time I felt to be without God and without hope in the world, with not a single friend in all the universe to whom I could turn for advice, and my cry day and night, at home, in the office and on the street, was with groanings which could not be uttered. My burden grew so heavy that I was compelled to seek relief somewhere, and though it was a great cross to me to have to tell my brother I had come to where we must part in our church affiliations, I realized I could not endure to live where I was as I was. They had put me on a committee to go out and get people interested in the "church," and this I could not do. About this time I learned of an appointment for Elder Sylvester Hassell in South Richmond, and determined that I should go to that meeting, and my prayer was that it would decide my future course; if the preaching was the kind that fed my starving soul I would ask to have my name removed from the records of the church where I was. The meeting was held in a small hall, and well do I remember the occasion. There were but few present, but I believe the Lord was there and was in the preaching and the hearing and the understand-

ing. The text was: "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world!" John 1:29. It seemed I had never heard such words fall from mortal lips as Elder Hassell uttered that day. My heart was filled with rejoicing, and tears flowed freely down my cheeks. I was among strangers in the flesh, and would have but could not keep back the tears. This did decide the case for me, for I returned fully determined to "come out from among them." My brother, an old deacon (and a very devout and sincere man he was, too,) and the pastor of the church reasoned with me, the latter telling me that the people who believed what I professed to were few in number, old in years, would soon pass on and the church would become extinct, to which I replied: I have nothing to do with how many or how old they are; that is God's work, and he will see to it; but as for me, if I stand alone, I stand alone. It was my only foundation, and all other ground had become as sinking sand. Having taken this course, a weight which had been crushing me down was apparently lifted bodily from my shoulders, and for a time I felt much relieved. There was no longer any doubt, neither has there been since, in my mind which was the true church of God, but many doubts arose as to my fitness to be among such people as they appeared to me, and having passed through a very distressing experience and believing it was not essential to eternal salvation to have my name enrolled on the Primitive Baptist church-book, I concluded I would live outside the portals of the church, but I was to be taught "man might propose, but God would dispose; man might plan, but God would execute." I had a great desire to hear preaching and planned my vacation so as to be at the old home during association time. I left Richmond

one morning in August, 1908, and went to an appointment of Elders P. D. Gold and Isaac Jones, some one hundred and forty miles away. I do not recall anything in particular about the preaching that day, but while singing the closing hymn one of the deacons arose and asked Elder Gold to announce an open door for the reception of members. When the singing resumed some unaccountable power took possession of me, and when I came to myself I was standing in front of the pulpit. All I could do was to weep, and were it not for what Elder Gold said regarding some correspondence which had passed between us, I am sure they would have had very little reason to receive me. Not long after that a church was organized in Richmond, and I took my letter there as a charter member. Some of the brethren soon began to intimate in different ways that they thought I had a gift to speak and occasionally I was asked to speak in prayer, and on one occasion to talk from any Scripture that was on my mind. I was now having trouble of another kind, and realizing my utter insufficiency in every way for such work as this, I began to draw back. About this time, whether in a dream I know not, I appeared to have gone with my stepmother to meeting, and upon entering I saw there was no minister in the stand. Several held a consultation and the lot fell on me. When I walked into the stand and faced the audience, among them was an Old Baptist minister, Elder J. E. Herndon, and this seemed to strengthen me, causing me to hope the Lord had not left me alone. Then came the opportunity to be transferred by my concern to its New York City office, and I felt this was my chance to get out of my trouble; I would go to New York among strangers, and not mention to any one anything about my impressions or the attitude of the brethren

there about my speaking. It so turned out that chance did no more for me than it did for that certain poor man who went down from Jerusalem to Jericho. Those who are familiar with the Ebenezer Church in New York know that on the first Sunday in each month a conference meeting is held, at which all are given an opportunity to speak their minds, and after hearing the different ones tell of their travels it was not long before I found myself trying to speak of the goodness and mercy of the Lord to me, for it did seem he had brought me by a way I knew not and into very pleasant pastures in casting my lot among such lovely people. As time passed on I was called upon on certain other occasions to say something. I was not content to keep silent, but I only got deeper in trouble when I tried to talk. What could I do? Where should I go? I endeavored to reason with the Lord, as it were, and to tell him as did Moses that I was not the man, that I was not eloquent, had a very limited education and no right understanding of the Scriptures. I would also try to review my life before him and show him how utterly unfit I was to be one of his servants; I by no means measured up to the standard fixed by holy writ, and many times was in a state that I would rather die than live. I would go to the fourteenth floor of my office building, and something would seem to almost draw me out. On Sundays on my way to meeting I would cross a high bridge, and as I walked across I could see in my mind's eye a picture of my leaping from the top of the bridge to sudden destruction in the waters far below. Sometimes while riding on the trains to and from my work the thought would come, if there could only be a wreck and no one hurt but me, what a relief it would be to leave forever the sufferings of this world. To

add fuel to the flame, conditions at my office were almost as near unbearable as they possibly could be, and while I had been able to lay aside but very little, I finally decided that I would rather sweep the streets of the city than endure longer what I was undergoing. I was cautioned not to give up a certainty for an uncertainty, as I proposed to work on a commission basis, but God has been good in his providences, and this change which conditions compelled me to make has proven one of the best in my life. During this period I was also having considerable trouble with my throat, and finally I was advised to go West, in the hope that climatic conditions would benefit me. This suggested another opportunity to run away, but again my plans came to naught. Since I was hedged about and could not flee to some unknown part I determined from time to time to quit trying to speak, and was so wrought up—on one occasion that I told our pastor, Elder McConnell, if he persisted in calling on me it would force me to remain away from meetings. But the love he and the dear brethren bore towards me, which was manifested in such various and wonderful ways at times, broke down my rebellious spirit, and a love was begotten in me which caused me to say, Lord, here am I; use me as thou seest fit. While my case seemed as hopeless to me as the valley of dry bones did to Ezekiel, I had to adopt his language and confess, "O Lord God, thou knowest," and "Thy will, not mine, be done." For many years any writing that savored of one's call to the ministry, or the obituary of a minister, had been quick to attract my attention, and seldom was any duty too urgent to prevent a suspension until I had read the article. Some have come very near to me in their writings, and as I have been given to

walk with them I have wept for joy. Occasionally one would talk to me as though he understood the yearnings of my fainting heart, and particularly did Elder H. H. Lefferts seem to read as an open book the inmost desires of my soul and tell me the things that my hearkening ears were longing to hear, on his way to the station after preaching for us in New York. I have desired above all else that the Lord would lead me in a plain path in this most solemn matter, knowing that except he build the house they that labor, labor but in vain. Sometimes I felt he gave me a message; Scriptures would fasten themselves upon my mind and would remain with me until I had tried to talk or write about them, and I began to watch the providences of God in opening a door for me to speak. There were times when I felt I had been given a text, and I looked in vain for the Lord to open the door; at other times he would open a door in a most unexpected and wonderful way; it might be through sickness, inability of a supply to come in the absence of our pastor, or some other channel. I remember especially an occasion when I was troubled about attending an association, and I believe I inquired prayerfully of the Lord concerning the matter and received the command to *go*, and as ye go, preach, saying, the kingdom of heaven is at hand. Upon arriving I found about twenty-nine ordained ministers present and the committee on arrangements was troubled to know how to have all preach. I thought after all I was mistaken, and the Lord had not sent me there, yet somehow I could not doubt that the Lord had given the command to go. To my utter surprise, a few hours before the closing of the meeting a sister of long standing in the church with which the association had been convened went to the committee and urged them to ar-

range some way for me to speak, as she was very anxious to hear me, and this sealed the command which had seemed to come direct from God to *go*, and as ye go, preach, saying the kingdom of heaven is at hand. This was after I had been licensed by the church, and it was during this period that I hesitated to go to meetings for fear of being misunderstood.

Some very wonderful promises have been made precious to my soul from time to time, notably among them was when the news of my having been licensed by the church was conveyed to me (I was not at the meeting) by a sister who had just received the news and came over to see us (where we were spending our vacation), thinking I knew about it. I was much surprised and disturbed over the news, and as I pondered it in my heart the language of the prophet Isaiah, forty-third chapter, came in much sweetness: "But now thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not: for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine. When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee. For I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Savior." Again, when I was on the verge of writing the church and asking them to rescind their action in licensing me, being so terribly perplexed that day with the solving of a business problem which taxed my very wits, I sought refuge in the Scriptures that night upon reaching home, but not knowing where to turn. The Bible opened at the thirty-second Psalm, and I began reading at the top of the page not the first verse, and soon came to this language: "I will

instruct thee, and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go: I will guide thee with mine eye." I had no thought that such words were in the Bible, and it appeared as though the very breathing desires of my soul were here being answered. The yearnings of my heart were that the Lord would instruct me and teach me and guide me, and this was the very thing he was promising to do. To be sure, it was a nail driven in a sure place, and for the time being I rested there, because it was in this great Teacher that my soul had put its confidence, knowing that all other leaders are blind, and that if the blind lead the blind both shall fall into the ditch. I cannot record the evidences some have had of their call by grace to serve the true and ever-living God, and while I long for brighter evidences and renewed tokens of his love, yet I desire to acknowledge before men that he hath not dealt with me as I have deserved, but that his goodness and mercy have followed me all the days of my life, and my desire is to dwell in the house of the Lord forever and to inquire in his holy temple. One day in the King's court is worth a thousand in the tents of wickedness. At best I can only hope to furnish a very imperfect account of the great and mysterious ways of God in dealing with the children of men, and of the infinite wisdom, the almighty power, the matchless mercy and the undying and incomprehensible love which contrived and wrought out to perfection in all its details his plan of salvation by grace. "O the depths of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" "Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it."

In conclusion, may I say that the church has proven a home indeed to me. I am satisfied that I have found my

Beloved dwelling in his people, and I hope I possess the evidence of having passed from death unto life spoken of by John—love for the brethren. My life has been such as to require the forgiveness, longsuffering and forbearance of my brethren, but their love has been unchanging and their fellowship I covet. Surely, here my best friends, my kindred dwell, and here God my Savior reigns.

In hope of eternal life through Christ Jesus.
R. LESTER DODSON

CIRCULAR LETTER

Circular Letter adopted by the Pocatlico Old School or Primitive Baptist Association in session with the Rock Springs Church, Elliott Co., Ky.

DEAR BRETHREN: Through the abounding mercy of God we, who are altogether undeserving, are blessed to come together in an Association, and as is our custom we wish to address you in the way of a Circular Letter, that you may know how we do, and though it be in the very weak expressions of the unworthy writer (appointed at your last session to write this epistle of love) that we might be blessed of the Lord to touch some of the cardinal points of doctrine most surely believed by us, viz: we believe the doctrine of the electing love of God; that God, before time began in the annals of eternity, chose the church and people of God in the person of his Son, and not because of some foreseen good in them for they all stood without merit before him, but freely in his triune person for so it seemed good in his sight according to his own will; (Eph. 1:4; 1 Peter 2:4 and 2:9.) that his chosen people of God fell in Adam in sin, in death, in transgression before God, hence the doctrine of the total depravity of the creature is clearly established by the Holy Scriptures, and the experience of the children of God so positively corroborate and al-

so prove their utter inability to extricate themselves from sin, death and degradation. "The creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope." Therefore, then all the praise be unto our 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." 2 Tim. 1:9.

We see then the salvation, grace and calling of this people of God all treasured in Christ before the world began. We hope, brethren, we stand on apostolic ground in the belief that the justice and wrath of God the Father was satisfied in the person of God the Son in behalf of every heir of promise when Jesus Christ, the lone wonder of heaven and earth, Gods only begotten Son, on the cursed Roman tree of the cross poured out his soul unto death, shed his precious blood, the just suffering in the law room and stead of the unjust, bearing their sins in his own body on the tree of the cross, that he made complete and ample atonement for their sins, and in his life, death, burial, resurrection, and ascension he hath forever put away their sins in all their immensity and entirety never to be remembered against them no more forever; and has put every enemy under his feet, led captivity captive and gave gifts unto men. Hear Him saying, "I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive forevermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death."

The doctrine of the new birth, born again, (John 3:3-7; 1 Peter 1:23) born not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible seed by the word of God which liveth and abideth forever, is necessary before one can see the kingdom of heaven, and this birth not a beginning

of life but a manifesting of life, which life was hid with Christ in God, hence the man thus born is a new creature in Christ, his conversation, his walk is effectual and effectively wrought of the Holy Spirit of God. The effectual calling of the people of God in time; the preservation of the saints through grace to ultimate glory, Christ their obedience, hence good works wrought in them by the effectual working of the Holy Spirit. Finally brethren, the righteousness of the people of God (all the righteousness they have) is Christ for of him (God) are ye in Christ Jesus, which is made unto us righteousness, sanctification and redemption.

Dear brethren, space forbids that we pursue these cardinal points of our faith further than to acknowledge before the throne of our God that he is Lord of all—Lord of lords and King of kings. Our Jesus, our Savior head over all things to the church which is his body, the fulness of Him which filleth all in all. Grace, mercy and truth be unto all the Israel of our God for Jesus sake. Amen.

(Elder) J. C. HAMMOND, Moderator

(Elder) H. J. BIRD, Clerk

Corresponding Letter adopted by the Pocatlico Old School or Primitive Baptist Association in session with the Rock Springs Church, Elliott Co., Ky.

DEAR BRETHREN AND KINDRED IN THE LORD JESUS CHRIST: Through the undeserved mercy of God our unprofitable lives have been spared, and according to the good pleasure of God we have indeed been blessed in our coming together in this our annual session of our Association. This has been a refreshing season, a time of love. Your messengers, able ministers of the New Testament, have come to us laden with the doctrine of God our Savior, salvation by grace through the atoning blood

of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. The preaching was in power and in demonstration of the Holy Spirit of God.

We greatly desire a continuance of your correspondence. Our minutes will inform you of the time and place of our next session. May the grace of our God keep us unspotted from the world. May his love be shed abroad in the hearts of all his little children for Jesus sake. Amen.

(Elder) J. C. HAMMOND, Moderator
(Elder) H. J. BIRD, Clerk

ORGANIZATION OF AN ASSOCIATION

Four churches sent letters and messengers to Stockdale, Texas and on Friday Oct. 17, 1947 we organized a little Association, naming it Pleasant Valley. Elder W. O. Beene was elected Moderator, and Elder B. B. Walston, Clerk. The next session of the Pleasant Valley Association will meet with Mt. Zion Church, two miles north from Cash, Texas, eight miles south from Greenville, Texas in Hunt County, on Friday before the fourth Sunday in Aug. 1948, and will continue three days. We invite Predestinarian Baptists and especially ministers who have a mind to be with us. Brother Dodson, we will be glad to have you with us if you have a mind to come. Yours in a little hope.

(Elder) W. O. BEENE

OBITUARIES

EMMA ESTELLE VREDENBURG BRUNOW was born Sept. 28, 1872, and departed this life Feb. 4, 1948 at the age of 75 years, 4 months and 7 days. She was the daughter of Calvin J. and Louise Vredenburg, and was born at Lansing, Mich. and died in Chicago, Ill. On April 18, 1894 she was married to William Daniel Brunow by Elder A. J. Harkness in Chicago. To this union were born two children, William Daniel Brunow, Elsinore, Cal., and Mildred Violet Brunow Mason, Chicago, Ill. She left surviving her two children, their spouses and four grandchildren.

She was left an orphan by the death of her mother when a small child, and was raised by an aunt, Mary Anne Dyer, a member of the Primitive Baptist faith, and subscriber to the *Signs of the Times*, whose home was in Indiana. In later years she united with the Primitive Baptist Church at the Blue Grass Church, near Rensselaer, Indiana. In the late twenties, upon the formation of the Bethel Church in Chicago, as a charter member, she moved her membership there where her name remained until the church disbanded in the thirties.

Although she had no church in the proximity of her home, she remained faithful to its beliefs, cherished its memories, and where opportunity afforded returned to its fold. She was a subscriber to the *Signs* for more than thirty years and found comfort and hope in its pages. Her family and friends mourn her passing and have hope in her pilgrimage to a happier home. Her remains were laid to rest in Waldheim Cemetery, Forest Park, Ill. Written by request of the family.

JOHN FRANKLIN LAX

ELDER J. F. BRIGGS was born Feb. 15, 1884 and departed this life Oct. 24, 1947. He was married three times, two companions having preceded him in death. He was married to Mrs. Maggie Edward June 5, 1947. He leaves to mourn his passing a loving companion, two children, the church and many friends. I do not have the date that he united with the Old Baptists. He was liberated to exercise in public and soon after was ordained to the full work of the gospel ministry.

He was faithful until the Lord called him home; able in doctrine and discipline; contended for that grand old doctrine of election and predestination of all things. He was gentle and kind to all, a kind loving and dutiful husband and father. The church and his children will miss him but **most of all his dear companion who is in great grief.** I will miss him greatly as we were companions in gospel bonds. We fought the same battles, suffered the same conflicts and rejoiced together with the joy that none but God can give. Written by one that loved him for the truth's sake.

(Elder) W. O. BEENE

AID FOR SENDING "SIGNS" TO INDIGENTS

G. M. Varnes, Pa., \$1; Mrs. R. H. Sanders, Ark., \$1; H. L. Gloer, Ga., \$4; Mrs. E. C. Redman, Ala., \$2; A friend, Va., \$2; Mrs. D. P. Farmer, Md., \$1; Mrs. J. B. Simmons, Tex., \$3; Mrs. E. Null, W. Va., \$1; Mrs. L. Z. Burton, Va., \$1; Mrs. J. H. Wright, Ky., \$3; J. W. Carter, Ala., \$4; Mrs. E. E. Nelson, Texas, \$1; A friend, Can., \$2; J. B. Collier, Tenn., \$1; Mrs. M. L. Lucas, Ala., \$2; Mrs. C. B. Gordy, Mich., \$1; Mrs. E. Osborne, Tenn., \$1; Eld. J. J. Collins, Ala., \$1; Mrs. R. MacPhee, N. J., \$8; Mrs. M. J. Jones, Del., \$3; Eld. H. H. Phillips, Ark., \$1; B. Evers, Ark., \$2; F. O. Pierce, N. J., \$4; C. L. Williams, Va., \$3; Mrs. J. J. McNeal, Ala., \$1; Mrs. M. V. Sizemore, Ill., \$2; G. W. Dolson, Texas, \$1; R. L. Davis, Kans., \$5; Mrs. C. W. Hanley, Md., \$1.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON'

VOL. 116

RUTHERFORD, N. J., JULY, 1948

No. 7

CORRESPONDENCE

"Out of Zion, the perfection of beauty,
God hath shined." Psalms 50:2.

Oh, what a subject for mere man to speak about! Are we capable of explaining this sublime subject? No, man of himself is not able to even think on His name, then how can he that is less than nothing and vanity, speak of perfection, and of this Zion that is the perfection of beauty, the dwelling place or habitation of God? Only as Jesus reveals this beauty to his elect people can they know and say, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." Matt. 16:16. Let us first try to understand what is meant by the word Zion. It is used in many forms throughout the Bible, referring to Mount Zion, beautiful for situation. "God is known in her palaces for refuge."

The Zion we wish to speak about is an invisible place, if we may call it a place. Our Lord takes things we see with our natural eyes and comprehend with natural faculty to represent the spiritual. Paul writes, "For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse." Rom. 1:20. Again in Col. 1:15-17 "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, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist." The idea that I wish to convey is, that the types and shadows shown to us by things that we know about, that our eyes behold when we behold them through the revelation of God, the spiritual is clearly seen and understood by the things that are made, and what applies to the church, Zion and Jerusalem and collectively has a part in every born heir of God for truly he is the head of the body, the church. Surely out of Zion, the perfection of beauty shines, and the kingdom of God is in you. Zion the city of our God, formed thee for his own abode. David says, "Sing us one of the songs of Zion." "Look upon Zion, the city of our solemnities: thine eyes shall see Jerusalem a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down." Isa. 33:20. "For the Lord hath chosen Zion; he hath desired it for his habitation." Psalms 132:13. Newton, the poet, has expressed it:

"Glorious things of thee are spoken,
Zion, city of our God!
He, whose word cannot be broken,
Form'd thee for his own abode."

Surrounded by walls of salvation, beautiful, perfect and holy, the habitation of Almighty God through the Spirit, for "God is a Spirit; and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." We poor mortals can

only worship God when he illuminates our soul and the still small voice speaks within us, and by his light we see light and behold the beauty, love and power, giving us meat to eat that the world knows nothing of. Oh, "what manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness." "Let Mount Zion rejoice, let the daughters of Judah be glad, because of thy judgments. Walk about Zion, and go round about her: tell the towers thereof. Mark ye well her bulwarks, consider her palaces; that ye may tell it to the generation following. For this God is our God for ever and ever: he will be our guide even unto death." Psalms 48:11-14.

This Zion, the perfection of beauty; this Jerusalem with its walls and jewels; this church without spot or wrinkle, whose head is Jesus Christ the Lord, whose builder and maker is God; and you, my dear brethren, called, chosen and born of incorruptible seed, led about in this wilderness, not out of it but led about in it, and kept by the power of God through faith, are the ones who have been saved by his free grace and redeemed by his Son and are the ones to whom this letter is addressed.

I have tried to keep on the subject, it is dear to me. For fifty years, through much opposition, I have been called foolish and my name cast out as evil, but through it all the Lord has led me, and to him and him only do I give lasting praise. I am glad to be classed with Peter and John. They were unlearned and ignorant men but they took knowledge of them that they had been with Jesus. I have thought many times of the three children in the fire heated seven times hotter than it was wont to be heated. The fire had no power over them because the Lord was with them in the fire. The Lord is with all the

inhabitants of Zion and will not allow them to be tempted above what they are able to bear, but will with the temptation make a way to escape. When we are drawn away by our own lusts, and enticed, when we fall in grace, (not from grace) there is always the good samaritan to bring us back to the inn and take care of us. When Israel spoke against God and Moses, the Lord sent fiery serpents among the people and they bit the people: and much people of Israel died, (Numbers 26:1) the Lord also sent the remedy, a brazen serpent on a pole. Notice only those that were bitten were healed, those that were not bitten had nothing to be healed from. As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so shall the Son of man be lifted up, showing to us the only cure for the bite of the serpent, also in the crucifixion of our dear Lord the only cure of sin. Jesus the Lord shines in type all through the Old Scriptures, he always was and always will be the head of the church, the Zion of God. Paul thanked God that ye were the servants of sin, and we are no better than they. We have been bitten and have looked at the cross and are healed. The evidence is we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren and are all of that same Zion out of which God is shining, the pillar and ground of the truth. It is the work of God and what he does is perfect because he does it. All of his work was established before he made the world. He has declared the end from the beginning creating all things for his pleasure, and as he has thought so shall it stand, his choice in Christ before the world was made. His judgments are just as sure as his mercy and no wonder as his church is perfect without spot or wrinkle, but holy and undefiled, chosen in Christ through that everlasting love

wherewith he loved us even when we were dead in sins. Oh, what love it must be! How beautiful is Zion! O Lord show us again, reconcile us to thy will and teach us to love one another. Let us not make a brother an offender for a word, but preach the truth as it is in Jesus, having no confidence in the flesh for thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever, Amen.

(Elder) GEORGE L. WEAVER

Redwood, Va.

MRS. SALLIE HUTCHENS, DEAR SISTER IN THE LORD: I received your much appreciated letter some time ago, and read it over many times with heartfelt sympathy. It was heart-rending to hear of your sad bereavements and lonely condition. Out of these the Lord has and will deliver all of his dear children. As you said, we are strangers in the flesh but we hope the Lord has acquainted us in his Holy Spirit. If so we are no more strangers, but we hope children of God. Dear sister, ever since I read your good letter I have desired to write you, but knowing my unworthiness and inability I felt unequal to such a task, and it is with much fear and trembling that I now make the attempt. I hope the dear Lord will bless me with his unerring Spirit to write you some little word of comfort.

You mentioned the death of your dear companion, Elder H. F. Hutchens, whom I knew well. I have heard him preach many times and dearly loved to hear him. I believe he preached the glorious doctrine of the Lord Jesus Christ and finished his course here in this world, and the work the Lord gave him to do. "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors." I hope the Lord will reconcile you to feel and

believe that those who die in the triumph of faith are far better off than we who are left here in this unfriendly world of toil and strife, which is an almost continual warfare, between the flesh and spirit, of great tribulations such as grief, sorrow, doubts and fears, and our many shortcomings which make us feel to be, as you said, forsaken, homeless and friendless here in this heathen world. We have no continual abiding place here, but just journeying through this lonely wilderness with many sad heartaches, disappointments, vexations and persecutions. I believe all of these trials are purposed and treasured up by the Lord for his dear children which is their meat and their drink, as well as the few seasons of peace they enjoy which are succeeded by pain.

You made mention of the sad condition of Zion. True it is there are splits, divisions and strife in many places among Zion's little ones. "Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." "Woe to them that are at ease in Zion." "It must needs be that offences come." I believe all of these tribulations, sad heartaches and disappointments are ours by lot, will and purpose. If we live in and truly suffer these things it is evidence that we are sons of God, if we escape these things we are bastards and not sons. By experience, I feel the greater we are made to suffer in these tribulations, the dearer we love, honor, praise and glorify our God's great and eternal name, which is above every other name, just and holy is he.

"Our dear Jesus went before us
And many sorrows bore;
And we who follow after,
Can never meet with more."

"If we suffer, (with Christ) we shall

also reign with him." Dear kindred, if we, poor, little, weak worms of the dust could escape all of these trials and troubles here in this life, where would be our evidences of eternal life? "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." Hope only in this life is not safe to live by nor die by. Truly according to the election of grace there is a remnant to be saved, and of this we hope to be the happy recipients. "Happy art thou, O Israel: who is like unto thee, O people saved by the Lord." They have had a sure promise in this life of having hardships such as being poverty stricken, despised, evil spoken of by the world, deemed to be the off-scouring of the earth, but great will be their reward in heaven. "If God be for us, who can be against us?" All things are theirs, even his glorious, eternal kingdom. With the Lord there is no guess work about who are the beneficiaries of his glorious kingdom. They are his beloved bride, the Lamb's wife. They have been his legal heirs from the ancients of eternity by will, purpose and redemption. "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect?"

When Christ, our dear Redeemer, hung on the shameful cross, and died that cruel, ignominious death of a martyr and said, "It is finished," then I believe the full and complete debt of redemption was paid, satisfaction made, the royal law fulfilled and restored honorable unto the Father. It is finished and no changes are to be made. "The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his." Our poor, unworthy, stammering tongues can but slightly hint at the grandeur, love, grace and all of the magnificent beauties that the Lord has treasured up in store for those that truly love him, his precious few that have been tried by fire and

refined as pure gold.

Dear sister, I have, as I truly hope, had a hope in Christ for nearly thirty years. I live in doubts and fears much of my time. There are many sad and lonely seasons which cause me many groanings which cannot be uttered. I do not get along on flowery beds of ease so much of the time as some of the arminians claim they do. Is it thus with you? Although I have some revelations and sweet meditations on heavenly prospects that seem to keep me from going into utter despair, occasionally the clouds break, the sun shines bright again and the singing birds are heard in our land. In reality we hope we live again and can go on our way rejoicing, and say with one of old, "He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters." Then we are begotten again unto a lively hope; then we believe that we truly love the Lord with all of our heart and soul, also our dear and precious brethren and sisters above all other people; there is no other people like this people that is saved by the Lord. We love him, he is our great treasure, prophet, priest and king; he is Lord of lords, and King of kings; there is none like him; he is supreme ruler over all worlds, powers principalities and devils, if not why not? By the Lord all things consist, he is the first great cause of all causes; he works all things after the counsel of his own will; all things are at the Lord's command; he speaks and it is done; he commands and it stands fast. Dear kindred, I do not doubt the embracement of the Lord for and to his little flock (who they be), they are preserved by power divine; preserved in Christ Jesus and called; called I believe to show forth the great praise of their everlasting and eternal King, one who is without the beginning of time or end-

ing of days. He is a present help in time of need. Our eternal King is seated at the right hand of his Father, making intercession for his saints according to the will of God. They are his legal heirs to inherit and possess his glorious, eternal kingdom; they are heirs of God and joint heirs with Jesus Christ; they are in Christ and he in them, Christ in the Father and the Father in him. What a glorious and eternal relationship is this? It is so securely sealed and bound together by the strong cords of Christ's redeeming love. This is an eternal wedlock where no separation of divorcements will ever come, this marriage feast will always last. These words of the poet are suited to my feelings: "Oh, happy day when saints shall meet to part no more," the thought is sweet. The world will scoff and wag their heads at this God blessed doctrine and truth that we believe; the world will say we are fools, but if fools for Christ's sake we are glad. We are more than conquerors through him that loved us. I do not doubt these sacred and eternal truths—salvation by grace and grace alone.

Dear one, I feel to be the doubtful one. I am condemned, O lord, but thou art clear. Is it thus with you? If so we can walk together in agreement, esteeming each other better than ourselves, and so fulfill the law of Christ. How lovely, sweet and soul cheering it is when we are made in love to bear afflictions needful rod. Beloved in the Lord, these things that I have hinted at are precious truths to me. If not deceived these sacred things are truly my greatest treasure and daily meditations. Sister, as you said, I have but little else to live for except the church. Oh, if I only knew that I was truly in the embracements of God's holy church, but we must live in the bounds of our precious hope as did the dear apostle

Paul. If we have any acceptance it is in and of the Lord. There is a rest that remaineth unto the people of God which we hope to be the humble recipients of. Dear kindred, as I grow older these things become more and more solemn, sacred and sincere with me. If I ever have truly served the Lord, my sincere desire is that it be his divine will and purpose that I may serve him more acceptably each day of my life even unto the end and also all of the household of faith. When time shall be no more and the final consummation of all things comes to hand; and Christ comes to gather his elect bride, his precious jewels, to be adorned in a pure and spotless robe of righteousness to meet the Lord in the air, to be ransomed home to glory to that blest abode, the new Jerusalem, the celestial city of our God whose maker and builder is God eternally in the heavens; there to love, honor, praise and glorify their great eternal redeemer God forever and ever; then will the redeemed of the Lord enjoy the full fruition of heaven, and sing the full and complete song of redemption.

I must close this unworthy scribble. It is like the writer very imperfect and full of mistakes although when we hope that we are blest to view the Canaan land, oh how we love to hint and meditate on these things. They are like a flowing fountain of everlasting love. May the Lord make us strong before we go hence and be no more. Our dear writers to the *Signs* do so wonderfully set forth and proclaim the true apostolic doctrine of salvation by grace and grace alone. How I love the *Signs of the Times*. It is a welcome visitor in my house. Elder Dodson does so much plead and strive for peace and unity among the churches and the brethren. Dear sister, if I never meet you in this life may it be our heavenly Father's

will and good pleasure that we may pass away in the full triumph of faith and can say, come welcome death, I'll gladly go with thee. May the Lord bless all of his saints is my prayer. A brother in hope of immortality.

J. A. PERDUE

Written by Mrs. Louise Newman,
Route 7, Box 224, Memphis, Tenn.

ELDER W. A. SPEER, DEAR ELDER SPEER: Many times I have thought of the Hope-well Association in Alabama, attended in October this year (1947), the meeting of dear ones we have met in the past as well as those we met for the first time. It was good to see you and Brother Davis there and was a glad surprise to this poor sinner. How pleased I was made to feel to be so privileged as to have Brother Davis in our home here, and I hope he will make me glad twice and come again, although I feel so unworthy to have God's humble poor under the same roof with such a vile sinner as I. I would have been so glad to have had you with us although I know others are not so poor and unlearned as I and better able to entertain you in a way to make your visit one of enjoyment. There are times with me when I cannot even think of a line of scripture, or a thought upon the blessed truth of God, and then it is I feel to be mourning and begging "God be merciful to me a sinner." Then there are times that upon arising the sun shines so brightly, and the birds sing so sweetly without effort on my part I am made to feel a melody, and green fields of meditation open before me, time passes swiftly and my work seems light as beautiful thoughts open to me as I hope he is taking of the things of the Spirit and showing them again unto us as unto John when he sent inquiring, "Art thou he that should come, or do we look

for another?"

Dear Elder, as I told you at Hope-well Association, I do not know that I have an experience of grace, and I only hope that I am not deceived into believing that he is a gracious, merciful and forgiving God, and the love I feel for his dear ones is in line with that endless chain that comes from him, rotates too in his dear ones and ascends back to him. I have the desire to tell you about that love I hope I am made to feel, how and when it came about, and if it is in line with truth God is honored. I am but a worm. You read in the July 1946 issue a part of this experience, and it was in 1939 that my father-in-law passed away and I was made willing in the day of God's power, I hope, to hear one of these people known as Primitive Baptist and I believe God's humble poor. I do not say only they are the people of God for I believe he has a people in every nation, kindred and tongue, but some are blinded to the truth, yet they are his and will enjoy the peace of his love some day with him the same as they that are made to see the truth. What did Jesus mean when he said, "And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd." John 10:16. I believe there are some that may never enjoy the privileges of the militant church, yet they are his and are a part of his body, the invisible church, for it takes every one for whom he died to complete his body, the fulness of him, the all in all of his people. He is the head of the church, his body, and through the head the body receives food, hears, smells and the head thinks for the body. The food is digested in the body as well as the body moves when the head speaks to it commanding it thus.

Dear Elder Speer, after my father-in-law's death the desire was how to hear these people and what they had to say concerning the truth, yet I did not know where the church was as it was moved from where it was when my father-in-law lived and attended it. My next two years were spent in every day living until one Sunday we visited my husband's cousin here in Memphis. His sister is a member of the little church here and came to visit them that Sunday also. As she and one of her brother's daughters discussed the difference in their beliefs, she, the niece of the Old Baptist being a Missionary Baptist in doctrine, and as they talked I wanted to get near the Old Baptist member, Audra Cox, for I felt she was speaking the truth. While there we asked where the church was and she gave us the directions and let me tell you when meeting day came we could not get there fast enough, so in the summer of 1941 I heard my first sermon in a Primitive Baptist Church and I came away a very shaken up creature, that was truth but oh what about me and then began the time of tears with me. I feel I tried just as hard as any poor sinner to keep the law. I am made to believe, dear Elder, not until one sees himself as a guilty sinner, standing before a just and holy God helpless, then and then only will he love the doctrine of predestination, election, and particular atonement; but the law condemns, "There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death." Ah! I could not keep the law, what a sinner was and am I. God could not be just, it seemed, to forgive such as I. The stronger had come upon the strong, binding him and my heretofore castle was being reduced to a mere hut. Dear Elder, many were the days I spent in tears and at night my face

and pillows were often wet with tears as I lay sleepless.

In 1942 I felt there was a struggling of two natures. I longed to live right but I did not know how and my whole being seemed to be in conflict. I would long for meeting day and when it was over I was not satisfied. This went on until my husband thought I was losing my mind. I read my Bible, I walked, talked, begging God to grant mercy for that was all that could reach my case. I had tried to keep the law but I could not. In Jan. 1943 I had a dream. I dreamed that I was standing before the church and a voice said to me, "look and see," and as my vision was drawn beyond that church I saw a hill so green and beautiful that tongue could not describe it. On that hill was a little band of people all dressed in white from head to foot. They were the people of this little church and I knew them every one. Was not this a revelation that this is God's people? They were knelt as if in prayer or worship. Then in Feb. I had another dream, it was of a baby. I was standing at my front door looking out and I saw a baby that was placed on my door steps by whom I did not know, but a great love came into my heart for this child, and as I tried to move to bring it in I found I was as helpless as that baby, yet I longed for this child for I loved it, and as I stood there helpless that child changed before my eyes to a figure bowed and humble as a great weight or burden was upon it. It was the figure of a man as acquainted with grief or sorrow. Some months later Elder A. D. Wall came to visit the church here and spent the night in our home. I wished he could stay the rest of his life for I longed to hear him talk and talk to someone, yet my lips seemed sealed, I could not talk as I longed to.

After meeting one day I was about my daily work and the thought came to me to sing a song we had sung during the last meeting day, "Did Christ o'er sinners weep," and as I started to sing I felt a feeling come over me of being lifted up, and I went into my kitchen, the whole room seemed full of light, down on my knees I fell and sung "Amazing Grace," and it had never sounded sweeter. After this doubt came, but not with the same feeling I had before, but it seemed I feared I was only deceived and I was trying to deceive others. I felt if I was one he, the Lord, died for things would not be so with me. November 1944 I had a dream that I was on a high bridge. It was built circular in form and no rails were on it, and as I looked over the side of it to the rolling, tumbling waters they seemed to reach for me to suck me under. I was filled with fear. I tried to move and could not as I looked beyond the bridge, where it looked so calm and peaceful, to safety and as I was thus, a power as an unseen hand picked me up and placed me there where I had longed to be. When I awoke I thought upon this dream, what was it, and I longed to know what it meant. A morning or so after I was sitting on the side of my bed before arising and my gaze was drawn to the heavens, right through the housetop as if it was not there, and there standing in the clouds I beheld Him in white. A light shone all around him, he was standing arms outstretched to me, not begging me to accept him as my Savior, ah no, but as the way, the truth and the life. It was as he had said, "It is I; be not afraid." I do not believe my natural eyes beheld him, but I was given to see him with the eyes of my inner understanding. I was shaken over the vision and said nothing of it as I stumbled from the room, and when

I did tell my husband of it he told me I was worrying over these things too much and he feared for my mind.

All day I wondered about the vision and when I retired that night I fell asleep and dreamed I was in the little church here, sitting in the back by one of the members, Carrie Campbell, and they started to sing a song. It had the sweetest tune I ever heard in my life, and the song they were singing was the twenty-third Psalm of the Bible, "The Lord is my shepherd" etc. She turned to me, put her arms around me and we sang with the church, and as we sang each note fell in sweet accord. The next morning when I awoke and as I arose the thought came to me in that still small voice, "here is your answer." Dear Elder, that was sweet to me and now, as I felt hope that God is a God of mercy and forgiveness, but after that passed away doubt came again and I wondered if these were imaginations of a deranged mind, so I thought I will just put it all away from me. I will not have one thing to do with it. Ah, I hope the Lord was and is teaching me terrible things in righteousness now, but doubt is such a demon seeking to devour. I did not go to church for six months or more but I was a very miserable creature in this time, and I was brought to believe this was something that had me and not me it. If I make my bed in hell he is there and I begged God to allow that I be one sometimes present when his blessed truth was preached. That was far more than deserved for I deserved only hell and banishment.

(To be continued.)

Newport, N. C.

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON, DEAR BROTHER: I have been a subscriber to your paper, *Signs of the Times*, for several years, and am enclosing check for

another year. I enjoy reading the editorials and correspondence with the dear brothers and sisters that write so humbly of their experience in these trying times. We know Christ is our peace and he, who knew no sin, took our sins upon himself and died that we might live. He loved us when we were dead in sin, and washed our sins away in his own blood that we should meet the Father in peace, clothed in his own righteousness and not the righteousness of the law or that of our own. Our own righteousness is as filthy rags. If Christ is in us we love him and that love fulfills the law. Paul said, "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." If Christ is in us the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is alive because of righteousness. We love righteousness and hate sin but have to say we are sinners. "The good that I would I do not, but the evil which I would not, that I do." Then with Paul we would say, "It is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me." While we live we know we are sinners. If we live after the flesh we shall reap corruption, but after the Spirit life and peace. We believe if Christ is in us, and we are born of the Spirit, Christ will lead us to the living fountain of water of life, and enable us to stand in this liberty wherewith Christ has made us free, and not be tangled with the yoke of bondage. The poor sinner under the law was under bondage, but Christ fulfilled the law and delivered his people from its curse. We are dead to the law and the law is dead to us.

We hope our blessed Lord will bless us with all needful blessings, and guide us by his spirit to enter that rest that

remains to the people of God. Dear brother, I would be glad to meet you. Hope you can come down and preach for us some time. May you be blessed in your labor of love for the Primitive Baptists. Your brother I hope in the Lord. (Elder) W. W. ROBERTS

Route 2, Box 86, Jasper, Ala.

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON, DEAR BROTHER IN THE LORD I HOPE: I was at the Five Mile Creek Association in Cullman Co. when a Brother Copeland came to me and said, "Are you Sister Hand from Jasper?" I said "yes." He said, "I read an article in the October *Signs* written by you." I said, "There must be some mistake, I haven't written any article worthy of space in the *Signs*." Then I remembered asking you to write your views on Jonathan and David's unusual friendship, not thinking the letter would be published. I was just looking forward to reading an article on this beautiful scripture. On reaching home my paper had come containing the editorial and I sat right down and read it through. Must say I enjoyed it very much and appreciate your writing it. I cannot hope to ever fully understand when you go into such deep waters. Naturally speaking I am afraid of deep water, but it holds a certain fascination along with the horror and some how I have a kind of longing to plunge in and explore the depths, but I cannot swim and human instinct and common sense tell me to stay out. So it is in spiritual things. I read this strange Book and sometimes feel that perhaps I understand the meaning a little. Sometimes it is all confusing. Perhaps I will awake at midnight and some scripture will be on my mind that I have not read in a long time. I will struggle with it and try to fix it, may be get up and read some and try more to get it fixed and

find it so hard. I cannot accept an interpretation that does not harmonize with God being the supreme ruler; the director of the steps of his people or the complete inability of weak human beings doing any works pleasing in his sight. We have sufficient scripture that I think I understand, and my experience in life so far teaches me beyond a doubt that this is true. This special scripture had me puzzled. The more I thought about it the farther I was from light. So many think of David at this time as a figure of Christ, but somehow I could not see it straight. As I began to read your editorial the mist began to clear. I could see David as a little shepherd watching over his Father's sheep; I could see Jonathan as a figure of that good Samaritan who took care of the poor fellow who was half dead; also the same as in Ezekiel 16:8-9. It all appeared in a different way from me trying to fix it, and I enjoyed it all the way through. I hope others who read it will enjoy it as I did for it is deep water food. I am not qualified to comprehend all the deep beauty I want to; I believe I can understand there are many hidden mysteries that we will never be able to see in this life, but when time rolls on, the lid removed and we are given eyes and understanding to behold the wonderful works of perfection, and the Savior arrayed in all his holy grandeur it will indeed be wonderful.

I enjoy all the editorials by you and the Associate Editors and all the letters. I feel so proud of the paper. Glad it is free of arguments, backbiting and debates. Such as that never accomplished anything but an uproar and confusion among our people. All have never seen every little point just alike, and we see nothing right except by divine revelation. We have nothing to boast about in ourselves and I wish

these words could always be before our eyes. If you ever have a mind to come South, remember a hearty welcome awaits you in Alabama in any of the Associations. We would all be glad to see you. There are always more people at the Hopewell than any other. It is the last one in this part of the country. They come from Kentucky, Texas, Indiana, Georgia, North and South Carolina, Tennessee, Arkansas, and Louisiana, all speaking the same language. Thanking you again for your kindness I am, I hope a little sister.

(Mrs.) M. G. HAND

Route 2, Box 101, Jasper, Ala.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: Enclosed find a money-order for my subscription renewal. It is a little late but I hope you will overlook that since I am sending the name of a new subscriber. I enjoy the *Signs* more than I can express. They are all good but it seemed the Feb. 1948 issue was unusual, especially your editorial and Elder Green's experience and call to preach. It disappoints me for such articles to be continued. It seems I enjoy the whole article more as I am forever searching and hoping for a little more evidence that I have an experience, yet there is something I cannot be loosed from and give up.

Elder Dodson, if you have a mind will you write on the subject of the fig tree. It is mentioned a number of times in the Bible, and I have heard some discussion on it but not to my satisfaction. Pray for this poor sinner. A sinner saved by grace if saved at all.

FANNIE R. HYATT

(As our sister says, the fig tree is frequently referred to in the Scriptures. It thrives best in warm or tropical climates, and sometimes bears two or three crops of fruit in one year.

Figs have a very high food value and are very delicious, as those of us who enjoy our California products well know, and no doubt their cultivation in olden times was quite profitable to those who grew them, enabling them to live comfortable and peaceful lives, as the following proverbial expression which was much in use among the Jews would indicate: "To sit under one's own vine and one's own fig tree." It was a terrible loss to them to have their vines and fig trees destroyed.

The fruit was more to be desired than its foliage for, notwithstanding its deeply-lobed leaves, an apron made of them was not sufficient to cover the nakedness of our first parents from the all-seeing eye of a just and holy God. We have thought of the fig tree which Jesus found in the way with "nothing thereon, but leaves only," to which he said, "Let no fruit grow on thee henceforward for ever," as typifying the legal dispensation. While the Scribes, Pharisees, Sadducees, etc., were prodigious in their professions of religious worship, they were as barren of the true spiritual fruit as a desert land. When Jesus came into this sin-cursed world he found no one had been able to keep the law or to do his Father's will. The law, indeed, came by Moses, and for centuries it went unkept until it was kept in every jot and tittle by our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. If righteousness could have come by the law, there would have been no need for Jesus to come, but the law was a school master unto Christ and proved conclusively the absolute necessity of grace and truth which came by Jesus Christ. He who is worshipped in Spirit and in truth, and who looketh on the heart, or the inward part, was not pleased with an outward profession or ostentatious display of the law. Therefore when Jesus came to the fig tree with great foliage

but no fruit, he pronounced a curse upon it and it withered. After setting forth the legal destruction of Jerusalem, as is recorded in the twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew, Jesus said to his hearers: "Now learn a parable of the fig tree; When his branch is yet tender, and putteth forth leaves, ye know that summer is nigh: so likewise ye, when ye shall see all things, know that it is near, and even at the doors." Mat. 24:32-33. This parable portrayed the approaching destruction of that age.

Jesus made another reference to the fig tree which has entranced us for many years. We refer to what is recorded in John 1:45-50. Jesus knew what was in the heart of Nathanael, which explains why he said unto him, "Behold an Israelite indeed, in whom is no guile!" Nathanael on the other hand was amazed that Jesus should have addressed him after this manner. Not having met or had any dealings with the Master previously, he could but ask? "Whence knowest thou me?" Our Lord brought to his remembrance what went on in his heart when he had sought in solitude the presence of his God under the fig tree, where he no doubt poured out his heart like water on the ground in prayer to God in secret to undertake for him, to lead him in a plain path and make straight the way before him. We hope we know something of Nathanael's experience under the fig tree and it has brought him close to us in love and fellowship of the truth. Jesus replied to Nathanael, "Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig tree, I saw thee." This convinced Nathanael of his omnipotence, and he said unto him, "Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; thou art the King of Israel." What a blessed assurance that was for Nathanael! All doubt was removed for the time being, since he was in the felt

presence of his Lord.

We have heard this narrative of Philip finding Nathanael and telling him of Jesus quoted in support of the claim that we can bring our brother to the Saviour, or as justifying the work of missionaries, but we believe that Jesus cut the very ground from under any such claim by saying to Nathanael, "Before that Philip called thee, when thou wast under the fig tree, I saw thee." This very definitely, to our mind, bears out the fact that "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Paul in writing to his Galatian brethren said, "God forbid that I should glory save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world. For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature." We are fully persuaded that, Salvation is of the Lord, and that all the missionary work in the world will not avail anything by way of bringing a single solitary soul into that heavenly kingdom. We hope these remarks will be helpful to our sister, since she says she has heard some discussion of the subject which was not to her satisfaction. R. L. D.)

630 Sherwood Road, N. E., Atlanta Ga.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: My brother, J. Ross Jackson, is sending \$2 for the *Signs* for a year and one dollar to be used as you see fit. He is sixty-five years old which is two years younger than I, and though he is not a member nor has ever offered himself to the church I feel sure he is far more worthy than I though my name is on the church book as a member.

I love the *Signs* so much that I have been giving him mine after I read them, but as he thought that was not treating you right he wanted to pay for it.

He and I have just returned from the Yellow River Association which we enjoyed very much. The preaching and singing was all good, demonstrating the consolation in Chrst, the comfort of love, the fellowship of the Spirit and the bowels of mercy, all having the same love, being of one accord and of one mind.

On the way home brother Ross talked with such conviction, such firmness in the doctrine of God our Savior, and great love for the members of the household of faith I felt an urge to ask him why he does not offer himself to the church, but instead I asked him to read the 10th chapter of the Acts and see if his case was not similar to Cornelius. Send to Joppa and get Peter. He will tell you what you ought to do. (Acts 10:47-48) "Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord."

I fully realize that it is not in my province to endeavor to persuade one to unite with the church, persuade one to accept Christ and believe, unite with the church and be saved as some advocate or as the world seems to be teaching: yet I have a feeling that when one is thoroughly convinced that a loved one has received the Holy Ghost and fire, it is hard not to suggest that he offer himself to the church for there is a certain amount of rest and comfort by being permitted to sit with and call one another brother and commune and wash one another's feet.

Dear brother Dodson, I am afraid I have taken up too much of your time reading this. I started to write you and try telling you how much I enjoy the *Signs of the Times*, but as words fail me all I can say is that when I read your Editorials and the writings of

others my cup runs over, and I feel as I imagine David did when he said, "Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye lands. Serve the Lord with gladness: come before his presence with singing." I want you to know I am not looking for an answer to this letter, just throw it into the waste basket and send the paper to brother Ross at your convenience. I hope some day it will be God's will to enlighten my mind and give me understanding, or at least he will put it in my heart to truly say, "Thy will be done."

W. W. JACKSON

(We appreciate the spirit of the foregoing letter. Many of our readers like to retain their own papers for future reference. We are glad to learn of the good meeting referred to and truly hope brother Jackson's brother will be made willing to follow his Lord in the ordinance of baptism. Jesus said to his disciples, "If ye love me, ye will keep my commandments," and his commandments are not grievous. R. L. D.)

Route 1, Winona, Texas

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON, DEAR BROTHER IN HOPE OF A BETTER HOME BEYOND THIS VALE OF SIN AND SORROW: I am 77 years old and have been trying to proclaim and preach His blessed gospel for thirty years or better. I try to preach to the people a God of all power, one that is able to command and it stands fast, speaks and it is done, opens and none can shut. He says, "I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me." "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending." "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure."

I am glad that I can be blessed to have a name among a people that believes in that kind of a God. Our little church is small in numbers but thank God we are all of one mind and see

eye to eye; all speak the same tongue and we do keep a clean house; will not tolerate or fellowship adultery in any form whatever or any one that will use the bankruptcy law or try to avoid paying their just debts as some so-called Primitive Baptists are doing yet claiming they are the orderly Baptists.

Brother Dodson, I have never had the pleasure of meeting you but I feel like we are related in the Spirit, and may God bless you to carry on the good old family paper. If not crowding out better matter please publish this in the *Signs*. Your brother in hope.

(Elder) J. F. JONES

807 Pope St., Memphis, Tenn.

DEAR ELDER RHODES: I have been writing in mind to you for quite awhile since reading your two books on debates with Elders West and Jones. I enjoyed them very much although I was afraid to read the first one with Elder West. I am so weak I was fearful I would not be able to understand clearly and would become confused, maybe leaning to one side then the other; but I was filled with joy while reading to realize it was the hard, sound truth you so ably set forth that I hope I believe. I have lately read the Rhodes-Jones book and enjoyed it.

Brother Rhodes, the Primitive Baptists believe the things they do because they cannot help it. The force of evidence and their experience along the way they have been led will not let them believe anything else. I enjoyed very much the discussion of the preached word and who benefits by it. Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the Word of God. I cannot believe that any or everybody could hear the preached word of their own will and it would give them faith. I would like to try in a few words to tell you why I cannot believe it. I guess I am a

normal being, and I heard the preached word only as sound many years and it left me as void of faith as I could be. I knew and realized I could not hear and understand, and there came a time when I became worried for fear I would never be able to feel and love the things of God. I would try to concentrate on what was being preached, and of course with a natural mind I desired to go to heaven when I died; but I actually seemed to realize that my heart was untouched and that if I made any move toward any religious activity I would be a hypocrite and have to pretend to be something I was not all the rest of my life and I was not willing to do that.

Now, Brother Rhodes, I do not say this boastfully but I did not take one step that I know of toward trying to save myself. I was somehow confident that it would get me nowhere. I think I have always been fearful that God would not save me. Even as a child I would look at older people who visited in our home, my sister and parents and they looked so good and I would think to myself they were never as sinful as I am and I felt to be the black sheep of the family. This fear grew into a gnawing thing inside me as I realized I was raising children and was not a Christian. That is what I heard when I went to the various churches around us, and yet I could not make one attempt to save myself. I could not hold up my hand to be prayed for. If I am not sadly mistaken there came a time when I felt life, and I marveled at this feeling within. My heart was bursting with joy and love and I knew not why. I pondered it and wondered, what can it be? It lasted two days. The third day I noticed I was just walking from one room to another, not doing anything, just filled with amazement at this joy and love

in my whole being. I walked into a room and sat down, and then it seems I thought of God and he seemed to be so close that I could reach out and touch him. His presence seemed to fill all the space in the room. The thought came to me to go to the door and look out to see if there was something changed. I did so and while standing there looking out these words came into my mind with such force that it was almost as if they were spoken to me, "The change is not out there, it is within you, you have been baptized with the Holy Spirit. Your heart has been washed in the blood of the Lamb."

Brother Rhodes, the peace that followed! The most perfect assurance that I was a saved character that stayed with me for weeks and weeks can never be told to my satisfaction. I honestly thought and believed that the rest of my life would be a new song. I did not know about the doubts and fears that would come later. I thought they were all behind. I could write on and on about this but I must not. That is why I hope to believe that if I have any faith Jesus is the author and finisher of it and not the preacher. The preached word is my food and my drink if I am not deceived. I do hope this has not wearied you.

I think of Paul the great apostle saying, "It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." I wondered why he used the word foolishness, but lately I have thought that being given such revelation and seeing by the eye of faith the perfect finished work of Jesus, just as perfect as when he was a Lamb slain before the foundation of the world, the salvation of God's people, or the bride, was just as sure as if it had already been accomplished, knowing they were all chosen before the foundation of the world and God's foreknowledge in de-

claring the end from the beginning. Jesus said, "This is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing." Well Brother Rhodes, please forgive me. I hope we are kindred in Christ, and I hope I love the truth above all else in the world. Wish you would come our way again.

(Mrs.) LUCILLE YOUNG

DEAR BROTHER RHODES: I was grateful for your kindness in answering my letter, and as these things were still in my mind I felt I would like to write the sequel. Of course I could not finish it for I am still living it, but it is so sweet when I can feel to see God's hand in it all; his purpose, love and power leading and guiding me though at times I feel the way has been dark, rough and winding. I feel to realize that this also is his purpose and was appointed unto me for my good. If I but reach my goal, if I but get there, see Jesus and be like him I will be just as satisfied as the person whose path was along shady lanes where the breeze was soft and gentle with no stormy winds to toss them about. God in his love, mercy and infinite wisdom knows best how to lead each one of his children.

I got my pen and paper and found I could not collect my thoughts much less get them on paper. Everything I receive, everything I have comes I hope from the great giver of all good and perfect gifts. I am indeed a dependent creature. I know not how to influence my God into blessing me with the things I desire, but I have found that I must wait and hope for these things. My thoughts were many while reading what you said about the scripture, "Without me ye can do nothing," and how well we do know that, and I believe we have a few fleeting moments

of knowing that, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." To those who have tasted of his love and power it is easy to face a frowning world when blessed with his presence in their hearts. I know that modern people of many faiths do not believe in the workings of the Holy Spirit in a person's heart this day and time, but if I did not believe in it I would have no hope. I have no way of proving or knowing without a doubt that it was the Holy Spirit that revealed such glorious things to me from time to time in my life; yet I cannot help feeling that I recognize it as such each time it comes and I could tell you of them down to the tiniest details for the feeling is so impressive and the memory so sweet that I remember and enjoy such a sweet meditation regarding them. I think of the scripture, "And thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God led thee."

I do not tire of hearing or talking of these truths, and sometimes it is such a comfort to feel them flowing through my mind and can write them to some one I feel sure knows and understands what I am saying or at least what I am trying to say, but when you speak of sending my letter to the *Signs* I get fearful. I turn my eyes within and what I see is in direct opposition to what I desire to be. I search my heart and feel like saying as Paul, "Behold, before God, I lie not" concerning the things I write, it came about exactly the way I told it yet I fear it is not worthy of space in such a good paper; but I get such comfort from the pens of others that I have no sound reason for not wishing you to send it to the *Signs*. I always feel that I am so little and insignificant that anything I would write would be just like me. I do hope it corres-

ponds with some one's experience. I have often wondered about it when hearing others tell theirs. At times it is so fresh in my mind and it surely seems that it would be sufficient if I were called to die; at other times it gets dim and far away so that I almost lay it by, but there is always a "bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus," and I do not believe we can lay it by. I am so glad to believe that. Paul did not write as though one could lay it by and lose it. He said it was "an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast."

If God is the author and finisher of one's faith how can people think they can hold on to it by obedience or lose it by disobedience. "Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." Brother Rhodes, what must you think of me as though I was trying to tell you something. I know you know all these things and so very much more, I blush to think I have written so much. The real truth is I love so much to find a letter from the Baptists in the mail box I try to write them my thoughts (poor as they are) in hopes they will find it in their hearts to write me theirs. I work eight hours a day five days a week and do not have much time to write, but I get so hungry to hear from the ones who love the truth as it is in Christ. I hope I do. Your unworthy sister if one at all.

(Mrs.) LUCILLE YOUNG

Route 1, Big Sandy, Texas

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON, DEAR BROTHER IN HOPE OF ETERNAL LIFE: I do not feel worthy to call you brother I am so little and full of sin. I have just finished reading your article in the December issue of the *Signs* and it is rich to me, and most all the other

articles in it are also. I surely do enjoy reading the *Signs* and do not want to miss a copy if I can help it and be able to pay for it. Enclosed find \$2 to renew my subscription for another year. My time has run over a little owing to my neglect as I have been working away from home. Will close as I do not want to take up your time. If you ever have occasion to come this way we will be very glad to have you stop off with us. Remember me as ever your little, unworthy brother in hope and bonds of love.

W. M. HARRIS

Weiser, Idaho

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: I wish you would change my address to Weiser General Hospital, Weiser, Idaho, and send my *Signs* there. I am sending \$3 for the "Poor of the Flock." I hope some of the Baptists will write to me. Thanks for past favors. Will try to write more some day.

(Mrs.) LEVICA PRATT

AID FOR SENDING "SIGNS" TO INDIGENTS

W. Y. Chandler, Ind., \$1; Mrs. D. W. Holland, Md., \$3; Mrs. R. V. Edwards, Ala., \$2; A friend, Cal., \$25; Mrs. L. T. Genung, N. Y., \$1; H. F. Waldon, Ala., \$1; C. S. Dodson, Tex., \$1; Eld. L. D. Rose, Tex., \$1; Miss C. M. Duffus, Can., \$3; J. W. Cox, Tex., \$1; B. C. Wray, N. C., \$1; T. S. Chester, Ky., \$1.

SPECIAL MEETING

Bethel Old School Baptist Church of Riffe, Wash. will, the Lord willing, hold her annual three days meeting, beginning Aug. 13, 1948, and continue the two days following.

(Elder) I. F. COLEMAN, Pastor
MRS. ROSA COLEMAN, Clerk
Riffe, Wash.

EDITORIAL

RUTHERFORD, N. J.

JULY 1948

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES

P.O. Box No. 70

Rutherford, N. J.

"Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard: that went down to the skirts of his garments; As the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion: for there the Lord commanded the blessing, even life for evermore." Psalm 133.

David was beholding the root of the matter that was in him, that brought all men to a knowledge of the truth. This truth has had much thought expressed both oral and written but the half has not been told, and beholding the abundance of thought that we see embraced we venture to express ourself, hoping to stir up the pure mind of our readers and to comfort their hearts.

Paul had this unity of spirit in his heart when he stood in the midst of Mars Hill and said, "Ye men of Athens, I perceive that in all things ye are too superstitious. For as I passed by, and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this inscription, TO THE UNKNOWN GOD. Whom therefore ye ignorantly worship, him declare I unto you. 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 any thing, seeing he giveth to all life, and breath, and all things; And hath made of one blood all nations of men for to dwell on all the face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed, and the bounds of their habitation; That they should seek the Lord, if haply they might feel after him, and find him, though he be not far from every one of us: For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring." Acts 17:22-28.

Those Paul was addressing were much divided, as some believed and some mocked, which proves that all men are carnally minded in the virtues of the first Adam, and are enmity against God, and are not given to see the virtues in the second Adam, because they cannot see and behold the spirit of the second Adam; and there is no unity to connect the relations of the first Adam and the second Adam for the seed of the woman was purged, and it is written that which was born of the woman "did no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth." 1 Peter 2:22.

The unity of the flesh is the tie that binds all that are born of the first Adam, and in the perceptions of the carnal mind often the peaceful relations of friends with each other are referred to as the religion of the Lord Jesus Christ; and by their living peaceably and uprightly under the laws of the land, and doing certain acts commanded of the Spirit to the child of God they will inherit the kingdom that is not of this world which Paul was referring to, as God needed men to do these things to give eternal life. All the works of men will not bring

God under the law to accept the works of righteousness men can do, but we commend uprightness and faithfulness among all men. This is not the unity we have in mind that the brethren dwell together in that is good and pleasant; it is the unity of the Spirit of which they are born of an incorruptible seed by the will of God, and are his workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

In this unity the children of God walk, talk and dwell together, and there is no confusion and divisions among them, but the peace and love of God is in all their deliberations for the great Moderator is in their midst directing the step of every one; and there are none great and noble among them which is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard; that went down to the skirts of his garments. We are agreed where such manifestations are in evidence it is a pleasant place to dwell.

The ties of spiritual life are the binding ties that so unite that they will not sever when they are forced to leave the place of sweet association and go to their several places of abode, for they will be continually reminiscing over the sweetness of the association and sweet fellowship enjoyed during their visit together; and all along the way each one having enjoyed such sweet seasons are made to love the brethren and long to meet with them again. They hope to be refreshed again, but often are disappointed as they are not given the spirit of rejoicing they enjoyed before, saying the meeting was not as good as before, but the truth was the same for I could not condemn by the word of God anything I heard during the meeting, and sometimes they

wish they had not gone.

If we look this matter over carefully we will find for us to have stayed at home secluded, our suffering would have been much greater, for the time the meeting was in session we would have been grieving because we would have been so hungry and thirsty for the righteousness of God bestowed upon the brethren we would not have any rest or comfort, and we would point to the meeting and say, "There my best friends, my kindred dwell; there God my Savior reigns." These realizations are in the life and virtues of the heart of every one that is born of the Spirit, and they can truly say with David, "how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." This unity is in the heart of every one thus exercised, and is the evidence that God created them in Christ Jesus unto good works. "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." These are the ties that bind our hearts in Christian love, and the fellowship of kindred minds is like to that above, and is the dear uniting love that will not let us part. Our Savior said, "Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee." Jer. 31:3. Yes, we feel drawn to keep on in the relations and responsibilities we feel were laid upon us, which are silken cords that draw us along in all the duties of life, to serve our loved ones with natural things and feel ready to stop any time to converse with them that speak of the goodness and mercy of God to poor sinners. The language of the poet, Doddridge, is very fitting to us.

"My God, what silken cords are thine!
How soft and yet how strong!
While power, and truth, and love combine
To draw our souls along."

Thou saw'st us crushed beneath the yoke
Of Satan and of sin:
Thy hand the iron bondage broke,
Our worthless hearts to win.

The guilt of twice ten thousand sins
One moment takes away;
And grace, when first the war begins,
Secures the crowning day.

Comfort through all this vale of tears,
In rich profusion flows,
And glory of unnumbered years
Eternity bestows.

Drawn by such cords, we onward move,
Till round thy throne we meet:
And captives in the chains of love,
Embrace our Conqueror's feet."

C. W. V.

TWENTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY

Twenty-five years ago this month, we became an associate editor of the *Signs of the Times*. Many changes have taken place since that time, and we have encountered many problems as we have journeyed along. We have been looking over our first editorial, which appeared in the August 15th, 1923, issue of the paper, and in the light of our experiences, the text upon which we wrote has seemed to take on renewed and greater significance than we had any idea of at that time. The text was, "The lot is cast into the lap; but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord." Prov. 16:33. We pointed out that "the whole, not a part, but the entire disposing of the lot is of the Lord, and he will bring thee forth by a right way; he will lead thee in paths thou hast not known; he will make darkness light before you and crooked things straight." Little did we realize then what was in store for us during the years ahead. How truly the language of Job seems to fit our case where he said: "I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear: but now mine eye seeth thee." And now we feel we can also adopt wholeheartedly his statement, "I know that thou canst do everything, and that no

thought can be withholden from thee."

We also stressed in said editorial that "all our times are in His hands, and all events at his command; that he would make us to lie down in green pastures, and lead us beside the still waters; that we would have to be still and know that he was God, and wait on him for his salvation." We further said, "If thou art a speaker, he will fill thy mouth and loose thy stammering tongue; if a writer, he will direct thy pen; if a hearer or reader, he will open thine ears and cause them to tingle with joy at the sound of the gospel of the Son of God."

Just one more reference to said editorial and we will pass on. Before concluding what we had to say, we stated: "Many will be the time when you will be in prison, shut up and unable to come forth, hedged about with hewn stone, but God is the whole disposer of thy lot." etc. While we were writing for the consideration of the household of faith, as we now review what we said, we are made to hope that much of it concerned our own life and experience in trying to serve Him for the past quarter of a century.

While we are reminiscing, we do not feel that we can refrain from quoting here, in full, a letter we received from our dear old Dad, dated September, 1936. The two of us had a great deal in common concerning the Scriptures, and we shall long cherish the memory of a number of our talks. His letter is as follows: "Beloved Son: We have your card dated the 13th, stating you are homeward bound and are tired. When I think of the life you are now living, that you have to make long trips and speak often, I sometimes fear your health may fail, knowing while you are trying to serve your Lord and Master you are trying also to work with your hands, that you be no bur-

den to any one. But, my son, when I take the view that you are a servant of the most high God, the One who made all things and doth rule and control all things, and does his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth and none can stay his hand, and I believe he has both called and qualified you to go and preach the gospel to the dear children of God, oh how could I want it different? So may I say, God's will be done. I feel I know something of the needs of God's humble poor, and I know he is able to uphold and sustain you. So I bid you Godspeed, and hope he will go with you, and I believe he will. Samson could not of his own strength have done the great things he did, and neither could David have conquered the lion and the bear except by the power of our God. So, my son, if God has called and sent you to feed and comfort the scattered saints he will make you able to do his will. Oh what a blessing from heaven the gospel ministers are, and to think that God has blessed you to be in line with such dear ones as Elder Silas H. Durand, and many others who did and still are preaching the wonderful things of Jesus. Oh, I just feel to say as did old Jacob when he knew that Joseph was still alive: It is enough, and I will go and see him before I die. It is enough, and sometimes my cup is made to run over when I can see what good things our heavenly Father has in store for us. My son, I often wish I could join in the praise of God with you, and at times I can see no reason for a hope that I am a child of God, but I hope I love these things. Amen."

We came across the foregoing letter of our father recently and it seemed to touch us so deeply that we decided to share it here with our readers, being assured that those who were privi-

leged to read and enjoy his writings will again rejoice with us and that those who have come along since his departure, will likewise feast upon the things which were so precious to him.

Having looked back upon the past and recounted some of God's benefits and blessings, we shall now endeavor to turn our face towards the future. While it is altogether unknown to us, we are persuaded that He who hath delivered, doth deliver, and in whom we trust he will yet deliver, that we can commit our all into his care and keeping, knowing that whatsoever He doeth will be for his own honor and glory and for the good of his people. In writing to the church at Philippi, Paul used the expression, "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." It is true that we know not what a day may bring forth, but our faith says the future can bring with it nothing but what God will see us through, for He who clothed the lilies will clothe his people too. Moses said to Israel, of old, "The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms." Of late, we have been urged by some of our good brethren and friends to slow down and take life easy, and we hope ere long to be able to do this, but we are mindful of the words of Jesus when he said, "the night cometh, when no man can work." We hope to be about our heavenly Father's business, and whether our days on earth be many or few, they are all His due, and we desire to devote them in service to him and his people. We cannot find words that will adequately express the gratitude of our heart for the manifold mercies and blessings which have been bestowed upon us all the days of our life, but we rejoice that it is written that God

seeth not as man seeth; man looketh on the outward, but God looketh on the inward, or the heart. We are glad that he discerns both the thought and the intent of the heart, and sometimes it is good to be brought into fellowship with Peter, when he said, "Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee." This was said despite all of Peter's weaknesses. At the time of this confession Peter had been converted from what he once thought, and because of it we believe that he strengthened his brethren even down to this very day. It was not until he had been sifted as wheat that he was told to feed the Lord's lambs and to feed his sheep. Sometimes it seems too much to even hope that we have been given to feed the flock of God, but on occasions we verily believe that we have felt in our own heart the power of his precious word, and have known of a truth that he was the potter and we the clay and that he was able to fashion us into a vessel that would be to the honor and glory of his name.

In conclusion, we would like to thank again our dear brethren and friends for the various kinds of support which they have so generously given us during the past two and a half decades, for without it we would have fallen by the wayside and been numbered among the forgotten, but God, we hope, has so wondrously wrought his work of grace in us as to give us a place in the hearts of those who love and trust him. We truly hope that he will continue to be mindful of us all and cause us to dwell together in unity and in the bonds of peace, and may his adorable name have all the praise, both now and forevermore. Amen.

R. L. D.

OBITUARIES

It is with a sorrowful heart I try to write of the death of my dear mother, MRS. SARAH L. GLOER, who departed this life July 25, 1947,

making her stay on earth 78 years, 11 months and 26 days. She was the daughter of the late Elder and Mrs. W. W. West and born in Putnam Co., Ga., July 29, 1868. On Jan. 27, 1889 she was married to Elbert J. Gloer who preceded her in death thirty-six years. To this union ten children were born all of whom survive, except one boy and one girl who died in infancy. She leaves to mourn her passing four daughters, Mrs. D. L. Davis, Mrs. R. G. Jacob, Atlanta, Ga., Mrs. H. T. Avary, East-Point, Ga. and Mrs. Robert E. Stanley, Savannah, Ga. Four sons; H. L. Gloer, East-Point, Ga., H. G. and R. C. Gloer, Atlanta, Ga. and W. E. Gloer, Decatur, Ga. Four brothers, two sisters, thirteen grandchildren, seven great-grandchildren, a host of nieces and nephews, and other relatives and friends. All was done for her that loving hands of doctors, children, neighbors and friends could do. When Jesus called the angels took her out of her suffering and helpless condition to a better world on high where there will be no parting and sad good-bye.

In her young womanhood, mother professed a hope in Christ, August 29, 1889. She united with the High-Shoals Primitive Baptist Church Oct. 18, 1890, Pauldin Co., Dallas, Ga., where she remained a faithful member until the passing of her loving companion. She then moved her membership to Bethel Primitive Baptist Church, Fulton Co., East-Point, Ga., where her precious body was laid in its final resting place beside her father and mother to await the second coming of Jesus Christ to gather up his jewels. Elders J. R. Chandler, M. M. Morton and W. L. Allen spoke words of comfort to the bereaved family.

Although the time must surely come
When loved ones have to part;
And our bereavement now has laid
A shadow on our hearts.

Be sure that we will meet again
On that far distant shore;
Where all the grief of parting past,
The sun will shine once more.

This is my hope. Written by her son who truly loved her.

H. L. GLOER

403 Dorsey Ave., East-Point, Ga.

ANNA ELIZABETH WATLINGTON was born in Guilford Co., N. C., Jan. 31, 1866, to John Armstead and Jane Simpson Watlington, and died May 3, 1947 at Winston-Salem, N. C.

She went to work at an early age for Mrs. Hancock in Reidsville, N. C., making dresses. Later she worked in millinery and finally went to Washington, D. C. to work as a fur finisher. She went to Baltimore, Md. in 1922 continuing to work in furs until her affliction in March 1935 when she

was stricken with paralysis. During her working seasons she stayed in the home of the late Elder J. T. Rowe. Meetings were held every Sunday and she never missed the opportunity to go. Sister Anna loved Black Rock Church at Butler, Baltimore County very much and brought her membership there by letter from Gilliams Church in North Carolina where she united in young womanhood. There she was a faithful member until her affliction. Moving back to North Carolina she took her letter back to Gilliams. She was faithful, ambitious and full of life. To know her was to love her.

She was a firm believer in salvation by grace, and sometimes felt her affliction was a blessing as she had time to read and meditate on the goodness and mercy of God. One time when visiting Sister Jennie Leonard at Prattsville, N. Y. they camped awhile on the side of a mountain in the Catskills, and she said it was wonderful to be away from the hustle and bustle of the world, as she expressed it, and be alone with her Maker.

Sleep on Sister Anna, we miss you, but sweet memories linger and we believe you are happy now resting in the mansions prepared by your Maker. Written by one who loved her.

(Mrs.) MAMIE W. ROWE

MRS. AMELIA CUMMINS died at Elgin, Oregon, Feb. 1, 1948 at the age of 77. She was born in 1870 at Elgin and was a member of the Primitive Baptist church there. The late Elder C. W. Bond was her pastor for many years. Her husband, John W. Cummins died in 1929. She is survived by nine children; Luther and Orville of Portland Oregon, Dee of Roseburg, Oregon, Mrs. Lloyd Spikes, Mrs. Tom Williams and Mrs. Morris Sherwood of Elgin, Oregon, Mrs. Catherine Dickinson of Gold Hill, Oregon, Mrs. Myrtle Duncan of Wallowa, Oregon, and Mrs. Lela Lockhart of Oxford, Nova Scotia. One son, Guy Cummins, died last fall as the result of an accident. Also surviving is a brother, Weldon Weaver of Portland, Oregon, and twenty-four grandchildren and twenty-eight great-grandchildren.

Funeral services were conducted in La Grande, Oregon, Feb. 4, 1948, interment in the cemetery at Elgin. In my weakness I tried to speak to the comfort of the bereaved. Sister Cummins was faithful and a dear sister in Christ. She was loved by all that knew her and was faithful to the end.

(Elder) B. O. JEFFREY

DAVID E. JOHNS, aged 72, prominent pioneer citizen and business man of Weiser, Idaho died at his home there, Feb. 24, 1948 of a heart attack. His passing was unexpected and a shock to his family and friends as he was believed to be in excellent health.

Mr. Johns was born in Washington County, Penn., and was married there on Christmas eve, 1896. He and Mrs. Johns came to Washington County, Idaho, in 1898, and located on a ranch on Monroe creek. They made their home there until 1921, when they moved to Weiser and he established a harness shop. A few years ago he moved his shop and enlarged his business, changing the name to Johns Leather Goods Company. His son, Earl, was associated with him in this venture, but he remained active in business until the last. He served as a member of the Weiser city council for twelve years, from 1935 to 1947.

Survivors are his wife, Alice; two daughters, Mrs. Howard Cousens of Weiser and Mrs. Frank Luhr of Caldwell, Idaho; two sons, Earl of Weiser and Bernard of Boise, Idaho; a brother, T. J. Johns of Miami, Florida, and twelve grandchildren.

Although he had never united with the Primitive Baptist church, he and his wife had been faithful in their attendance and support of the church for many years. I was called to conduct the funeral and was blessed to speak of the beauty of the passing from this life into eternity and the surety of our eternal home. I used for a text John 6:38.

(Elder) B. O. JEFFREY

SPECIAL MEETINGS

The Delaware Old School Baptist Association will convene, the Lord willing, with the Salem Old School Baptist Church of Philadelphia, Pa., in Grand Fraternity Building, 1626 Arch St., Philadelphia, Saturday and Sunday, Aug. 28 and 29, 1948. Ministers of our faith and order and all others interested in the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

T. C. KOCH, Church Clerk

The Powell's Valley Association will meet, God willing, with the Powder Spring Gap Church at the head of Datson's Creek, Union Co., Tenn. in its 129th session, Friday before the first Saturday in Sept. 1948.

All lovers of truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

(Elder) JOHN WILDER, Mod.

Pineville, Ky.

J. E. WALTON, Clerk

Rt. 1, Maynardville, Ky.

Fellowship Association will meet on Friday before the second Sunday in September, 1948 with Paron Church, about four miles northwest of Big Sandy, Texas. Those coming to Big Sandy inquire for W. M. Harris. Those coming to Gilmer call for D. C. Shelton.

MEETINGS

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The Old School or Predestinarian Baptists meet for worship first Sunday of each month, 2:30 p. m., second floor Pythian Temple Building, 1012 Ninth St., N. W., Washington, D. C. Elder John D. Wood, Minister. For information write FRANK T. SIMPKINS, 5210 - H St., Dillon Park, Washington, D. C.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Hopewell Old School Baptist Church, Hopewell, N. J. meets every Sunday 10:30 a.m. in the meeting-house. Pastor in regular attendance except first Sundays.
 C. W. VAUGHN, Pastor

Olive and Hurley Old School Baptist Church ASHOKAN, N. Y.
 Meetings every first and third Sundays 11:00 a. m., 2 p. m.

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

**Ebenezer Old School Baptist Church
in NEW YORK CITY**

Meetings every first and and third Sundays at Parkside Hotel, 18 Gramercy Park South, one block east of Fourth Ave. and 20th St., near 18th St. Sta. Lexington Ave. Subway. Take Elevator to **Park Room second floor. 11 A.M. 1:30 P.M.**

R. LESTER DODSON, Pastor

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

D. V. SPANGLER, Pastor

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

(Mrs.) **M. R. FOSTER.**

Salem Old School Baptist Church
1626 Arch Street Philadelphia, Pa.
(**GRAND FRATERNITY HALL**)

Meeting first Sunday, each month
10:30 a.m.

Take Elevator to 5th Floor

C. W. VAUGHN, Pastor

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

E. H. LANIER, Clerk

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

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

W. A. LITTLE, Moderator
Sister SIMMONS, Clerk

Saints Rest Predestinarian Baptist Church meets each first Sunday 11 a.m. and Saturday before 2:30 p.m., 4614 Sylvester St., Dallas, Texas. C. B. Teague, co-pastor, G. E. RUSHING, Pastor.

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

C. Y. OSTEEEN, Pastor.

Shepherd Fold Church meets every fourth Sunday at Civic Club, 1419 N. Shepherd St., Houston, Texas. W. O. Beene, Pastor, Ben B. Walston, Ass't Pastor. (Mrs.) **IRENE WISENBAKER, Clerk.**

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

C. M. HAYGOOD, Pastor
HOWARD EASON, Clerk

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

C. Y. OSTEEEN, Pastor.

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

E. B. AULT, Pastor

The Old Salem Church of Old School Baptists, 4 miles south from Teague, Texas, meets the first Sunday in each month and Saturday before.

MAGGIE ELMORE, Clerk

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

E. B. AULT, Pastor

BESSIE CHAMBERS, Clerk
Route 1, Box 88, Mission, Tex.

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

W. R. DODD, Pastor

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

D. V. SPANGLER, Pastor

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

R. B. DENSON, Pastor

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

R. B. DENSON, Pastor

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

C. M. FISHER.

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

I. F. COLEMAN, Mod.

ROSA COLEMAN, Clerk, Riffe, Wash.

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

PETER JONES, Pastor.

Pleasant Grove Church near Yakima, Washington, meets at 11 a. m. each second Sunday by appointment at the home of one of the members living at Naches, Wash. **A. D. HUGHETT, Pastor**
BEATRICE HAAN, Clerk
Star Route, Naches, Wash.

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

HARVEY J. BIRD, Moderator.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON'

VOL. 116

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No. 8

Kinwood, Texas

DEAR ELDER DODSON: If you deem it worthy of space in the dear old *Signs of the Times* I desire to express some views on Deut. 32:9-10. It here appears evident that Jacob is spoken of as the church of God, and the Lord's inheritance which was found in the wilderness of sin, led about and instructed. "Who is this that cometh up from the wilderness, leaning upon her beloved? I raised thee up under the apple tree: there thy mother brought thee forth: there she brought thee forth that bare thee." S.S. 8:5. The church is here spoken of and viewed as coming up hill, away from the wilderness of sin and this troublesome world, leaning on Christ, her beloved, under whom as the apple tree, her mother (the New Jerusalem which is above) brought her forth. "As the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons. I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste." S.S. 3:2. We now see that Christ is the apple tree, under the shadow of which the church sat and lived upon his fruit through the shadowed and prophetic dispensation, and now under the gospel dispensation the Lord is bringing her up from under the law as a covenant of works. "The Lord hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee." Jer. 31:3.

We can now understand what it is that is drawing the church up the hill

way. It is evidently that everlasting lovingkindness with which her God had loved her. "When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called my son out of Egypt." Hosea 11:1. "And the Lord said unto Moses, When thou goest to return into Egypt, see that thou do all those wonders before Pharaoh, which I have put in thine hand: but I will harden his heart, that he shall not let the people go. And thou shalt say unto Pharaoh, Thus saith the Lord, Israel is my son, even my firstborn: And I say unto thee let my son go, that he may serve me: and if thou refuse to let him go, behold, I will slay thy son, even thy firstborn." Ex. 4:21-23. "When he arose, he took the young child and his mother by night, and departed into Egypt: And was there until the death of Herod: that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Out of Egypt have I called my son." Matt. 2:14-15. By these last three quotations with the former the following facts are clearly proven: First, that God loved his children while they were dead in sin. Second, that the spiritual bondage of God's church or people, under spiritual Egypt, is brought to view by spiritual Israel his son, being in bondage under Pharaoh, king of Egypt, and that God delivered them by his own power. Third, that there is such an oneness in Christ, to and with his church, that the calling of Israel out of Egypt was as the calling of Christ, and as the Lord by the prophet had said, "Out of Egypt have I called

my son," so the Savior had to go down into Egypt and be called out for the fulfillment of prophecy. It appears that Israel and Christ are both spoken of as being but one son, and that the calling or delivering his people, the church, from the power of darkness, Egyptian bondage, was the purpose of God in sending Christ, his Son, down into national Egypt where his children had been that he might deliver them out of spiritual Egypt where they are now. If we should find that Israel and Jacob are one here spoken of, whom God loved with an everlasting love, and, therefore, called him out of Egypt, led him about and instructed him and kept him as the apple of his eye, is the whole church of God, then by a strict examination of the course of the people, we should no doubt find that the church of God is or should be a strict predestinarian faith people. "And Jacob was left alone; and there wrestled a man with him until the breaking of the day. And when he saw that he prevailed not against him, he touched the hollow of his thigh; and the hollow of Jacob's thigh was out of joint, as he wrestled with him. And he said, Let me go, for the day breaketh. And he said, I will not let thee go, except thou bless me. And he said unto him, What is thy name? And he said, Jacob. And he said, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince hast thou power with God and with men, and hast prevailed." Gen. 32:24-28.

Here it appears that in consequence of Jacob's prevailing his name was changed to that of Israel, which shows the church in her state of bondage or unmanifest situation, but when prevailing by or through Christ her head, she bare the name Israel. "Then said I, O Lord God, cease, I beseech thee: by whom shall Jacob arise? for he is small." Amos 7:5. Here the prophet be-

sought the Lord on the part of *Jacob*, in his weak and afflicted state, which was evidently the national Israel, in the time that God was threatening her with judgment for her sins. This proves that the national Israel was sometimes called Jacob. "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 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: 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." Deut. 7:6-8. Here the Lord is speaking to and of his chosen people, showing them that there was no influencing in them, why he loved or chose them, or as a cause why he delivered them, but assigns his own love and oath as the cause. While the Lord shows his love and goodness to them as a cause why the Lord's chosen people were particular sectarian "Zion shall be redeemed with judgment, and her converts with righteousness." Isa. 1:27. The church is here spoken of by the term Zion (which I shall give some attention) and her redemption by judgment in her complete deliverance with the redemption of her converts being with righteousness of God, which is Christ, who hath redeemed us from the curse of the law by the sacrifice of himself.

If we, upon examination, should find that God speaks of his church in the term Zion, and that by this appellation the whole church of God, or spiritual Israel, both under the law and gospel dispensations is spoken of, we shall

then find the predestinarian doctrine established, particularly if we will observe God's purposes as he declared by himself respecting Zion. While we will find that in consequence of Zion not strictly adhering to the strict instruction as given by God she suffered severe affliction, so it is to-day. Yet the Lord has saved her at the final overthrow of her enemies who led her astray. "Hearken unto me, O Jacob and Israel, my called; I am he; I am the first, I also am the last." Isa. 48:12.

Here Jacob and Israel are both spoken of as the Lord's people while the Lord declares who he is. "Mine hand also hath laid the foundation of the earth, and my right hand hath spanned the heavens: when I call unto them, they stand up together. All ye, assemble yourselves, and hear; which among them hath declared these things? The Lord hath loved him: he will do his pleasure on Babylon, and his arm shall be on the Chaldeans." Isa. 48:12-13. Does this teach the doctrine of predestination of all things, seeing the same Lord that called Jacob and Israel will do his "pleasure on Babylon, and his arm shall be on the Chaldeans," "Sing, O heavens; and be joyful, O earth; and break forth into singing, O mountains: for the Lord hath comforted his people, and will have mercy upon his afflicted." Isa. 49:13. The Lord is here speaking of that great display of his power in the reign of grace through the Savior which shall comfort Zion when his rich mercy is extended to the relief of his afflicted. "But Zion said, the Lord hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me." Isa. 49:14. This shows it was Zion that the Lord was seeking, yet she has so little knowledge of God's purpose toward her that she was almost in despair. "Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the

son of her womb? yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee." Isa. 49:15. Here is such a striking figure to illustrate the sure standing of God's children that it seems strange that any one would believe in the doctrine of falling from grace. "Behold, I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands; thy walls are continually before me." Isa. 49:16. The Lord here shows such strong reason why he will not, nor cannot forget Zion, that I cannot conceive of the idea of any intelligent being believing the doctrine of apostacy. Surely their eyes are blinded by the gods of this world. "Thus saith the Lord God, Behold, I will lift up mine hand to the Gentiles, and set up my standard to the people: and they shall bring thy sons in their arms, and thy daughters shall be carried upon their shoulders." Isa. 49:22. The Lord here explains his determination in bringing Zion's children home that were among the Gentiles without any condition performed by them. This looks like the true standard of gospel faith maintained by the church of God. That particular sect which God has set up in the world that we know as Predestinarian Baptist, every-where (by the world) spoken against, and that the faith once delivered to the saints shall yet be the standard, therefore, we will not give it up. "And kings shall be thy nursing fathers, and their queens thy nursing mothers: they shall bow down to thee with their face toward the earth, and lick up the dust of thy feet; and thou shalt know that I am the Lord: for they shall not be ashamed that wait for me." Isa. 49:23. (Remember the dust was to be the serpents food.) This does not go to show that these kings and queens were to be converted to the gospel faith, but to become humble at the feet of the church by the executing judgment upon the

enemies of the church. "And all thy children shall be taught by the Lord; and great shall be the peace of thy children." Isa. 54:13. This is the reason why the children of Zion are so particular and sound in the faith God has taught them. "For Zion's sake will I not hold my peace, and for Jerusalem's sake I will not rest, until the righteousness thereof go forth as brightness, and the salvation thereof as a lamp that burneth. And the Gentiles shall see thy righteousness, and all kings thy glory: and thou shalt be called by a new name, which the mouth of the Lord shall name." Isa. 52:1-2. Here is the true spirit of the gospel manifest by which the faithful ministers of the gospel are influenced, and this is the reason why they will not hold their peace. This is certainly Christ the righteousness of God secured in the covenant of grace to be declared under the gospel as being unto and upon them that believe. "In those days, and at that time, will I cause the Branch of righteousness to grow up unto David; and he shall execute judgment and righteousness in the land." Jer. 33:15.

We now see the name wherewith the church should be called, in the gospel day in the spirituality of her title, and the cause why the righteousness of God being manifest for her salvation for it must be the spiritual Judah and Jerusalem here spoken of. "But now thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not; for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine. When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee." Isa. 43:1-2. We here see that Jacob and Israel are but one peo-

ple, and that the Lord claims that people for his own and shows the cause why, and declares that the waters and fire shall not destroy them; which I understand to be their trials and afflictions. Does this not prove God's predestination and grace to a special call and people, "For I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Savior: I gave Egypt for thy ransom, Ethiopia and Seba for thee. Since thou wast precious in my sight, thou hast been honorable, and I have loved thee: therefore will I give men for thee, and people for thy life." Isa. 43:3-4. The Lord here shows the cause why he will complete the redemption of his people which he has purposed to do. "Even every one that is called by my name: for I have created him for my glory, I have formed him; yea, I have made him." Isa. 43:7. They were created for the glory of God, they were created by him, they were created in Christ Jesus unto good works which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. He distinguished Jacob as the object of his everlasting love; found him in the waste howling wilderness; set up his name there; called them by his name. O, how soul refreshing is this to the tempted lambs of God; to know that their strength is in the Lord, and to the persecuted ministers of the gospel to know that the Lord has called and sent them to gather in the scattered flock of God. If the Lord be for us, who shall be against us. But oh the glorious news and happy effect when the sweet whisper of the benefits of Christ was applied to the soul, and they by faith could say, the Lord is my salvation and righteousness.

"And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they

shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn." Zech. 12:10. Now let every child of grace examine his own experience of grace, and see if this is not the way that the Lord brought them to the Savior, for here is the way the Lord, by mouth of the prophet, has said that he would bring his children, referring to the gospel day. This looks like the work of the Spirit. This is the way that old predestinarian Baptists believe it. The Lord poured on them the spirit of grace and supplication, and they mourned bitterly for the lovely Savior whom they had pierced. "And the land shall mourn, every family apart; the family of the house of David apart, and their wives apart; the family of the house of Nathan apart, and their wives apart." Zech. 12:12. This the children of grace know by experience, the one cannot help the other, the wife cannot help the husband, nor can the husband the wife. Each one mourns his own sins apart. "In that day there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and uncleanness." Zech. 13:1. Notice this fountain was not opened *in* the house of David but *to* it, and what a blessed thing indeed that these mourners of the house of David and inhabitants of Jerusalem could be cleansed from their sin and uncleanness in this fountain; but I do not think one of them would ever have come to the fountain if God had not poured upon them the spirit of grace and supplication. It was only opened to the house and the inhabitants of Jerusalem, and, therefore, this spirit is only poured on them.

What do you think of it, ye saints of the Lord, would you ever have come to this fountain if the Lord by his

spirit had not brought you? And do you not think that if others had seen and felt their lost condition and load of sin as you did, that they would have been humble beggars for the benefits of this fountain as well as you? "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the broken-hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and the opening of the prison to them that are bound." Isa. 61:1. Thus we learn the glorious errand of Christ into the world and the benefit of the gospel of peace. The children of grace well knew that when the Lord gave them to see themselves in their own poor, lost, sinful condition, that it brought them very meek, humble and low before the Lord, broken-hearted, captive, bound with fetters too strong for them to break. O the glorious news and the happy effect, when the sweet whisper of the benefits of Christ were applied to the soul, and they by faith could say, the Lord is my salvation and righteousness. This looks like experimental religion that the Lord has wrought in the soul by his spirit, and witnessed by the Word, and just what the prophet said should be under the reign of Zion's King. Yours in the faith. (Elder) B. B. WALSTON

THE WIDOW'S MITE

"And Jesus sat over against the treasury, and beheld how the people cast money into the treasury: and many that were rich cast in much. And there came a certain poor widow, and she threw in two mites, which makes a farthing. And he called unto him his disciples, and saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, That this poor widow hath cast more in, than all they which have cast into the treasury; For all they did cast in of their abundance;

but she of her want did cast in all that she had, even all of her living." Mark 12:41-44.

In the exposition and experimental application of scripture rich in typical or symbolical meaning, it should be emphasized that the type is not as perfect as the anti-type, otherwise it could not serve as a type or symbol of the thing represented. Every type therefore must fall short in some respects. And this is true of the typology embraced in the scripture under consideration. The incident related here is real, literal, historical, but has a spiritual application of deep and sweet meaning to subjects of God's grace.

It is important to note that in one of the precincts of the temple at Jerusalem was a treasury consisting of several boxes or receptacles into which offerings for various purposes were dropped by those who wished to contribute for a certain purpose. This treasury may represent the repository of faith, for scripture confirms the assertion that money may represent faith in the kingdom of heaven. It is written, "A feast is made for laughter, and wine maketh merry: but money answereth all things." As all things in the temporal walks of life that may be purchased require the expenditure of money, the medium of exchange for material things, and such unit of value must be a recognized legal tender, so in the spiritual realms it is impossible to please God unless faith is possessed by the individual, that faith which is the gift of God and the evidence of things not seen, the substance of things hoped for, and which is accounted unto the believer for righteousness. "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ," as Paul asserts in Romans. But true faith signifies a counterfeit, and the nearer the counterfeit is to

the genuine the more dangerous and deceptive it is. Some spurious coins are so nearly like the genuine that only an expert can detect the fraud. So there is even a counterfeit faith possessed by those who have head knowledge in regard to the gospel of the Lord Jesus, having the form of Godliness but denying the power thereof, often versed in the letter of the word, but not feeling its power, not having had the atoning blood of the crucified Lamb of God sprinkled upon the doorposts of their hearts and consciences, never having tasted that the Lord is gracious. Yet these characters are often eloquent in speech fervent in their devotion to the system of works and their ideas of co-operating with God in order to obtain salvation, and are outwardly moral, being whited sepulchers without but full of dead men's bones within. These characters pass for genuine Christians among the people of the world, even though they never have confessed to the working of sin within their hearts, of having been condemned by God's holy law, of having found that within themselves there was no good thing, never writing bitter things against themselves, never confessing their inability to do one thing to merit the Creator's favor and notice. Yet they often cast in of their abundance in the way of gifts to charity, thinking that they are doing for the Lord and giving him willing co-operation to work out the salvation of their souls. They have never wrestled as Jacob of old with the angel of the Lord's presence, been deprived of all sense of creature strength, and made to cling and cry, "I will not let thee go except thou bless me." These characters have a counterfeit faith: it is not acceptable to God.

Let us note in the Scriptures considered that Jesus sat over against the treasury and beheld how the people

cast in their offerings. There is much meaning in the expression "Jesus sat." This whole incident is typical of the gospel dispensation in which Jesus sits down in the Kingdom of Heaven. Stephen said that he saw heaven opened and the Son of Man sitting at the right hand of God. Again the Bible tells us that Jesus when he made one offering for sin, forever sat down at the right hand of God, and that when he comes to judge the world he will sit upon the throne of his glory. Jesus did not sit down at God's right hand until he had finished his work on earth, until sin had been put away, the law magnified, the penalty for sin with all of its hideous curse endured, and the salvation of his people assured. Before sitting down in this sense, he had risen from the dead, manifested himself to his disciples, and ascended to God. To sit down, then, denotes the work accomplished, for sitting carries with it the idea of rest. When the five thousand and the four thousand were fed by the miraculous multiplication of loaves and fishes, the people first sat down. When the mad Gadarene was cured of his plague of his legion of devils, he was found sitting, clothed and in his right mind. The church of God sits down in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, and that is after their deliverance from the condemnation of the law. We feast upon heavenly food in the mountain of the Lord's holiness when we sit down in the Kingdom of Heaven, having entered into that rest that remains to the people of God; rest from the exactions of a law which man can not keep, but which Jesus kept and fulfilled. So the sitting of Jesus in the scripture under consideration typifies his sitting down upon his mediatorial throne in heaven.

Now there came a certain poor widow, who threw two mites into the treasury. The word certain here implies a char-

acter separate from the others in purpose and work, denoting a child of God possessing true faith. It is expressly stated that she was a widow. She represents the single believer as an individual or the church of God collectively, for the church is composed of individuals. The fact that she was a widow is an admission that her husband was dead. Every child of God is under law before the grace of the Lord Jesus is revealed and salvation made manifest. She, therefore, typifies one who has become dead to the law by the body of Christ that she might be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead that she might bring forth fruit unto God. "The woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband." Rom. 7:2. Here the woman is represented as having been under the law, but having become dead to it by the body of Christ, so she came as a widow in a spiritual sense. She was born under the law and had the sentence of death in her own body and was condemned by it. The law had demanded of her a holy life, requiring perfect love to God and perfect love to man, demanding that all its precepts be kept. She did not have a holy nature by birth, but was born in sin, and therefore, could not meet the requirements of God's inexorable justice. When the law demanded holiness she failed utterly, but Jesus kept that precept for her. The law required perfect love to man and love of her neighbor as herself, and she failed miserably to meet its demands, but Jesus met all requirements for her. The law pronounced death upon the transgressor, also the curse, also banishment from the holy presence of God, but Christ fulfilled all the law for her, so that it had no power over her; she

was dead to the law, and in her realization of her utter dependence upon Jesus for grace and glory she came in type in her poverty, being poor, having no works of righteousness to offer, no good deeds in the flesh to her credit, not a good resolution kept, needy in the extreme in a spiritual sense. She came because of her poverty and felt need, and she gave two mites, representing all her living, for she came by faith through grace given unto her. She had in a typical sense the two mites of faith and hope, for both of these graces of the spirit are necessary for salvation, and one goes with the other to make a single unit, the faith by which the sinner is justified.

It is written that the just shall live by faith. This is why the Savior affirmed that she had cast in all her living. Of course she gave two mites in real money, all the currency she possessed, showing that in natural things she had to trust for her next mite to meet the pressing needs of material things. And so in the life of a child of God, one learns that it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps and that the believer must trust for all things. Real faith will be tried in order that its value may be proven, its worth realized. That is why the faith of the saints has been so sorely tried and yet has failed not. Jesus answered Peter that he had prayed for him that his faith fail not.

There is one concluding thought that we would present; Jesus called his disciples and spoke approvingly of her contribution to the treasury. Here is an implication of fellowship, for the disciples witnessed unto the woman's great devotion and manifestation of her faith. When one is called from the darkness of nature into the light of God's revealed truth and comes before the church, there is fellowship extend-

ed by those who have witnessed unto the same experience in being taught of the Lord. We might add also that those that were rich who had preceded her did not cast all their living into the treasury, proof that they had not been taught of the Lord, and did not possess the righteousness of true faith. In a child of God being espoused as a chaste virgin unto Christ there must be the manifestation and exercise of that faith which is legal tender in the kingdom of God.

(Elder) ARNOLD H. BELLOWS

Dallas, Texas

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: My February *Signs* came the seventh and I started reading it from the first page and read right on through until I came to the Editorial page where I found the article headed prayer and enjoyed it so much. When I saw the next article was Isaiah 45:7, "I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the Lord do all these things," I called to my son and asked him to read this sermon aloud to our little family.

Brother Dodson, I would be very ungrateful not to write and thank you and tell you how much I enjoyed this wonderful sermon. You satisfied my mind on this Scripture and it was like listening to a real sermon, a message from on high. You beautifully took up each part of this Scripture and made it as plain as it could be made to my way of thinking. I am glad God gave you a mind to write upon this text as I had never heard a sermon preached on it. I am also thankful God gave me a receptive mind to understand the message. We all enjoyed it and I will be reading and rereading it many times.

I have never thought that God was the cause of people's evil deeds. I think that is Satan's work, and I cannot believe there is a Primitive Baptist who

thinks God is the cause of the wickedness of men and women. I find in Deut. 32:4, "He is the Rock, his work is perfect: for all his ways are judgment: a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he."

I have enjoyed reading the *Signs of the Times* and especially this February number. By reading these good letters I find others who have traveled over the same road as I have and their experience coincides with mine. This gives me hope to see and hear others in whom I have great confidence express my feelings better than I can myself. I want to tell you again how much I appreciate the explanation you gave of Isaiah 45:7. May God bless you in the good work you are doing and give you strength and understanding to keep sending out these good soul-cheering messages. A little sister in hope.

(Mrs.) MABEL MILLER

(Continued from July issue.)

We went back to church as God granted or so willed it thus, and one day I was about my work, singing a few of the old songs and the thought came to me to sing, "How firm a foundation," and as I began to sing I felt again that feeling of being lifted up, and when I came to the lines, "Fear not I am with thee," the sweetest feeling of love came over me so much that it seemed to cover me completely. Ah, I felt I was sailing on perfect skies of love. That is the best way I know to describe that feeling. When I finished the song I felt it was not I that had sung it but I had been sung to. This feeling lasted over two weeks as I was given, I hope, to rest in the peace of his love. Then again came doubt and fear that I was not only deceived, but I was trying also to deceive God's people. I was then corresponding with Carrie Campbell and the thought came, why

don't you tell her, and I thought I would, I will not continue such deceitfulness. I wrote her of my thoughts and when I mailed that letter, short it was, the feeling came over me that everything was going to be all right. Do we not know or hope his grace is sufficient? A few days later I was at my washing machine and that feeling came over me again. I now felt to know and hope it was the presence of his love. I remember leaving my work and going into my front room and as I fell down on my face I cried, "Oh my Lord and my God, wash me and I shall be whiter than snow," and the still small voice answered me at once, "You are already washed." The sun shone so brightly and the birds sang so sweetly. Dear Elder, every time I have had that feeling it has come in the same way, unexpected and without effort on my part. I do not remember how I finished the wash that day.

If this is not an experience of grace I am the one deceived for God cannot be and is not deceived, and he knows why I was ever sent among the Old Baptist people, I do not. Thus far he has brought me as I am unable to travel alone. I need his help continually for I am dependent upon the great and independent God who needs no help, neither is he a God of want for he is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think. The world would have us believe we can of self turn about to doing good works and bring God in debt to save us, or save self, making man his own Savior thus denying Christ and eliminating mercy. I am made to believe it takes more than such to satisfy God, indeed so, for it took the altogether lovely and the chiefest among ten thousands, his dear Son, to satisfy God, and I know if he would look upon me as I stand in the flesh I could never be one of his for I am so

prone to sin, but no man is justified by the law in the sight of God it is evident for the just shall live by faith. By faith Abraham believed God and it was accounted to him for righteousness, but before faith came we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed. Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ that we might be justified by faith. I hope that is my experience. "Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." "We are saved by hope; but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for. But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it." All I feel to have is hope. "Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth." How do we believe? Jesus is as good an authority as any on that when he said, "This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent." The law is fulfilled in one word, even in this, "Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself." Love worketh no ill to his neighbor, therefore love is the fulfilling of the law. Ah, wonder of wonders that "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life," "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saves us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior." I feel to know I can claim no power to be able to save self for there is no power but of God, and the powers that be are ordained of God. Satan had to come before God before he could afflict Job which proves to me that he is subject to the power of God and can do no more than God allows. I hope I am

made to believe that God chose his people in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world and they shall be holy and without blame before God in love. We all as sinners fell in Adam, "For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous. Moreover the law entered, that the offence might abound. But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound." The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. The law binds heavy burdens, makes demands that we cannot keep, and there is no promise of life in the law only that ye shall eat of the fat of the land. Christ took on himself the likeness of sinful flesh; yet without sin, came the end of the law when he said, "It is finished;" paying the debt of his bride, caught in the law as he hung on the cross, was buried and arose the third day according to the Scriptures, and is now at the right hand of God making intercession for the saints according to the will of God.

Dear Elder and I hope a dear brother in Christ, if you will allow a sinner such as I to address you thus although I am not a member of the militant church, but I hope he has given me a hope in his mercy. If this be in accordance with the truth he is honored and I cannot even give him praise, honor and glory as it already belongs to him. Failure belongs to man. As I said before I do not know that this is an experience of grace, but one thing I do feel to know, I am a sinner and a beggar of mercy. I feel to know I could never work hard enough or long enough to merit his goodness and salvation of self for the best of man's performances are as filthy rags in the sight of God. I am made to love things I once hated and hate the things I once loved. To the natural man this is indeed a strange

way for "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." If I be one he came to this low ground of sin and sorrow to die for my sins, when I awake in his likeness I shall be satisfied, for I shall see him as he is. "For now we know in part, and we prophesy in part." "Now we see through a glass darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known." May he give us grace to hold fast to the faith once delivered unto the saints, keeping us by his power in love; we cannot keep self. Jesus said, "They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick." "I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." Precious words!

I hope I have not written contrary to doctrine, if so the error is mine, God will not be charged with folly. I fully realize how unlearned and ignorant I am, very limited also in education as you evidently see. I repeat if these poorly written lines be in accordance with truth God is honored for "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." May he give unto us grace to ever look unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith. I hope I have not wearied you with such length. It takes the arminian world but a short time to tell what they do for God, but it takes a sinner such as I a long time to tell what I hope the Lord has done for me. The half could never be told. Hope you are well and will visit us some time. Love to all that love the doctrine of salvation by grace wherever

they may be. In a precious hope of rest beyond the grave I am,

(Mrs.) LOUISE NEWMAN

EXPERIENCE AND CALL TO THE MINISTRY

Soon after I was twenty I began to be in trouble. I ceased to love the things I had so much enjoyed in the natural realm of life. I did not understand but I dared not reveal my troubles to a soul, not even my parents. I think I must have gone along in this awful travail two or three months. One Sunday after doing the morning chores I went into my room and locked the door. I knew I was going to die. The thought in my mind was that when they miss me they can break the door to find me. I must have remained in that awful state about two hours, then it seemed almost as quick as lightning the burden rolled away. I jumped up and shouted in inaudible language, walked out on the veranda and looked to the East. At that moment I heard my father's eight day clock strike nine. I must have stood there twenty or thirty minutes. I gazed at the sun and looked all around. I have never been so happy and do not expect to be until I am ushered into the full expectation at the final consummation. It was the brightest morning I have ever seen, not one small cloud. The birds were flitting in the old walnut tree; the old gray mule began braying. I thought all there and all things else were tuning a responsive chord to help me shout my Redeemer's praise. I do not have a Saul of Tarsus' call to the ministry. I have read so many miraculous experiences of a ministerial call till I have been made to doubt if I have a call. If indeed I have it was that bright Sunday morning at nine o'clock. These are the words, "Go tell the good news."

As far back as I can remember I

fancied myself a school teacher. Some of the neighbors and kinspeople would call me their school teacher; some would call me their preacher, some would call me both. I have always had the quality and ability of leadership. My father trusted me with the management of his farm early in life. He said I could lead his laborers better and get more work out of them than he could. I am proud of my home training, my parents were a fine pair. I had a good time in my young manhood days but I was high class. After that beautiful Sunday morning my life has been different. "Go tell the good news" has haunted me from then until now. I have lain on my bed late hours in the night, sometimes one, two and three o'clock preaching to an invisible audience. I have walked the roadside on the way to school, and in the schoolroom, when there was a break in routine, in fact everywhere preaching the gospel. One night on the front porch I forgot myself and was preaching aloud. My wife walked to the door and said, "Daddy, what in the world is the matter?" She thought I was sick. It was hard to turn her off for she vigorously contended something serious was the matter. Quite often when time to go to meeting was approaching I would begin preaching a day or two before meeting time. By the time I had arrived I had eaten it all up, but at other times the Lord would withhold until time to preach or about, then "it was in my mouth as honey for sweetness." Ezek. 3:3. This scripture comes to my mind just at this second, "Even so hath the Lord ordained that they which preach the gospel should live of the gospel." I Cor. 9:14. Preaching is the easiest thing in the world to do; trying to preach is the hardest. When it is real preaching (the preacher gets there) no one gets more real gospel food than the minister

himself. When I am really blessed to preach I keep living on it days, weeks and sometimes months. I told Elder H. T. Johnson once that I certainly did enjoy his sermon. He replied, "I did too." Elder J. W. McLeod was asked once whom he had rather hear preach. He replied, that he had rather hear John Wright McLeod than anybody else. I have had that burning in my bosom until I have tried to beg God to take it all away and let me be easy, but on the other hand my hope is anchored that it is Jesus. (Luke 24:32.) I have often said if I could preach to visible audiences as to invisible I would indeed be a great preacher, but I have to take it as it comes, it is all fixed. I wish I could stay at home with a satisfied mind but I cannot do it. When I get home I am crazy until I go again. (Jer. 20:9.) I love my kinspeople and I have to live with them as much as is possible.

Last night I dreamed I was traveling in quite a wilderness section of the country. In the journey I met quite a number of people, one was my father. I trust the significance of my heavenly Father. My brief stay with my father in the dream meant much to me in the journey. After much rambling in the wilderness everybody had disappeared but a very comely and plain little woman. I said to her, "let's stop, take stock and see where we are." We seemed to be lost. She said, "just over that mountain is Troy, we are close to it." I looked up the mountainside and gazed over. I could see the reflection of the lights, but could not see the lights. She said, "there is an all-day Sacred Harp singing near us and we will attend it." My dream vanished. "Who is this that cometh up from the wilderness, leaning upon her beloved?" S.S. 8:5. The brief period with this woman was sweet indeed. I trust I have had a few brief

and sweet seasons in the blessed old blood-bought church. In secular life Troy is where I spent two very happy years in normal college. My mind went to ancient Troy. Helen was the most beautiful woman in the world. To the child of grace the church is the most beautiful institution. It towers above everything, its light cannot be hid. Helen loved Paris, the shepherd boy; she eloped with him. This caused a long and bloody war between the Greeks and Trojans. The strategy of the Greeks with the wooden horse, etc., was defeat for the Trojans. Helen was rescued and carried back to her native country. Her husband forgave her. "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." Luke 23:34. It cost Jesus every drop of his blood to redeem the blessed old church. The all-day Sacred Harp singing is fleshly pleasure before we ascend the mountains into the bright and shining realm of grace, free grace. Dear child of grace, do you often get to the end of your journey in your experience? All you can do is stop and take stock. It seems impossible to go farther but Jesus returns just in time. My mind wants to go farther but I must not be lengthy. May I close with this thought, "The true worshippers shall worship the Father in spirit and in truth." John 4:23. (Elder) C. H. BYRD
Route 2, Box 89, Panama City, Fla.

Route 3, Providence, Ky.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: In the beginning who did God have to consult with before the dust of the highest hills was laid, yes, even before the powerful lightning ever chased through the deep blue sky? The same God is sitting on that same throne to-day as then. He did not need help then neither does he need it now. I think it would be a bigger task to make something out of nothing than to control it after it was made.

I wonder then if God made as great a thing as this old globe if he hung it on conditions? God forbid. Do not bring me any conditional time salvation, neither eternal salvation by conditions. Either one destroys, or in other words denies, the foreknowledge and predestination of that great, all-wise God who is sitting on that most holy and righteous throne. I am satisfied he is able to carry on the work without help from me except such as he has predestinated and predetermined that I should do. Do not understand me to say that man does not do anything for he will do everything God has predestinated he should do. The scripture says, "It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." In Daniel 12:10 it reads, "Many shall be purified, and made white, and tried; but the wicked shall do wickedly: and none of the wicked shall understand; but the wise shall understand." You will notice there are two characters spoken of in that text, one of them spoken of twice, and that little word "but" divides these characters each time. I think that little word has a great and wonderful meaning; it points out the firmness of God's solvent and unconditional predestination. One of these characters is the same as the other; one of them was no more conditional than the other; that little three letter word divides the two characters. I am glad that I believe in a God that "spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast;" also who says, "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." Why did he not say man's pleasure? Because he decreed and predestinated these things before he made them, and besides man is too

small and weak. Man is described as nothing and less than nothing and altogether vanity, but the best reason of all is that he does not need man's help. I think there is no other power in heaven, earth or the bottomless pits of hell other than that of the eternal God that is sitting on that great white throne, watching with that all-seeing eye the great eternity as it rolls along. It is wonderful to have confidence and believe in God that he is able to handle old Satan without the help of man or any other creature. When we speak of God's predestination it is unlimited, but man's is limited. "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord." That is enough to convince me that he is able to control all.

There is but one thing that bothers me and that is my case. Am I in the choice that God made? If I am, thanks be to God, there is no other power in heaven, earth nor the lower regions of hell that can destroy my soul, nor that love that God has for me. As I look back over my life, even my present life, it looks so dark to me that I am made to wonder if such a character as I could be included in that choice? Then I am made to doubt my case and get my Bible to read and see if I can get relief. Sometimes I can and at others I get so dark and gloomy I cannot read with understanding and just close the book and walk about. What bothers me badly is that I hear so many old people tell their experiences which are so sweet. Some can even tell just when the Savior made his appearance to them, even to the hour and I just sit with a little hope. That is all I can claim—my little hope—but I would not take ten thousand worlds like this for it! If I could tell a good experience like some do I feel that I would not have so many doubts.

Now back to God's predestination. I

want my children, yes even my friends to know just what I believe although it may be contrary to their belief. I am glad they all have the same right to believe as God has predestinated for them to believe. They cannot help it. The difference between us is that I am a "can't-help-it" and know it, while they are "can't-help-its" and do not know it. So you see it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps. If it is not in man's hands to direct his own steps, in whose hands is it? The Bible says it is left in God's hands, and if so do you not believe God will direct those steps to please himself, I surely do. The scripture says, "Predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will," "And none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou." Those two scriptures cover the whole predestination. I am willing to trust Him without any of my help except that which he has predestinated for me to do. I will not fail to act in accordance with his predestination but not the works of man. He says, "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling." To stop there it would sound weak, but here is where predestination comes in, "For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." That abolishes man's free ability and puts it on a sound basis. Do you not see that the predestination and foreknowledge of God is the only good, sound foundation that can be found? Man's work will not stand and the reason is that it is like man—it is too weak. "He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." God never makes a failure of anything but man does. "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" I have often thought if it was left to man what a bad delivery it

would be. I have had preachers tell me just to get on my knees and give my heart to God. I asked one preacher to tell me just what position I would have to be in to give God something that already belonged to him? I looked at him squarely and said, "Preacher, all I have is my little hope." He said, "God pity such a sinner" to which I said "thank you." He walked away as much as to say that I was bound for hell and beneath his notice. I never had a chance to talk with him again. I believe God has predestinated the evil things of this world as well as the good. You may not believe what I am writing but God knows I believe every word of it. If he did not predestinate the destiny, yes even the steps of the wicked, who did? There is no other power or powers other than that of the eternal and all-wise God to do these things. Why did he say he worked all things after the counsel of his own will and none could stay his hand? I believe he is able to handle the bitter as well as the sweet. By being able to handle the wicked things of this world he knew how and where to place his blessed children, and placed them in the hands of his Son, Jesus Christ the Savior of his people. If he has nothing to do with the wickedness of this world why did he say in I Samuel 16:16, "It shall come to pass, when the evil spirit from God is upon thee, that he shall play with his hand, and thou shalt be well." Read also the 14th and 15th verses of the same chapter, Judges 9:23 and many other scriptures pointing to the fact that ours is a sovereign God. Yours in a blessed hope of eternal life.

MANCE BROWN

2211 - 5th St., Riverside, Cal.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: Find herewith \$2 to pay my subscription for the dear old *Signs* for another year. It cheers

my lonely hours to read the good sermons and letters from the dear saints who, I am sure, have been taught of the Lord whether I have or not. I have just passed the eighty-seventh milepost in my journey through this vale of tears, feeble and crippled, confined to the house so I cannot go to church. Our church is named Friendship, having a membership of twenty-five. Our meeting place is near Fontana, Calif. Elder Leonard Moore, son of Elder J. Moore, is our pastor. We are living in sweet peace and harmony. Long may you live to keep publishing the *Signs*. I was reading it when dear old Elder Gilbert Beebe was its Editor and Publisher, and I have a book of his editorials. Most unworthily yours in the hope of a blessed rest in immortality.

J. W. HAYNES

Hopewell, Pa.

R. LESTER DODSON, DEAR BROTHER: I want to renew my subscription to the *Signs* as I am still here though for how long I do not know. If when my subscription expires you do not hear from me discontinue it. I am past eighty years of age and do not feel it will be long. With best wishes to you and yours and may the Lord bless and comfort you. May you continue to publish the *Signs* in the future as in the past. When you see Elder Vaughn remember me to him. It is twenty-two years since I saw him. He preached my brother Corder's funeral at the time.

(Mrs.) LIZZIE HIMES

BOOKS WANTED

Will any one having "Meditations" by Elder S. H. Durand they are willing to part with please communicate with the undersigned. Two copies are desired.

MRS. D. L. TOPPING,

Linthicum Heights
Baltimore, Md.

EDITORIAL

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AUGUST 1948

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Rutherford, N. J.

"But all this was done, that the scriptures of the prophets might be fulfilled."

Matt. 26:56.

In the death of Jesus there was a fulfillment of the many things the prophets had foretold, yet the actual carrying out of these things was by men who knew nothing of the purpose of God. If they had known he was the Son of God they would not have crucified him. Wicked men came together to do whatsoever God's hand and counsel afore determined. Nothing more, nothing less.

In the words of the prophets we read, a bone of him shall not be broken. Could men break his bones? certainly not. When soldiers visited the scene of the crucifixion, they no doubt purposed to break the bones of Jesus and the two thieves that were crucified with him, as the plans were to take the bodies down from the cross. The bones of the two thieves were broken, but when they came to Jesus, they said he is dead already. Not one word of prophecy could fail. How little they knew of the purpose of Almighty God.

Their bounds were set by him who is to wise to err. Not a dart of Satan can hit, but what the God of heaven sees fit. Though the bones of Jesus could not be broken, the soldiers must pierce his side, for the word had gone forth, "They shall look on him whom they have pierced." A spear pierces his side, and blood and water issue forth. Without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sin, and the blood of Jesus, the perfect offering, prepared by God for his people must be shed. God's word has gone forth, and cannot return to him void. It must accomplish the things he has purposed, and prosper in the things he pleases.

God has made of one blood all nations, and set the bounds of their habitations, and he who has so arranged these things has determined they shall reach the bounds. The apostle Peter, on the day of Pentecost, could plainly declare that Jesus was delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, taken by wicked hands, crucified and slain. Pontius Pilate and the Gentiles came together to do whatsoever God's hand and counsel afore determined. Some believe these things were by the permissive decree of God; others do not accept the doctrine of permissive decree, but rather believe the carrying out of these things was the direct decree of Almighty God. However we may look at the matter, we must admit that every circumstance connected with the death of the Lord was controlled by God himself. Both men and devils took their place in these things.

The parting of his garments was another fulfillment of scripture. They parted his garments among them, and for his vesture they did cast lots. These prophecies were actually carried out by men who knew nothing about what had been foretold. In carrying out these

things they were only doing the things they were instructed to do by those in authority over them. God's control is so universal over the world and all things therein, that not a sparrow falls to the ground without him; even the hairs of our head are all numbered.

The rulers of the day thought that all these things were in their hands. We read of one telling Jesus he had power to crucify him or to release him. The answer of the Lord was, "Thou couldest have no power at all against me, except it were given thee from above." At the last supper Jesus said, "He that dippeth his hand with me in the dish, the same shall betray me." It must be Judas that reaches forth his hand. The word has gone out. He is a devil, has been chosen for this very purpose. He is lost that the Scriptures might be fulfilled.

Ah, my brethren does not all this close our mouth, when we would arraign God in a court of carnal reasoning? The wrath of man shall praise God, and the remainder shall he restrain. The remainder of anything is what is left. What does not work for the good of his people, and his own glory he restrains. The wicked are made for the day of evil. Though the wicked are living out the designs of their own heart, their sins fall upon their own head as accountable creatures under a holy law, they are fulfilling the purpose of an all wise God, who works all things after the counsel of his own will; working all things together for good to them that love him, and are the called according to his purpose.

Let us now pass on to the disciples of Jesus. Before his suffering Jesus told Peter, "Before the cock crow twice, thou shalt deny me thrice." This man did not believe he would do such a thing. He said, "If I should die with thee, I will not deny thee in any wise.

Likewise also said they all." What says the Word? "Smite the shepherd, and the sheep shall be scattered: and I will turn mine hand upon the little ones." Could the word of Jesus fail? "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away" until all is fulfilled. The apostle follows Jesus into the judgment hall. Here he warms himself by the fire, and when questioned about being one of Jesus' disciples, denies that he knows him. Can he stop there and only deny him once? No, if so the word of the Master would fail. He must be questioned by some one again, and that one was there to repeat the question. The denial cannot fall short of the number of times Jesus said it would be.

What is the difference between the wicked men who took part in these things and his own followers. Notice and see. The poor fellow, namely, Peter who thought he would not deny his Lord begins to weep bitterly when he remembers the word of the Lord. Jesus looks at him. That is the evidence he has grace. It is still the mark of grace when one weeps over sin. He did not lay his sin to God. He does not excuse himself in any way. Those who are taught in the school of grace do not try to hide behind predestination as a cloak for sin. Not one time in his ministry did he refer to this experience in a way that would charge God with sin. He could now say to the brethren, you are kept by the power of God. God's people hate sin; they hate their own life; pant for God as the hart panteth after the water-brook, and are continually made to say, God be merciful to me, a poor sinner. They eat the paschal lamb with bitter herbs. After Jacob had been led in mysterious ways for a long time, often feeling that all things were against him, as he saw the goodness of the Lord, he could witness with the

word that says, "the Lord alone did lead him."

These things do not conflict with the doctrine of exhortation, reproof, rebuke, etc., but rather confirms it. These things preached from the heart, fired with holy zeal are profitable to the church, but if any of us decide to preach these things only from the zeal of the head they fall on deaf ears. The letter kills but the spirit gives life.

There have been with us through the ages the limited predestinarians and unlimited predestinarians. I see no reason why they should not live together in peace. I have known lovely brethren who did not believe these things to the extent others did, yet they believed that all their salvation was of grace. May we all remember the language of James, "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." The doctrine of predestination of all things is the doctrine of the Old School Baptist church; let no man deny this. It is a great mystery, and how careful we should all be in proclaiming these things to rightly divide the word of truth for God's attitude toward righteousness and unrighteousness is not the same. In all of it we would say:

"In thy fair book of life and grace,
O may I find my name
Recorded in some humble place,
Beneath my Lord the Lamb!"

Submitted I trust in love and the desire for the welfare of our beloved Zion.

D. V. S.

Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. John 3:5.

Brother Hubert T. Faulk of El Paso, Texas, in asking for our views on the significance of the word *water* in Christ's

statement to Nicodemus, also says, "This, as you know, is the basis for the argument put forth by some that baptism is essential to salvation, and without baptism there is no way to enter the kingdom of God or to come into possession of eternal life." We are aware of the contention made by a great many that water baptism is absolutely necessary in order for one to enter the climes of eternal glory when they pass from this world. We do not, however, believe that the record of divine truth as set forth in Holy Writ will sustain such an idea. It has been thought by some that this verse was largely the basis for the institution of infant baptism, now so common among Protestants and Roman Catholics alike, who have their babies christened. They appear to think that once this is done their offspring is heavenward bound and that they are secure for eternal glory. There is another group who are very outspoken in their claim for the necessity of water baptism as a passport to eternal glory for both young and old. We have no where found the Scriptures saying that water baptism is essential to eternal salvation. Peter spoke of it as being "the answer of a good conscience toward God," but he also said it does not put away the filth of the flesh. Paul declared that "without shedding of blood is no remission" of sin, and the blood to which he referred was none other than the precious blood of the blessed Lamb of God. Not long ago we were appealed to by a sister for an explanation of Mark 16:16, which was being stressed by a certain group in proof of the fact that her mother, who had not been baptized and had passed away, was lost and condemned forever. This verse reads as follows: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned." We pointed

out the fact that there was no justification for claiming that this Scripture supported any such contention as that water baptism is necessary for eternal salvation, for it does not say that he that is not baptized shall be damned, but it does say that "he that *believeth not* shall be damned." One must needs believe that Jesus is the Christ before he is eligible for water baptism. When Peter confessed that Jesus was the Christ he was told by the Master that flesh and blood had not revealed it unto him, but the Father which is in heaven. The Scriptures plainly declare that it is the work of God that we believe on Him whom he hath sent, and that no man can say in reality that Jesus is the Christ, but by the Holy Ghost. When the Ethiopian Eunuch said to Philip, "See, here is water: what doth hinder me to be baptized?" Philip answered readily by saying, "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 is the true test, and without it water baptism amounts to nothing and should not be administered. Unless one has first been baptized "with the Holy Ghost, and with fire" he is not a fit subject for water baptism by one of God's called and qualified servants.

One of the primary purposes for which Jesus came into the world to suffer, bleed and die, and rise again, was to establish his kingdom here in the world. It has been prophesied that "a king shall reign in righteousness, and princes shall rule in judgment. And a man shall be as an hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land." Isa. 32:1-2. All of the prophets spoke in their own way of the coming of the Messiah. Daniel said, "And in the days of these kings shall

the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand for ever." Dan. 2:44. He also declared, "And at that time shall Michael stand up, the great prince which standeth for the children of thy people: and there shall be a time of trouble, such as never was since there was a nation even to that same time: and at that time thy people shall be delivered, every one that shall be found written in the book." Isaiah prophesied, saying, "Unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this." The truth of the fulfillment of these prophesies was sealed by the apostle Paul in his epistle to the Ephesians when he wrote: "Wherefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus, and love unto all the saints, Cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers; That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him: The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the

dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be head over all things to the church, Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all." Eph. 1:15-23. In the twelfth chapter of Revelation we have the record of the battle that "Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought and his angels.*****And the great red dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him," and the gospel church sang all hell's defeat, for John said, "I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength, and the kingdom of our God, and the power of his Christ: for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night."

Jesus told his disciples that his kingdom was not of this world, and when he had finished the work which the Father gave him to do, he said, "I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were, and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word.*****I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine."

Nicodemus was a very unusual man, naturally, being a Pharisee, or student of the law (the Scriptures), and also a ruler of the Jews, but he had to be taught that none of his earthly attainments availed him anything in the sight of God. It is quite evident that he had some knowledge of Jesus, for he came to him by night, and said unto him,

"Rabbi, we know that thou art a teacher come from God: for no man can do these miracles that thou doest, except God be with him." In order to make certain that such knowledge could not be attributed to any earthly source, Jesus said unto him, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Jesus was here emphasizing the necessity of the *new birth*, without which no man can see the kingdom of God. If we have been blessed to look upon the solemnities of Mount Zion, and have seen that she is "beautiful for situation" and the joy of the whole earth, it is because we have been born of an incorruptible seed, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever. Jesus is further stressing the point of regeneration, or the new birth, in our text, in answering Nicodemus' question, "How can a man be born when he is old?" He said, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." While it is perfectly true that only through the ordinance of water baptism can one enter into the fellowship of the militant church, which is to follow the example set by Jesus, undoubtedly our text has more spiritual significance than that, and we shall endeavor to bring forth from the storehouse of inspired truth some instances where water has more than a literal meaning. When the Lord spake by the mouth of Isaiah, saying "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," he was not referring to those who were thirsting after natural water. When the Psalmist said, "There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the most

High," he was talking about the river of the water of life which proceeds from beneath the throne of God and the Lamb. In conversing with the Samaritan woman at Jacob's well, Jesus said to her, "If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink; thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water." He later told her, concerning the water in Jacob's well, that "Whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again: But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life." The woman perceiving the great significance of this water, said, "Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw." When "one of the soldiers with a spear pierced his side, and forthwith came there out blood and water," the fountain for sin and uncleanness was opened to the spiritual house of David, and in this fountain they are washed and made clean and presented to God the Father by his Son without spot, wrinkle or any such thing. Is it any wonder, then, that those who feel the efficacy of its cleansing power like to sing,

"There is a fountain fill'd with blood,
Drawn from Immanuel's veins;
And sinners plunged beneath that flood,
Lose all their guilty stains.

The dying thief rejoiced to see
That fountain in his day;
O may I there, though vile as he,
Wash all my sins away.

Dear, dying Lamb! thy precious blood
Shall never lose its power,
Till all the ransomed church of God
Be saved to sin no more."

In the days of old God manifested his power and love for Israel when he spake to Moses, saying, "Take the rod,

and gather thou the assembly together, thou, and Aaron thy brother, and speak ye unto the rock before their eyes; and it shall give forth his water, and thou shalt bring forth to them water out of the rock: so thou shalt give the congregation and their beasts drink. And Moses took the rod from before the Lord, as he commanded him. And Moses and Aaron gathered the congregation together before the rock, and he said unto them, Hear now, ye rebels; must we fetch you water out of this rock? And Moses lifted up his hand, and with his rod he smote the rock twice: and the water came out abundantly, and the congregation drank, and their beasts also." National Israel was a type of Spiritual Israel, and we believe what the Lord did for them portrayed but dimly the significance of what was accomplished for those whom he chose in Christ before the world was, when the sword (wicked) smote his darling Son, the true Shepherd of the sheep. The water which came forth from the rock when it was smitten by God's rod in the hand of Moses, could only set forth in part the water of life which came forth from our Lord's riven side. The members of his mystical body, by faith, look unto the Rock from whence they were hewn, and to the hole of the pit from whence they were digged, and they rejoice exceedingly, not only because it assuages their spiritual thirst, but it cleanses them from all of their iniquities and they appear whiter than snow before God in love.

While we do not believe in spiritualizing away the literal meaning of the types and shadows of the Old Scriptures, at the same time we do not like to literalize too much the precious things of the New Testament. What follows in our text shows, we believe, that the *water* in our text is inseparably bound to the *Spirit*, and that without

their spiritual application no one will ever be able to enter the kingdom of God. This thought is further borne out by what Jesus said to Nicodemus in this immediate connection: "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." There can be no partnership business in this matter of salvation. It is all of the Lord, from first to last, and it shall all redound to the honor of God and to the praise of his glorious grace. We hope what has been said will be helpful to our inquiring brother.

R. L. D.

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

Whereas, MRS. ADA PATTERSON EVERETT, wife of Elder J. T. Everett, passed from this life March 4, 1948. She bore every evidence that she was a child of God. She was a faithful wife and loving mother. The church at Antioch feels that we have lost a faithful friend. It was her many sacrifices that made it possible for Brother Everett to serve his churches, therefore be it

Resolved, that the church express sincere sympathy to Brother Everett and his children. We know the sorrow is great and hard to bear but let us not sorrow as those that have no hope. She is only asleep there to wait the glories that will be hers in the resurrection. Also may we express our thanks to God for the privilege of association with her these many years, and that he will be with us all world without end, be it further

Resolved, that a copy of this resolution be recorded in our records and a copy be sent to Brother Everett and each of his children. Also a copy be sent to the **Signs of the Times** and **Old Faith Contender** which papers she enjoyed reading very much.

J. M. PROFFITT,

Clerk of Antioch Church

Whereas, on the night of March 7, 1948 God called our dear brother, ROBERT S. WILLIAMS, from his home on earth to a place prepared for him eternal in the heavens. We believe it was a happy exchange for him. He had been blessed with good health until a short time before his death. He was born Feb., 1875, making his mortal life on earth 73 years. He united with the Primitive Church at Malmaison in 1911, and served the church as clerk for many years. He was a devoted

husband and father, and a good neighbor. He was devoted to his church and loved the doctrine of salvation by grace. He will be missed by his church, family and community. We extend our heart felt sympathy to his family and sorrowing friends, be it

Resolved, that we bow in humble submission to the will of an all wise God who doeth all things well, be it further

Resolved, that copy of these resolutions be entered on our church book, a copy sent to the family, and copies be sent to the **Signs of the Times** and **Old Faith Contender**. Done by order of the church in conference fourth Saturday in March 1948.

(Elder) D. V. SPANGLER, Moderator

A. F. COX, Clerk

In loving memory of our dear Sister, JOSEPHINE POWELL, who died Feb. 20, 1948, and was laid to rest at Kermet, Texas. She was born Nov. 16, 1896. Sister Powell, daughter of J. A. and S. B. Faught, was married to Dave Powell, July 14, 1915, who with one son and three daughters survive her. She will be sadly missed by her family, friends and the church. Little Flock Church extends deepest sympathy to her parents, husband and children.

Resolved, that copy of these resolutions be sent to the husband, a copy made a part of our church record, and a copy sent to the **Signs of the Times** for publication.

Done by order of the church while in conference March 31, 1948 at Altus, Oklahoma.

(Elder) W. N. Green, Mod.

(Mrs.) LOU KESTER, Clerk

OBITUARIES

ELDER THOMAS WEBB WALKER was born in Caswell Co., N. C., Aug. 20, 1874, and departed this life March 26, 1948; making his stay on earth 73 years, 7 months and 6 days. He was the son of James and Martha Walker. He was first married to Miss Nannie Walker in 1897. To this union was born only one child, Mrs. W. H. Willis, Gibsonville, N. C. Mrs. Walker passed away Nov. 10, 1899, and in 1906 he married again. His second wife was Miss Ethel Turner. To this union nine children were born, eight of them surviving: Mrs. Thelma Hundley, Mrs. Rosa Moore, Mrs. Mary Cousins, Mrs. Evelyn Marlow, Woodrow W. and Horace Walker all of Danville, Va., Sterling T. Walker, Clifton Forge, Va. and Hassell G. Walker, New York City.

Having received a precious hope in Jesus, Elder Walker was received into the fellowship of Pleasant Grove Primitive Baptist Church in Caswell Co., Sept. 19, 1896 and was baptized the following day by Elder J. A. Burch. He later moved

his membership to Wolf Island Church and on Sept. 10, 1905 he was ordained to the full work of the ministry by a presbytery composed of Elders P. D. Gold, F. L. Oakley and P. W. Williard.

Elder Walker possessed little of this world's goods, but he was rich in faith, and his heart's desire was in keeping with the language of Solomon, "with all thy getting get understanding." Prov. 4:7. He fully measured up to the qualifications as recorded by the apostle Paul in the third chapter of first Timothy, vigilant, sober, given to hospitality, apt to teach, not a brawler, not covetous, not given to wine, no striker, not greedy of filthy lucre, patient, having a good report of them which are without; following the injunction of his blessed Master in which he said, "Carry neither purse nor scrip," and I am sure he could say in the language of the servants of old, that on his return he lacked nothing. The greater part of his service was among the churches in Virginia and North Carolina. However, he frequently made visits among the northern Baptists, and I have heard many reports of how the good Lord blessed his labors of love to the comfort of their souls. His unassuming manner, meek and humble spirit, was convincing evidence that he had been crucified with Christ.

Elder Walker spent the last seven years of his life on earth with his daughter, Mrs. W. H. Willis, Gibsonville, N. C., and her tenderness, love and devotion, together with that of her husband and children towards him, cannot be estimated in dollars and cents for the writer has personal knowledge of their enduring efforts to make life a comfort for him, which was indeed a great blessing from God. Many servants of God were present at his funeral and spoke comfortingly to the bereaved family in the presence of a large audience of brethren, sisters and friends who came to pay their tribute of love for him. His body was placed in the City Cemetery beneath a mound of flowers to await the final coming of our Lord and Master, Jesus Christ, "Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself." Phil. 3:21. Written by request of Mebane Church where his membership has been for several years. Humbly submitted.

(Elder) T. F. ADAMS

It is with sadness I record the passing of our dear brother, WILLIAM H. MORRIS of 7241 Jefferson St., Kansas City, Mo. whose decease came Feb. 17, 1948. He was born in the state of Ohio in 1872, thus at the time of his death was in his 77th year. He was a Railway Mail Clerk, retired at the expiration of 30 years of service. In 1904 he entered the Postal Branch of the govern-

ment service and was employed at Iola, Kansas for two years and transferred to the Railway Mail Service in 1906. He then moved to Kansas City where he continued to live until removed by death. April 26, 1891 he was married to Malinda Belle Simpkins who departed this life July 30, 1908. To this union was born one daughter, Bertha Morris. March 29, 1911 he was united in marriage to Abbie B. Freeman Byars. To them no children were born. Those surviving are his widow of the home address, his daughter and one step-son both of Kansas City, one brother of Topeka and one sister in California.

Brother Morris united with Mt. Lebanon Church of Regular Predestinarian Baptists in Kansas City, Mo. He later moved his membership to Little Flock Church near Pleasant Hill, Mo. Elder Hall served them faithfully as pastor for many years. Brother Morris served as clerk of the original Mt. Zion Association for a number of years until they ceased to meet as an Association two or three years ago. He was not a preacher and yet he was a preacher, but he resented being spoken of as such. He possessed the rare gift of going ahead in the absence of a pastor and was a wonderful help at all times. The church had considered setting him at liberty to exercise his gift among the brethren which I have no doubt they would have done at their next meeting had he survived until that time. He was a man dearly beloved by his brethren, and the church has been comforted by his labors in both a spiritual and material way. It has not been my privilege to know a more God-fearing man or one more zealous and faithful to the cause of Christ. He will be greatly missed, not only by his sorrowing widow but by his sorrowing brethren and by the writer whose privilege it was to partake of his generous hospitality many times. Often-times he has met me at the station and conveyed me to his pleasant home, where I would spend the night and we would journey together to the place of meeting near Pleasant Hill, Mo. I think I can say that next to his family no one will miss him more than I. His labors of love came to an abrupt end, his work is finished, he has fought a good fight, finished his course and kept the faith. There is now laid up for him a crown of righteousness which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give him at that day, and not to him only but to all them also who love his appearing. **Righteous Judge**, he makes no mistakes. Although it may please him to lay his hand heavily upon us at times, we shall not reply against him for he is righteous.

December 22nd the writer entered the hospital in Kansas City, Kans. Brother Morris visited me three or four times while I was there. His last visit was on Sunday before I was released the following Friday. He looked strong and vigorous

but that Sunday night he was stricken with pneumonia. When released from the hospital the following Friday I retired to the home of my daughter in Kansas City, Mo. to recuperate. Saturday morning some of the brethren, including Mrs. Morris, waited on me to bear the sad intelligence that Brother Morris had passed away the preceding night. It was hard for me to rally from the shock this gave me. It seemed to be the common wish of all that I should speak on the occasion of his funeral if indeed I felt able to speak. The funeral being set for the following Monday I told them I would try. Though only three days out of the hospital it pleased the Lord to strengthen me. I spoke to a large concourse of people assembled at the funeral home to pay their last respects to this blessed brother, neighbor and friend.

While I was lying prostrate upon my hospital bed I thought that if per-chance I might be on my way out I should like Brother Morris to conduct my last sad rites. But alas, it pleased the Lord to strike him down and raise me up for what purpose I know not.

As touching Brother Morris' Christian experience there is not one thing we can call in question, but he has ceased from his labors and his works do follow him, I pray that God may comfort his bereaved family and reconcile us all to this sad dispensation of his providence. In the language of one of old I would say, "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his!"

(Elder) L. L. SCHENCK

SPECIAL MEETINGS

Bethel Old School Baptist Church of Riffe, Wash. will, the Lord willing, hold her annual three days meeting, beginning Aug. 13, 1948 and continue the two following days.

(Elder) I. F. COLEMAN, Pastor
(Mrs.) ROSA COLEMAN, Clerk
Riffe, Wash.

The regular all-day annual meeting will be held at Slate Hill, N. Y., Friday, August 20th, 1948, where we shall be glad to welcome all who are interested.

R. LESTER DODSON

The Predestinarian Baptist Churches of Eastern Wash., Eastern Oregon and Idaho will hold their three days union meeting with Mizpah Church in Touchet, Wash., beginning on Friday before the second Sunday in Sept. 1948.

Touchet, Wash. ELLEN COLWELL, Church Clerk

The Maine Old School Baptist Association will

be held with the Whitefield Church at Whitefield, Me., Sept. 10, 11 and 12, 1948 the Lord willing. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us.

S. S. BARTLETT, Clerk

The Lexington-Roxbury Association will meet with the Olive and Hurley Church, Shokan, N. Y. Wednesday and Thursday, Sept. 15 and 16, 1948. Ministers and brethren of our faith and order are cordially invited to be with us, and all friends of our faith will be welcomed. Services will begin at 10:30 DST Wednesday morning Those coming Tuesday evening will stop at Brookside Lodge in Ashokan, conducted by Mrs. Hazel Byrnes unless otherwise provided for. Brookside Lodge is the second house to the left on the side road that meets the main road by the Ashokan store. Ashokan is on the Catskill Mountain Branch of the N. Y. C. R. R. The Margaretville-Kingston buses stop in Ashokan. Those coming Wednesday morning will go direct to the meeting-house.

(Elder) ARNOLD H. BELLOWS, Moderator

The Virginia Corresponding Meeting is appointed to be held with the Frying Pan Church Wednesday, Thursday and Friday October 12th, 13th and 14th, 1948. All ministers and brethren of our correspondence, and others of our faith and order, and lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us. Those coming Tuesday in own conveyance will come to Herndon, Va. and inquire for brother Walter Norman who will direct them to homes to be cared for. Those coming by train will come to Herndon which is reached by the W. & O. D. R. R. from Rosslyn, Va. Trains leave Rosslyn at 1:55 p.m. and 6:05 p.m. The station at Rosslyn is at the Virginia end of the Key Bridge across the Potomac from Washington. Those coming into Washington by rail or bus will take electric car from Union Station or from the Bus Station at 12th & N. Y. Ave. marked "Rosslyn." There are no bus lines running to or through Herndon. For any further information, communicate with the undersigned.

G. C. SPINDLE, Clerk
914 Ninth St., N. E.,
Washington, D. C.

AID FOR SENDING "SIGNS" TO INDIGENTS

Mrs. J. C. Florence, Ga., \$1; Mrs. M. C. De Wolfe, Ga., \$1; D. O. Sloan, W. Va., \$1; Mrs. J. B. Hill, N. J., \$3; J. A. Perdue, Va., \$1; J. A. Owen, Ala., \$3; Mrs. W. A. Horton, N. Y., \$10; J. F. Simpson, Ill., \$1; S. D. Murphy, Fla., \$1; Mrs. S. L. Hutchens, N. Y., \$25.

IMPORTANT NOTICE

We understand The Delaware Old School Baptist Association will not be held in Philadelphia as per notice in July SIGNS. Please disregard that announcement.—EDITOR.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON'

VOL. 116

RUTHERFORD, N. J., SEPTEMBER, 1948

No. 9

"O may I live the proof to see
The saints in full prosperity;
To see that bright, that glittering bride
Close seated by her Savior's side.

O may I find some humble seat,
Beneath my dear Redeemer's feet;
A servant as before I've been
And sing salvation to my King.

Farewell vain world, I'm going home,
My Savior smiles and bids me come;
Sweet angels will convey my soul
Away to the New Jerusalem.

I soon shall pass the vale of death,
And in His arms I lose my breath;
And then my happy soul shall tell
My Jesus hath done all things well.

I soon shall hear the awful sound
Awake ye nations underground!
Arise and drop your dying shroud!
And meet king Jesus in the cloud."

AUTHOR UNKNOWN

Submitted by
Mrs. Addie Chandler, Sulphur, Ky.

CORRESPONDENCE

Denton, Ky.

R. LESTER DODSON, DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST: I am impressed to write some of my thoughts on the narrative of David and will use as a beginning the scripture found in I Samuel 17:29. "And David said, What have I now done? Is there not a cause?" I do not know that I shall be able to write anything that will be of interest to any one, in fact I feel at this time that I will not. The good Lord knows I feel to be a very weak and unprofitable servant, and I cannot be sure that I have ever been given any spiritual

revelation of God's truth, while sometimes I seem to be given strength to hope that I have. I am so stammering in speech that I know not how to collect words to explain what I hope I do understand about God's blessed truth, but I just possess what ability it has pleased the Lord to give me, and I cannot obtain more as far as years are concerned. I am a man of mature age but as far as knowledge and ability are concerned I feel to be but a child and down at the feet of my brethren. No doubt I will make incorrect statements and possibly statements that will not be in accordance with truth but I hope if I do you will be kind enough to correct them, that is if you publish this article.

"What have I now done? Is there not a cause?" Yes there must be a cause for everything that transpires, and everything that comes to pass is linked up either in first or secondary causes, and it seems that so many of the Lord's people cannot, or are not blessed to see farther back than the secondary cause. The chain of Providence is like a great piece of machinery which is connected with cogwheels and belts so that it all works in perfect co-ordination. The inventor or designer of the machinery first planned and drew a blueprint of it, predestinated or decreed just how every portion of it would work so there would be no conflict in the movement of the whole machinery he designed, just what every part should play and

the moment that it should move. Every pulley or wheel is connected by a belt or cogwheel to another wheel which causes it to move, when the preceding wheel moves which is the secondary cause of its moving and so on through the whole machinery, all being moved by secondary causes as designed, but the first cause of the whole movement is the big engine which may be out of sight behind closed doors or in the basement. When the big engine starts its motion the portion of the machinery which is first attached to the engine starts first and it starts the next wheel attached to it and on throughout the whole machinery, all being moved by secondary causes except the first part which is attached to the engine, and the designer knows that every portion of the machinery will have to start when the engine starts as designed or decreed, unless something breaks or throws a belt; but God's work is perfect, it does not throw any belts so the material goes in this machinery a raw product and comes out a finished product. God has designed that his people go through the furnace of affliction here in this world that they be made fit subjects and meet for the Father's use.

We will go back to our subject, "What have I now done? Is there not a cause?" I do not think that David was motivated by a secondary cause. God put it in his heart by his Spirit to fight and conquer this giant Philistine, who is said to have been a great giant. The Scriptures say he was six cubits and a span. I do not know just what a cubit is according to our measurements. Some writers think it is the distance from the point of the elbow to the end of the middle finger which would be about eighteen inches, other writers think he was a little more than eleven feet tall. A great giant according to nature. His

name was Goliath, "And he had an helmet of brass upon his head, and he was armed with a coat of mail; and the weight of the coat was five thousand shekels of brass. And he had greaves of brass upon his legs, and a target of brass between his shoulders. And the staff of his spear was like a weaver's beam; and his spear's head weighed six hundred shekels of iron: and one bearing a shield went before him. And he stood and cried unto the armies of Israel, and said unto them, Why are ye come out to set your battles in array? am not I a Philistine, and ye servants to Saul? choose you a man for you, and let him come down to me. If he be able to fight with me, and to kill me, then will we be your servants: but if I prevail against him, and kill him, then shall ye be our servants, and serve us. And the Philistine said, I defy the armies of Israel this day: give me a man, that we may fight together." I Samuel 17:5-10. "And the Philistine drew near morning and evening, and presented himself forty days. And Jesse said unto David his son, Take now for thy brethren an ephah of this parched corn, and these ten loaves, and run to the camp of thy brethren." I Samuel 17:16-17.

Before we go any farther with this narrative I want to state that I believe it is figurative of something spiritual, and that David represented our spiritual David, Christ. David is said, in the holy scriptures, to be a man after God's own heart which is not said of any other man. Is not Christ our spiritual David after God's own heart? Is he not God manifest in the flesh? "And Jesse said unto David his son, Take now for thy brethren an ephah of this parched corn, and these ten loaves, and run to the camp of thy brethren." Did not God send his Son down to his brethren with the bread of life? "And

David left his carriage in the hands of the keeper of the carriage, and ran into the army, and came and saluted his brethren, And as he talked with them, behold, there came up the champion, the Philistine of Gath, Goliath by name, out of the armies of the Philistines, and spake according to the same words: and David heard them. And all the men of Israel, when he saw the man fled from him, and were sore afraid." I Samuel 17:22-24. Were we not sore afraid when this great champion, Satan, appeared, and did we not feel that we were not able to fight and conquer him, and felt in our experience that we were overcome by him and gone forever? But then did not our brother come to see about us and said, "Who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should defy the armies of the living God?" and said I will fight him. "And the men of Israel said, Have ye seen this man that has come up? surely to defy Israel is he come up: and it shall be, that the man who killeth him, the king will enrich him with great riches, and will give him his daughter, and make his father's house free in Israel." I Samuel 17:25. Notice what the king is going to do for the man that conquers this champion. Did not God enrich his Son with all riches? "And all mine are thine and thine are mine, and I am glorified in them." And did he not enrich him with all power, and did he not give him his daughter to wife, and set his house free in Israel? Did not our spiritual David redeem us and set us free? Did he not take away the reproach from Israel, "And David said, What have I now done? Is there not a cause?" Yes David, there is a cause.

"And Saul said to David, Thou art not able to go against this Philistine to fight with him: for thou art but a youth, and he a man of war from his youth. And David said unto Saul, Thy

servant kept his father's sheep, and there came a lion, and a bear, and took a lamb out of the flock: And I went out after him, and smote him, and delivered it out of his mouth: and when he arose against me, I caught him by his beard, and smote him, and slew him. Thy servant slew both the lion and the bear: and this uncircumcised Philistine shall be as one of them, seeing he hath defied the armies of the living God." I Samuel 17:33-36. The lion and the bear represent strength and power. Does not our spiritual David deliver his little lambs who are caught by the power of Satan? Did he not go after the one that was gone astray, and lay it on his own shoulder, and bring it safely back to the fold? "And he took his staff in his hand, and chose him five smooth stones out of the brook, and put them in a shepherd's bag which he had." The five smooth stones represent to my mind the five principles of doctrine—*foreordination, predestination, election, justification and glorification* which embraces all of the doctrine of God our Savior. The brook is that broken river that proceeds from the throne of God, but it just took one stone to bring down this great warrior, the first one, foreordination, being foreordered by Almighty God. David stood on him and with his (Goliath's) own sword cut off his head. Did not our spiritual David put all enemies under his feet and stand on them? The apostle Paul speaks of this five point doctrine in this way in Rom. 8:29-30. "For whom He did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified." This in a chain of five links. The first

one was in eternity before time, the last one in eternity after time. This giant in tempting Israel said, if you will furnish a man to come down and fight with me, and if he kill me, we will be your servants, so he was killed by his own proposition, his head cut off with his own sword. So the Philistines lost their captain, their head, and are serving God and Israel. Yes, and that according to their own choice; but do not understand me to say that they are worshipping God in spirit and in truth. No, they are serving God in that they are fulfilling God's decree and serving in the purpose that they were made for. God also uses them for his sword to chastise his people, and to teach them obedience by the things they shall suffer by the hand of their enemies, and in this respect they are serving Israel and that by their own choice so that God is not the direct author of their evil deeds; neither does he, by his holy spirit, influence them to do evil but they are moved as they are geared in the machinery or linked in the chain of Providence, and are moved by causes and effects. Every cause has an effect and every effect makes another cause and that causes another effect and so on and on from the beginning to the end. Their will is also decreed that it runs in perfect accord with God's purpose so that they do what they do according to his own choice.

I have learned more about God and his goodness when I have been led by the carnal mind into things that were wrong and suffered his scourging and chastising rod than I have in righteous living, for God has designed that his people learn obedience by the things which they suffer. If the conditional time salvation doctrine be true, and some of our brethren seem to believe it is, then it might be possible that some escape the chastising rod by voluntary

obedience, but if so they could not be the children of God, "For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth." "But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons." But our brethren, or the children of God who believe in voluntary obedience, fall into these evils as well as we who believe in the sovereignty of God over all things, and they must suffer the same chastisements for them, but we are drifting from our subject and possibly making our letter too long. It seems difficult to find a stopping place.

"What have I now done? Is there not a cause?" As this great Goliath tempted Israel for forty days, so did the spiritual Goliath tempt our spiritual David forty days. "Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me. Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan;" and he (Satan) then left Christ to tempt him no more. So we, like the children of Israel, feared and thought that we were overcome by him and would hunt the dark places and flee into the mountains and plead with God to save us. In our agony of soul and distress our spiritual David came to us and said, fear not little one I have conquered your enemy, I have saved you from your lost and undone condition. Then was not your soul knit with the soul of your spiritual David, and did you not love him as your own soul as Jonathan did David? I believe Jonathan represents the Spirit as he loved David and clung to him, and remember that Jonathan was the son of the king. So when you were delivered you thought your troubles were gone forever, but when, "the women an-

swered one another as they played, and said, Saul hath slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands," Saul became jealous of David and sought to destroy him and Jonathan, and it came to pass on the morrow that the evil spirit from God came upon Saul. Dear readers, in this narrative I think Saul represents the flesh. Did you ever feel that the evil spirit had come upon you in your travels? I think I have experienced that. There was a continual warfare between Saul and David and Jonathan. Do you not, dear reader, experience this continual warfare between the spirit and the flesh?

Brother Dodson, I do not know whether I have written in accordance with truth or not, I have just followed my mind and feeling. Use your judgment about publishing it. I know not whether the Lord has given me an understanding of his truth, I sometimes fear he has not. I have passed over several things I would like to have taken up in this article but time and space would not permit. Your unworthy brother in Christ. H. L. ROGERS

McDonough, Ga.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: I am sending for publication a letter from Elder George Ruston that I enjoyed so much I would like others to read it. I enjoy the *Signs* and I presume there are others that cannot go to their places of worship who get consolation through the good articles contained therein. May it please God to spare you many years hence for the comfort and edification of his little children. Yours in hope. (Mrs.) HENRY ROWAN

Dutton, Ontario, Canada

DEAR SISTER ROWAN: Your card mailed Feb. 19 came to hand and we were very sorry to hear of Elder Hewett's death. We had heard that he had a bad

stroke; he will be greatly missed by those who loved him amongst whom he labored in the gospel. It is sad to hear of so many of our ministers being sick. I hope Elder Nash is better and able to fill his appointments.

The prophet says, "The righteous perisheth, and no man layeth it to heart: and merciful men are taken away, none considering that the righteous is taken away from the evil to come." When we think of men like Elder Hewett let us consider that they are taken from the evil to come. To be forever with the Lord is far better than to remain here, especially when age and weakness comes upon us. As I lay awake last night I thought of the Covenant of Grace and then later of the Testament. The words seemed beautiful and they opened up to me this way: In a covenant there must be at least two people who shall be alive and able to perform the things upon which they engage. So in the "covenant ordered in all things and sure" the Father loved a people, the Son engaged to redeem them and the Spirit seals them. All the blessings poor sinners have here and hereafter come through their covenant head, Jesus Christ. The counsel of peace is between God and man in the person Jesus Christ our Lord. Thus through Jesus Christ, God the Father is the God of peace. (I Thess. 5:23; Heb. 13:20). And we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ by whom we have access unto this grace (the Covenant of Grace) wherein we stand and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

A Testament is a will which can only be enforced after the death of the testator. Thus these covenant blessings we enjoy come to us because Jesus, the testator, has died. Nothing in that covenant comes as a condition, depending upon us, the recipients. Such were

the glorious characters that covenanted together, there was nothing left to chance. It was ordered in *all things* and sure. Jesus, our covenant head, was so mighty that he vanquished death in dying. He is the mighty God and a mighty Savior, saving unto the uttermost all that come unto God by him. Thus because he paid the price and sealed the covenant with his blood, we are sealed by the Holy Ghost to receive every covenant mercy, and every covenant reproof and rebuke necessary. In this covenant of grace the hour is coming and now is when the dead (in trespasses and sin) shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live. For as the Father hath life in himself so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself, and hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of man. He not only sealed the covenant with his blood, but being a perfect Redeemer death could not hold him. He arose from the dead for our justification. This justification is a part of the testament, or will, and is enjoyed by the believer by faith, which is the fruit of the Spirit which takes up its abode in the believer. So Paul says, "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." Rom. 5:1.

Well dear sister, you may be away from your brethren and twenty miles from your church, but if you be a recipient of the blessings of that *covenant* and *testament*, which I believe you are, you will find it is well with you while life endures and it will be well with you when you are called to die. I do not get away from home much. I can say with one of old, "I dwell among mine own people." We still have very pleasant memories of our visit at the Yellow River Association in 1946. Love to all the brethren and friends. Your brother I hope through the grace

of God. (Elder) GEORGE RUSTON

192 Main St., Flemington, N. J.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: It seems a long time since we met last on the second Sunday in November. At that time I thought that before this I should have an opportunity to attend one of your meetings in New York, but the severe weather has kept me at home. In spite of its being difficult always to keep comfortably warm, I have fared well, indeed, for I have been in good health. To-day I have completed seventy-four years of unprofitable and sorry living, judged by human standards, but at times faith silences my almost constant repinings over my failure to do the things I should do, and the insignificant accomplishments of my many years by the realization that my pathway in life, however humiliating and disappointing it has been to me, has been decreed by the wisdom of God, and, it may be, designed to teach a proud and rebellious nature lessons in humility, and in the knowledge of its utter unworthiness to claim a part in the wonderful plan of salvation provided for sinners.

I have often felt it a necessity to try to tell you and others of our spiritual kindred with whom I have been closely associated some truths about myself which you, nor they, do not but ought to know. In periods of self investigation the conclusion I always reach is that I am a wily deceiver. This I have not designed, neither does it seem to me that Judas necessarily designed the betrayal, although it was in his nature to do it. For nearly fifty-four years I have had a name with Old Baptists and have received always the kindest consideration from them, but each year evidence becomes more convincing that I am a misfit among them, and hence a despicable creature. This does not alter the fact that what I am or do are matters

decreed for God's ultimate glory.

It is written, "The Lord hath made all things for himself: yea, even the wicked for the day of evil," and "Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor?" and again "All thy works shall praise thee, O Lord; and thy saints shall bless thee." It is not for man to question his wisdom or his right. It would be futile for me to enumerate the dark places in my nature which are most disturbing to me, for I believe that you, as a child of God, are not ignorant of the depravity of human nature. What you do not know are the many ways in which my experience, if it may be called that, does not coincide with the experience of God's chosen people. Mine is made up of negative quantities. To begin with I remember the day I asked for a home in the church. I had to confess I came utterly empty handed without even having experienced the exceeding sinfulness of sin. Time has revealed much of that knowledge to me. Neither could I claim that Jesus had been revealed to me as a personal Savior. I have never been able to subscribe to any change in my views. I have not been aware of hating things I once loved, nor can I say that "Wherein I was blind, now I see." As I look back it seems it was sorrow that drove me to the church—to the one church most likely to appeal to me—the church of my father, my mother and brother.

As a child I was taken by my parents to their meetings. I also met the many Old Baptists who were frequent visitors in our home. I felt kindly toward them except when I suspected them of boasting of their ability in silencing an opponent in some religious argument—that I resented. Following the example of my companions I attended Sunday School in our little town, but always

with the feeling of an outsider, and one showing disloyalty to her parent's belief. When I was sixteen years old a dearly loved brother, who surprisingly to me frequently sought me out to converse with me about his newly found joy in spiritual knowledge, suddenly died. The shock and the sorrow of that loss seemed unbearable. I still hear the words from his lips as they rang into my young ears, "I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth." My brother's death ended Sunday School for me. Blow after blow then fell in quick succession. Within less than four years my father, a sister, my cousin and my companion, a close Old Baptist friend, and a young niece, all so very dear to me, were taken from earth. Life seemed nothing but sorrow and I was weary of it, so with the beautiful hymn beginning, "Does the gospel word proclaim, Rest for those who weary be" upon my lips I went to the church, and in spite of the leanness of an experience of grace I was received for the rite of baptism which was administered the next day, Oct. 21, 1894, by our dear Elder Bundy.

Since then the story is but a drab one. I cannot describe it as I would but I have always been like one on the outside looking in, and desiring to have the evidences which others enjoyed of being a subject of God's grace. I have often tasted deeply of despair but never have I known the ecstasy of joy which others know—only once before I was a member in listening to Elder Wm. L. Beebe it seemed when he was through speaking I had known what heaven was. In the light of maturer years the memory of that joy has been greatly tempered by the knowledge that one so highly emotionalized as I could listen to a favorite speaker with excited imagination and be entranced by it. I think that was the case since it was

a solitary experience. But now how is it? I realize I am nearing the close of my earthly existence. In spite of those gospel promises which I have laid claim to for myself I have a cowardly fear of the end—death, we call it. Instead of my faith growing brighter with the years I am appalled at my seasons of unbelief. (I think I have been told that unbelief is the “unpardonable sin.”) My walk is so frequently a reproach and my deadness to spiritual interests a condemnation. Along with these dark thoughts and questionings I freely admit I find my greatest happiness in attending our meetings, reading the *Signs* and in the companionship of the brethren, for through all these do I hear the truth, as it is dear to me, expressed. If I am deluded by it there are times when it is my prayer that the delusion may outlast my days for it is my reliance.

I cannot close this without an acknowledgement of the many unmerited blessings and mercies which have accompanied me through an uphill road in life. My belief in the greatness and goodness of God has grown with the years, but my understanding is quite as limited as in my youth. But, alas, what I wish I could say with equal assurance is that I know I love this God and that I know he loves me. Moreover, I wish deeply that marks of grace might be evidenced in my daily life. I wish I loved to read the Bible—that Brother Dodson, is a real cross to me, and fills me with shame—and that my interests were not so strongly centered in the things of this life. Now I close this letter which for years I have wanted to write to you and which, if I have the courage to send you, I know I shall look upon as a sorry blot upon an already bad record, and as a confession, only a shadow of what it should be. It is the expression of a base in-

grate, a tirade of unbelief instead of a song of sacred joy. I think God's children are bidden to “rejoice” and “be of good cheer.”

After all this unprofitable writing can you feel fellowship for me? The answer undoubtedly is, “I would like to but I cannot understand you.” Yours believing in the great mystery of godliness. (Mrs.) WILDA R. STRYKER

Williamstown, Kansas

ELDER R. L. DODSON, DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST: I am enclosing the obituary of our dear brother, William H. Morris, which our brethren would like very much to have published in our family paper, if in your judgment you can give space to it. We all thought Brother Morris was greatly needed in this little community of saints, but the dear Lord saw otherwise. How fitting are the words of inspiration, “For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts,” I pray that we all may be made willing to accept of this higher, nobler way of our blessed God, and remember with awe and admiration that “He is God.” Our membership in both Kansas and Missouri is sadly small, having been depleted by death and divisions until it seems at times that it is mere folly to try to hold on, yet it is encouraging to know the few who are left are standing firm in the doctrine and order of the church of God. It seems from all accounts that our beloved Zion is languishing the world over, while the forces of Anti-Christ are making great strides, adding to their numbers by the thousands, new inventions and schemes to deceive are being brought to bear on the thoughtless, the ungodly and indifferent to have them enroll on their so

called church book, promising eternal life if they will do this or that, and abstain from this or that thus making the blood of Christ of none effect.

If there had been any other way to satisfy divine justice and pay the debt we owed, then Christ ought not to have suffered. It was not a mere experiment with God Almighty when he sent his Son into the world to be led as a lamb to the slaughter, nor did he come to *try* to save his people from their sins. To try would imply the possibility of a failure. I am inclined to the belief that God never tried to do anything, but he did it and it is written of him, "He shall not fail." I do not need tell you this because I am sure you know this and much more, so pardon me for taking up your time. Wishing God's choicest blessings to rest upon you and yours I am, as I hope, yours in hope of a blessed immortality beyond the grave.

(Elder) L. L. SCHENCK
(*Obituary in August issue*)

3574 Marion St., Memphis, Tenn.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: Please find enclosed my check for another year's renewal to the *Signs*. I am thankful, I hope, that you have been enabled to continue this medium of truth through the troublous and trying times through which we have been passing in recent years. The paper is a monument to God's providence and sustaining care for during its 116 years existence of continual publication there have been enough obstacles and discouragements in its way to have caused the abandonment of its publication had it been God's will for that to be.

An item of encouragement is to be found in the fact that you report in the March issue voluntary gifts to the amount of \$90 to enable those who are not able to pay to have the paper gratis. This is practical religion or love in

action, and I am rejoiced to see more of the brethren and sisters responding to this need than was apparent in the years past.

If the Lord will, may it please him to give us grace to do his will in this respect and also to help the indigent and desitute in other needful ways for inasmuch as we do it to the least of his children, we do it unto Him. In bonds of Christian love, I hope.

H. M. BOWDEN

(We thank Brother Bowden for his nice letter, and feel as he does that the *Signs* is a monument to God's providence. Surely it is he who puts it in the hearts of his people to support the paper as they do. We thank them all for their co-operation. R. L. D.)

Route 1, Plad, Mo.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: The May issue of *Signs* came yesterday and I usually lay aside whatever I am doing and read it all. I did enjoy Brother Lambert's article so much, and as I have heard him speak several times it seemed I could see his face and hear his voice. He is now serving one or two of the churches that Mr. Hardy served, and I feel so thankful for the dear saints to have him. I also enjoyed your article Brother Dodson and I wonder many times about the nine, but we know they are where the dear Lord desires them to be, yet we feel it a mystery why they all do not come into the church. We know God rules and controls all things and it must be right.

I did not intend to take so much of your time, but I want to tell you I failed to receive the April issue of the *Signs* and may I ask for a copy. The *Signs* is about all the preaching I get and I do get so hungry to hear more about the things most dear to me. There are no sound Baptists near us. Thank you for all favors. Yours in hope.

(Mrs.) J. R. HARDY

Box 275, San Juan, Texas

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: I received the book, "Showers of Rain," by Flossie Faulkner and have enjoyed it so much. Should have sent you a message of thanks before this but owing to sickness have neglected it. Please believe me this book is a great comfort to me and I thank you so much for sending it, also the *Signs*. I have some poems I have been requested to send for publication but I feel too unworthy. I fear for God's people to know me or to know about me, but I am what I am and cannot be any other way. I believe I fear the living God, and if not deceived I want to be submissive to his holy and righteous will. I find myself so far below what I see in God's little ones I fear I have never known him in the free pardon of my sins. We are told in the good Book that we shall suffer persecutions and afflictions, and he says he will be with us and not forsake us. When I am made to think of the sufferings that he bore for His people, and of all the glorious and precious promises he has made to all his wayward children, I think if I just knew I was suffering for Christ's sake how different it would be. Then the thought comes, if I knew this where would my hope be? I can only hope that I have a hope.

Sometimes I get so low and troubled it causes me to go back (in mind) to the night the dear Lord was delivered into sinful hands to be crucified. How heavy his burden was when he was praying for the cup to be removed but said, "O my Father, if this cup may not pass away from me, except I drink it, thy will be done." If not deceived, I have been made to say the same in spirit, Lord, thy will not mine be done, and then I hope it is that the strengthening angel has come to me and helped me to go on, asking God to make me sub-

missive to his will. I had rather, above all things, be submissive to his will. Yes, above all the wealth and glitter of this world let me lie passive at his feet and know no other than God. Please forgive all that is amiss. I feel this to be like the writer, very imperfect. May God bless all his people everywhere. I hope I am a little sister. In hope. (Mrs.) JAMES B. REID

(We are glad Sister Reid is enjoying "Showers of Rain" and hope others will send us a new subscriber and get a copy FREE. R. L. D.)

Ponce De Leon, Fla.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: Enclosed find \$2 to renew my subscription for the *Signs of the Times*. It is a feast to me, an old woman that lives a long way from the church. The Old Primitive Baptist faith is all that I can get anything out of, it is the only preaching I love and all that is food for me so I look and wait for the *Signs* every month. Some of the writers said if there was more of it, but I read it over and over and every time I get so much out of it. I wish I could write and express myself as some can but I am old and not able to do much of anything. My son sent me the *Signs* last April and I was so glad. He is a good son and we can witness together. I have a hope that I may be one of those little ones that were saved by grace. I am too weak to have any good thoughts except as God blesses me. Unworthily,

(Mrs.) SARAH D. MURPHY

Route 2, Mayfield, Ky.

ELDER DODSON, VERY DEAR BROTHER: A few lines to you although we are strangers in the flesh, yet I hope we are brothers in the spirit. I do not feel competent to write to one such as I esteem you to be. I am a poor scribe and a bad composer but I will try, the

Lord willing, to drop a few thoughts to say that I believe in a sovereign God that does his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand or say what doest thou. If I did not believe that it seems to me I would be the most miserable creature on earth. Jesus said, "I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." Just think, Brother Dodson, this is not the will of a man but the will of the God that made the earth by his power; established the world by his wisdom; stretched heaven by his understanding. That is the one whose will Jesus came to do, and all power in heaven and in earth was given to him. What was there to hinder him from doing the will of his Father? "These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come; (What hour? the hour that his Father appointed before the world began.) glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee. As thou (God) hast given him (his Son) power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." Will they all know him? Yes, surely. Why? Because it is God's will. "All thy children shall be taught of the Lord; and great shall be the peace of thy children." Jesus said, "It is written in the prophets, And they shall all be taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me." Why? not, Because "I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me." How many are coming to Christ, All that God gave him

and no more. Jesus said, "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." How many are coming? All that the Father has given him shall come.

It would be ignorance to say he wanted them to come and they would not because "he calleth his own sheep by name, and leadeth them out. And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice." Why, Because he is leading them by his power and love. "I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them (the sheep) out of my hand. (To me this means his power.) My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand." Dear Brother, I do not believe there will be one soul in heaven contrary to God's will, neither do I believe there will be one soul in hell contrary to God's will. No, no! Paul writes, "After those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people: And they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest." Just how many are going to know him? All those whose names were written in the will that God made and sent Jesus in the world to fulfill. When Jesus died on the cross he cried, "It is finished," and there is where our redemption took place. God in his own time and way, not too soon nor too late, makes this known to them by opening their blind eyes, unstopping their deaf ears, taking away that hard and stony heart and giving them a heart of flesh. Dear Brother, I do not doubt the doc-

trine the Old Baptists believe and preach, my fear is, am I his or am I not. If I am one of his I did nothing to become one, and if I am not one of his I cannot do anything to become one now. Solomon said, "I know that, whatsoever God doeth, it shall be forever: nothing can be put to it, nor anything taken from it." May God bless you and your efforts in feeding the flock in that dear old paper. I would love to see and hear you preach some time. Yours in bonds. (Elder) O. W. PERKINS

Route 3, Box 3130, Paradise, Calif.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: I am sorry to be late with my renewal for the *Signs*. Enclosed find \$2 for another year. I do love to read the dear old *Signs*, and truly hope the dear Lord will bless you to carry on in the future. Oh, such able witnesses. I sit down to read my paper and usually read it through before I lay it down. I read it over and over, each time finding something new. We are blessed here with a very able minister, Elder T. R. Jefferson. I went forth begging a home with them last June (1947) and much to my surprise was accepted, and was baptized July 6. I felt so unworthy of being accepted in the house of God's elect but it seemed I could not stay out any longer. I hope I can live in such a way as to never bring trouble to the dear church, it is so much comfort to me. I have loved the brethren since I was a little child and they are the dearest people on earth to me. I know that if I am saved it is by grace and not of works. Sometimes I am down in the valley and am made to wonder, "Am I his or am I not." I feel to be such a worm of the dust and so seldom find myself on the mountain top, but oh I do want to praise his holy name. I know he is the giver of every good and perfect gift. Remember me when at a throne of

grace. I do need your prayers. In hope of eternal life. MARY ETTA JONES

Route 3, Benton, Ky.

BROTHER DODSON: I hope I feasted on the article you wrote in answer to Sister McNeals request on 2 Thes. 2: 1-3. I believe we are living in the day of Christ. We have evidences that he is in some, the hope of them. This is his day. We have had three dispensations of time and Jesus Christ was the Savior in the two which went before. He has ever been the Savior, he came to set up his church and the window was in the third story, but the door was in the side, in him, in his wounded side from which both blood and water flowed. All that will be in heaven as his bride, his redeemed ones, were sealed with blood and will drink of that water of life. Zechariah says, "And it shall be in that day, that living waters shall go out from Jerusalem: half of them toward the former sea, and half of them toward the hinder sea," and these living waters flowed to those who were chosen in Him before the foundation of the world. "And it shall come to pass in that day, that the light shall not be clear, nor dark," our light which we claim does not let us see clearly that we are the children of light, neither is it dark. No, we have been given evidences to claim and to console us that we are in deed and in truth the children of light. Light is Jesus Christ and truth is Him, so it is not dark. Ah! we hope we can now see by the light of the Son of God that we were once in darkness. Just as dark as the old law was dark, and just doing our will as they who were before the flood. There are three woes we have to pass through: it is woe to us to pass through the devastating things in our experiences of being lead up to the time when we hope we were delivered and did hear his voice, but we were children

of Israel, children of God, while we were being lead through these woes; these thundering sounds from the Great I Am, these darknesses felt and our works being burned with the fire which does consume our law which we builded ourselves to reach our God, and to be in his presence presenting our gifts to him and he would accept us because of our great gifts and works which we had in abundance to offer him. But all the journey and all the woes were for our good who were builders and workers, and in the end we had gathered evidence enough to claim him as our God and Jesus Christ our Savior, then we found rest in him. Ah! we sought death, but did we find it in the way we wanted it? We begged for everything to fall on us, mountains, rocks and hills. Well, we died and all those mountains wherein we rested came toppling down. Those rocks were not the Rock, those mountains were not the Mount, those hills and every green tree were not the Hill and the Tree.

We hope by the time we passed through those woes, walls to us, that in the passing through we were gaining evidences of a wonderful power over us and losing our own power. We gain sight and become blind, we die and died to one thing and to live to another. We hope we see then we have the light of the true strength of Israel—mighty to save. We see then that we surely heard the sounding of all those trumpets that did sound, even for us, and did rejoice when and in the seventh where then we were delivered and rested. Ah, what rest! It is indeed a sabbath, what a song we could sing on that sabbath day, resting in peace, wonderful peace. We had been singing in the dark of our night, of our mountains of rejoicing and places of worship and of our rocks, but this new song we sing when we enter into our rest.

The sabbath of our souls is Jesus and him alone, and the power of God to lead and grant mercy and deliverance, the same power that raised Jesus from the dead.

I am not concerned about Jesus coming here to live again and set up his kingdom; he already lives here in the hearts of his children; he has a strong hold here in this world; his kingdom, when he sets it up in our hearts, tears down all other kingdoms which man could and did set up; he builds the city; he looses the captives and when he looses one he goes forth singing his praise. Yes, then we can feel, as we hope, all the things you did write for sister McNeal about that text. It is indeed now Christ's day and we are gathered together in his name, and he in our midst to own and bless us. He is in every storm we pass through, whether it be in nature or in the church, it will work for our good and for his glory. These floods, flames and storms would not come to disturb us were they not in mercy sent for our good and his glory. Yes, we see the man of sin revealed. We see him when God opens our eyes, we see him in us too, sitting there in rulership, ruling; but thanks be to God that child who has a hope that he has been lead to experience these woes and these thunderings, and has had his darkness turned to light believes with a strong belief that Jesus did overcome for him and did rut all enemies under his feet. If so, then in due time he will give us power to tread all things down that does not redound to his glory and honor. In him do we have to trust we were brought there by his power.

I will add we have had a wonderful month of meeting with the saints of God, children of light because it is the day of Christ, and he gathered us together, we hope, to learn, hear and re-

joice in him and weep because of our own weakness. Our Association, Soldier Creek, was well attended and the visitors well cared for in a natural way. The ministers were able, by the strength of our God, to declare the glory and power of the three one God. We attended Old Bethel Association the three days, and we also went with Elder Darnell of Little River Association and to the Hopewell Association with whom we correspond, and did enjoy the three days and nights there in Alabama. We find there those claiming a hope in Jesus. Their conversations are about his finished work; their songs are songs of his praise; their prayers (like ours we hope) are prayers for mercy and guidance. May it please God to lead us on and on in the joys of his salvation and when he is through with us hand us down to our graves in peace with him and with all just men is our prayer if indeed we do pray and beg. For fellowship in the truth.

(Mrs.) EFFIE BOWDEN

Route 2, Box 55, Grand Ridge, Fla.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, DEAR EDITORS: Enclosed you will find \$2 to renew my subscription. Have been taking it two years and felt I would like to tell you how much I enjoy it. I read and re-read it and pass it on for others to share the enjoyment. I get real preaching from it. I am fifty-nine years old and have been attending the Primitive Baptist Church all my life. I have never made any confession but if I have any belief it is that. I have always felt my unworthiness too much to offer myself for membership. As the Bible says, "To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven." I reckon that time has not reached me yet although I was reared by Primitive Baptist parents. Please remember me in your prayers. Respectfully,

R. S. JACKSON

SPECIAL MEETINGS

The Maine Old School Baptist Association will be held with the Whitefield Church at Whitefield, Me., Sept. 10, 11 and 12, 1948 the Lord willing. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us. S. S. BARTLETT, Clerk

The Lexington-Roxbury Association will meet with the Olive and Hurley Church, Shokan, N. Y. Wednesday and Thursday, Sept. 15 and 16, 1948. Ministers and brethren of our faith and order are cordially invited to be with us, and all friends of our faith will be welcomed. Services will begin at 10:30 DST Wednesday morning. Those coming Tuesday evening will stop at Brookside Lodge in Ashokan, conducted by Mrs. Hazel Byrnes unless otherwise provided for. Brookside Lodge is the second house to the left on the side road that meets the main road by the Ashokan store. Ashokan is on the Catskill Mountain Branch of the N. Y. C. R. R. The Margaretville-Kingston buses stop in Ashokan. Those coming Wednesday morning will go direct to the meeting-house.

(Elder) ARNOLD H. BELLOWS, Moderator

The Virginia Corresponding Meeting is appointed to be held with the Frying Pan Church Wednesday, Thursday and Friday October 12th, 13th and 14th, 1948. All ministers and brethren of our correspondence, and others of our faith and order, and lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us. Those coming Tuesday in own conveyance will come to Herndon, Va. and inquire for brother Walter Norman who will direct them to homes to be cared for. Those coming by train will come to Herndon which is reached by the W. & O. D. R. R. from Rosslyn, Va. Trains leave Rosslyn at 1:55 p.m. and 6:05 p.m. The station at Rosslyn is at the Virginia end of the Key Bridge across the Potomac from Washington. Those coming into Washington by rail or bus will take electric car from Union Station or from the Bus Station at 12th & N. Y. Ave. marked "Rosslyn." There are no bus lines running to or through Herndon. For any further information, communicate with the undersigned.

G. C. SPINDLE, Clerk
914 Ninth St., N. E.,
Washington, D. C.

The yearly meeting of the Snow Hill Old School Baptist Church at Snow Hill, Md. will be held on the first Sunday in November instead of the fourth as has been their custom.

BY ORDER OF THE CHURCH

CORRECTION

In the obituary of Elder W. L. Slusher in the April issue it states that he passed away Dec. 27, 1947. We are advised that this should have been November 27, 1947.—EDITOR.

EDITORIAL

RUTHERFORD, N. J. SEPTEMBER, 1948

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P.O. Box No. 70 Rutherford, N. J.

ISAIAH 2:1-4

“The word that Isaiah the son of Amoz saw concerning Judah and Jerusalem. And it shall come to pass in the last days, that the mountain of the Lord’s house shall be established in the top of the mountains, and shall be exalted above the hills; and all nations shall flow unto it. And many people shall go and say, Come ye, and let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, to the house of the God of Jacob; and he will teach us of his ways, and we will walk in his paths: for out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem. And he shall judge among the nations and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.”

This is the word that Isaiah received. It is not received by any except those called, as was the prophet. His calling does away with the idea that men can volunteer for the office of a bishop. This message to and for the children of Israel starts out as the work of God

in calling the message-bearer, and then it is a certain word that she is to receive. After establishing the fact that the word is sent by the hand of God, we are comforted with further proof of God’s unconditional work in caring for this people. It is not sent to just any kind of house, built by just any kind of builder, but it is sent to the house that the Lord builds. He does not build just anywhere, but in the top of the mountains.

How wonderful it is to contemplate the work of God in saving his chosen race from sin and degradation. It is God that chose them before the world began its day and night; bringing forth in due season. This choice was not based on any foreseen merits in the creature. Had the creature been worthy of choice, his worthiness would have abrogated the necessity of a choice. By the grace of our Lord, it is our desire to take this irrefutable position, that the creature was without merit when God beheld him in his eternal wisdom before the world was formed. Even now they are as helpless as they were when he looked on them. Thus they were chosen in a safe place, and in a place of eternal righteousness. If I know my poor heart, I am glad that he did not choose them and leave the building of a house to them. There is a laboring in the Lord, laboring in the kingdom of him that has called us out of darkness into the marvelous light, but any laboring for the purpose of building or of keeping the kingdom of heaven is vain. When the blessed Saviour declared his purpose in building a church, not a word did he say about any help. This word does not mention anything about any intermediate agency in the establishing of this house in the top of the mountains; he does not hint that the Lord is liable to need any help. I have never had any desire to ascribe honor to any man for

this wonderful work, either in the beginning of that building or the keeping of it. I hope the dear Lord has given me a desire to comfort, rebuke, reprove in this kingdom, but that not the first thing of it is to purchase blessings beyond those that the Lord procured for us in his offering of his own body on the tree of the cross.

I have not been very apt in the water, but I have found that floating is easy. Yet all that men can do is to float in smooth water. Water cannot be forced up hill without being enclosed in pipes, and this could never mean floating. But this house that is so high is easy for the children of God to get to. I do not mean that they can get there by just a little effort. I mean that the mode of travel is of the Lord and that it is such a wonderful way that they travel in perfect complacency and satisfaction. This house and this traveling is not limited to just the Old Baptists in some sense of the word, but as far as manifestation is concerned it is to them alone. It is all nations that flow unto this house, and I am persuaded that this is the people that Jesus redeemed when he ascended Calvary's hill. As they come to this church they are all just alike, and I am not very patient with the thought I have heard expressed by Old Baptists, that the German people are not worthy to eat anything we have in America. These people are cut down in the forest and each one of them is hewed and made ready by the cunning workmen. They are all floated in and it up hill. How wonderful it is as they travel the road or stream to that dear refuge of God's humble poor, how interested they are in one another and how they speak to one another about the home of the dear lambs of God. *Come and let us go to the house of God* is their greeting to one another. If this is not a good and precious thing in our

lives, as children of God, what would it take to constitute a good and happy home in the Lord? Ah, dear child, do you not remember those first days when these things first became so precious to you. Not a time since then has it been any more pleasant to go to church than it was at that time. *We were glad* about our companionship, and we wanted to be with those whose minds were inquiring for the house of God. This house is made ready for Jacob and there is not a more fitting character in the Bible for our study than that of this poor pilgrim. I am not glad that I am a sinner and I doubt the propriety of saying such a thing. I am glad that the Lord came to save sinners and prepared a home for them to live in here in the world; that it was such sinners as was set forth in the life of Jacob; that it is called his house because he is the most helpless and dejected sinner the whole Book tells us about, and right at this time the only one referred to as being a worm. It is the habit of worms to cut down and destroy instead of building up. This is exactly the way with Jacob; he will not do to depend on. It is not best to depend on any man, for their judgment is not to be relied on, having nothing better than the judgment of a worm. Furthermore, how long would Jacob have been in building a house? Was he not lost in the wilderness? And was he not just as lost in the desert as he was in the wilderness? Can a lost man build? No, for he is not interested in staying there, but in getting out. Would he not be as helpless without the presence of the Lord, after being found, as he was before? Then the only building that he would ever have in this place would be one that the Founder built.

Now we come to teaching and to walking. Oh, my brethren that we could some how come to an understanding

about teaching and walking. We have spent so much time in throwing brickbats at one another about a thing that we know very little about. We cannot mention the teaching of God in an abstract way without running into somebody that calls our ideas antinomian. Well sir, it is the truth that God alone teaches. It is our main tenet of faith that all of God's children shall be taught of him. If we want to lose our identity let us imbibe the current arminian doctrine that men can climb up to God without any regenerating work of the Holy Spirit. But this teaching of the Spirit, works in his people a teaching of one another. Part of the work of the minister is to teach, but to say that he teaches by the volition of the creature, is running into something that we want to stay as far from as saying that men can, of themselves, know God. Yet when we say anything about this teaching that belongs to the ministers, then we run into another school of thought, and they are just as vehement in their denunciation of that being conditionalism as the other is of something being antinomianism. Our text is plain on the whole thing to me, and I hope if we cannot agree about its contents, that we may yet be blessed to have patience one with another. "He will teach us" and "we will walk in his paths." Is that something to spend time contending about? Isn't that consoling to you? Isn't that a wonderful God, for meditating on his glorious name? The teaching comes from God and our walking comes out of the teaching. It is not that we are taught and then we can later walk; but we walk as we are taught to walk. He teaches us to walk, not in the old paths of sin but in his paths. Are his paths the paths of sin? No sir, and I have just as much impatience with the thought, as I do that the creature can walk without the direct and com-

PELLING influence of God's Spirit. His paths are the way he has gone and the things that he has done. Left alone Peter went fishing, and all the others went along to keep him company and to make manifest how unable they were to tread the paths of the Lord. Fishing was an old path; and it was a path that belonged to Peter—in fact while he had on his own girdle he always went in those paths, but when girdled by one mightier than he, he then went in the paths of the Lord. When left alone David could not walk in the paths of righteousness, but went right back to the paths of sin. The Lord loved David and, contrary to David's own feeling of right in the matter after he had been overtaken in his fault, he came and restored to him the joys of those days when he was walking in the right paths, and even enabled him again to walk there. I have been in the schoolroom with my little charges, trying to do that that had been enjoined on me. I never told my pupils how a thing ought to be done and expected any satisfactory results. I showed them; I taught them; I had them to do the thing for themselves. That is teaching; that is the doctrine, child, in this New Covenant promise under consideration. Did you listen at the understanding of the church under the law dispensation? "He will teach us" was the sum and substance of their doctrine. We are unable to learn anything without him. We are not able to walk without being taught to walk. Out of that teaching comes our every sermon, prayer, or anything else pertaining to the travel of the church in time. I want to be understood just here. I believe this is a promise for that future day when Jesus shall have finished the will of his Father concerning his mission in the world. It is a day that the children of Israel saw and longed for, and, while

blinded to many things, they did not see that in some measure, at least, they were in possession of the substance of that day. My reason for saying that is found in the language of the prophet when he said, "that unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given." This would be called a short passage in some respects, yet it covers the whole gospel dispensation. This promise is sufficient to last from the time that Jesus left until he comes again. This is the only scriptural way that the church can ever be like her Lord and Master in time. It is when she can be found walking in his precepts and examples. We hear it said sometimes that a church is a live church. True, for he is teaching them, and that teaching comes right down into their every day lives. The life that they live, they live by the faith of the Son of God, and you could not have faith in God unless he taught you to have it. Here is the simplicity of the perseverance of the saints, of the church of God. He teaches you, and you are taught. What is it that he teaches you? He teaches you to walk. Where? In paths of sin? No sir, not that, and if I was called a conditionalist every moment of my remaining days on this vain and transitory globe, I'd still say as long as breath and accompanied strength remained that the Spirit of my glorious Redeemer has not led any man to sin. But, let abuses be mine to endure, and this world and its perishing cargo be all taken away from me, yet I must ascribe unto him my every step in this kingdom, be that step preaching, praying, singing, teaching, rebuking, reproving, or any thing else pertaining to the travel of God's poor and afflicted people.

I want to hasten on to the time when the "rebuked" people shall go to the beating of their weapons into tools. I must cross somebody's opinion about

this, for I know that we have people among us that believe in a future and coming millennium. I am not crossing your views to get an argument, but I want to state mine for the sake of my own brethren that made the request for me to write out what I saw in this text. We hear so much about this among the statesman of the day; that some time we will have things perfected to where we can beat all our weapons into tools, and our government sometimes scrap quite a few as a gesture towards this beautiful picture. We have not done that yet but that the time soon came when we needed those things to defend ourselves against some enemy that had not yet gotten to the millennium. It will always be like that, because it does not have a shred of reference to such a time.

After this rebuke these nations (many people) shall beat their swords into plowshares. I think the Scriptures are plain on what a blacksmith is for. They had them in the olden days. The ways of a smith have not materially changed. To do much smithing requires much heat, especially in order to do much changing of an item from one thing to another. Now I think I know that God must kindle the fire that brings this needed heat. Not only must he kindle it but he must keep it fueled and lighted. People tell me that there is not a thing for the children of God to do. I do not believe a word of it. People tell me that there is not any activity about the children of God. I do not believe a word of that fable either. I came into the world a natural man and so did all of Adam's race. We had it deeply imbedded in us that for Christ to win this world and keep it, he needed us. We have never gotten over that when the Lord called us to him, for we see that Peter thought it was necessary for him to fight with carnal

weapons. But that material sword was sheathed, and that hateful, domineering, gutting, sword of his mind must be beaten. God did not say that I am going to beat the sword into a plowshare, but he said that they shall do it. They SHALL do it. And this is experience, this is the place when the Lord begins to work in you. Now dear saints you cannot help this fire being kindled, nor can you help taking this sword in your hands and take it to the fire. You need not be afraid little one, for you remember that you have another promise about handling deadly and poisonous things. This is God at work in you and he has made you willing to this beating. Oh, how trying the day when our sword is being transformed into a tool. We have liked this sword business right well. We liked the folly of war because we got much spoils in the conflict. Now in a glorious way we are brought to the place of beating, and having been born of God and given the teaching and leadership of his Spirit, and a hope, which hope is Christ, it is in the personage of no less than the blessed Son of God that we do this beating of this sword and spear into a plowshare and a pruning hook. We are thus made to quit fighting to win anything, and put to work in a kingdom that has all things provided. The ground is good. The plants are the planting of God. The church is the place all this takes place in as far as manifestation is concerned. Here is where workmen are sent out to labor in the kingdom with the tools that we could not in ANY WAY escape having. Our work? It is plowing and pruning.

War? It is gone. Forever gone, precious thought. Not another lesson shall we ever learn. Not another time shall we ever lift up a sword again. Oh, that the Lord would keep this foolish, wandering heart of mine on the

grand and eternal things of this kingdom, teaching me to walk, holding my weak and sinful hand in his, guiding, sweetly guiding, my tottering footsteps through all these changing scenes before us, enabling me by conquering, sovereign grace, to keep on approaching the consuming fire to the beating of this sword and this spear into the tools prescribed for the saints of God. Only by this sovereign grace, this kind, providential and parental care, will this poor servant, if a servant, be kept living at the feet of the dear children of God.

W. D. G.

"The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be." Gen. 49:10.

A year and a half ago this month, Sister Ernie Null of Charleston, W. Va. asked that we give our views through the *Signs* on the above verse of scripture. We regret having been so long complying with her request, but we simply cannot meet all of the demands made upon us as promptly as we would like. We keep a file of requests and would like to write them in the order they come in, but unless we have some exercise of mind or feel that we have some light on a subject, we prefer not to undertake to present views on it. We fear there are times when some of our readers, at least, feel we are in the dark when we write. We have to confess to having to walk by faith and living in the hope that God will be pleased to draw back the curtain and give us a glimpse of what a text contains.

We do not recall ever having either written or spoken on this text, and neither do we feel equal to the task before us at this time. We shall, therefore, endeavor to follow our usual rule of considering the setting of the text in the hope that the connections may throw some light upon its true mean-

ing. Judging from the latter part of the chapter, the setting appears to indicate what might be termed a death bed scene, which lends all the more weight to the importance of the occasion and the subject matter. A man's last words are usually well considered. Jacob before taking his departure had called upon all of his sons to gather themselves together in order that he might tell them what would befall them "in the last days." As what he would have to say would reach far beyond the individual life of his immediate sons, involving their posterity for many centuries to come, and embracing all of the twelve tribes of Israel, it was urgently imperative that the head of each tribe should be present in person to hear what was to be the lot of those who were to come after him. We shall here only concern ourselves with the first four sons mentioned. Jacob begins with Reuben, his firstborn, to whom he refers as his "might" and the beginning of his strength, "the excellency of dignity, and the excellency of power." How sad that Reuben should have turned out so badly as to be "unstable as water" and even defiled his father's bed. This must have been a great trial to his father. Next, Simeon and Levi are spoken of, and concerning them it is said "instruments of cruelty are in their habitations." Their deeds were to be such that their father desired that his soul might not come into their secret, nor his honor be united with their assemblies. Jacob said of them, "Cursed be their anger, for it was fierce; and their wrath, for it was cruel."

Jacob then speaks concerning Judah, with whom our text deals in particular, saying, "Judah, thou art he whom thy brethren shall praise: thy hand shall be in the neck of thine enemies; thy father's children shall bow down before thee. Judah is a lion's whelp: from

the prey, my son, thou art gone up: he stooped down, he couched as a lion, and as an old lion; who shall rouse him up?" It seems to us that these two verses, immediately preceding our text, are interlocked with it and have an important bearing upon it. The tribe of Judah was singled out by God to be most highly favored, in that through this lineage the Messiah was to appear in the flesh. This was foretold by the Lord when he spake by the prophet Ezekiel, saying, "I will also take of the highest branch of the high cedar, and will set it; I will crop off from the top of his young twigs a tender one, and will plant it upon an high mountain and eminent: In the mountain of the height of Israel will I plant it: and it shall bring forth boughs, and bear fruit, and be a goodly cedar: and under it shall dwell all fowl of every wing; in the shadow of the branches thereof shall they dwell. And all the trees of the field shall know that I the Lord have brought down the high tree, have exalted the low tree, have dried up the green tree, and have made the dry tree to flourish: I the Lord have spoken and have done it." Ezek. 17:22-24. It seems perfectly clear to us that the foregoing prophesy was portraying in a most wonderful manner the coming of our Lord through the house of David, and this prophesy was vindicated by the record in the last chapter of the Bible, in the following words, "I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star." Rev. 22:16. When a search was made in heaven, in earth and under the earth, for a man who could open the book sealed with seven seals, and none was found, one of the elders saith unto John, "Weep not: behold, the Lion of the tribe of Judah, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book, and to loose the seven seals thereof." This was He of whom

it was said to Judah, "thy brethren shall praise." It was his hand which was in the neck of Israel's enemies, and by his power they were slain and overcome, and it is before Him "thy father's children shall bow down." He was, indeed, as the lion's whelp, mighty in strength, who stooped down (con-descending to come down in these low grounds of sorrow) and couched as a lion, and as an old lion, conquering and destroying him who had the power of death, and hath ascended at the right hand of the Majesty on high, ever to make intercession for his people.

John gives us a wonderful description of Him in the first chapter of Revelation, and he himself spake to John, saying, "I am the first and the last: I am he that liveth, and was dead; and behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and death." Great, indeed, was the faithfulness of Him who said concerning Judah, "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be." On the day when Pentecost was fully come, the apostle Peter repeated this promise, enlarging upon it, when he spake to those who were pricked in their heart, saying, "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." This sceptre was an emblem of God's love for his people, and the favor he would shew them down through the vistas of time. It was confirmed in type in the days of Mordecai when "the king held out to Esther the golden sceptre that was in his hand." As with God's people, it was a matter of life and death with Queen Esther and her people. Mordecai had sent her a message, saying, "Think not with thyself that thou shalt escape in the king's house, more than all the Jews. For if

thou altogether holdest thy peace at this time, then shall there enlargement and deliverance arise to the Jews from another place; but thou and thy father's house shall be destroyed: and who knoweth whether thou art come to the kingdom for such a time as this? Then Esther bade them return Mordecai this answer, Go, gather together all the Jews that are present in Shushan, and fast ye for me, neither eat nor drink three days, night or day: I also and my maidens will fast likewise; and so will I go in unto the king, which is not according to the law: and if I perish, I perish." Esther was undoubtedly a type of the Church, and how true it is that her salvation is not according to the law, but according to truth and grace, which came by our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. Paul in stressing the necessity of that *new and living way* to his Hebrew brethren, said, "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, Hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds; Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high; Being made so much better than the angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they."

Moses was truly inspired of God when he wrote "The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come." As we look back upon the travels of Israel and see how God took them by the hand and led them out of Egypt, causing the mighty waters of the Red Sea to stand back and allow them to pass

over dry shod; then leading them for forty years through the wilderness, and finally into the promised land of Canaan, which flowed with milk and honey, how wonderfully did it appear that the sceptre, which signified God's favor, did not fail or forsake them, and neither were they to have another lawgiver, until Shiloh, the Messiah, should come. The prophet Isaiah declared that the government would be upon his shoulder, and as to his kingdom there would be no end. Paul in writing to the church at Rome said, "Whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope." If we hunger and thirst after the righteousness of Christ, we will want to search the scriptures, because they testify of Jesus, and his name is more precious than rubies to the believer. How good it is to have heavenly light upon them, whereby we are enabled to look beyond the letter and discern what the Spirit saith unto the churches! There are times, we hope, when we have that blessed assurance that "unto him shall the gathering of the people be." He is the great Shepherd of the sheep, and he who gave unto them eternal life, will never suffer a single one to be utterly lost. In these days which are trying the hearts and reins of men, it is pleasant to contemplate the doctrine of the final preservation of the saints with Him in glory. We need to feed upon that strong meat which the apostle Paul gave to his Roman brethren when he wrote, "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." A few days ago we were bewildered and overwhelmed by what is going on in the world about us, and we could but wonder what it all means and where it will end, and we were reminded of the

scripture which saith unto Pharoah, "Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth." It is only when we realize that the Lord God omnipotent reigneth that we can say, let all the earth keep silence before him. Paul said, "For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." These are, indeed, precious declarations of divine truth. We can but rejoice in that portion of our text which says, "And unto him shall the gathering of the people be." In their natural state his people have no desire for him to rule over them, and if left to themselves they would never come to him, but when they are quickened by his mighty power, the North will give up, and the South will keep not back, for his sons will come from afar, and his daughters from the ends of the earth, and they shall all sit down in the kingdom with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. We know not when the day of the Lord cometh, but Peter has admonished us to "be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day," and he declares that "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." The words of our text have gone forth from His mouth, and they shall not return unto him void, but

they shall accomplish his will and pleasure, and will prosper in the things whereto he sends them. Jesus said, "Till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled." We are nothing, and less than nothing, and vanity, that He might be our all and in all. "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." May the Lord guide and direct us all into a right understanding of his precious truth, if it be according to his own will and purpose in grace! R. L. D.

CIRCULAR LETTER

Adopted by the Maine Old School Baptist Association in session with the Bowdoinham Church, Bowdoinham, Me., Sept. 5, 6, 7, 1947.

DEAR BRETHREN: Another year has passed, and through the loving kindness and mercy of our God we are permitted to meet again in an Association, and if it is his will we will address you by circular letter as has been our custom in years past.

We feel that this coming together in his name is a wonderful privilege, for our God who changes not has promised that where two or three are gathered together in his name he will be in their midst. We pray that those whom he

has called to preach will be filled, and that those who have come to listen will be given the hearing ear. We know how dependent both are. In Jeremiah it is written, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee." These are the words of God, written, we believe, to the household of faith, God's elect from Adam down to the present time, and also to generations yet unborn for he has 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." He answers before we call. We love him because he first loved us, and we have faith to believe that the shed blood of Jesus Christ shall never lose its power until all the ransomed sons of God are saved to sin no more.

To us who have felt the burden of sin, and have tried by all earthly means to improve our lost condition, we only find ourselves sinking deeper. When we are nearly driven to despair, lonely, helpless and ready to die, we, like Israel of old, come down to the Red Sea and, like the parting of the waters, our deliverance comes, and with it the realization of our own weakness, and the knowledge that all our help and strength comes from God, the giver of every good and perfect gift, who so loved us that he sent his only begotten Son in the likeness of sinful flesh into the world to suffer and die on the cross as an atonement for our sins. "Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." God's love is unchangeable, when once he loves, he loves until the end and there is nothing can separate us from that love. We read in Psalms 139:5-10, "Thou hast beset me behind and before, and laid thine hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high,

I cannot attain unto it. Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me." Paul writes to the Romans, chapter 8, verses 38 and 39, "For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Brethren, the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, and peace, and we are glad to affirm that the churches of this Association are living together in love and peace. It is our prayer that the Lord may so keep us.

(Elder) JOHN D. WOOD,

Moderator

S. S. BARTLETT, Clerk

CORRESPONDING LETTER

The Maine Old School Baptist Association in session with the Bowdoinham Church at Bowdoinham, Me., Sept. 5, 6, 7, 1947 to the several meetings and Associations with which we correspond sends greetings.

DEAR BRETHREN: We feel that we have been greatly blessed by our heavenly Father in being once more permitted to meet again in an Association. We feel that God's presence has been in our midst. Even though we are a small Association in number he has given his promise true that wherever even two or three are gathered together in his name that he will be in their midst.

Your ministering brethren, Elders Dodson and Wood, have come to us laden with the gospel of love and peace, exalting the name of Jesus above every name, and his redeeming blood the sal-

vation of all that are his.

We are grateful for your correspondence, declaring the same truths that the Lord of heaven and earth has declared by the working of the Holy Spirit within us from ancient times to the present day, and we hope for its continuance. Sister Ida Bartlett and Brother Arthur Merrigold united with the Whitefield Church and were baptized Sunday morning.

The Lord willing, the next meeting of the Maine Association will be held Friday, Saturday and Sunday before the second Monday in Sept. 1948.

(Elder) JOHN D. WOOD,

Moderator

S. S. BARTLETT, Clerk

MEMORIAL

ELDER DOUGLAS LEE TOPPING was a faithful, loving member of Ebenezer Church, Baltimore City, for almost half a century. He served as Deacon until his ordination to the full work of the ministry in June, 1928.

After the death of Elder Joshua T. Rowe in 1936, Elder Topping was called to the pastorate. Both as Deacon and Pastor he was untiring in his efforts to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace. And too, he gave liberally of his time and means for the upkeep of the meeting-house. Indeed he loved this church more than life itself if possible.

We have suffered a great loss in his passing on Sept. 18, 1947. "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." Therefore we

Resolve, to bow in humble submission to the will of God.

Resolve, to place one of these resolutions on our church book, send one copy to the Signs of the Times, one to the Old Faith Contender and one to our dear Sister Topping, the bereaved widow,

Done by order of the church in conference, March 7, 1948.

QUINCY A. GLADDING, Acting Moderator
ALVIS S. ROWE, Clerk

PRICES FOR EXTRA COPIES OF THE "SIGNS"

We will furnish extra copies of the *Signs of the Times* at the following prices: 1 copy, 20 cents; 3 copies, 50 cents; 6 copies, \$1; 12 copies, \$2. These prices do not apply to our regular subscribers who fail to receive their paper, and if they will notify us of the failure we will mail them another copy free of charge.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON'

VOL. 116

RUTHERFORD, N. J., OCTOBER, 1948

No. 10

"The lot is cast into the lap; but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord. Prov. 16:33.

The aged trees are falling fast,
The rose buds pass away,
The army grows, our dear ones blast,
It seems an evil day.

But the great God is ruling all,
All evil means for good;
It was His will for man to fall
By us not understood.

All things that happen are His will,
The end has been declared;
His purpose He will fulfill
Although the vessel marred.

He made a contract with his Son
To save the chosen bride;
In order that this thing be done
His Son was crucified.

The bride was chosen in the Son,
The Father made the choice,
The Son redeemed them every one
And they shall hear His voice.

As Adam died to be with Eve,
His love was strong as death;
The only cure for sins disease
Was Jesus' righteousness.

Poor mourning mother, let me speak
A word of cheer for you;
No doubt you feel cast down and weak
His promise yet is true.

(Elder) LYTLE BURNS

CORRESPONDENCE

"Walk about Zion, and go round about her:
tell the towers thereof." Psalms 48:12.

Zion, or City of David, was strongly fortified, her walls were calculated to resist a strong invading force, and her towers were ample and imposing. This

city has been chosen throughout the writing of the Old and New Testament as a favorite figure of the church of God, the kingdom of our Lord, Jesus Christ. The inspired singer of Israel, in the exalted strains of his devotion as described in this Psalm, was led to contemplate more than the figure; his prophetic eye glanced down the vista of ages, and beheld with rapture the advent, the kingdom, and the glory of our Lord, Jesus Christ.

With the understanding then, that the Zion of our text is the spiritual kingdom of Christ, we will inquire, who are called upon to survey her walls, and to report the number of her towers? Qualifications of a spiritual kind are indispensable to the performance of this word. Not all the wisdom of men can supercede the necessity of the Spirit's work; for, "Except a man be born again, he can not see the kingdom of God." John 3:3. And certainly a man, however wise, learned, or great, who cannot see, must be incompetent to tell the towers of Zion. If men by wisdom could know God, or if by education, or indefatigable research could learn the invincibility of the bulwark of the church of God, they would never venture an assault upon her; but God, in his wisdom, has hidden it from their powers of perception, that they may exhaust all their energies in fruitless warfare, for not one of her stakes shall ever be removed, nor one of her cords ever be broken. Souls that are born again, redeemed and brought with sing-

ing to Zion, alone are blessed with the privilege of *walking around Zion*.

The idea in the text of walking round Zion, is not to gratify an idle curiosity, but to prepare the peculiarly favored beholders to make their report to the generations to come, and to fill the soul with confidence in God, that he is abundantly able to keep that which they have committed to him against that day.

But let us consider what it is to walk around the Zion of our God; her location, the Psalmist has informed us is in the mountain of the holiness of God. "Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is mount Zion, on the sides of the north, the city of the great King. God is known in her palaces for a refuge." Can we then circumambulate her walls so as to see her strength, and tell her towers and yet remain ignorant of the "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty" in whose holiness she is immutably and eternally established?

Fearful emblems of divine majesty were displayed in giving the preceptive covenant to carnal Israel from the top of mount Sinai; but they who count the towers of Zion are not come to the mountain that might be touched. No peals of thunder shake the walls of Zion; no streaming lightnings bear God's vengeance down to those who dwell within her sacred walls. No gloom of darkness, tempest, fire nor smoke sullies the beauties of her situation.

But those who fled her gates, come to the city of the living God, to the heavenly Jerusalem, to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and the church of the First Born, which are written in heaven, and to God, the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect, and to Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling that speaketh better things than that

of Abel.

To this mount, this heavenly vision of peace they come, because they are redeemed of the Lord, and God has said they shall come with songs and everlasting joy. The great trumpet is blown, and they shall come which are ready to perish, etc., and shall worship God at his holy mount at Jerusalem.

Nothing is more certain than that we must come to this Zion before we can walk around it; and as coming to Zion is coming to Jesus the mediator of the New Covenant, no man can come except the Father who sent Jesus into the world, draw him, and he will raise him up at the last day. But, all that the Father gave him, shall come unto him, and shall in no wise be cast out.

My dear reader, have you ever come to Zion? If you have, you know and you are willing to confess that the Father has drawn you there to Christ; and this being your happy condition, it is your privilege to take the walk proposed in the text. "Go round about her." This is no place for idleness; it is true your going around her is not to add to her strength, nor safety, for that is not necessary, nor is it possible, for—

"Her walls are strength, and at her gates
A guard of heavenly warriors waits;
Nor shall her firm foundations move,
Fixed on His counsel and His love."

But this privilege contemplates your improvement, your instruction, and your comfort, as well as your blessed employment. "Go round about her." You have not yet seen all that there is to be learned; you may have seen or had some faint view of the straight gate by which you entered the city, but have you observed the closed gate that looketh towards the East, by which the Lord God of Israel hath entered, and can you report with accuracy the dimensions of

the South, the North, and the West gates? See Ezekiel 44. To perform this delightful walk like the prophet Ezekiel, you will require to have a guide; you cannot perform it alone. But if that guide which Jesus promised, takes you in charge, he shall guide you into all truth; and then you will walk and not faint. This walk if we mistake not, will occupy the whole pilgrimage of the saints of the Lord, from the moment of their translation from darkness to light, until they behold the consummation of the glory of the church in unclouded glory and uninterrupted bliss. "Tell the towers thereof." The Lord's name is one of them, and it is invincible. At this tower, every knee shall bow and every tongue shall confess. Yet it is a strong tower, into which the righteous flee and find safety; but the Psalmist uses the plural number. "Tell the towers thereof." To tell is to count. Now let us see if we can count the towers of strength and safety which God has provided for his saints. God's thoughts are but another name for his purposes or his counsel, and David has said, "If I should count them, they are more in number than the sand." Psalms 139:18. Every new covenant promise is a tower of strength to the children of God.

The spiritual bond that serves as a connecting link or neck which unites Christ the head, and Zion the body, is as the tower of David, which was builded for an armory whereon there hangs a thousand bucklers, all shields of mighty men. Predestination, election, effectual calling, preservation in grace to glory, resurrection and eternal glory, are well known towers to the tried saints. Often have they been chased into them by their arminian natures, and by their arminian devils too; but they have always found them impregnable. Standing in this doctrine, the darts of the enemy cease to be hurled at us; for

the enemy hates the doctrine with more deadly hate than that with which he hates us, and all his arrows are wasted in vain attempts to batter down our towers, and finding them invulnerable, their poisoned arrows fall harmlessly at our feet. The idea of fortification, forts, towers, etc., clearly implies the present militant state of the church of the living God, the Holy City, whose dimensions are eighteen thousand measures, and the name of which from that day shall be, "The Lord is there." Now she has enemies to encounter, battles to fight, agogs to hew in pieces, persecutions, reproaches and sore conflicts to endure; but the God of Jeshurun rideth upon the heavens in her help, and in his excellency on the sky! The eternal God is her refuge, and underneath her are the everlasting arms. In sweet fellowship. (Elder) L. P. HARRISS

2402 Lakewood Drive, Vancouver, B. C.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: The sweet thought at hand is dying grace which my Father has been pleased to allow me to view as I traveled from church to church. As they begged me to stay just a little longer I was constantly reminded to take the shoes from off my feet. Brother Overstreet, a faithful member at Riffe, has twice sat up, with God's strength, preaching to us with tears of joy. Although failing, paralyzed, he scrawls letters to me with his right hand. (His *kind* family are Jehovah's witnesses.) He is strong like my little mother was before death. I enclose two letters which he wrote for his own meditation. It would comfort him if he lives to see some of it in the *Signs*, but this must be left in your, rather in God's hands. Brother Overstreet wants to know about my little mother remaining firm in the faith until her last call came.

I am copying a letter I wrote last August. I have tried to begin letters to

you before to-day which is one of thanksgiving. I was reminded of a letter in the *Signs* which said you walked in the streets and heard "Jesus Savior pilot me" from church chimes. That is what Elder Jeffreys said about three sermons which just dovetailed into each other, "Didn't they chime?" Yes those sermons were chimes from heaven. To-day I have been walking in the city with "God moves in a mysterious way" ringing through my mind. Now I realize it is the hymn which my tenant's deceased wife mentioned to me. To-day I verily believe I have viewed the strong man overcome by a stronger in her husband who is left mourning. He left my property to-day, a humble, bowed, prayerful man inquiring what my religion was. About a week before she died of a heart attack, I was held at the end of a moment of praying, for a sweet golden moment. It seemed to me that a world of golden healing power lay above me, where dwells all the power. Our sunlight would seem very thin, insipid and transparent compared to that instant of golden love. That is the nearest I can describe it.

I was trying to explain to Brother Fisher at Chehalis Church how every circle of thought around one situation can be used by God to teach each individual concerned a different impression of truth. God sees the end from the beginning. He sees the good he intends to place in his bright design. How good to know that he restrains the evil. I have been at meeting at Brother and Sister Fisher's home near Chehalis. What a sweet feast! Brother Cameron of Seattle spoke from Isaiah 51. The captive exile was released. He just led us over the Bible to specific instances where the captive exile was led to hearken unto the Lord. He ended on the theme of Joseph hearkening unto the Lord for the good of Israel.

Another wonderful word is quickened. Last Sunday we dwelt upon quickened saints who hearkened unto their Lord. Then Brother Fisher spoke about instances in the Bible where every act and detail had to be just that way for God's final good purposes. The pure truth once delivered unto the saints went ringing through our minds with startling power. So we sang our song feeling in spirit, "Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did."

I met Old Baptists who travel long distances, driven of necessity to feast where the stone is rolled away from the well. Mother Withers tells me we must needs be sanctified and suffer enough before we can climb our Jacob's ladder and see Him face to face. I feel so small when these experienced patient saints talk to me. I can only turn to Job 42:1-6 and repent. If only he leads me into the spirit of prayer where I can pray, Lord Jesus, come quickly. Otherwise how dark! But "Fear not, thou worm Jacob." "Let the beauty of the Lord our God be upon us." Psalms 90:17. Humbly,

(Miss) CATHERINE M. DUFFUS

Ajlune, Wash.

DEAR SISTER DUFFUS: It is a pleasure to write to you in reply to your letter of Feb. 2. One of the blessings of our lives has been to associate with Bible reading people who absorb the full meaning of the scripture rather than try to put a passing construction and meaning on all of it. We do not offer any improvement to the words of inspired servants of the Most High. Satan commenced to add to God's words in the garden of Eden, and his words proved false. In addition to the pleasure mentioned above we have richly enjoyed entertaining, rather extensively, the people who share the same faith with us.

We now regret that we are not situated to offer this entertainment to people of like precious faith, but genuine gratitude for such a privilege in past years is a pleasant sensation. We look to only one source for joy and blessings as gifts, not rewards, for our own faithfulness.

Paul gives us a clear definition of the grace and gifts of God, and he finally dismisses the subject by saying, "if by grace, then it is no more of works." Well, perhaps I should say that our parents were believers of the whole unflavored words of inspiration and we have been observers among the Primitive Baptists all our lives, but this alone has not warped our understanding of the creation or purpose of the Creator. We accept the visible evidence of his great purpose and its development in the various parts of the earth from any source it may offer us the information. We believe that Jesus still sits at the right hand of the Father and ever maketh intercession for his sheep. My wife's father was a minister among the Baptists while my father was a deacon. We gratefully cherish their memory, but not to the point of worshipful admiration. God's grace placed us in this environment when we could not choose for ourselves. It is all grace for which we are grateful. We fully realize the gifts of grace in all our lives both past and present. We feel confident of continued blessings without merit of our own offering, and we pray for gifts not rewards. Jesus tells us that the Father is abundantly able to give good gifts unto them that ask him. We believe that miracles are still his if he wills to perform them. In fact I personally believe that both miracles and the fulfillment of prophecies are being developed each day, so we have good reason to feel secure in a weak and sinful race of men, only we must trust Jesus for our safety. E. D. OVERSTREET

DEAR SISTER DUFFUS: Your letter of yesterday (from Seattle) came to hand to-day and it reminds me of my own shortcomings in a busy life, but I recall that true merit is not a product of human effort in spiritual fields, so I look to the great Elder Brother to impute his own righteousness to me as one of his sheep if so I be. Your conversation led me to expect Elder Hughett to see me. I shall be so glad to talk with him if he deems me worth a visit. I regret my inability to entertain loved ones. I am so helpless and dizzy. I want to be normal but I cannot. I wish to correct the impression that Elder S. H. Durand's brother once lived near Seattle. It was his first cousin and his son. The son was there and his father visited and the two attended an Association in this community. Sorry my mind was confused but I have this correct now and would like to talk it over with some of the older members. I believe I can remind them of it not far from 1917 or 1918. With love, unworthily your brother,

E. D. OVERSTREET

1306 Cumberland Ave., Evansville 15, Ind.

ELDER R. L. DODSON, DEAR BROTHER IN A SWEET HOPE: I have a desire to write to the dear saints abroad because I hope, if not mistaken, I love them all, and such love as I seem to have is beyond my understanding. The apostle Paul writes in Phil. 4:19, "But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Jesus Christ." Why such mercy to sinners? Because we live in hope of that promise that God that cannot lie promised in eternity. Why did he make this promise? Because of that great love wherewith he (God) loved us even when we were dead in sin (if so be that I am numbered in that—us) for God is love. What a precious promise that there is no enmity

there, but all is love for he loves his children with an everlasting love. "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." God did not declare by that dear old apostle that he would supply all our wants and I am glad of that, glad that his thoughts are so much higher than our thoughts for by nature we are creatures of want, and if it were so I fear that we, as the world, would destroy that very salvation we hope to have received from the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, and that by the mercies that are meted out to us by and through the suffering of the only begotten Son of God and our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, for he knows the needs of his people both natural and spiritual, and will cause all things to come to us according to his will and purpose because he is the first cause of all causes and there are no accidents with God. He speaks and it is done.

Often I am made to wonder "Am I a soldier of the cross?" and my spirit ebbs so far until I sink so deep in the pit and mire that I am made to fear that I may be mistaken and am going about trying to deceive those dear little lambs of God. I will stay away from my meetings until I cannot stay longer, but there is no joy to me in this earth, nor do I believe there can ever be again, like meeting with those dear brothers and sisters that can see and receive faith to faith alike, and bask in the sweet sunshine of God's mercies, truth and love, and meet fellowship with fellowship one for the other. Then it seems that I am lifted from the pit, my feet are cleansed from the miry clay, I am anchored on a rock and am caused to rejoice in that great and good God that is able to supply all our needs. "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever." Aaron was made to wash his feet and

new robes were given them, and they were anointed with the grace of God's love. Now under our new and lovely Priest oh how often we are made to wash our feet, and that perfume of his love is poured upon us and we are given new robes of his righteousness to rejoice in. Then it is I can praise God on high for his mercy to men; for what is man that God should be mindful of him. "When I said, My foot slippeth; thy mercy, O Lord, held me up." "The Lord hath made known his salvation: his righteousness hath he openly showed in the sight of the heathen." Dear brethren, I sometimes hope that I have both seen and felt this righteousness and that it is mine for I have no righteousness of my own except it be in that blessed redeemer Christ. "He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill." I feel to be a poor beggar at mercy's door.

May it be the will of God that we be gentle and meek to all men for we were sometimes foolish, disobedient and deceived: serving the lusts of the flesh and worldly pleasures and envy towards others, but after that the love of God our Savior toward man appeared, not by the works of righteousness which we have done but according to his mercy he saved us by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior, that being justified by his grace we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life. Oh, what a wonderful thought, what love is this, O my soul! Tell me, dear brethren, can it be denied that God directs our steps and supplies all our needs according to his own purpose which he purposed in us before the world was? This is getting too lengthy so must close. Your unworthy

brother, if one, in hope.

W. Y. CHANDLER

Castle Rock, Wash.

DEAR EDITORS OF THE SIGNS: If the dear Lord will guide my mind, I would like to express my appreciation to the dear saints who have recently visited me. On Friday of the three days meeting at Riffe, Wash. (1947) five of the members from the church at Naches, and Elder Bynum from California came and spent the night with me. After supper we assembled for worship. After singing, Elder Hughett offered a comforting prayer and Elder Bynum preached a good sermon.

I am at present confined again to my bed and am very lonely at times. None of the brethren live near enough to visit often so this was a season of great rejoicing to me. I find no words to adequately describe the calm, peaceful atmosphere that these dear Christian friends brought into my room. I felt at once the difference between their presence and that of my worldly friends when they call. This I felt so keenly that I spoke of it to them and said to myself many times, surely it is of the Lord. I do not try to express my mind orally very much for I have what I call an affliction which makes it almost impossible for me to express aloud my precious spiritual thought. When I lost my husband some months ago I lost my emotional control, and cannot, since that time, sing a hymn or say many words without bursting into tears. I wish it were otherwise but so it is. In time I hope it may please my heavenly Father to remove this burden, but if not I must say, so be it, for in thy sight it seemeth good. Perhaps I was saying too much or words amiss and to no profit and this was my Father's way of closing my mouth.

Now to resume what I had meant to

say: On Sunday after the meeting was over at Riffe. Brother and Sister John Simpson came into my home and stayed until Wednesday morning. We had such a good visit. My dear sister administered to my nursing needs, and we all three spoke of many things near and dear to us. I truly felt to say when they were gone, the Lord has been in this place. They had two of their young children with them which added very greatly to my joy and that of my daughter.

Brethren and sisters everywhere may I in love, and I hope in true kindness, admonish you to visit your afflicted ones as often as you possibly can. To my own shame I must confess that when I was able and had means, and should have done so I often failed. I so often felt the desire but many things hindered. It proves my sinful, selfish weakness and causes me to sigh and repine my many short comings. If I could pray, if God would bless me to get his ear I should love to beg him to be ever near his afflicted one whose bed and one room is as the bounds of their habitation; whose hours are filled with the pain they must endure. Only God knows their suffering, only he can make it endurable.

I think all scripture has a spiritual meaning and that most of it has, or did have at the time of its inspiration and recording, a literal meaning. Perhaps it has both if and when God blesses us to see them, so let us who are blessed with means and health visit the sick, the widow and the orphan in their loneliness. I am sure we can find such admonition in the Scriptures. May our family paper continue to carry messages of hope and cheer to God's saints. Without my Baptist papers I would be much lonelier than I am. *Signs, Old Faith Contender* and *Zion's Witness* come each month and then they seem not enough. I read them again and

again and long for more. I am never satisfied, there is always something more I wish to know, something else I long to understand. But, dear saints of God, I look forward, with sometimes a sweet hope and sure expectation, to a time and life where I shall be satisfied. Where the dark glass I now see through will be removed, where I shall see Christ as he is, be like him and be satisfied, really satisfied.

That one word when studied upon is beyond my limited comprehension for in this life that is one condition I have never experienced. I am satisfied in a measure (always lacking) on that very interesting point of doctrine, the resurrection, though I do differ with some versions of it I have read and heard. Of course since there are different views of it I could not possibly see it as all do, but my comfort and limited satisfaction comes from the very promise that then we shall be satisfied. How, when and where the resurrection is will not trouble us there, our pains, tears and disappointments, our temporal and spiritual tribulations will be as if they had never been, and in their stead we shall have his glorious presence eternally. Oh, dear saints, what a wonderful God to grant us such sweet hope, such blessed assurance. All glory and praise be to him forever and ever.

(Mrs.) EFFIE PARKE

Route 4, Camden, Ark.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: May I commend you on the article in the *Signs* of Jan. 1948 entitled "New Years Greetings." What a wonderful subject and how ably you commented on it. John's entire epistles are surely based upon this wonderful word *love*. As I understand, the universe and all that pertains to it was founded and framed upon the love of God who is the very embodiment of love. Without love there would not be

a moments peace on earth and no happiness in heaven. I feel that all the Old Baptists would do well to heed your admonition in regard to the correct quoting and application of the scripture.

The two subjects you mentioned—*predestination* and *resurrection*—to me are the most basic principals or doctrines in Holy Writ, and to deny either of them would destroy my entire belief. Yet I feel that they are (especially *predestination*) very delicate subjects to handle and that those old patriarchs that drafted and handed down to us the London Confession of Faith warned about the loose application of this subject. May the Lord bless you both in physical and spiritual strength to continue in the work of the Lord. Yours in Christian love. J. M. PROFFITT

Goldonna, La.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: I am a little late sending in my subscription but I do not want to miss a copy as it is about all the comfort I get since we lost our dearly loved Elder W. B. Valentine and also his beloved wife. I enjoy reading the letters of the brothers and sisters, also the editorials, in fact every page of it is dear to me. May God in his loving kindness and tender mercy watch over and uphold you that you may continue the publication of the *Signs* to the dear Old Baptist people. When you can feel it in your heart to pray for such as I, an interest in your prayers is desired that I might ever be found worthy to be one among God's dear little children. As ever a poor, weak, unworthy sister in hope if at all.

(Mrs.) VELIA STEWART

507 W. Laced St., Malden, Mo.

EDITOR DODSON: Enclosed you will find \$3 for which please extend my subscription one year and use the rest as you

see fit. It is useless for me to tell you I enjoy the *Signs* beyond expression. I live here where there is no Old School Baptist church to attend. In this city there are nine so-called churches with each a rather large membership, but they believe in good works as righteousness. Ninety per cent of them attend Sunday School and church Sunday morning and to a show or ball game Sunday afternoon and back to church Sunday night. They go to work Monday morning and the things they do and say make me wonder if they have been born again, not them only but me also. I wonder if we are now living in the last days? I wonder if these are not good days compared with those of the near future?

Elder Dodson I am not a member of the Old School Baptists. I was born and raised by Missionary Baptists, but if I know myself I believe the Old Baptists are the children of God and are saved by grace, not of works. If by works many people could do more than others so would have a more glorious crown. Thanks be to God for saving grace, and his loving tender mercy for sparing such an unprofitable person as I, and giving me such a good companion and four dear children when I have been so undeserving. I only intended to write a few lines. May the great God of heaven permit you to continue to publish the *Signs* to feed God's people. A friend.

E. C. DEAN

Route 1, Claude, Texas

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: After reading and rereading the February *Signs* it seems if I hold my peace the very stones will cry out. Not having any particular scripture I just wish to try to express my thankfulness to you and the dear saints who have been led by the spirit of my God to write such God honoring experiences.

First Elder W. N. Green, who is my pastor. He has told me his experience several times. Brother Collins, on peace and how it is acquired. Brother Byrd, who wrote so beautifully, also his sad experience concerning his wife and her sudden passing. I could personally relate almost the same experience in the loss of my dear wife in 1923, and my heart goes out to him in sympathy. I fully concur with him in his opinion about God's set time to perform his will. There is a time to be born and a time to die, and let me say, if not deceived, I can truthfully say God doeth all things well. Since losing my dear wife I have lost two boys tragically. How Brother Wingfield's writings cheer the heart of a poor weary traveler almost fallen, whose feet seem ready to slip, ten thousand talents in debt and not a farthing to pay. Also Brother McMillian, Sister Clifford and all the others too many to name.

May God continue to bless his dear saints to have a mind to write so as such lonely beggars as I may pick up the crumbs that fall though I am not worthy to eat with them at the Master's table. May God also give you, Brother Dodson, that anointing whereby you may be blessed to keep the good news coming from a far country, for it is from a far country; even from the throne of God's mercy to poor heart broken, sin sick souls who must wait, like dear old Job, until we fulfill our days. May all who have access to the throne of grace pray for me. A sinner, if saved at all, saved by grace.

G. G. TURNER

Lynville, Ky.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: Enclosed you will find check for the *Signs*. I do not see how my wife and I could get along without the *Signs*. There are so many good articles in it. The February paper

was in the mail box when they brought me from the hospital where I had been confined for a week with blood poison. The paper came at the appointed time as I believe all things do. When I would read the dear Elder's articles I could not keep the tears back.

While I was in the hospital and at my worst, two women from the Baptist Church in Mayfield came and asked the nurse if they could talk to me and she told them "yes." They gave me their names and said they were working for the Lord. They asked me if I was saved. I said, "I hope I am." They said, "We do not understand what you mean by saying hope, we know we are saved." They asked me to tell them just what I meant by hope. I said, "I am very weak but if God will give me the strength I will try to tell you about this hope. Now I hope back before time God wrote my name in his will, and I am here in this hospital with doctor and nurses doing all they can for me, but if it be God's will for me to go nothing can be done. I do not see angels and shining cities as some say they do, but I believe strongly tonight I am lying here in the hands of a just God and he has made me willing to go." They asked me to pray. I said, "I can't. I might say a prayer within myself but would it be answered? I am afraid not. Let me make prayer a little clearer. I do not believe any one ever prayed but what God answered, but I do not believe any one can pray unless God first brings you to that prayer." I told those two women I did not believe they could change the mind and purposes of God. When they left they took me by the hand and said, "We want you to stop saying hope and say, I know I am saved." Hope suits me best, if I am saved Christ did it all. I did all the sinning and Christ did all of the saving. Christ does not need any one to help

him do any thing. He hath all power. In hope of eternal life.

ALBERT CASEY

Route 5, Union City, Tenn.

R. L. DODSON, DEAR BROTHER: Having been shut in all this New Year on account of sickness, not being able to work yet able to be up most of the time, my mind has drifted around from person to person, and from one thing to another. Part of the time I seem to have a mind to read the Bible and in my reading I happened to read the 7th chapter of Isaiah and the 18th and 19th verses arrested my mind. Brother Dodson, there is wonderful beauty in the language of these scriptures, in fact in the whole chapter. If not asking too much or if you have been given light on these two verses I would be so glad if you would give me and the other readers of the *Signs* your views as to what they teach. If you should not feel disposed to write on them may be some one else might. I do hope some one will be moved to express the truths contained in these verses also the whole chapter. Trusting that you and yours are well, and asking that you remember us, if you can, when you pray, I remain your very unworthy brother if a brother at all.

J. W. BARNES

(See Editorial)

1158 Falls Terrace, Union, N. J.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: You made the remark in your sermon yesterday that some one had said a miracle was performed every time a sermon is preached. I think a miracle was performed yesterday when you selected hymn 291 (Beebe's Collection) for the opening of the service as I had selected that hymn earlier in the day with the intention of asking you to use it some time during the service. I had the hymn book open at that selection when you gave the

number. It was just like a voice from above answering my plea for some token of inspiration to revive the drooping of one low down in the valley, and for a few minutes I was lifted to the mountain top with tears of joy. I cannot find words to express my feelings at that time, but it was just like the morning dew or a few drops of refreshing rain on a wilted flower by the wayside on a hot summer day made to lift its face once again when all hope of life seemed gone. My faith, be it ever so small, was reassured that the Lord was in our midst and directed you in the selection of that hymn. May be I seem too overjoyed at this but it meant so much to me and was so much comfort in the thought that, "God moves in a mysterious way, His wonders to perform," that he is ever round about us, directing every move we make, keeping a watchful eye on us at all times. Praise God for giving us grace and strength to believe that all things are in his hands. To us it seems impossible to believe anything else, yet for those who are not given eyes to see and ears to hear, we feel that they are to be pitied and not blamed as the dear Savior said, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do."

We would still be groping in the dark and following after the things of the world had it not been for the all sufficient grace of an all wise God. We did nothing to merit such a favor, it is all in the hands of One who does all things after the counsel of his own will. We can only say with the poet:

"Nothing in my hand I bring!
Simply to thy cross I cling;
Naked, come to thee for dress;
Helpless, look to thee for grace;
Black, I to the fountain fly;
Wash me, Savior, or I die!"

are just as helpless as the clay in the hands of the potter who molds the vessel as he sees fit, one unto honor and another unto dishonor. Nay, but who art thou, oh, sinful man to even question why this should be as it is. The clay hath no power of its own to determine the shape or condition of the vessel when it is finished. Neither do we, we are told to "stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord," and that is all we can do. We are so helpless we cannot even think a good thought; when we would do good evil is present with us, and the good that we would we cannot do, the desire may be there but evil creeps in unaware and just as we are ready to give up in despair the still small voice speaks to the tired and weary one, thus giving that reassuring faith once again that nothing is impossible with God.

Not long ago I saw a demonstration of the art of pottery. It was amazing to see the simplicity of this process as the fingers of the maker gracefully formed a beautiful vase, yet my mind was carried away to the greater magnificence of the work of the Great Potter who fashions these helpless bodies of ours into a vessel more wonderful than any vessel that human hands could make. Our vile bodies are so utterly at the mercy of the Lord who has power to fashion them like unto his glorious body if he so desires, and try as we may we could never change one single item in this marvelous plan. We are truly thankful for this we hope; if left to ourselves our finite minds could never see or comprehend the greatness of such a plan whereby the giver of every good and perfect gift condescended to come into this world of sin and sorrow to mold a vessel of mercy from these earthly bodies here below and make it fit to reign with him above. Who are we to inquire or question the right of God

How true are the above words. We

to make one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor. He has said, "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy." Praise his name for giving us faith to see that whatever it is his will to do, is just, and by grace and grace alone we can say, "If my soul were sent to hell, thy righteous law approves it well." "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." We must stand still and see the salvation of the Lord, watching day by day as he molds the clay after his own pattern, knowing by faith alone that he doeth all things well. His watchful eye is ever round about us as we travel in this troubled world to-day. "What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid." He spreads mercy wherever he desires, regardless of anything we may do or say.

The potter's work is a beautiful illustration of how helpless we are in the hands of the Great Potter, we can rest assured that he will finish the work of righteousness and a remnant shall be saved according to the determinate counsel and foreknowledge in the plan of salvation that was predestinated and planned before man was able to say he had any part in it; planned for children not yet born, having done no evil or good, but were included in the plan of election, being saved by faith and not by works which we have done. "There is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." There is no God besides the great giver of all power in heaven and earth. He forms the light and creates darkness; he makes a peace that passeth all understanding; none can say unto him what doest thou? He has created the earth and brought salvation to those of his own choice; he will direct them in the way they should travel; he has promised to go before, making the crooked places

straight and creating in us a heart of tender mercy and love, revealing unto us the treasures of darkness and hidden riches of secret places, that we may know the Lord will call us into everlasting joys above. If we did not travel in the paths of darkness, in the way our father's trod, we would not be able to appreciate the beautiful rays of light that come piercing the darkest cloud. Thank thee Father of love, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, revealing them unto babes who yearn and long for the sincere milk of the word, not because we are worthy of such a blessing, but because it seemed good in thy sight.

Blessed are those whose ears are opened to hear the gospel. It is by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit that they are brought out from among the ways of the world, brought into the fold as the shepherd seeketh the lost sheep and brings it home amid much rejoicing. Oh, how could we claim to be able to have any part in this great and marvelous work! Behold again the helplessness of the clay, a contrite and broken spirit in the hands of an all powerful God, who feeds the hungry souls and causes them to lie down in green pastures midst the rich grace of his love. He sends the refreshing rain to revive our spirits when we have sunk in the miry clay beyond the help of anything man can do or say. His arm is ever round about his people, oh the greatness of his power and love! "The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein," for he has created it all and his purposes will ripen from day to day, unfolding the beautiful flower that will be found from the bud hidden deep in our hearts. Who shall enjoy these blessings? He that hath clean hands and a pure heart, washed in the Redeemer's blood given in the counsels of eternity

before time began. He shall receive all blessings from the Lord and great shall be the rejoicing in his heart when the Lord speaks peace and says, fear not, "My grace is sufficient for thee," "It is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." If he has given it to one, rest assured none will be able to take it away for he has promised, "My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand." Sweeter yet is the promise that the Lord hath gone home to prepare a place for those that love him at the right hand of God, that where he dwells there you may be also. He has promised to come again and take those of his own flock home to glory, ever to bask on the sunny banks of sweet deliverance. He is the way, the truth and the life, the only way that leads unto the Father, by and through the revelation of the divine Spirit. May it be his will to mold this vessel of clay as it seemeth best in his sight, giving the praise to the giver of every good and perfect gift. When the vessel is finished may it reflect the wisdom of an all wise God, free from the sinfulness of man, fashioned like unto his glorious body, who ascended unto God on high after finishing the work in this world and now sits at the right hand of God ever making intercession for the members of his flock.

I intended to make only a few comments on the potter and the clay, but it seems my thoughts are rambling in many directions. Sometimes my cup is so full it seems I must give vent to my feelings on paper. I have so little opportunity to discuss the things dearest to my heart, and when I do try to speak of such things my tongue seems still for fear I will say something that is not consistent with His will. To-day it seems as if I could continue telling of his

goodness and mercy, my heart and soul are still rejoicing from the lovely meeting of yesterday. My wish has often been that I could find words to tell you how much I enjoy my spiritual home in New York, and what a wonderful blessing it was to me to be taken in by you when I was almost a stranger to you, naturally speaking. Spiritually I feel that we were not strangers, but were drawn together by the great cords of unbreakable love. I have tried to be thankful for such a blessing, but I feel less worthy of it every day, afraid I have not been able to show my appreciation. Your sermons are so wonderful and so full of truth that I do not try to express my feeling of love and joy for such a great blessing. May the Lord continue to bless you and give you spiritual wisdom to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints. I hope my presence at the meetings has helped to give you an idea of how much I enjoy and appreciate the privilege of being numbered with the church in New York. I shall never forget the first time I heard you speak. A silent prayer was on my lips as I came home that day that some day my name would be recorded on your church book as you had spoken the language I love dearly. It was wonderful to hear you tell the story hidden in my soul better than I could ever tell it myself. Great was the rejoicing in my heart the day you asked me if I would like to move my membership to New York City. I had anxiously waited for that moment, trembling within lest you should not want such as I in your midst. Thank God for giving you the insight to read the thoughts behind my outward manifestations and directing you to offer me a spiritual home. God grant me grace to live worthy of this great blessing.

"O that the Lord would guide my ways
To keep his statutes still!
O that my God would grant me grace
To know and do his will."

I must close. Please forgive anything amiss in these rambling thoughts. In bonds of love.

(Mrs.) ELSIE LOEFFEL

223½ South 10th St., Mt. Vernon, Ill.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: I am sending you a copy of my dear husband's experience. If you have space for it I would be glad to have it published in the *Signs* as he told me I could send it if I wanted to do so.

I received my December issue of the *Signs* yesterday and certainly enjoyed it. I love the paper, it is a comfort to my poor heart. I feel so lonely and cast down, too unworthy to attempt to write one with the understanding you have. I enjoy all your writings so much and love to read all the good letters. They are glad tidings to my aching heart.

"In all my Lord's appointed ways,
My journey I'll pursue;
Hinder me not, ye much loved saints
For I must go with you.

And when my Savior calls me home
Still this my cry shall be,
Hinder me not; Come, welcome death,
I'll gladly go with thee."

I love the dear Old Baptists and where they go let me go. I have been blessed this fall to attend three Associations, Bethel, Soldier Creek and Obion and we had some wonderful meetings. It was so sweet to gather in heavenly places, meet all the dear Baptists and sing praises to God's adorable name. Elder Dodson, I did not intend to write and take up any of your time as I know you are burdened in keeping the dear paper going. I hope you can all be blessed to carry on with the

paper. A little unworthy sister, if one, in hope of eternal life.

(Mrs.) S. S. KERLEY

Mt. Vernon, Ill.

On April 13, 1875 I was born and now have passed my seventy-third birthday, and I wish to say during the last four or five years, from some cause unknown to me, there has come on my mind a desire of which I wish to write. It is concerning things which appeared to me and as best I can remember it was in November 1892.

One evening when I was on my way home from school there appeared to me the sound of a rushing wind. I looked up to see what made this noise and I saw, as it were, a great flying horse up in the clouds. From its mouth and nostrils were gushing out fire, heat and smoke and its eyes were as balls of fire. It appeared to me that it was waiting for the appointed time to descend upon this earth, and set the earth on fire to destroy the wicked and I felt that I was one of the number. There came over me a dark cloud and I seemed to hear a voice say to me "why are you so great a sinner?" I saw how great a sinner I was and I trembled with fear, and began to weep and cry over my lost and ruined condition, my heart was filled with sorrow and pain. It appeared to me I was to die. I wanted to pray and ask for mercy but no words could I find. I felt that I was sinking down to utter destruction to be consumed by a raging fire and I could not see how I could escape such an awful death for I had lived such a life there was no mercy for a sinner like me. When I reached home I did not want any one to know about my awful condition so went on my way to the barn to take care of the stock. When I had reached about mid-way between the house and barn I paused for a

few moments and looked up to the sun which was sinking in the west behind some clouds. It seemed to me about to fail to shine and I felt I would not live to see the sun rise again. Oh! how dark that hour was to me. I was mourning and pleading for mercy and begging that I be spared to live, and if I could be spared to live to live a better life.

(*To be continued.*)

Lowland, N. C.

DEAR EDITORS AND BRETHREN: Find enclosed my renewal for the *Signs* which is now overdue two months. Please forgive me for this wrong. I enjoy many of the articles which appear from time to time. I know from experience it is hard to be fair with all concerned and at the same time do what one thinks is right. If brethren would write more about Jesus and his love toward poor sinners it would be much more comforting and consoling than about things which lead to confusion.

Jesus is the bread and staff of God's children. If we have him there is peace and life, without him we have nothing. If we have him it is because the Father has given him. He that anoints us in Jesus is God. Never has man been able to reach forth his puny hand and touch the tree of life. There is a flaming sword pointing in every direction that protects this tree of life. If I have an understanding in the matter we have to be carried to him (Jesus) by his Father. It is not as easy to become a Christian as many tell us. We have to be raised from the dead (this side of the grave if you please) and made alive in Christ Jesus by new birth. Then old things are done away and new things begin to take shape. Make us new creatures in the blessed Lamb of God.

Jesus is our Priest and King,
The only source of good;
In Gethsemane's garden he bowed
and prayed,
And on the cross our bond he stood.

While to others (there's but a few
That like to talk my way)
There are other things they have to do,
They will call again some other day.

There's a chosen few who take delight
In singing and praying and like to tell
How that Jesus snatched the brands
From the destruction of a hell.

Dear Brother, if you see anything to this that is worth while you have my consent to carry it in your paper. I again ask your forgiveness for being negligent in renewing my subscription. Yours in hope of a better world in death.

W. R. LEWIS

958 First Ave., Vernonia, Oregon

DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST: I hope you will excuse me for being late. I do enjoy reading the *Signs*. They seem to feed my thirsty soul. So many of the articles and experiences give me hope as I have had similar experiences. I do not get to hear any preaching that is food to me. I hope I am able to know the truth as it is in Christ and I feel it is taught in the *Signs* if I have any spiritual knowledge imparted to me. When I look around it seems there is nothing but false doctrines among the people. They are blinded to the new birth just as Nicodemus was when he went to Christ by night, and I think there are many these days like the foolish virgins, they lack the oil of grace. May God bless his believing children. Yours in hope of eternal life.

A. B. COUNTS

EDITORIAL

RUTHERFORD, N. J.

OCTOBER, 1948

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES

P.O. Box No. 70

Rutherford, N. J.

"And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall hiss for the fly that is in the uttermost part of the rivers of Egypt, and for the bee that is in the land of Assyria. And they shall come, and shall rest all of them in the desolate valleys, and in the holes of the rocks, and upon all thorns, and upon all bushes."

Isaiah 7:18-19.

Elsewhere in this issue of our paper will be found a letter from brother J. W. Barnes, Union City, Tenn., requesting our views on the above verses, as well as other parts of the chapter. Brother Barnes says, "There is wonderful beauty in the language of these Scriptures."

When we first read the verses in question, they seemed so dry and meaningless to us that we really wondered what there was in them to arrest the attention of our brother, and we wished very much he had enlarged upon the beauty he saw in them, in order to give us some inkling as to what was in his mind for our contemplation. For awhile we felt we would have to ask one of our other editors to comply with our brother's request. We finally decided to read the entire chapter in the hope that

God would come to our rescue by causing a ray of light to break through the fog of our mind, and give us at least the desire to consider this portion of his blessed word. We read in the fourteenth verse God's promise of One whose name should be called Immanuel, which, being interpreted, means "God with us;" and it is with the hope that God will be with us in this undertaking that we are venturing to express some thoughts on this chapter, and particularly the two verses mentioned.

The chapter opens with dark forebodings for the tribe of Judah, referred to as "the house of David" in the second verse. What a strange picture we have presented to us! The king of the ten tribes of Israel who had departed from the way of the Lord was making a confederacy with the king of Assyria, who had always been the enemy of Israel, to join together by combining their armies and strength, to go up to Jerusalem, the most sacred of all citadels, against what remained of true worship for the purpose of making a breach between them and setting up a new king who would be subservient to them. If the true followers of our Lord did not possess unfeigned faith to look to him who is able to do exceeding abundantly above all they may ask or think, what would become of them? They could but perish and go the way of all flesh. However, God does not forsake nor leave them. The Lord told his prophet Isaiah to go forth and say unto Ahaz, "Take heed, and be quiet; fear not, neither be fainthearted for the two tails of these smoking firebrands, for the fierce anger of Rezin with Syria, and of the son of Remaliah." What follows shows their efforts would not succeed, for God said "It shall not stand, neither shall it come to pass?" God further declared that within the time which he had fixed (five years) Ephraim would be broken,

that it be not a people. Paul said, "If this counsel or this work be of men, it will come to nought: But if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it; lest haply ye be found even to fight against God." We would all do well to remember these things and seek to know the mind and will of Him, who works and none can hinder, and hinders and none can work.

The Lord said unto Ahaz, "Ask thee a sign of the Lord thy God; ask it either in the depth, or in the height above. But Ahaz said, I will not ask, neither will I tempt the Lord." If we follow the career of Ahaz we discover how corrupt the leaders and rulers of Israel can be, but the purposes of God cannot be thwarted by either men or devils. God's prophet then spoke directly to His people, saying, "Hear ye now, O house of David; Is it a small thing for you to weary men, but will ye weary my God also? Therefore the Lord himself shall give you a sign; Behold, a virgin shall conceive, and bear a son, and shall call his name Immanuel." This prophecy showed how God, according to his matchless grace would remember his people in great mercy, by giving them a Deliverer from all of their enemies and from those who would undertake to lord it over his heritage. His people would despair, to-day if they did not have the blessed assurance that he will watch over and protect them, and provide for all of their needs. In the ninth chapter of this same prophecy is set forth more abundantly the splendor and grandeur of this glorious event. The prophet said, "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." There is such an inexhaustible fulness in this that we feel that all we can do is to join the

Psalmist and say, *Selah*. This wonderfully portrayed our Lord when the Word was to be made flesh and dwell among us, when his glory, yea the glory of the only begotten Son of God was to be beheld, full of grace and truth. This meant the humbling of Himself, by taking not the nature of angels, but the seed of Abraham; nevertheless for the joy that was set before him, he endured the cross, despised the shame and sat down at the right hand of the throne of God. Therefore he ate of butter and honey, and refused the evil and chose the good, which is so abundantly bestowed upon his people here in this gospel age. The house of David was told that before all of this should come to pass, "the land that thou abhorrest shall be forsaken of both her kings." When the God of heaven sets up his kingdom in the hearts of his people, he breaks in pieces all other kingdoms, and he rules supremely, and his kingdom shall know no end.

Ahaz was not what he should have been, for he was full of unbelief, was rebellious and turned out to be a very wicked king. Therefore God moved the prophet to tell him in advance what would befall him and his people in the days that were to come. He reminded him of the other ten tribes of Israel, ruled over by Ephraim, since the days of their departure from the house of David, and in the language of our text God foretold the afflictions he would visit upon them. The prophet boldly and emphatically declared, "And it shall come to pass in that day, that the Lord shall hiss for the fly that is in the uttermost part of the rivers of Egypt, and for the bee that is in the land of Assyria. And they shall come, and shall rest all of them in the desolate valleys, and in the holes of the rocks, and upon all thorns, and upon all bushes." It is a terrible day, indeed, when the Lord

takes vengeance. Paul said, "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." Both Egypt and Assyria were enemy countries of Israel, and it appeared as though God was saying that he would call forth the plagues of Egypt, the numerousness of which was signified by the flies from the uttermost part of the rivers of Egypt, and also for the bee that is in the land of Assyria. Israel had been bitterly stung before by the fierceness of the Assyrians, and they should have known too well the significance of this prophecy, but she has always been a stiffnecked and rebellious people. There could be no question as to the thoroughness in which their enemies would encompass them, for it is declared, "They shall come, and shall rest all of them in the desolate valleys, and in the holes of the rocks, and upon all thorns, and upon all bushes." Lest there should be some little hope remaining for a place of refuge from their tormentors, the prophet went on to say, "The same day shall the Lord shave with a razor that is hired, namely, by them beyond the river, by the king of Assyria, the head, and the hair of the feet: and it shall also consume the beard." It would seem that utter destruction awaited Israel, at the hands of their enemies, not only in their immediate land, but also by those beyond the river, or other lands. God sometimes makes use of the wicked as his sword for the slaying of the rebellious among his people. He can also raise up, as he did in the case of Cyrus, a wicked king to deliver Israel from the power of their enemies. One said, "Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; Just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints." While there is no promise in the balance of the chapter for great prosperity and an abundance, there is a precious promise to the few who, according to God's in-

finite mercy, are left in the land. The word declares, "It shall come to pass in that day, that a man shall nourish a young cow, and two sheep; And it shall come to pass, for the abundance of milk that they shall give he shall eat butter: for the butter and honey shall every one eat that is left in the land." Let the faithful few who follow their Lord in sincerity and in truth take courage and persevere in earnestly contending for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints, for God has promised to be with his people, and Peter tells us that he is not slack concerning his promise. From just one young cow, and two sheep, we see that an abundance of milk was to be given, which would suffice to supply every one that was left in the land with butter. This butter was to be mingled with the honey supplied by the bees of Assyria, which formerly had stung and plagued them, but God would work all things together for their good and for his own glory, so that they could truly say with David, "Thy rod and thy staff they comfort me." Paul tells us that "Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth." A little farther on in the twelfth chapter of Hebrews, he says, "Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous; nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby." It is good when we are exercised over God's chastening of us, for when we realize that he is our Lord, and our Shepherd, then and then only can we say, "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me."

We did not feel that we knew how or where to begin this article, for at first we could see no beauty in the text,

but now it seems we do not know where or how to stop. In meditating upon God's goodness and mercy to his rebellious people, his grace, indeed, appears amazing, and we hope we have been given a glimpse of what perhaps appeared to our brother who made the request. If we have been blessed of the Lord to present anything that may prove to be instructive to our readers, all the praise is due and should be rendered to his great and adorable name.

R. L. D.

"But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you." Romans 8:11.

How can one whose condition is described in the preceding chapter have hope and joy and comfort? If in his flesh there dwells no good thing, if his carnal mind is enmity against God, if he cannot do the things that he would, but finds a law in his members warring against the law of sin which is in his members, so that he has to cry out, O wretched man that I am; how can he walk so as to please God, and enjoy peace of mind? This question the apostle answers in this chapter, and especially in this verse. Let us briefly trace his argument. "There is no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus." He has come "in the likeness of sinful flesh" under the law, died under the curse of that law for his people, and risen again from under that death; and so by that death for sin has condemned or made an end of sin in the flesh, thus raising his people above condemnation, which "the law could not do," in that it was weak through the flesh, being able only to condemn those who have broken it. Thus they experience a hope of righteousness by faith, (Gal. 5:5) when Christ is revealed to them as their salvation; and this

righteousness is that required by the law which is thus "fulfilled in them" as passive subjects of a gracious work, and not by them as active agents. They still have a vile body in which they find dwells no good thing. But the law of the Spirit of life which is in Christ Jesus is experienced in their souls to be stronger than the law of sin and death which is in their members, so that it has made them free from the dominion of that hateful law, enabling them to "walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." They are sometimes brought in bondage under that law, but are never again under its dominion as willing subjects. The love of Christ which is in them is stronger than the love of the world, and makes them willing and desirous to forsake the world, and deny themselves of all ungodliness and worldly lusts, which they are enabled also to do whenever that love is in exercise. "For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh." Their hopes, aims and desires are there. "But they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. For to be carnally minded is death." The natural man is dead, that is destitute of spiritual life; but being dead, he does not recognize his condition, for "the dead know not anything at all," and to talk to him of such a state as death in sin or total depravity, is to talk what is foolishness to him. The man who has been quickened by divine life sees and feels that death in which his body and carnal mind remain; and whenever he becomes carnally minded, that is, lets his carnal mind rule him, he loses spiritual enjoyment, though he may gain some worldly benefit. "But to be spiritually minded is life and peace." When the Spirit of Christ rules our conduct, and the things of his kingdom occupy our thoughts, what peace and comfort we feel, even though in adversity. We may often

think our natural mind will direct us right, because its teachings so well suit the lusts of our vile nature. But we shall always find that it directs us away from the ways of God, away from the ways of life and peace, because it is enmity against God, and is not subject to his law, neither indeed can be. "So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God." How then can I please him, when I so often seem to be altogether in the flesh, and search in vain for anything that is spiritual! How often have I looked as with a special gift of searching sight over the range of my nature, my thoughts and feelings, and found it to be like a wild desert, or rather like a miry swamp full of foul vapors and noxious weeds. And then all at once some portion of the word of God would come into my mind, and bring comfort, and set my soul to singing before I was aware, and make me forget in a moment all these miserable feelings. Why is this? I have often asked. How dare I take comfort when I cannot see anything good in myself? But I can no more help it than I can help receiving the sweet and healing warmth and light of the sun when he shines. This, I think, is what the psalmist tells also of his experience: "In the multitude of my thoughts within me, thy comforts delight my soul." The apostle tells us the mystery in the ninth verse, "But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." Now we can sometimes gather some evidences that the Spirit of God is in us. We have seen and known some of the blessed things of Christ; but "No man knoweth the things of God, but the Spirit of God." 1 Cor. 2:11. We have felt our souls at times enabled sweetly though tremblingly to cry, Abba, Father. But it is only by the

Spirit of his Son, sent forth in our hearts, that we can in faith use that endearing term.—15th verse; Gal. 4:6. We know that we love the brethren; but we are assured that he that loveth is born of God, and that God dwelleth in him.—1 John 4:7-15. And here we have the assurance by the inspired apostle that those in whom is the Spirit of God are not in the flesh. Can we not see that since we received that precious hope, our desires, our hopes, our joys are not in the flesh, that we have a Spirit that looks away from this sinful flesh, away from this vain world, and centers all its affections and hopes upon the precious things which God hath prepared for them that love.

"And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness." It is by the indwelling of the Spirit of Christ that we experience the vileness of the body, and realize that in us, that is in our flesh, there dwells no good thing, that the body is dead because of sin, so that we cannot do the things that we would. "To will is present with us," because of the Spirit of Christ in us, which shows us heavenly things, and causes us to desire them; and which "is life because of righteousness," the righteousness of him who fulfilled the law, rose from the dead, and brought life and immortality to light, communicating it to us by that Spirit. "But how to perform that which is good we find not," on account of the vileness or death of the body, which is therefore felt to be a bondage of corruption. Often the humble saint inquires, "How can I do anything pleasing in the sight of a holy God? If I pray, or hear, or read, sin is mixed with all I do." I am often afraid that all I do is from a fleshly, a sinful motive. How can so sinful a being perform a holy action? How dare I take the name of a holy

God upon my sin defiled lips in prayer, or in an attempt to preach his blessed word? How dare I venture to be baptized, or to baptize one of the Lord's dear children, or take the bread and wine, or walk in any of the holy ordinances? Is it not written, "Be ye holy, for I am holy, saith the Lord?" And again, "Be ye clean that bear the vessels of the Lord?" And is not this body dead because of sin? The answer to all of these questions is, as I understand it, the explanation of the text. I have traced the context from the beginning of the chapter, to show why I understand the apostle to be referring to the present experience of the saints, instead of that change which is to come upon this vile body in its resurrection from mortality to immortality.

"If the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you." He has spoken much of the indwelling of this Spirit, but here it is further described by an allusion to the resurrection of Jesus from the dead through its power. The name Jesus is here used, calling to our minds why he died and rose again, "to save his people from their sins." He bore all their sins. We feel each one of us only his own sins, black and heavy enough to sink us down to endless darkness, but still not such a weight as Jesus bore, for all the sins of all his people were upon him. Yet he was quickened by the Spirit, and raised up from under that terrible load, to be under its dominion no more. "Then," continues the apostle, "he who raised up Christ from the dead." Here the name Christ, or Anointed, is used, bringing to our minds the union that eternally exists between him and his people. "Shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you." Only when thus quickened or moved by the Spirit of the risen Savior can we perform an action that is spirit-

ual and acceptable to God. David prays frequently that the Lord would quicken him. "My soul cleaveth unto the dust: quicken thou me according to thy word." "Quicken me after thy loving kindness; so shall I keep the testimonies of thy mouth." Psalms 119: 50, 88, 107. To quicken is not to change the nature of that which is quickened, but to make it alive, or to exercise it by a life already possessed. The bodies of Lazarus and the widow's son were quickened when the Savior raised them up, but they were not changed in their nature, as they shall be in the resurrection. When spiritual life is communicated to a sinner, he is said to be quickened, that is, made alive spiritually. "And you hath he quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins." Eph. 2:1. But though we possess this spiritual life, yet these bodies are still dead because of sin, with all their powers both of thought and affection. Indeed it is only because of that spiritual life, or Christ in us, that this death is manifested. But when these mortal bodies are moved or exercised by the spiritual life, that is, quickened by it, then the action we perform is spiritual and holy. Thus in baptism, in communion one with another, in ministering to the poor, in preaching the word, and in all the duties enjoined upon the saints, when we are quickened or moved to do them by the Spirit of him who raised up Christ from the dead, the work is acceptable and pleasing to God, who has "worked in us both the will and to do of his good pleasure." Our powers of thought and feeling, which in themselves are natural, and a part of that fleshly body which is dead because of sin, are quickened by the Spirit, and thus enabled to dwell on spiritual things. We cannot always speak or even think of spiritual things. At times we can hardly speak the name of Jesus, or handle the pre-

cious word, or walk in the holy ordinances; our lips, our tongues, our hands and feet appear so vile, and we feel so cold and dead spiritually, while our thoughts can neither fly nor go to reach eternal things, but with the psalmist we have to cry, "My soul cleaveth unto the dust; quicken me according to thy word." At another time, ere we are aware, our souls make us like the chariots of Aminadib; we mount up with wings as eagles, we run in the way of our Savior's commandments and are not weary, we walk in his holy ordinances and are not faint, we handle the word with confidence and delight, while "our tongues break forth in unknown strains and sing surprising grace." Why this difference! He who raised up Christ from the dead has in his faithfulness and loving kindness quickened our mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in us. And the apostle says he shall quicken you, and thus you shall be enabled to walk in his ways, even though the body be dead because of sin; and though you experience this death daily, and feel the bondage of corruption, yet through this very experience the life also of Jesus shall be made manifest in this mortal flesh. 2 Cor. 4:11.

"Therefore, brethren," the apostle continues, "we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live after 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."

I have thus in a very brief and imperfect manner given what I understand to be the meaning and application of this scripture, and I submit it to you, brother Beebe, and to the brethren, to whom also I desire to submit myself in love for Jesus' sake.

SILAS H. DURAND

(The foregoing article by the late Elder Silas H. Durand appeared in the *Signs of the Times* dated April 1,

1875. At that time Elder Gilbert Beebe was living and was Editor of the paper. In the absence of an editorial from our Associate Editor who was to contribute for this issue, we have selected this article for the consideration of our readers. R. L. D.)

CIRCULAR LETTER

To the Ministers and Messengers of the Powell's Valley Association. Greetings in the Lord: As it has fallen to my lot to write a Circular Letter for the Minutes of the Powell's Valley Association, I will try to perform that service if the Lord will guide me in spirit and in truth.

The scripture that I will try to use is "Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them." May I ask you is there anything that was not finished in these six days? I maintain that everything was fixed and finished by the one hand of the Supreme. I believe that every event which transpires in the daily experience of the children of God, or the wicked is but a link in the chain of events which, when manifested, will only reach to a definite or predestinated end. In His infinite wisdom He saw it all completed and finished, and each moment is a manifestation of what was in his work; we could not think that God has ever failed to secure the perfect accomplishment of his own design or purpose in anything that he has ever done.

The entrance of sin in the world was a finished work with the Lord, and every sin his people will commit was amply provided for with him. The wicked is the Lord's sword, and was asleep until the fixed time of God. They positively predicted from the days of Abel in what God spake to the prophets, and by what was signified by all the offerings which were made under the dispensation, according to the prophecy the sword awoke at his appointed time, and the Shepherd was smitten. It is a comforting thought to realize that God has set the bounds of our habitation on the earth, and death, hell and all things are naked before him, and destruction uncovered to his all seeing eye, and yet unlimited by his power and wisdom.

In the beginning of his way he bound up the waters in his thick clouds and gave to the sea his decree that the waters should not pass his commandments. He has left nothing to the vagary of chance, when he sets his throne above the heavens was it to be a place of no power? In controlling the destiny of all things in heaven, and in earth and hell we have evidence that everything was definitely fixed by him. For about six thousand years the sun, moon and stars have

with exactness filled their respective orbits, and without the variation of a second of time from their creation, made their revolutions in obedience to the decree of the Creator. Was it by chance that the heavens declared the glory of God, and the firmament showeth his handi-work? No, nothing is by chance, the invisible things of earth did not come into this world by chance.

There are many things we would like to mention, but for fear we are covering too much space we will come to a close. It is very hard to express just what you believe on a few sheets of paper. I have done the best I know how, and will conclude by saying if God will be with me, and keep me in this way that I go, and will give me bread to eat and raiment to put on until I return to my Father's house, thou shalt be the Lord my God. Yours in hope of eternal life.

(Elder) JOHN WILDER

OBITUARIES

Again it becomes our painful duty to record the passing of a dear brother in Christ, ELDER W. L. HALL, of 808 South Park Ave., Independence, Mo. Elder Hall was born in Floyd Co., W. Va., March 25, 1859, and departed this life May 26, 1948 at his home in Independence, Mo. at the advanced age of 89 years, 2 months and 1 day. He was the second child of a family of eleven children, and the eldest son of the late Elder J. C. and Elizabeth Olive (Harris) Hall. When about three years old, his father with his family moved to Franklin Co., W. Va. where he grew to manhood.

Despite the limited advantages in the field of education in his youth he, by studious effort, acquired a common education which, with his gift of natural ability, fitted him in his mature years to fill various offices of distinction.

Sept. 4, 1879 he was united in marriage to Miss Rosa Lee Akers. I think six sons were born to this union, two of whom, Harry of 422 West 11th St., Kansas City, Mo., and Paul of the home address with their mother survive. He is also survived by three sisters, Miss Lucy Lee Hall, Mrs. May Halley and Mrs. Temperence Brown of Radford, W. Va. and one brother Benjamin F. Hall of Thorps, W. Va. There are also five grandsons and eight great-grandchildren.

Space would forbid us to follow all his activities through life, but suffice it to say he, with his wife, and wife's father and family emigrated to Franklin Co., Kansas in the fall of 1880 where he engaged in farming for a period of ten years. He then went to Missouri for three years and then back to Kansas for six years when he sold the farm he had purchased and bought a smaller tract near Blue Springs, Mo. In the year 1881 Brother Hall obtained a good hope through grace, which hope he cherished as an anchor of the soul both

sure and steadfast. On the first Sunday in Aug. 1883 he was received into Gilead Church of Old School Baptists in Miami Co., Kansas. The first Sunday in Sept. following he rode seventeen miles on horseback to receive baptism at the hand of Elder S. P. Ramey. He was soon thereafter chosen clerk of the church and later clerk of Pilgrims Rest Association which position he held until both church and Association became extinct.

After moving to Blue Springs he and his wife united with Little Blue Church and he was soon called as Pastor of that church. I have no data concerning his ordination. He also had the pastoral care of Sniabar, Oak Grove and Little Flock Churches. Of these the first two mentioned have ceased to function, but the latter retained him as their pastor until he was removed by death and he served them faithfully for a period of about thirty years. It was my privilege to visit Brother Hall about three weeks before he passed away. He was very weak, too weak to talk much, but he did request of me that I officiate at his funeral if he should be taken before me. I told him I would if the will of God be so. The dear Lord saw fit to grant his wish and I tried in weakness to speak from the words of the apostle Peter concerning that glorious inheritance which is incorruptible and undefiled and fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for all who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

I feel the loss of Brother Hall very keenly. He was a lovable brother, a father in Israel and a true yokefellow. His church, his wife and his two noble sons will miss him, but we hope and confidently believe his spirit is now basking in that blessed inheritance that will never fade away. Truly we are going down the valley one by one. Our ranks are becoming sadly depleted. These old soldiers of the cross are being discharged from this war one by one, but how good it is to know they have not fought in vain. They are conquerors and more than conquerors through him that loved them. May the dear Lord comfort his sorrowing widow and family, and strengthen those brethren who have looked and waited Brother Hall's coming these many years, and may he reconcile us all to this sad dispensation of his providence. The dear brother's body was laid to rest in Blue Springs Cemetery. He has ceased from his labors and his works do follow him. May he rest in peace.

(Elder) L. L. SCHENCK

My sister, MRS. LAURA ANN (OSTEEN) GRIFFITH, was born in Hood Co., Texas in 1874, and passed away May 9, 1948. She moved with the family to Denton Co. not long after her birth and made her home there. After she was grown

she received a good hope through grace and united with the Old Denton Creek Church near Keller, Texas and was baptized by Elder A. D. Bourland in 1893. She lived a very devoted Christian always believing in the doctrine advocated by the **Signs of the Times** and conversed freely on the scriptures of eternal truth. She became ill in body and mind and had to be taken to a state institution, but never lost sight of the true meaning of the Bible. The last time I visited her she talked freely of her experience and hope of heaven and immortality and said she felt very low in spirit. I feel it was a great blessing that God gave her that kind of mind in her last days.

After uniting with the church she was married to Mr. Will Griffith to which union were born five girls and one boy. Her husband passed away several years ago which left her in a bad financial condition, but with my help and that of her children she got along and gave her children a good education. We feel that her passing was a great blessing for her as we have a hope that she has gone to a better world where there will be no sorrow or pain, but there is no language to describe what heaven is and what it all means to those that are heirs of God and joint heirs with Jesus Christ. She was sick only a few days before passing away when with two exceptions her children were all at her bedside. She was buried at Perrin, Texas. The names of the children are Mrs. Norma Oxford and Mrs. Elsie Hardy, Ardmore, Okla., Miss Vern Griffith and Mrs. Lizzie Rogers, Fort Worth, Texas, Mrs. Rosie Hill, Borges, Texas and Mr. Vester Griffith, Odessa, Texas. She is survived by a brother, C. Y. Osteen, Perrin, Texas and a sister, Mrs. Belle Griffith, Sweet Water, Texas. May the good Lord bless all her children. Her brother,

(Elder) C. Y. OSTEEN

AID FOR SENDING "SIGNS" TO INDIGENTS

Mrs. W. T. Wright, Tenn., \$1; Mrs. J. W. Free, Tex., \$3; Miss V. M. Jones, N. Y., \$3; A. C. Morton, N. C., \$1; J. R. Davie, Ky., \$2; Mrs. W. White, Ky., \$2; J. Rook, Pa., \$1; Mrs. N. M. Carney, W. Va., \$1; Mrs. J. E. Donlavy, Cal., \$1; Mrs. J. T. Pickerell, Va., \$1; Mrs. F. Wiles, Va., \$3; Mrs. J. H. Gooch, N. C., \$2; Mrs. D. Holloway, Md., \$3; Eld. R. L. Biggs, Tenn., \$1; R. R. Peters, Cal., \$3; Mrs. D. H. Baker, Wash., \$3.

Mrs. I. Wisenbaker, Tex., \$1; C. R. Myers, Pa., \$3; Mrs. F. Brooks, N. Y., \$1; A friend, Can., \$2; J. A. Johnson, Tenn., \$4; J. Vaughn, Tenn., \$1; C. A. Taylor, Okla., \$1; J. M. Cox, Tenn., \$1; Mrs. L. B. Eason, Tex., \$1; J. Y. Vanhook, N. Y., \$1; A. F. Pilchard, Md., \$1; Mrs. A. Hastings, Md., \$2; Mrs. P. Krewatch, Md., \$1; L. W. Warren, Md., \$1; Mrs. A. V. C. Meyer in memory of father S. W. Shipway, N. Y., \$10; Mrs. A. D. Hodges, Va., \$1;

Mrs. E. Loeffel, N. J., \$3; W. W. Jackson, Ga., \$1; J. F. Jacks, Miss., \$1; Eld. P. Jones, Wash., \$1; Mrs. A. B. Justice, Del., \$1.

SPECIAL MEETINGS

The Virginia Corresponding Meeting is appointed to be held with the Frying Pan Church Wednesday, Thursday and Friday October 13th, 14th and 15th, 1948. All ministers and brethren of our correspondence, and others of our faith and order, and lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us. Those coming Tuesday in own conveyance will come to Herndon, Va. and inquire for brother Walter Norman who will direct them to homes to be cared for. Those coming by train will come to Herndon which is reached by the W. & O. D. R. R. from Rosslyn, Va. Trains leave Rosslyn at 1:55 p.m. and 6:05 p.m. The station at Rosslyn is at the Virginia end of the Key Bridge across the Potomac from Washington. Those coming into Washington by rail or bus will take electric car from Union Station or from the Bus Station at 12th & N. Y. Ave. marked "Rosslyn." There are no bus lines running to or through Herndon. For any further information, communicate with the undersigned.

G. C. SPINDLE, Clerk
914 Ninth St., N. E.,
Washington, D. C.

The Salisbury Old School Baptist Association will convene, the Lord willing, with the Salisbury Church, Salisbury, Md., October 20 and 21, 1948. All lovers of the truth are cordially invited to meet with us. Those arriving on Tuesday will go directly to the meeting-house where directions will be given.

(Mrs.) MAUD T. LAWS, Church Clerk
(Elder) D. V. SPANGLER, Pastor

The yearly meeting of the Snow Hill Old School Baptist Church at Snow Hill, Md. will be held on the first Sunday in November instead of the fourth as has been their custom.

BY ORDER OF THE CHURCH

PRICES FOR EXTRA COPIES OF THE "SIGNS"

We will furnish extra copies of the *Signs of the Times* at the following prices: 1 copy, 20 cents; 3 copies, 50 cents; 6 copies, \$1; 12 copies, \$2. These prices do not apply to our regular subscribers who fail to receive their paper, and if they will notify us of the failure we will mail them another copy free of charge.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON'

VOL. 116

RUTHERFORD, N. J., NOVEMBER 1948

No. 11

"IN MY FLESH DWELLETH NO GOOD THING"

Guilty I fall before Thy throne,
In dust and ashes lie;
No goodness in my flesh I own,
For mercy, Lord I cry.

Canst Thou forgive a wretch like me
And bid a sinner live?
Turn Thou my eyes, Lord unto Thee,
And bid me look and live.

I am a rebel guilty, vile,
A wretch before Thy throne;
Canst Thou in mercy on me smile
Bid me Thy goodness own?

Oh, bid these stormy doubts remove,
And let me hope in Thee,
And in Thy grace, and in Thy love
Make me to steadfast be.

Raise me, O Lord, from doubts that plague
That so disdain my peace;
Those bitter doubts within me rage,
Dishonor Thy free grace.

I am so vile, so full of sin
My life of flesh I hate;
Oh, breathe that peace of soul within
The rest within Thy gates.

In Thy dear sanctuary Lord
Within Thy courts to dwell;
Among Thy saints, oh blessed Lord
And with them ever dwell.

Thou wondrous advocate with God,
My King and great High Priest,
In these low grounds Thy feet hast trod
Thou great Melchizedek.

St. Albans, W. Va. (Elder) H. J. BIRD

CORRESPONDENCE

1194 Joy Ave., Akron 6, Ohio

ELDER HARVEY J. BIRD, DEAR BROTHER
BIRD: For some time I have desired to

write you to let you know that I very often think of you and wonder how you and your family are. It was one year ago last month since I last saw you. That time and event will remain in my mind probably as long as I live. That was when I called at your home asking you to fulfill the request of my mother and conduct her funeral service. This you did without any excuses although your wife was not very well at the time and needed your care. Nevertheless you arranged to make the trip the same day, and how nice it was that we made the trip and returned you home that night. Had I felt capable of expressing my appreciation for the kindness that you did in extending your service to our father and family I truly would have written you before.

Have been reading the 1947 minutes of the Old Pocotalico Association and note with considerable interest that your wife is still not well. I also notice the present situation of the Association. I confess with much sorrow that it has been four years since I last met with you brethren at the Association. Sorry to note the death of Elder Tackett, also the changes made by the two other Elders of the Association. It is very evident that my excuses, if I would try to give any, would not be valid. It is about three hundred miles between me and you brethren, and I have to work six days a week here in the factory to keep my family. I have resolved to meet with you this spring or summer if I can arrange it and it is the will of

the Lord.

No doubt you have read the Editorials in the February issue of the *Signs of the Times*. How precious is the doctrine as it is set forth by Elder Dodson and Elder Griffin. To be stirred up by such good preaching makes us feel quite different at times when our mind has forgotten or become so full of carnal things. I would greatly rejoice if it would please the Great I Am to remove this Adam of mine long enough to speak something of interest and comfort to you, but unless he be pleased to put it into this heart of mine, and give me the knowledge of truth by the guiding hand of the Holy Spirit, I will remain as cold and destitute as the polar regions of the North. I feel to speak with the poet:

"Come, holy Spirit, heavenly Dove,
With all thy quickening powers,
Kindle a flame of sacred love,
In these cold hearts of ours."

If I should speak anything as I would like to I hope it would be about Jesus Christ our Savior, who came to this wicked world to do his Father's will: was to be born of the virgin Mary, (of the seed of Abraham) and to live a life of sorrow and grief: to die upon that old Roman cross: was resurrected the third day a full and complete Savior of the church. "And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all." Eph. 1:22-23.

I will quote some scripture from the Song of Solomon, 2:2-3. "As the lily among thorns, so is my love among the daughters. As the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons." I believe this lily among thorns to be the militant church (spiritually) here among all the work

mongering denominations, as they have nothing sweet to feast upon and are called thorns by the Beloved. We see he speaks of his love towards daughters, (plural) more than one. His love is only for *her*, the church. "But Israel shall be saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation." Isa. 45:17. We are speaking of spiritual Israel as there are two Israels, natural and spiritual. And this daughter, his love, so greatly mentioned through the book of Solomon's Song is the whole house of Israel, every member of that precious family, redeemed by his blood out of every kindred, tongue, people and nation.

This apple tree among the trees of the wood we believe to be Jesus among the sons, which are God's called ministers as they are qualified to know which tree bears fruit. This tree is always full of fruit whenever he is pleased to administer his fruit (love) to the church through his ministers (virgins). "Thy lips, O my spouse, drop as the honeycomb: honey and milk are under thy tongue." To us her lips and tongue are his ministers who speak comfortably unto Jerusalem. This honey we believe to be the sweet doctrine of salvation by grace and grace alone. "And I took the little book out of the angel's hand, and ate it up; and it was in my mouth sweet as honey: and as soon as I had eaten it, my belly was bitter." Rev. 10:10. This doctrine is truly sweet as honey when the holy Scriptures are revealed by the Holy Ghost to those who have been born again, and after we have swallowed into the belly it is bitter. That is when it has become digested by our spiritual understanding and we are left alone in the flesh (carnally). "And the Lord said, I have surely seen the affliction of my people which are in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their taskmasters: for I know their sorrows; And I am

come to deliver them out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land unto a good land and a large, unto a land flowing with milk and honey." Exod. 3:7-8. Spiritually we believe that every son and daughter is brought out of Egypt into this good and large land flowing with milk and honey. This happens when one is truly born of the Spirit. They begin to feast upon milk doctrine first. Jesus commanded Peter to feed his sheep; again he said feed my lambs. We understand lamb's food to be milk from the mother sheep. Sheep will only feed upon clean food while a goat will eat even old rags. The lamb's food is the substance of the same food that the mother has eaten only it has been extracted and refined by nature's process. So to live and grow in grace and increase in the knowledge of truth, a new born babe in Christ should swallow only the doctrine as taught by his ministers after it has been refined by the Holy Ghost. Elders are able to eat and digest strong meats and should be very careful how they feed the little ones.

Now back to the honey. We believe the bee hive to be a symbol of the militant church. There are the queen bees, the drones, also the workers who gather the honey (the warriors with the stings). This queen (or boss) lays eggs and migrates the whole colony. The drones are males, they do not work. We believe the queen to be God's wisdom, the mother of us all. The drones, as they are not workers, are not fit for warfare as they have no stings. To our mind they have no place in the sweet kingdom and should be cast out. (Gal. 2:4, Jude 4.) We see the working bees to type the Lord's ministers. They are neither male nor female, so is a truly called minister when he is called upon by the Holy Spirit. He produces the honey as it pleases the blessed Lord

God of Israel to measure out to his hungry children, both male and female are changed into one during this conception of the fruit of the Holy Spirit. This is called neuter. Let us emphasize, we see the little neuter bees going from one flower to another gathering the substances that make the honey. Now they go for water as this pollen they have gathered is not fit for honey until it is mixed with water; then they swallow it into their digestive organs (as we are taught by bee experts) where it becomes pure honey.

As we see God's called and qualified virgins, stars or preachers going searching from page to page, chapter to chapter throughout the Scriptures, many hours, perhaps nights while his family is asleep, they "Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." After all this study and collection of beautiful things, he has to be watered from that Everlasting Fountain, Jesus the fountain of living waters before any of his work is fit for processing; then he drinks it down as good news from a far country. After all this has been expounded by the Holy Ghost it is then digested by the servant of God. Now this honey we call the doctrine of salvation by grace is passed on to the family when called upon by the Lord to "preach the word." "And the house of Israel called the name thereof Manna: and it was like coriander seed, white; and the taste of it was like wafers made with honey."*****And the children of Israel did eat manna forty years." Exod. 2:31-35. We believe this manna to be symbolic of the sweet gospel of Jesus Christ. "Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead. This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die. I am the living

bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever: and the bread that I will give is my flesh, which I will give for the life of the world." John 6:49-51. There is more than one world, and this world He gave his life for truly is the church, as she is still here in a wilderness of woes. She is a speckled bird, the birds round about her are against her. "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." "For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will."

Let us turn back to the Song of Solomon. We see the little dove as a symbol of Jesus and the church. In the beautiful springtime we hear the little innocent creatures cooing to each other, manifesting their love for each other. We are taught that doves only have one mate. How truly this symbolizes Jesus, the husband of the church, his love for her and not for "MYSTERY, BABYLON THE GREAT, THE MOTHER OF HARLOTS AND ABOMINATIONS OF THE EARTH." (See monogamy.) "Hast thou found honey? eat so much as is sufficient for thee, lest thou be filled therewith, and vomit it." Prov. 25:16.

Now Brother, I hope you will not get too much of this. We will conclude by relating a sweet dream we had about ten years ago. My wife and I were given authority to work in a dairy barn. We went into the feed room to get feed for the cows as we were getting ready to milk. My wife began asking, "where is the feed for the cows?" I began showing her the several containers round about us that were full of feed. This feed was snow white and in small flakes. She asked me "what kind of feed is that?" I told her "this is dried honey, feed it to the cows as everything here is milk and honey." Even the

cows were white as snow. Brother, if you think this is sound doctrine and of the Spirit you may pass it on to the *little flock*, if not just cast it aside as I do not want to offer God's little ones anything contaminated. An unworthy wretch in hope of eternal life through Jesus Christ. May his love and guiding hand direct you in the blessed work of his ministry. Amen.

(Elder) GILBERT SEARS

Route 1, Hartford, Ala.

I find in the 35th chapter of Isaiah the prophet foretelling a glorious event in respect to Jesus Christ and his people, the constituents of his church. The prophet uses descriptive words very beautifully and very meaningfully if we can find a receptive place in our hearts for them. I feel a great change necessarily would have to be wrought in the heart before a subject could even conceive of the idea that a wilderness and solitary place could be places wherein a subject thus confined would be glad of such confinement, as I understand a wilderness to be a very desolate and lonely place. I also understand a solitary place to be a place of the strictest isolation and confinement. I feel that a child of grace must be isolated from all things, themselves not excepted, and dwelling in a wilderness in order to be made glad by Jesus.

Now note the impossibility of an Adamite ever making or even desiring to make such a change in order to be with Jesus. Then we see clearly this alone is God's way for the communication of his children with Jesus, and the utter impossibility of a subject communing with Jesus, with earth and the cares of earth, self and selfish interests, motives, intents and purposes all mingled and entwined. "So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. But ye are not in the flesh; but in the

Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." Romans 8:8-9. The desert is an unoccupied region, a region or place pathless, neither is it moistened by the efforts of men, but the prophet avers it shall rejoice and blossom as the rose. Jesus only, is the path in this desert. "I am the rose of Sharon, and the lily of the valleys." S.S. 2:1. Experimentally it is Jesus who makes the desert and waste places into gardens of sweet smelling roses, causing them to blossom abundantly.

Here, my friends, is great rejoicing and melody making in our hearts, possessing the gift of the glory of Lebanon, the excellency of Carmel and Sharon beholding the glory of the Lord and the excellency of our God. Such as the above adds strength to weak hands. Surely the Lord is our strength, our confirmation, our good hope, our all and in all. Ye fearful heart new courage take, the good physician is here: the blind now see, the deaf hear, the lame walk, the dumb sing, the wilderness and desert abound in water now, the parched ground as a pool; springs of water bubbling from thirsty grounds, all dragons removed; grass, reeds and rushes growing in all their splendor; nothing now to molest or make afraid for lo and behold "an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness." While there is a highway please note there is also a way. None are privileged to enjoy the highway unless they legally conform to the laws regulating the traffic upon the highway, and none conform to the traffic laws except those who have been schooled of Him who ordained the highway and predestinated the traffic laws of the way of the highway. This highway was predestinated of God for wayfaring men.

Wayfaring men are not riding in ve-

hicles, they are foot travelers. They travel slow it is true, but the race is not to the swift. There are many illegal travelers on this highway, some riding in new models, some in old; but all riding, apparently to me, only to clutter up the highway; but thanks be to God there is a way and the wayfaring sojourner has been taught, and learned the rightful way of this way. Although the wayfarer is considered by the vehicle gang to be a fool, for not getting him a vehicle and riding in ease and style, he will not err for he will not be affrighted into making the purchase when the vehicle gang tells him there are lions and venomous beasts on that highway, for the wayfarer knows so well there are none there for they cannot go thereon and will not be found there. The wayfarer remembers so well when he sat in solitary, and too, he remembers so well when he received the good news, the ransom price for him had been paid and he was told to go home to his friends and tell how great things had been done for him. So the poor wayfarer trudges on his journey in spite of the cluttered highway with arminian vehicles, feeling to know he is conforming in precept and example to the law of the way of the highway. But why travel this way you may ask? For this reason, this is the one and only safe way for the wayfarer, and remember these people are walking they are not traveling by vehicle. They are people who have been liberated out of solitary and coming up out of the wilderness. "Who is that that cometh out of the wilderness like pillars of smoke, perfumed with myrrh and frankincense, with all powders of the merchant? Behold his bed, which is Solomon's; three-score valiant men are about it, of the valiant of Israel. They all hold swords, being expert in war: every man hath his sword upon his thigh because of fear

in the night." S.S. 3:6-8.

These people fear not because of the good pleasure of their Father to give them the kingdom. Being the ransomed of the Lord they are returning, they could not return had they not once resided. This probably has some little tinge of the doctrine of eternal vital union, but if so to me the more the better for I certainly fancy that doctrine and feel that fundamentally it is the bed rock of Christ and his church. Their returning is with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads, having obtained joy and gladness and all sorrow and sighing now fled. Not glad of having sat in solitary, but glad of having been released or ransomed of God from solitary.

I cannot quite catch the drift when I hear our precious brethren say they are sinners and glad of it, and then enlarge upon the expression even to the extent I feel sometimes of boasting over the fact. For quite awhile I have known that I was a sinner and much of the time felt to be chief, but at no time have I felt glad of it, but rather sad about it. I have felt glad many, many times, in view of the fact that I was a sinner, in a blessed hope that the ransom price had been paid for all my sins and transgressions, and that I would not have that to sigh and sorrow over ever again. This is what I am glad about, and I trust thankful for, as I sojourn in the way of the blessed highway which is the way of holiness, righteousness, peace and sweet fellowship for all wayfaring men wherever they may be. Affectionately in Christ.

(Elder) F. A. COLLINS

(Continued from October issue.)

My poor heart was filled with sorrow and pain, I was trying to pray, pleading for mercy. I felt that my doom was just and that I did not deserve

mercy. My burden became so heavy on me that I fell down on the ground. I thought I had fallen to rise no more and lay there with my face to the ground. I was without hope in this world or in the world to come. How dark and lonely that hour was to me as I lay there waiting for the moment to come when I would pass away only to be cast into everlasting punishment. But as I lay there a great light shone over me and I seemed to hear a voice say to me "arise and see." So I rose at once, I did not see what made the great light, but I saw the light. Oh! how great and beautiful it was, what a joy before me! It seemed, as it were, a garden of great joy. The trees in the garden were in full bloom with every leaf and branch trimmed in pure gold. No tongue can tell how beautiful those trees were. It appeared that nothing could have been added to or taken away from those trees to have made them more beautiful. They were waving and bowing in great joy, praising and worshipping the Almighty God. My heavy burden of sorrow and pain over my lost and ruined condition had been removed from my mind and I was rejoicing over the blessed thought of O Lord how precious and gracious is thy great and exalted name that saved a wretched sinner like me. What a joy this was to me but how soon it all passed away. The garden and all the great things I saw in the garden, and the great light all passed from my vision. I do not know from whence they came or where they went. The joy I had seen in the great light; the thought I would never sin again soon all passed away and never have I seen the light or the trees in the garden again. For a short time I thought I would live a better life, but this all proved to be a failure with me. When I would try to live as I wished to live so many

things seemed to step in my way; then I would find myself doing worse than I had ever done before, all was a failure with me so I have been wondering from that day until this if I was not mistaken in the whole thing which I believe I saw in the garden of great joy. I wonder if I was out of my mind when I saw the great light and the trees waving and bowing in the garden of joy praising and worshipping the Almighty God. If I was out of my mind when I saw those wonderful things, what a joy this life would have been to me if I could only have stayed in that state of mind all the remaining days that I have been spared to live in this world. If I was in my right mind when I saw those wonderful things, why have I lived such a life?

I often doubt it all when I look over the road I have traveled, and the life I have lived and the life I continue to live which makes me fear and tremble. Sometimes I feel that the whole thing that I thought I had seen in the garden and the great light was a failure, but in my poor heart there still remains a hope, and it does not matter how dark the hour may be at times, or the feeling that I have no hope in the world to come, there is something that causes me to remember the day when I felt that I was in the light of a great joy, and the tears fall in streams from my eyes with a hope that Christ, the blessed Savior will come some sweet day and have mercy on me a wretched sinner, and take me to that blessed home to live with Jesus for evermore, blessed be his name. After I had seen those wonderful things I was at a great loss as to what it meant and I wondered if it meant anything to me. The thought came to me that I would not say anything about it until I understood more of its meaning, so I kept it all to myself, but from that day to this there

has been a raging within me, and at times when I would be at church hearing the dear old Primitive Baptist ministers relate what the great God of mercy had done for the poor sinner, I would feel like I would smother to death if I did not tell all about the wonderful things I had seen. Then this thought came to me that I should be careful what I said for I did not understand it myself and I might be mistaken in what I wanted to tell. For many years I kept it hoping that I might understand more about it.

In 1936 I told my wife and three of my friends, then soon after I told them I wished I had not told any one and said nothing more until October 1939 when I wrote to Elder R. M. Brann telling him what I had seen and heard. When I handed him my letter I requested him to read it and return it to me which he did. Then I began to wonder why I had written the letter or told any one for I did not understand it myself and thought I would say no more, but again I wanted to write and tell of the wonderful things I have seen and heard so now I have done so. If I am not mistaken it will be fifty-four years this coming November 1946. Oh, wretched man that I am. My cup of sin is full and running over. I wish to say, that if I ever live in that great city of peace and joy, around the great throne of God beyond this vale of tears, it will be by the grace and mercy of a wonderful God and not for good things that I have ever done in this life.

S. S. KERLEY

2712 N. W. 28th St., Ft. Worth 6, Texas
DEAR BROTHER DODSON: Received your card thanking me for my remittance and informing me it was paid to 1-48. I was under the impression that I was paying in advance. Am certainly sorry and ashamed of this. Find enclosed

check for \$2 for which please extend my subscription through the year.

We read in Psalms 139 "Thou understandest my thought a far off***** there is not a word in my tongue, but lo, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether." I wonder if I am a victim? If so I certainly do not like it. However, be my likes and dislikes what they may, I am compelled to believe they are "being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." I am forced to believe by evidence I have received, supported by my Bible—a record of the word of God—that he made this world and everything in it for no other reason than because he desired to. (Job. 23:13.) I also will contend, which to my mind cannot be refuted, that God is an absolute sovereign who is too wise to make a mistake, and too good to be unkind, carries on his world here and every object of his creation on it under his exclusive jurisdiction, and will finally bring all things to an end, and that end he, as a wise master builder, saw from the beginning. Yes, God is an absolute sovereign and the only one to whom title can be applied. He is absolute in every way. You cannot speak of anything that has happened or come to pass here in this time world that is not exactly according to his will and purpose. David said, "All thy works shall praise thee, O Lord." He is selfish. "My glory will I not give to another, neither my praise to graven images." Isa. 42:8. It seems he asks no help from any of us. Peter tells us, "Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons." The Lord says in Psalms 50:12, "If I were hungry, I would not tell thee."

How glad I would be if I were not delinquent in so many things. I do not know that you can attribute it to my honesty that I am not a thief. I believe

I might be one if I were not afraid of the consequences. I do not mean that law over at the court-house, but that Judge whose eyes are never closed, and who always metes out the reward and penalty in such a way that he never had a case reversed and sent back for a new trial. As for his people, everything that happens to them is for their good and education. All their needs shall be supplied according to his riches. He makes them willing in the day of his power; he draws them with his loving kindness; he calls them into fellowship with his dear Son; he sends the spirit of his Son into their hearts and makes them cry; the Shepherd's eyes are ever over them, and his ears open to their cries; he lays them down in green pastures, and leads them beside still waters; they fear no evil though they walk through the valley of the shadow of death; because thou art with them; thy rod and thy staff they comfort them; they lean on the staff while chastisement is applied with the rod. "Blessed is the man whom thou chastenest, O Lord, and teachest him out of thy law." Psalms 94:12.

It is possible that I am all wrong in what I am saying. If I am please bear with me until it is the Lord's will to show me the right way. At the present I just cannot believe that one must accept the Lord as their personal Savior before he can or will do the things I have mentioned above. That would be the same as accepting a birthday or Christmas present, or any gift that might please me. It would have to be an act of the natural mind, and that we read is enmity against God. However, it is proclaimed all over the country that God sent his beloved Son here to suffer and die for the sins of the world, and from there it is wholly a matter for you to decide, as a free agent, whether to accept or reject. God wants

everybody to be saved, and Christ is pleading to all of them to accept him and be saved. *God wants*. How foolish that seems to me when I think of what my Bible says about his desires, thoughts and purposes. "And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins." Matt. 1:21. Before this Son left here he said he had completed that work. The people for whom he had done that work, I believe, is set forth very plainly in the gospel of St. Matthew 1:1. I quote, "The book of the GENERATION OF JESUS CHRIST, the son of David, the son of Abraham." I believe this is a spiritual generation, and every one included in it will find Jesus precious to their souls, claim him as their Elder Brother, their High Priest and captain of their salvation.

My dear brother, if I may claim such relationship, it is my sincere desire and prayer—when possible—that God will give you and your Associate Editors continued strength and power to proclaim the absolute sovereignty of God in all things both spiritual and natural. I do not know why I am writing to you other than because it is a pleasure and enjoyment to me. Brother Dodson, the Lord has given me many periods of enjoyment while reading your articles in our family paper, the *Signs of the Times*. Brother, is there any way to know the truth other than when you are guided by the spirit of truth? In fact if we are not of the truth will we ever know what it is? Our Captain said, "To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice."

I am sixty-seven years old and the most of my life I have been hearing the preachers say, "If you will then God will." Their sermons were not interest-

ing to me. "Do not resist the spirit of God, but permit it to enter your heart, and accept Christ as your Savior, and then he will accept you as his child" the preachers would say. I used to think my father was rather strict in his discipline pertaining to obedience, honesty, honor, sobriety, etc., but he was, to some extent, successful in instilling some of it into me. When certain things began to present themselves to me and command my consideration and study, and lead me along a path which I have since learned led to a foreign country, I began to seriously consider my future destiny. I would try to reason, does God bless the good, moral and upright man, and condemn the wicked, immoral and dishonest? Finally I decided that the good man, one who lived a moral and upright life in his community, looked upon as a representative citizen, belongs to a church, and applied his knowledge, skill and ability for its successful progress, contributed financially for its upkeep and did what he could to show sinners the way to the Lord, had a better chance to win the favor of God. So I united with the Missionary Baptist church and lived with them about nine years. They highly honored me with very responsible and popular offices; some of which reflected their confidence in my honesty, my counsel was sought and judgment honored. Of course all this made me feel good. Except for the last six months of these nine years things went fine with me. Sometimes I wonder if the positions I held, and the popularity I enjoyed did not contribute to my contentment. During the last six months of this nine years, well I will not go into that now for it would be difficult to find a period. However, will say this: I was made to witness, with all the natural power I could muster against it, the complete destruction of all my eight and one

half years work. Many times during these last six months I feigned sickness as a reason for not being at my post of duty. All I had been doing was condemned and destroyed and me with it. Something seemed to say: I made you for a purpose; I do all you have been trying to do for you and me; I do all the works; I gave you ears, eyes and a heart and will guide you in the exercise of them for I am God and there is none other. My mind was led into many channels of thought too numerous to recite; they were peculiar and unheard of to me. However, in all of this, it was very strongly argued with me that God was having his way in it all, and in a kind and loving way preparing me to see it his way. After traveling this far on my journey I was still stubborn and rebellious.

Will try to close out now. Suffice it to say, if not deceived, in this confused and bewildered condition, about two o'clock in the morning a voice seemed to speak to me, "Come unto me and I will give you rest; I am the great Physician who never lost a case; I put you in that horrible condition and I can lift you out; I kill and I make alive; I wounded you and I can cure you and none can deliver you out of my hand." I arose and went out into my back yard. It was a beautifully clear night. The moon and stars appeared to be outstanding in their brilliancy, and singing in complete harmony a most beautiful anthem in praise to their maker. If not deceived, it was here in my back yard that I was made to see and confess the immeasurable and unbounded perfections of Jehovah, and with it received a little hope that I was one of those peculiar people. This event of about ten minutes duration was one of the most outstanding in all my journey. This was about eleven years ago. After groping around for about another

year I offered myself for membership to those who preached my experience and they suffered it. Since that time I hear, every third Sunday, some good preaching by Elders C. Y. Osteen and W. A. Little telling what God has done (not will do) for his people, and this is food and drink to my hungry soul.

Dear Brother Dodson, may it please the Lord to supply you with strength and power to continue the great work he has raised you up to do—the Editor of our great family paper. Its contents are so precious to me. Hope you will remember this old wretch when you can. A sinner saved by the unmerited favor of God if at all.

W. H. STAGGS

Route 3, Bassett, Va.

DEAR ELDER DODSON: I notice my time for renewal to the *Signs of the Times* has come. I believe we are now living in the last times. The apostle Paul called it "perilous times." "Yea, and all that will live godly in Christ Jesus shall suffer persecution." The Old Baptists suffer persecution for believing in a God of all power, being first and last our salvation. Others say it is left to the creature to work it out. In his writings Paul says, "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." This does not sound like it is left to the creature, but God worketh it. If that be true it could be nothing more nor less than God's salvation and our salvation. To know this of a surety is to have the evidence, the witness within. Christ our Savior left it to his Father's will. Sometimes we can look back in our experience and see Him when we are made to cry for God's will to be done. His people look to him for all their help and feel their need before they ask of him.

Three days after uniting with the church I was dissatisfied with myself. This was a burden to me for several days. Brother George Dyer being the pastor asked if I could keep the commandments. I answered "the best I know how." I feared I could not keep them or understand them. I had told my husband I could not be baptized with that feeling. The burden became so heavy I was almost smothering for breath. I remembered saying, "Lord have mercy. Why did I unite with the church? If it be thy will take this burden off, if not continue it." All of a sudden, it seemed in a moment I was changed to a happy state of feeling and rejoicing. The burden was gone. I then wanted to be baptized. When my husband came home Tuesday night from his work he could tell a difference as soon as he saw me and asked why I was so happy. A line of poetry came into my mind and I was singing it most of the evening. "This world is not my home." The title of the song, "Oh! land of rest." A little bird singing in the tree sounded like he was singing, "Cheer up, cheer up." I told my husband what had happened and that I wanted to be baptized. He said he had prayed to find me better. Since that time the commandments are not grievous. "Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. Honor thy father and mother: which is the first commandment with promise." Eph. 6:1-2. I believe this means to honor them in the faith, not to those taught of men, as Paul was when persecuting the church and blaspheming, teaching the doctrine and commandments of men, thinking he was doing God's service. After he was taught of the Lord he preached the gospel of sound doctrine—Old Baptist doctrine of being saved before the foundation of the world and from it. He received it not of man neither taught it but by the revelation

of Jesus Christ, that our faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.

The worldly religionists say, "get ready to meet the Lord." Paul said, "Be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear." "Let us watch and be sober." I believe he meant to watch these false teachers and not be seated with them, be ye separate for they are deceivers and cannot endure sound doctrine.

I was raised with the Primitive Baptists, my mother being one although she did not make me one. I have always loved the doctrine of God, our Saviour.

(Mrs.) MATTIE UNDERWOOD

AN EXHORTATION TO THE CONSTANCY IN THE FAITH

"Ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints." Jude 3.

Of all the Christian attributes, meekness is one of the most admirable. It is to be sought after, prayed for, and earnestly cultivated by the regenerated Child of Grace. The quality of meekness in a human soul is an open portal through which can be glimpsed views of the Celestial Character. The godly and the reprobate alike respect the meek; in the humble faces of God's poor children there is reflected an intangible peculiarity which is not carnal in origin or manifestation.

The meek we have had with us always. Those who fear God and obey his commandments, through the operations of the Divine Spirit in their souls, are of necessity meek. For who can survey his wealth of sins, and not be reduced to meekness? Or who can recall the blackness and depth of his temptations and shortcomings, his lack of perseverance and his enormity of transgression, and not cry in agony, Fall on

me, O ye rocks, and cover me, O ye hills: hide me from the wrath of Him who sits on the Throne! There can, indeed, be no argument for a retraction of the quality of meekness. Would that we all were endowed with this holy nature, for the meek alone taste of the comfort of God. While the meek are the most powerful example of God's sovereignty over the human will which can be observed anywhere, they are not a potent factor in the enlightenment of the unregenerated elect. God's children who still labour under their yoke of sin are not attracted to the truth by the example of the meek. They must be brought through fire and water before they are reduced to that condition where they humbly and tearfully plead for mercy from the Most High. Rather than attracting such unenlightened sons, the property of meekness repels them. There is nothing in service and lowliness of heart which seems desirable to carnality.

The spiritual regeneration of an elected soul is the most profound operation which can ever take place. When the sinner's hardness of heart has been broken down, when he has been shown his complete impotency, and when he has been made to realize the awful depth of his total depravity, he despairs of his own strength, and throws himself upon the disposition of the Lord. He is led through many and varying degrees of temptation; he is sorely chastised and despised by the world. But the *faith* of the true son of God never falters; And as God gives his elect strength to believe, so he also gives them strength to contend for that belief.

There has been a growing tendency among the Children of Grace in recent times to accept passively the denunciations of unbelievers and unenlightened elect. That the doctrines of truth should be reviled by those who do not believe or do not understand them is only na-

tural, but it is decidedly unnatural that their advocacy by enlightened believers should be neglected. It must be granted that the elect themselves are but weak and impotent creatures, incapable of successfully defending with their own strength the sacred truths which grace has revealed unto them. But it becomes the necessity of every believer to earnestly and continually pray to the Lord for aid in the advancement and encouragement of divine truth.

Enemies of the gospel of Christ have attempted to pervert its true message from earliest times. The instruments of misinterpretation and distortion have been so cunningly applied to the Scriptures that the vitiated product is made to apply to devils as well as angels: salvation is offered indiscriminately to all who will accept it; God is represented as depending for power upon the wills of his creatures; the divinity of Christ is rejected; the completeness of the blood atonement is denied; and man is hailed as *summa cum potentia* in the universe.

This exceedingly palatable and universal theology is acceptable to even the most confirmed of sinners, and it consequently receives the enthusiastic support of all classes of infidels. This is the religion of the world. It is accepted by the world, believed in by the world, and vigorously contended for by the world. There are many of the very elect of God who have been led astray into an acceptance of these hellish proclamations.

Opposing these principles are a very poor, small, and ridiculed group, who have learned that they are lies and inventions of the Devil through their own bitter experience. They are the enlightened elect of God; they have been baptized with fire and steel, and they know the worth of truth. Yet even among these Children of Grace, resistance to

the attacks of Satan is sadly inadequate. There has crept into their ranks a certain passiveness, a spirit of non-reaction. Where they ought to be enlisting divine support in their struggle against evil, they are instead succumbing to it. It cannot be too strongly emphasized that these elect have no power within themselves; all that they are, they owe to Jesus; all that they know, they owe to the Holy Spirit. If they are ever to overcome the Devil and his teachings, they must do it with divine aid alone.

And how is this divine aid secured? Prayer is the answer to all the saints' ills. Let the Children of Grace deliver their souls into the hands of the Invincible One; let them cry unto God for aid in vanquishing the wicked and proclaiming the truth, and He will not fail them. O brethren, trust not to carnal security! Put not your faith in man, or man's power, but let your sword be the Sword of the Lord and of Gideon, and your refuge the eternal Rock of Ages. HENRY TOWNSEND, JR.

Gantt, Ala.

DEAR MRS. YOUNG: At last I will try to answer your sweet letter as my granddaughter is here and willing to write for me again. I am late answering but you know there is a time for all things. If I could have answered each time I thought of you it would have been every day. What is this other than love? Love is something we cannot manufacture ourselves, and it is something we cannot see but feel. I have thought of giving my belief on love. There are two kinds, a fleshly love and a spiritual love and one differs from the other.

Fleshly love can be made by the creature but spiritual love must come from above, there is no connection between the two. It is by the Spirit that we know the spirit and the way we know

the spirit is the way we feel. I know that I love you but it is by the spirit I understand in your writings. If we be the children of God we love one another if we never see each other, but it is by corresponding with one another. We read, "Comfort yourselves together, and edify one another" and in so doing it makes our hope strong. "Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted" and the comfort comes by feeling. You ask me to write my experiences so there is probably no better time to make an attempt. I have been asked that by others but have been fearful that I might deceive.

When I was a boy in my teens I thought of dying and going to the bad place. My mother, father, brothers and sisters were church members and I wanted to be with them. I thought the church was the place for good people and I heard them say you must pray to be good so I thought I would try to pray. I would hide myself, fall on my knees and ask the Lord to have mercy on me and make me a good boy. Time and again I would do likewise but got no answer. At last I thought I would go one more time and if he did not hear me I would give it up. One day about eleven o'clock I slipped off by myself in the woods and dropped down by an oak tree begging the Lord, as I thought, the last time to have mercy on me, and at once I saw a light come around me brighter than the sun it seemed to me. All I could say was Lord have mercy on me, and I believed he was having mercy on me which made me shed tears. When I arose I looked around to see if I had been seen, and seeing no one I made my way back toward the house and the thought came what would I tell mother and father if they should ask why I had cried. I thought of going by the spring and washing and then they would not ask

me. I did that and thought now I have it hid they cannot tell. As I walked in the gate I saw father sitting near the door reading the Bible, and before I entered the door the light came again and I broke into tears. I thought what shall I say now and it came to me to ask him to pray for me. I did and he called mother into the room and told her, "Joe wants me to pray for him." We then knelt and he prayed. I do not remember his prayer as I was rejoicing and shedding tears at the time. When we got up mother said dinner was ready. Neither of them asked me a question and I was proud. Then I believed I was a fit subject to go to the church and the first chance I had I went and offered myself. The preacher took me by the hand and asked if I wanted to talk. My answer was—NO. Then he asked me the question if I believed the Lord for Christ's sake had pardoned my sins and my answer was—YES. They received me by giving me the right hand of fellowship and the next day was set for baptism. I was baptized and thought I was saved and went on thinking no more concerning it.

In a few weeks father and I were working near the place where I had seen the light, building a fence. The thought came to me you have got to die and I was miserable the rest of the day. Got to die. That thought came about the same time of day—eleven o'clock. We went to dinner and as soon as I got a chance I told mother I had to die and she asked what was the matter with me. I said, "It just came to me I had to die." She said, "Ah, do not pay any attention to that, you will not die." I believed I would and could think of nothing else. I wanted to tell my brother but he was at school. When he came that evening I met him and told him I had to die. He wanted to know why? I said, "Nothing, only I had to

soon." He had nothing to give for comfort, he wanted to get it off my mind. He said, "Let us go see Willie Dunsford and go hunting tonight." I said I would go but it was not satisfying to me. I told Willie the same thing and he wanted to know why I had told him. He said, "Joe it may be conviction working on you." I said, "No, I have united with the church and been baptized." No more was said and after we finished our stay we went home. When I awoke next morning I did not think of death any more. I went along with that church in peace believing it was the true church until I was grown.

When I was twenty-three I married a widow lady belonging to the Hardshells. She and I would have arguments about our religion, I believed in mine and she in hers. I thought I knew mine was right and hers wrong. I tried to get her to quit and come to mine but that she could not do and we went on for several years. We sold our place in Talpoosa County and moved to Crenshaw County. There was no church of my denomination there. I had a desire for a church home and wrote my pastor asking him to come down as there was a good opening for a church. He answered saying he could not come and for me to pick a church I liked best and unite with them as there was not much difference. I decided I would go to the Methodist as I thought they were the next best. I attended one of their communion meetings. They took the bread and wine and dismissed. They lacked foot washing and I said I cannot live with them. Next I thought of the Missionaries and I happened to be at their communion and they did like the Methodists. I said, no I cannot live with them, I will have to go without a church home. I knew the Hardshells were wrong so I will go along doing the best I can and if it is for me to be saved I will be.

That is my first experience but there comes another. I said I would never unite with the Hardshells. I went to one of their meetings. There were two deacons to be ordained and two preachers were called to assist. The names of the preachers were Mills and Hudson. Mills preached in the morning and the hardest sermon I ever heard but I could believe it. Hudson preached in the evening and I liked his preaching, and while he was preaching I thought if I ever unite with you people I would want you to baptize me but that will never be. A few weeks after the meeting Mills and I met in imagination and we argued over his sermon. I thought I could convince him he was wrong but when we finished our talk he had convinced me I was wrong and the bright light shone around me. I said, "thank the Lord they are right, I see now I have been wrong all the time." It brought lots of rejoicing for me to see things I had never seen before. I said, "when I finish the row I am plowing I will go tell my wife." I took my mule out about eleven o'clock and was feeling good. I thought I will make her feel good by telling her, but before I got near the house that all left me and I said, "I will tell her nothing." I still had a desire to want to hear the Hardshells preach and went as often as I could and enjoyed them. The members saw there was a change in me and suggested that I unite with the church. I told them I would if I could have Mr. Hudson baptize me and they said they would have him. He sent me word to unite with the church and he would come for the baptism whenever the time was set in the week as his time was filled on our days. I offered myself the first chance and was received and Wednesday the next week following was set for the baptism and he came. My wife said, "suppose Brother Hudson is not

there." I replied, "if it is ordered by the Lord he will be there, and if not some one else will be present to act." There were two to be baptized and the other member had a choice. His choice was Elder Henderson. Brother Hudson was there but Brother Henderson failed to come. After I was baptized they asked the other candidate what he wanted to do since Elder Henderson was not there. He said, "if Brother Hudson can baptize Brother Scott he can baptize me and he was ready." Brother Hudson baptized him without any trouble. He was a one armed man but I did not give that a thought. I have had no doubt since that it was ordered of the Lord, but I have had doubts of myself.

Dear Sister Young this is what my hope depends on. You can do as you please with what I have written. Let me know what you think of it. I want to tell you the first church I united with was called Bible Christian. Their practice was like the Primitive Baptists. They believed in an experience of grace and baptism. They believed in communion and washing one another's feet. They did it at night is one difference I see. Excuse all mistakes. Your brother in hope of eternal life. J. S. SCOTT

AID FOR SENDING "SIGNS" TO INDIGENTS

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CORRECTION

In the article of Brother H. L. Rogers second column, page 195, Sept. issue it reads: The brook is that broken river that proceeds from the throne of God. Should read: that brook or river.

Editor.

EDITORIAL

RUTHERFORD, N. J.

NOVEMBER, 1948

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

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Rutherford, N. J.

"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men."

Luke 2:14.

This proclamation gives the reason for glorifying God in the highest, which was the embodiment of Christ Jesus in the salvation of poor sinners and which was in God's purpose from before the foundation of the world. We hope it has been given to us to behold the abundance of His mercies for poor sinners; and with the apostle Paul we feel to be the chief of sinners, and but for the grace of God we would be numbered with the ungodly. For sinners, such as we feel to be to behold the abundance of grace given us in Jesus Christ, we are made to say that it is by grace we are what we are and then we can give glory to God in the highest. Seeing we are bought with a price: therefore we desire to glorify God in our body, and in our spirit, which are God's. I Cor. 6:20. If we had no knowledge of being redeemed from the captivity of the devil, and being turned about to serve the living God and having his directing hand guiding us, we could not glorify God for it. We know in our mortal

flesh there dwells no good thing, and to have the demonstrated power of God leading, keeping and making us to realize salvation is of the Lord, we are made to glorify God in our bodies for these evidences in our daily lives, which brings forth the declaration that by the grace of God I am what I am.

On that memorable night the highest heavens were glorifying God, and by that virtue the star appeared in heaven to guide the wise men of the East to where God's only begotten Son was wrapped in swaddling clothes, and laid in a manger. Luke 2:7. And before we glorify God we must have the virtues of an heavenly birth. Jesus confirmed that to Nicodemus when he said, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." John 3:3. "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent." John 17:3. The highest in which the heavenly host was saying glory to God, we feel was God's only begotten Son, for he was as one brought up with God, and there was none equal with him, and the proclamation to glorify God in the highest would, to our mind, infer that His Son should glorify God, and we here quote the language of Jesus: "These words spake Jesus, and lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, Father, the hour is come: glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee: As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent. I have glorified thee on earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the glory which I had with thee before the world was." John 17:1-5. God has exalted

Jesus higher than the heavens, for heaven is God's throne, and Jesus is at his right hand a Prince and a Saviour, which to our mind is being glorified in the highest, and through him we were given peace with God from the just condemnation of death, which the transgression of God's holy law meted to all of Adam's posterity; by the sufferings and death of Jesus many were given peace with God, which were as many as the Lord our God shall call. Their names were all written in the Lamb's book of life from before the foundation of the world. Rev. 13:8. They are heirs of the kingdom of God, and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ the Son of God, and their peace is the peace Jesus told his disciples he would give them, and not the peace of the world. John 14:27. These words are explanatory to the peace on earth, which was proclaimed by the heavenly host, and for a poor sinner to have a hope in Jesus is a foretaste of that eternal peace given by the Lord Jesus Christ. The good will of the eternal God to the creature He created in his own image has been manifested by the sending of his only begotten Son into the world to suffer, bleed and die for man's redemption from the condemnation of his law, and for this golden scepter we would apply the quotation, "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." When we are exercised to meditate upon these things, and our hope embraces the faith to believe that all power both in heaven and in earth is given to Jesus, and he will save to the uttermost all that the Father hath given him, brings to our realization the good will of God toward men. These evidences constrain us to ascribe greatness unto our God and to feel the

surety of salvation to all the elect in Christ Jesus, and we can say with the apostle Paul we are "persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Roms. 8:38-39.

According to our understanding we have called attention to these things in order to give you the meditations which it has been our lot to enjoy, and we pass them on to our readers of the *Signs of the Times*, with the sincere desire of our heart that you may glean from these few lines joy and gladness to your hearts by which you can join in the sweet chorus of the heavenly host and say, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men, for such a great salvation.

The Hymn on page 233 in Durand and Lester's hymn and tune book and No. 499 in Beebe's Collection, expresses it better than we can:

"Jesus is our great salvation;
Worthy of our best esteem!
He has saved his favorite nation;
Join to sing aloud of him!
He has saved us!
Christ alone could us redeem!

When involved in sin and ruin,
And no helper there was found,
Jesus our distress was viewing;
Grace did more than sin abound!
He has called us,
With salvation in the sound.

Let us never, Lord, forget thee;
Make us walk as children here:
We will give thee all the glory,
Of that love that brought us near:
Bid us praise thee,
And rejoice with holy fear.

Free election, known by calling,
Is a privilege divine;
Saints are kept from final falling;

All the glory, Lord, be thine:
 All the glory!
 All the glory, Lord, is thine!"

We feel to express our appreciation for the forbearance of our readers of the *Signs of the Times* during the year 1948, and we hope to continue with such as will be to the glory of God and the edification of the saints. We remain as ever your unworthy servant for Jesus sake.

C.W.V.

THE RICH MAN AND LAZARUS

In an attempt to make clear our understanding of this parable, for such we consider it to be, we shall quote the full account of it as it appears in the sixteenth chapter of Luke, and in order to simplify our efforts for clarification of various points we shall place the number of each verse in parenthesis as a matter of identification:

(19) "There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day: (20) And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate full of sores, (21) And desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores. (22) And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried; (23) And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. (24) And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame. (25) But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented. (26) And beside all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass

from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence. (27) Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house: (28) For I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment. (29) Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them. (30) And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent. (31) And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead."

We have referred to the above scripture as being a parable, and we feel we are justified in so doing. In the previous chapter we have three parables presented: the parable of the lost sheep, the piece of silver, and the prodigal son. In the chapter which we are considering, we have the parable of the unjust steward, and as we see it the account of the rich man and Lazarus is likewise a parable. If indeed it is a parable, then it is not to be interpreted according to the wisdom of this world, and neither is it to be literally understood. We believe there is a key to this parable, beginning with the sixteenth through the eighteenth verses, immediately preceding the narrative. The sixteenth verse reads, "The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it." Here we have the Legal and the Gospel dispensations referred to. The seventeenth verse shows how all-exacting the law is by declaring, "And it is easier for heaven and earth to pass, than one tittle of the law to fail." The eighteenth verse says, "Whosoever putteth away his wife, and marrieth another, committeth adultery: and whosoever marrieth her that is put away from her husband committeth adultery."

While a literal interpretation of this should have a wholesome effect upon society, its true significance undoubtedly concerns Christ and his church. Paul writes in a similar vein to the church at Rome, saying, "Know ye not, brethren, (for I speak to them that know the law,) how that the law hath dominion over a man as long as he liveth? For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband. So then if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress; but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man. Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God." Jesus had also (13 verse) said, "No servant can serve two masters: for he will either hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon." There can be no division of one's allegiance. Jesus said the first commandment of all is, "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength." The "fairest among women" represented by Solomon as a beautiful type of the Bride of Christ, said of her Beloved he is "the chiefest among ten thousand***yea, he is altogether lovely." The Psalmist asked, "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee." When the poor Samaritan woman, with whom Jesus talked at Jacob's well, confessed that although she had had five husbands, yet he whom

she then had was not her husband, Jesus commended her and said unto her, "Thou hast well said, I have no husband: For thou hast had five husbands; and he whom thou now hast is not thy husband: in that saidst thou truly." She had been married or clinging to the law in all of its fulness, but now she is dead to the law, by the knowledge of Christ, and is therefore free to be married unto him. We feel to stress the point that the devotion of the church to her husband should be absolute, and we regard spiritual adultery as a most grievous sin. The Lord presented Eve as a beautiful type of the church when he said unto her, "thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee."

When the Lord first called Abraham, he said unto him, "Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee: And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: And I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed." The Lord later made a covenant with Abraham, and renewed it with Isaac and with Jacob, and we do not believe that any one can read the Old Testament scriptures without being impressed with the fact that the Jews were manifestly God's peculiar people. In manifold ways God used them as types of better things in his kingdom to be established on earth. He also gave them inspired prophets to foretell what the future had in store for his people. God brought National Israel up out of Egypt, delivering them at the Red Sea, and he led them through the wilderness into the land of Canaan, which flowed with milk and honey. They were given kings to rule

over them, and their wise men had no equals. They had their Levitical priests to guide and instruct them in all the pomp of the ceremonial law, and for centuries their great temples were famous. However, their own prophets foretold the end of those days, and when Jesus came he told them plainly of the utter destruction of all those things by declaring that not one stone of their temple would be left remaining upon another. Jesus plead with them, saying, "O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, thou that killest the prophets, and stonest them which are sent unto thee, how oft would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings, and ye would not! Behold, your house is left unto you desolate."

We do not understand that this parable is intended to apply to two particular persons, but rather that it definitely concerns the Jewish nation and the kingdom of God here in this world. We will now, without further preliminary remarks, take up some of the outstanding points in the parable. Verse nineteen says, "There was a certain rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared sumptuously every day." This is an excellent description of the Jewish nation for many centuries, and the purple and fine linen denote the glory with which they felt to be clothed, with no lack apparently for anything, as the record is "they fared sumptuously every day." The twentieth verse reads, "And there was a certain beggar named Lazarus, which was laid at his gate full of sores." This certain beggar characterized under the name of Lazarus was none other than Jesus himself. He was laid at their gate full of sores, symbolic of his humiliation and sufferings. They would not even permit him to be born in their inn, and he had to come into this world

in a manger, and was wrapped in swaddling clothes. The prophet said before hand that he would be as a root out of dry ground to them, and they would see no comeliness in him nor desire him. Instead they continually heaped upon him ignominy and shame, and contemptuously called him Beelzebub, the prince of devils. Finally, they crucified him in the place of a murderer, placing a crown of thorns upon his sacred brow and gave him vinegar to drink. Verse twenty-one reads, "And desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from the rich man's table: moreover the dogs came and licked his sores." He came unto his own, but his own received him not; he trod the wine-press alone and of the people there was none with him. No man gave unto him among the Jews, but we are told that the dogs came and licked his sores. We believe here is where the Gentile nations were brought into fellowship with him, and they ministered unto him by licking, or soothing his wounds. In the twenty-second and twenty-third verses we are told, "And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried; And in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom." It is noteworthy that the beggar died first, presenting as we see it the fulfilment of the law by the death of our Lord, who brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. He was carried by the angels to Abraham's bosom, the gospel church or kingdom of God here in the world. He was the first born among many brethren. Jesus himself foretold of his departure and reappearance when he said to his disciples: "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house (the gospel church)

are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also." It is said, "the rich man also died, and was buried; and in hell he lift up his eyes, being in torments, and seeth Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom." When this Jewish economy was destroyed it meant the end of that dispensation or age, and for nearly two thousand years now the Jews have seemingly, to us at least, been without any visible evidence of God's special divine favor and mercy. They have been scattered throughout the world, lost their identity as a nation, (recently there is some semblance of the birth of a nation) and no trace of their Levitical priesthood, being persecuted and tormented and it would seem as a people that they are passing through a veritable hell indeed. Perhaps there are some among them in this day and time who are not without hope, but are having visions and seeing Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom; if so they are undoubtedly portrayed in the twenty-fourth verse, where it is said, "And he cried and said, Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame." This rich man claims Abraham as his father, and himself is presented as begging for mercy, and desiring that Lazarus, or Jesus (his Messiah) might come and dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool his tongue. Only Jesus can dip his finger in the water of life and cool the tongue that is tormented by the fiery flame of the law, which demands full payment, and there can be no release until all of the debt is paid, and only Jesus can pay it. In the twenty-

fifth verse, the relationship is acknowledged, as it reads, "But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things: but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented." One's sins must need be brought to his remembrance before he truly repents, or looks away from self for comfort. The twenty-sixth verse reads, "And besides all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed: so that they which would pass from hence to you cannot; neither can they pass to us, that would come from thence." Jesus said, "No man cometh unto the Father, but by me." He had just said, "I am the way, the truth and the life." No earthly creature can bridge that great gulf that is fixed between law and gospel; and truly only Jesus will be able to deliver his people among the Jews. We believe the apostle Paul saw the indescribable horror in which the Jews are in, as they are cut off from the promises of God, when he said, "For I could wish that myself were accursed from Christ for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh: Who are Israelites; to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises; Whose are the fathers, and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen." He had seen the tame olive branch cut off, and the wild olive branch grafted in, but he was given faith to believe that when the fulness of the Gentiles be come in, they (the Jews) would be grafted in again, and so all true Spiritual Israel shall be saved in the end. Being assured of that, Paul could well exclaim, "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!" The narrative of the rich man is continued in the twenty-seventh and twenty-eighth verses, as follows: "Then he said, I pray thee therefore, father, that thou wouldest send him to my father's house: For I have five brethren; that he may testify unto them, lest they also come into this place of torment," but "Abraham saith unto him, They have Moses and the prophets: let them hear them." (twenty-ninth verse.) The Jews are, indeed, in a very sad plight, and those of them who have any spiritual vision at all are, no doubt, crying unto God day and night to remember, in mercy, their father's house, the seed of Abraham after the flesh, who are to follow, lest they likewise come into that place of torment of seemingly receiving only God's wrath. Their "five brethren," indicated they were still under the law, and Jesus said to them when he was here in the flesh, "Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me." As Abraham said, they have Moses and the prophets, and they are still under the work system of do and live, thinking they have eternal life by the works of the law, and they will have no final peace until they clearly see that they all testified of Jesus, and look only to him for salvation. The rich man continued by saying, "Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent." (thirtieth verse.) It is as hard for one under the law to repent as it is for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle. Therefore Abraham replied, "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead." (thirty-first verse.) So we see it is utterly impossible to convince by the reasoning powers of mankind those who are under the bondage of the law. Nothing short of the quickening power which wrought

in Christ in raising him from the dead will perform the miracle. There must be a re-generation, a new birth. Jesus said to Nicodemus, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." In God's own time the Jews will undoubtedly be brought into a knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus, and then they will know what it means to rest in Abraham's bosom, or to partake of the joys that are to be found under the dispensation of grace, the church or kingdom of God here in this world. They will be made to know that it is not by works of righteousness which they can do, but that it is because of His mercy he saves them.

Experimentally speaking, we believe the only way to the joys of God's salvation is by first experiencing the tortures of that hell where one is made to feel to be without God and without hope in the world. The Psalmist said, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me," before he said, "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want." We believe there is recognition between characters who travel this way. The one who is under conviction under the law suffers the torments of hell, feelingly cut off and doomed to eternal banishment from God's presence, and without hope of ever being accepted into the fold of God's people. The one who has experienced deliverance and has partaken of that joy which no man can take from him, realizes the blessedness of being in the kingdom of God, and while his heart may go out in deepest sympathy for the one in distress, he cannot pass back into that condition of condemnation where he was without hope, and neither can he do anything by way of delivering the soul that is being tortured. Only Jesus can do helpless sinners good, and if a word of encouragement or comfort is spoken, it must be in the name of Jesus, and all

will redound to the honor and glory of God's matchless grace. We are made to hope that we have been a witness to the things which we have here tried to present to our readers, and we trust they will be given to think on these things and if there be any praise, give it all to God.

R. L. D.

OBITUARIES

MARY BARON-nee-CAMERON was born in Lancashire, England, April 11, 1872, and departed this life April 2, 1948, making her stay on earth 9 days short of 76 years. She came from England about October 1911 to join her husband in Wyoming. She moved to Cleveland, Ohio about 1919 and was baptized at the Salem Strict Baptist Church there. After that she lived in Colorado until the death of her husband. After his death she came to Seattle to be near her brother and where she could sit under the doctrine of Free and Sovereign Grace. She loved to sing the songs of Zion, and when questioned for the reason of her hope she was ever ready to give it. Though unlettered, having little education, she would show others the magazines she could read. Whenever possible they would get together at night for reading and prayer. They miss her in the brother's home as she was regular in coming when they commended themselves to their Father's care.

Her brother was making some repairs in her home when she related to him a beautiful vision of Jesus, pointing to the place where she saw him. She said he looked at her and said, "I go to prepare a place for you." She said in reply, "Where Lord?" He gave no answer but vanished. This was about two weeks previous to her passing.

We feel that our loss is her eternal gain. Services were conducted by her brother, J. W. Cameron. She leaves to mourn her passing, her brother and family in Seattle and other relatives in this country and England. Written by request.

(Mrs.) EFFIE PARKE

SISTER FERNETA JANE RUSH was born Aug. 9, 1859 and died March 4, 1948. She had been a member of Little Zion Church since May 1925. She was a sweet sister in Christ. During her later years she was afflicted and could not often meet with the church, but she was a firm believer in the true doctrine and we have the comfort of a good hope that all is well with her now. She leaves to mourn her departure her husband, one brother, nieces and nephews, besides the saints to whom she was dear. The services were conducted by Brother J. W. Cameron of Seattle, Wash.

She was laid to rest at Centralia, Wash. Written by order of the church.

(Elder) L. F. ADKINS, Pastor

(Mrs.) EFFIE PARKE, Clerk

POETRY USED AT SERVICES OF SISTERS BARON AND RUSH

Sleep on, beloved, sleep and take thy rest.
Lay down thy head upon thy Saviour's breast.
We love thee well, but Jesus loves thee best.
Goodnight, Goodnight, Goodnight.

Calm is thy slumber as an infant's sleep.
But thou shalt wake no more to toil and weep:
Thine is a perfect rest, secure and deep.
Goodnight, Goodnight, Goodnight.

Until the shadows from this earth are cast;
Until He gathers in His sheaves at last;
Until the twilight gloom be overpast
Goodnight, Goodnight, Goodnight.

Only Goodnight, beloved, not farewell.
A little while and all His saints shall dwell
In hallowed union indivisible.
Goodnight, Goodnight, Goodnight.

Until we meet again before His Throne.
Cloth'd in a spotless robe He gives His Own,
Until we know even as we are known.
Goodnight, Goodnight, Goodnight.

BROTHER MICHAEL RUSH, husband of Fernetta Jane Rush was born in Lewis Co., Wash. and lived his entire life here. He was baptized without presenting himself to the church, but later on Dec. 1, 1936 he became a member of Little Zion Church at Chehalis. He died in June 1948 and was buried without the knowledge of his church, Mr. Earl Van Duren conducting the services. He was laid to rest by the side of his wife. In this we bow to the ruling of Almighty God, knowing beyond any doubt that he doeth all things well. Written by order of the church.

(Elder) L. F. ADKINS, Pastor

(Mrs.) EFFIE PARKE, Clerk

LEONIA ANNA BURNS was born in Van Zant Co., Texas, Dec. 13, 1870, and passed away Feb. 23, 1948, making her stay on earth 77 years, 2 months and 10 days. She married Hubbard Anderson Jan 16, 1890 and to this union were born three boys and one girl. Dewey, the daughter, now living at Sipe Springs, Texas, together with the help of her husband, Charlie Lewis, has been constantly with her parents caring for them for the past fourteen months until her mother's death. The boys are all deceased.

Sister Anderson's experience of grace dates back to girlhood. She united with the Primitive Baptist

Church in 1932 and lived a firm believer in its principles and doctrine until her death. She leaves to mourn her loss Brother Hubbard Anderson, daughter Dewey, one brother, one sister, many nieces and nephews and a host of friends. She was blind for a number of years before passing away. The unworthy writer held several meetings at her home during her affliction of blindness and she did enjoy the meetings.

When she passed away her daughter phoned me that their request was for me to come so I drove the 512 miles that day, four other Old Baptists went with me. We had to go out of the way on account of high water washing out a bridge. On one detour it looked impossible to cross that muddy creek in a car, but the Lord was with us and we made it, arriving there at 1:30 in the morning. A few days after the funeral Brother Anderson wrote me several had talked to him, saying if that was Hardshell Doctrine they were too as that was what they believed. Others said if I was ever back there they wanted to hear me again. The Lord moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform.

Weslaco, Texas (Elder) E. B. AULT

**IN MEMORY OF J. FLOYD WILLIAMS
WHO PASSED AWAY APRIL 26, 1946**

It has been over two years since he left us,
'Twas very, very hard to say farewell;
I tried to ask the Lord to ever guide us.
And be near us where we have to dwell.

He was so patient in all his afflictions,
So kind and loving to his dear ones at home;
Words cannot express how much we shall miss
him,
But we believe he is happy, never more to roam.

His vacant seat no one can ever fill,
And in God's time each one shall have to go
To that great beyond prepared according to His
will,
For 'tis written in His word, he has purposed it so.

He said if 'twas God's will he was willing to go,
His prayer was answered through the return of
our boys
From service which our Government called them
to go,
To wage war no more, we hope, and share eternal
joys.

Many hours we spent together talking of God's
mercies,
How He had blessed us all through trials and pain;
And may He remember this poor worm of the dust,
'Till He shall call me to my home above to remain.

May He bless me to mingle with His people here,
To share their sorrows, burdens and grief;
And may I sing with them the songs to me so dear,
Until I shall glory in His cross and find relief.

My remaining days God alone doth know,
May I spend them in praise to His holy name;
And through all my afflictions, pain and woe,
Praise Him who is of endless fame.
Keeling, Va. (Mrs.) MATTIE B. WILLIAMS

OBITUARY

ELDER J. F. BRIGGS was born Dec. 1, 1875 and departed this life Oct. 24, 1947. He was married three times, two companions having preceded him in death. To the first union four children were born, two of them preceded him in death. Surviving are one daughter, Mrs. Dossie Loveless, Crockett, Texas and Joseph C. Briggs, eight grandchildren and one great-grandchild. He also left a faithful daughter-in-law, Mrs. Pearl Briggs, who loved him very much.

His third marriage was to Mrs. Maggie Elmore, June 5, 1947 who is left to mourn his death with the children and grandchildren. During his three weeks of illness he was very patient, never complaining and always ready to give his patient, loving wife and friends a smile and words of thanks as long as he could speak. He left many friends. He was faithful until the Lord called him home; abe in doctrine and discipline; contended for that grand old doctrine of election and predestination of all things. He was gentle and kind to all, a kind, loving and dutiful husband and father. The church and his children will miss him, but most of all his dear companion who is left in great grief. I will miss him greatly as we were companions in gospel bonds. We fought the same battles, suffered the same conflicts and rejoiced together with joy that none but God can give. At the time of his death he was pastor of the Old Salem Church, six miles east of Teague which church he loved very much. I do not have the date that he united with the Old Baptists. He was liberated to exercise in public and soon after was ordained to the full work of the gospel ministry. Written by one that loved him for the truth's sake.

(Elder) W. O. BEENE

(Re-published by request to correct errors and give more details.)

The yearly meeting of the Snow Hill Old School Baptist Church at Snow Hill, Md. will be held on the first Sunday in November instead of the fourth as has been their custom.

BY ORDER OF THE CHURCH

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'THE SWORD OF THE LORD AND OF GIDEON'

VOL. 116

RUTHERFORD, N. J., DECEMBER, 1948

No. 12

CORRESPONDENCE

Box 315, El Dorado, Ark.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: I am happy to have the privilege of sending you a new subscriber to the *Signs*. He wants his subscription to begin with the July issue so that he may have the full publication of the letter written by Mrs. Louise Newman of Memphis, Tenn.

Brother Dodson, I enjoyed your editorial in the July issue entitled, "TWENTY-FIFTH ANNIVERSARY," and was so glad you were given a mind to quote the letter from your father. It seemed so good and pleasant for it to be shared with the readers. It is comforting to read letters and articles written by the fathers in which they have been able to expound the doctrine of God our Savior. We are reminded with great joy that this blessed truth we hope we are enabled to love and contend for at this present day and age is the same that has been loved and contended for in all ages, and a few have been taught it and contended for it out of each and every generation. It has never changed and will never change. God is unchangeable, likewise his doctrine. His truth and his divine nature shall never change. A blessed truth to hope to be enabled to believe, because of his mercy and grace in revealing the truth to his children—vessels of mercy. Jesus Christ the same yesterday and today and forever.

We are persuaded this not only embraces the unchangeableness of the blessed Savior, but the truth as it is in him—his gospel—and everything con-

cerning and pertaining to him and the salvation of his people, those given to him by the Father before the world began. Of the unchangeableness of the Lord the prophet said, "For I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." His counsel is immutable and is confirmed by his oath. Such a comfort this is to God's humble poor when they are enabled to meditate on this glorious and blessed truth, "That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and which entereth into that within the veil." That which is within the veil is the blessed Savior, the forerunner of all his dear children, those he died for, made the atonement for and redeemed. All that the Father gave him. "Whither the forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus, made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec." Heb. 6:20.

He is the forerunner. He is not going to enter or may enter depending upon some condition or something to be done or performed by man or any contingency, *but is entered* and entered for us, *his elect children*. And it is an entry that there is no doubt about because *he is entered* and it is an entry for them that will not fail nor cease to be, for he is "made an high priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec." Yes, it

is sure and steadfast. No doubt about it being forever, no doubt about it embracing all his elect children that were given him by the Father. But are we embraced therein? There is the serious question with us. Are we embraced therein? If so we are sure to live in the sunlight of his eternal love in that upper and better kingdom forever and forever. For if embraced: then the apostle in reply to the question of "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?" goes on to say, "For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." May the God of all grace bless and keep us all in all his ways unto the coming of his everlasting kingdom is the humble prayer of your little brother in hope and in bonds.

(Elder) W. A. SPEER

Route 2, Ripley, Tenn.

EXPERIENCES

I was born in Crockitt Co., Tenn. close to Crockitt Mills, Sept. 21, 1895. My parents were Lonnie Carroll and Meddie Rice White. They moved close to Ripley, Tenn. when I was three years old. We moved to Blytheville, Ark. in the fall of 1904 and on Jan. 25, 1905 my mother died. Father moved back to Ripley in April 1905. Mother being gone I felt a great loss. I had a dear little sister and my father to love but I missed mother. I traveled on in sadness until I was thirteen years of age and then united with the Presbyterian Church in Flippen, Tenn. The next year I was sick during the months of July, Aug. and Sept. with typhoid fever.

In Nov. the deacon of my church came to see me, saying he was making

up funds to buy some Christmas presents for the preacher's children. I told him I would give him some money as soon as I could, that I had been sick three months and could not work. Then he said, "get the money as soon as possible and bring it to the church." I was displeased with the matter and asked him if the Presbyterians believed in visiting the sick, that I had been sick three months and only one of them came to see me. He made some excuses and went home. I got the money and the next meeting day took it and laid it on the organ for the last time. I saw that day that I did not believe what they did. I did not mind giving the money but I did not believe their doctrine.

A few years later I told them to take my name from their book. I felt I was lost but I did not know where to go. I wanted to do something for myself. One night I dreamed I saw a ball of fire coming out of the West and it came by where I was standing. It was about five feet from the ground but did not burn anything, just moving in a straight line. I traveled along in sadness until Feb. 1911. I married J. H. Kerley, son of Elder J. W. Kerley. He preached that salvation is of the Lord, not by money, not by man. I began believing the Old Primitive Baptist doctrine. In 1938 I had another dream. I was baptized, the preacher and I being the only ones there. When I came out of the water the preacher was gone. I walked to the bank and Sister Onie E. Stafford was waiting for me. She was a true believer in Christ. I said, "Sister Stafford, the sky looked foggy a few minutes ago but now it looks clear." She said, "Yes, you follow me."

In a few months I began talking to Elder Kerley. I did not tell him about my dreams. I had told him I wanted a

home with the Old Baptists and that I believed salvation is of the Lord. He said, "Bessie I do not doubt you in the least." On Nov. 11, 1945 I asked for a home with the Old Primitive Baptist Church in Memphis, Tenn. and was baptized by Elder H. G. Brown on the fourth Sunday in May 1946. If I am saved it is by the grace of God and the Lord Jesus Christ. I want to live in the Lord's will, and when my time is over here on earth I want to sleep in his name if it is his will. I am now fifty-two years old, just traveling on. I have my dear husband with me and six living children and one grandson. Two children passed away. I close with lots of love to the household of faith. From a little sister the least of all if one at all. Saved by grace if saved at all. May God bless us all and lead us with his right arm.

(Mrs.) BESSIE KERLEY

I was born April 15, 1890, growing like other babies until I was eighteen months old. I was the tenth child and the baby of the family. At this age while the older children were playing with me they burst some peach seeds and gave me a kernel. This I could not chew and half of it went down into my windpipe. I could not cough it up and an abscess formed and burst through to the outside. I did cough it up after one year but was left with one lung.

My father was a poor man and had to work and some nights had to walk the floor and carry me. Mother said I loved my father and when they would take me to the field to see him I would cry for him to carry me while he worked. I am not wanting pity as I believe it is all due me. If Christ suffered for me I should suffer also. I could not do or have things like other boys. I would wonder why not. I think I know why now, it was not God's

will. I never went to school much as when I was strong enough I had to work being the only boy at home.

Before going farther I want to say I am not ashamed of the way I was raised. The Lord was in the matter. Father was a Primitive Baptist preacher and while I do not want to boast I believe he was a big one. As to mother, there was none better. On Feb. 1, 1911 I married Bessie Lee White. Thanks be to God I have her yet and she is just as sweet to me now as then. Nov. 13, 1911 our first baby was born. She was sweet and smart as could be, growing fast until the third Sunday in Aug. 1912 when she was stricken helpless in both body and mind. Her condition remained that way all her days on earth which were thirty-two years and two days. Seven other children were born to us, six of which are living.

As a boy sometimes I would think I ought to be better and I would try to straighten up as I call it. In a little while I would see myself in worse things than ever. In Feb. 1918 I was made to believe God ruled all things. While in the field I was taken with the flu. I hated to go to the house. Something seemed to be telling me we would not all get through it. We lost one daughter. While on my bed I saw some mighty things. I saw a church torn and blown away, and the thought came, that was not my church the right church will live forever.

In the fall of 1921 there was an Association at father's church. I was blessed to have company in my home the next week after that. I had a dream, I was told to pray and I knew not what to do. I awoke but could not pray. I went to sleep again believing if God did not have mercy on me I was lost, and the world without end. I fell asleep and the same voice said, "Do not pray until you are told to do so." I

was mixed up but I would not tell any of the good brethren though it did not leave me. The next fall I went to another Association, the Bethel, held with Cain Creek Church. On Friday night at a good old brother's house was the first time I ever heard the gospel. I did not sleep much that night. The next morning I went to the barn to help feed the stock. When I got back to the house the dear old saints were out in the yard washing and talking. I was so filled up I could not stay there and went behind the house and leaned upon a fence where they could not see me cry. In just a short time my father came out and called me. I turned around and there stood the old man the sweetest I ever saw him. He was lighting his pipe. He said, "go eat your breakfast." That was all he said. Everybody looked happy and I felt lost. I met a man there that did not belong to the church but I thought he ought to. That man stayed in my mind. His name is Earl Jones. I believe if I am a child of God or ever will be I was on April 15, 1890. If so I was chosen in Christ before the world was.

In Jan. 1924 I was sick with death staring at me until March 8th. I could see old satan on the walls of my room clawing at me. I thought of something I had read, the Lord giveth and the Lord taketh. I thought he would do his will and I did not fear death. That was not my time to go, I had not gone to the bottom. I went on down to where I wanted to die and get away from my family.

I went to hear the Primitive Baptists preach all I could. On Nov. 11, 1945 I drove up in front of our little church in Memphis, Tenn. The preacher and deacons were standing by their cars. Something said to me, "talk to them." I told the preacher that I wanted a home with them. He told me that he

knew it and when they opened the doors of the church I asked for a home. They took me in and I was baptized the fourth Sunday in May 1946. On Thursday before I was baptized I dreamed that I was in a crowd of the brethren when I wanted to ask my father something. I went to him and this man I saw at Cain Creek Church was there just as he was when I saw him the first time, and my father was just like he was at that time. On Monday after I was baptized everything went dark with me. It seemed to be the worst time I ever saw, but that night everything became plain, and I wrote to Brother Brown, the preacher who baptized me. The first dream I was made to believe that Christ prayed it for me in the seventeenth chapter of John. If he does not tell any one to pray it is not a prayer.

I do not know whether this is an experience of grace or not, but if it is I do know it is not anything that I have done that brought it on. These are just part of the things I have seen in my life. If any one gets comfort from this give God the praise. I am less than nothing and do not know why God has spared me all this time any more than it has been his will. I hope I am a brother in Christ, and if saved it was grace that did it, not I, a sinner.

J. H. KERLEY

Route 1, St. Albans, W. Va.

"O that the Lord would guide my ways
To keep his statutes still!
O that my God would grant me grace
To know and do his will!"

O that my God would lead by his Holy Spirit in the strait and narrow way, into truth and righteousness; O that he would keep me from evil, evil surmisings, backbiting, jealousy, tattling, thinking or speaking evil against a brother or sister, from gendering

strife. O that my God would deliver me through the abundance of his grace from vanity, vain glory, from becoming vainly puffed up of a fleshly mind, from false zeal, from trusting in the cursed arm of flesh. O that he would bridle my tongue, that unruly evil in me, the tongue whom no man hath tamed, whom no man can tame, which tongue sets on fire the course of nature, and it is set on fire of hell. O that my God would lead me and keep me at the feet of my brethren, and at the foot of the cross of Jesus, my Immanuel. O that he would move in me by his spirit to continually esteem others better than myself and make me to always know the *beam* is in my eye and the *mote* in my brother's eye.

O that my God would bless me with tolerance, forbearance, the spirit of forgiveness, bless me with charity which covereth all and hides a multitude of faults (sins), bless me with love, (which love is the fulfilling of all law,) (against which there is no law.) Bless me with brotherly kindness, gentleness, meekness, take away my heart of stone and give me a heart of flesh. O that my God would cause me to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith I am called, that I might serve him in meekness and fear, and worship him in the beauty of holiness. O that he would make the labor of my ministry that labor of love, and so ordain in this labor a fruitful ministry to the comfort of his saints and the glory of his name.

O that I might share the love and fellowship of my kindred in Christ, (although I am altogether undeserving of their love or notice.) O that he would make me fervent in prayer, and tear each cursed idol out that dares to rival my God. O for restraining grace, for deliverance from presumptuous thoughts. O for the spirit of resignation, for reconciliation before my God, that I

might stand resigned to my hard, rugged and tedious lot, that I might kiss the rod, and when the furnace I prove, that I might in my Jesus glory in tribulation, knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience experience; and experience, hope; and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts whereby we cry Abba, Father. O that in my beloved I be made to be a recipient of *grace, mercy and truth*. And finally when the warfare is ended, when sin is finished, to awake in the likeness of my Redeemer God, to see him as he is, and be like him, and be satisfied. O blessed hope! My soul leaps forward at the thought. O blessed Savior! how great is thy grace. In love for the cause of Christ, and in hope of the mercy of God.

(Elder) H. J. BIRD

Topsham, Me.

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON, DEAR BROTHER: This A.M. I suppose you will be preaching God's word and how I would love to be where I might hear you. I have nothing of interest to write, nothing new, the same old story ever new as I have been alone all winter with no one to talk to. I always think back to you, a wonderful day back in Sept. 1925. I have been favored this winter and I hope I give thanks where thanks are due. Sometimes I am deep down in the valley but I never lose my hope or faith. I know He will come again and the peace he brings with him is blessed for he says, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." What more could we ask? Sometimes when I hear and read so much of the awful things that happen I wonder, still I know it is ordered. There are so many religious societies,

and people are striving to save people, still what crime and dishonesty goes on throughout the world. To me there is not much Christianity in this world but I do not wonder, and should I tell people what I think they would say I was not in my right mind. I have to be careful what ideas I advance. Perhaps I should not but father told me never to argue over religion. He was a good father and I never found his words untrue.

We are told about the last days, still there are those who do not believe it, and how they are striving for God. I have a friend here who has been in the church since she was twelve. She can repeat the word of God but does she understand it? She will pull it apart, I think, and asks me all manner of questions. She read me this one day, "I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the Lord do all these things," and asked me if I believed it. I said "yes," she said "I don't." I pitied her. Then last night she said, it says, "It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps," do you believe that? I said, "yes." Then she said the foolish thing I have heard other people say, "If you believe that why don't you go and have all the good time you can, it would not make any difference?" Well, I said, "You say you have had an experience; so have I, do you feel like going out and raising a disturbance? I am glad God keeps me, I feel he has opened my eyes and has given me a hope beyond this world and will keep it to the end. It tells you of people that would deceive the very elect if it were possible." Then she said, "I should not think you would have any need for prayer." Little she must know how my prayers go out to God to keep me. I know I have no strength in myself and it strengthens my faith for I know there is nothing God cannot do.

She was studying her Sabbath School lesson and wanted me to help her but I was not much help. I know I am evil and full of sin and I mourn and weep for it is against Him and him only I have sinned, and he bore the sins of all his people. Little wonder he sweat drops of blood.

I am given small books to read like, "A line a day," "The Upper Room," "The Secret Place." Well, Elder Dodson I do not need them. When I want to read I turn to my Bible and always find comfort. Does it not say, "Be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine." But who keeps me? It is not of myself I know. I had a book sent to me, "Two Worlds" by Milford Hall, Sr., I have read it and turned to read it again. The brother has suffered and I think I know something of that suffering, so that makes us brethren, does it not? Does it not say, "It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God." I hope God holds me steadfast in the faith he gave me. Well Elder Dodson here is my letter. It is not what I would like to have written but it is what I have so please accept it with charity in your heart. Will close with a prayer for you that God will bless you in your walk of life, give you comfort as needed and open up to you the meaning of his word to his honor and glory. My love and fellowship.

(Mrs.) RACHEL POTTER

KINGWOOD CHURCH LETTER

—to—

DELAWARE RIVER ASSOCIATION

DEARLY LOVED ONES: It is our desire to express gratitude to our heavenly Father for this happy privilege of addressing you, our sister churches, and of bringing to you again our annual message concerning the welfare of our church since you met with us at Locktown one

year ago. It is in love and appreciation that we greet the Hopewell Church and wish it God's blessing in the hospitality it is extending to our Association. May those labors and responsibilities which we know you have gladly assumed, in preparing for and conducting this meeting, realize for you the full measure of joy you have held in anticipation. May you find pleasure in meeting with the visiting brethren and friends, and spiritual joy and comfort in listening to the truth as it is presented in the varied aspects by those of God's messengers sent among you.

We come humbly before both the Hopewell and Southampton Churches with whom for so many years we have been united in love and close kinship, feeling that we may lay before you our joys and our sorrows, our praises and our lamentations, believing that you will hear us patiently and stand ready to give us guidance wherein you see that we err. It is a mystery that those professing the hope of being "Children of the heavenly King" should be more ready to voice their sorrows and lamentations, than their praises and thanksgiving but it is so with us, even though we have been amply shown and can aver with Jeremiah that "The Lord is good, his mercy endureth forever." We have been richly blessed in being shielded from the great dangers and visitations of woe that imperil so many in our confused and disquieted world, and have been openly kept as objects of God's care and love, receiving from his hand health to permit us to go about our duties, all necessary temporal comforts, and beyond and above these the blessing of peace among us, and, we hope, the humble desire to be kept in the way. Sinners we are, totally unfit to let fall from evil lips words pertaining to the great and holy God who reigns in majesty in the heavens and

works his will in all his creatures, yet we are irresistibly drawn to, and bound by, the belief that through the amazing love and sacrifice of his beloved Son, God can look upon us as his children.

In our foolish wisdom we are wont to feel that if God would bless us with additional membership, we then should be, as a church, more worthy your esteem and fellowship, but in this we are forgetting that in God alone lies our sufficiency and strength and though in his love he denies those desires we feel to be right, still his ways are ever just, holy and perfect.

Through our lack of faith we question. We look for signs and proof that we are not deluded, saying as did Job before us, "Why, seeing times are not hidden from the Almighty, do they that know him not see his days?" More often do we pine in doubt than rejoice in his continuing love and watchcare. Indeed, among us the blackest of sins, unbelief, abounds. Such knowledge bows us in deep humility. Our walk before God is careless, far from what it should be; our words are vain and unbecoming. Pray for us that we may worship rather than deny him. These are some of the weaknesses we would confess to you, asking whether your fellowship can reach beyond the bounds of our perversities and still embrace us. If it can we believe that we shall have your prayers that we may become more Christlike and remember his ways to walk in them.

We continue to assemble on the second Sunday in each month at 3 P.M. during the months from April through November. Those meetings are our oases, made so by the patient and loving ministrations of two of God's faithful witnesses, Elders C. W. Vaughn, and R. L. Dodson, who, unless providentially prevented, come to us in turn. It is then as we hear them repeat the

amazing messages of truth which God gives them to bestow upon us that the clouds of doubt dispel, and in our hearts we feel to say, "Lord, I believe; help thou mine unbelief." Our congregations are small but constant. As in years past our dependence rests upon those without, upon those friends who so graciously stand ready to assist us as we need, and who are so much a part of us, loving and loved for His sake.

We come amongst you hungering for that spiritual food we trust God's ministers present have been vouchsafed to give us. Gladly we have them know the appreciation we feel for the services and comfort they bring us. How truly blest we feel them to be, to be fitted and called for their exalted position. May they share in the comfort and gladness which they bring to others. We are grieved that two voices so often heard in our Associational meetings in bringing the glad tidings of eternal life for condemned sinners, have since our last session been silenced in death. We miss these brothers and mourn with all others who loved them, but in a better sense we rejoice that their cares and sorrows are ended and that for them hope has now blossomed into the full fruition of ineffable joys in the realms of eternal bliss.

As we now meet for these seasons of worship may it be God's pleasure to stir our spirits within us. May heavenly manna be provided for those who hunger; may the thirsty drink freely from the water of life; may the light of his countenance shine upon those who walk in darkness; may the needy be supplied from the riches of God's grace; may those who stand afar off be brought near; may the faith of the faltering ones be increased; and may the weary find a haven of rest, so that as later we resume our accustomed

walks in life we may all do so strengthened in our belief that the Lord is, indeed, our shepherd, and we shall not want, and though we walk through the valley of the shadow of death we will fear no evil for he is with us, and may we, too, feel that his rod and his staff comfort us.

(Mrs.) ALWILDA R. STRYKER

TO MY CHILDREN: I will tell what I feel is my experience. You know I united with the Methodist Church when a child and had no use for the Primitive Baptists. One day I heard Brother Pace preach. I thought it was the best sermon I had ever heard, and it was for it was the first one I had ever heard. From that I began to see I was a lost sinner. I began to read the Bible and found things that would comfort me and also that would condemn me. One evening I laid the Bible aside feeling I was not fit to touch it, and thought I never would again. When I laid it down I saw a deep pit right at my feet as black as night. I thought that was the place for me and felt I would be cast into it. The next morning I got my hymn book thinking I would sing and may be that would drive my burdens away. The more I sang the better I felt. I looked out at some red-oak trees in the yard and they were the prettiest I had ever seen. The Bible says, "all the trees of the field shall clap their hands." It looked like they were praising God. My burden was gone. If this is not an experience I do not have one, but I hope I have a hope that I would not give for the world.

Dear children, I will try to write a little of my faith and my belief to leave here with you when I am gone. Some of you or all of you may be made to believe it some day as I was made to believe it and am glad of it. I believe

in an all wise and all powerful God. He has the power over all things in heaven and earth for he created all things, and he has said, "whatsoever is under the whole heaven is mine." I believe he can and will do as he pleases with that that is his own for he said, "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." He viewed through time and decreed the end from the beginning and from ancient times the things that are not yet done. What he has decreed must come the way he foresaw and purposed it should come. God created all things from the least to the greatest. I believe he created them for a purpose and that they are fulfilling that purpose. I believe God has an elect people and that they are those he (Christ) died for and that not one of them can be lost. Oh! if I only knew that I was one of them I would be satisfied, but I only have a sweet little hope that I would not take the world and all that is in it for. I believe God gave me the hope for he showed me that I was nothing and less than nothing. I still see that I am nothing for I can do nothing without him. He is still taking care of me, directing my steps in this sinful world. I hope he will guide me on to the end. I believe God is a sovereign who is omniscient, omnipotent and omnipresent, and is therefore, the first great cause of all causes. I believe he is the source of all power and the powers that be are ordained of him. I believe in the purpose of God so as to exclude all chance. I am glad that I believe in the eternal fixedness of God's purposes, that he declared the end from the beginning, the things that are not yet done saying, "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." I will soon pass through the chilly waters of death, and if I can be made able to look to that strong God-given faith, to the God I hope I love,

and be borne to that haven of rest from the troubles of life, it will be a great sinner saved by grace.

MATTIE BOYD

(See obituary in this issue.)

THE NECESSITY OF OUR RESURRECTION
AND THE MANNER THEREOF

by

the late Elder W. L. SLUSHER

To start with I will say I believe that it is I, this old body you see walking around, that is benefitted in the resurrection. I do pray and trust, or hope I do, that God will lead and direct my poor, weak, faltering mind while I try in my weakness to say a few words on this great and grand subject. Yes, and one that is so sweet and precious to me. If you destroy the resurrection of this old body then you have destroyed my hope.

Paul wrote in Romans 8:23—"And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body." Yes, Paul like all the rest of God's chosen elect ones was waiting for this when his body should be changed and brought forth a spiritual body. Yes, this is what all of God's loved ones are waiting and hoping for when we will see him as he is and be like him. David said, "I shall be satisfied when I awake, with thy likeness." Again we hear Paul saying in 1 Cor. 15:12—"Now if Christ be preached that he rose from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead?" Then is Christ not risen? The 14th verse reads, "And if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain." In the 19th verse, "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." Yes, these old bodies is what Paul is talk-

ing about for he says, it is sown in weakness and raised in power, it is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption, it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body. I believe Paul was talking about these old bodies that we have. They are the ones that get the benefits or are benefitted in the resurrection.

I do not believe that the blessed Son of God came to redeem his own Spirit; no, he came to redeem that which was lost. The Spirit was never lost but God hath said, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee." We can see it is not the Spirit that transgressed, but it was the man, Adam, and I believe that is what Christ came to redeem for he did not come to save his own Spirit, but it was that which was lost and that is I as Paul would have it when he said, "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." I believe these old bodies are changed and raised to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall they ever be with the Lord. I do not believe carnality will be raised, but all will be spiritual. We see in the 37th chapter of Ezekiel where he speaks of the valley of dry bones, "they were very dry." The Lord spake unto this old servant saying, "Can these bones live?" and he said, "O Lord, God, thou knowest." Then the Lord told the old servant to prophesy so he did as he was commanded as all of God's true servants do. "There was a noise, and behold a shaking, and the bones came together, bone to his bone. And when I beheld, lo, the sinews and the flesh came upon them, and the skin covered them above: but there was no breath in them." And the Lord God of Israel did breathe upon these bones as slain that they may live. Then God said to the old prophet these bones are the whole house of Israel.

Yes they stood up as a great army. These are the ones whose graves the Lord is going to open. He said he was going to bring them up from their graves.

Yes, the Lord is coming the second time without sin unto salvation to gather his jewels home, that where he is they shall be also. I believe these old bodies is what he is coming back for. He has said the sea shall give up the dead that are in it. We read in John 5:28-29 "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, And shall come forth; they that have done good, unto the resurrection of life; and they that have done evil, unto the resurrection of damnation." So it is an absolute fact both the elect and non-elect are resurrected, or brought forth from the grave or wherever they may be laid. Yes, that would be their grave. It matters not where the dead are buried, in the sea or elsewhere, that is their grave and that is what God is going to raise them from. I believe it is these old bodies that he is speaking about. These are the ones that are benefitted in the resurrection. That is what Paul was waiting for. We all groan within ourselves, waiting the adoption, to wit, the redemption of these bodies, when they shall be changed and fashioned like unto the precious body of the blessed Son of God. The Lord hath said, "I will ransom them from the power of the grave; I will redeem them from death." Hosea 13:14.

Well, my Father's children, I believe that all of these old servants are talking about these old bodies. They were given the revelation to see and understand that God was fully able to raise up all the bodies that have died both of the just and the unjust, and he will divide them as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats. He will say to

his sheep, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world," and he will say to the goats depart from me unto everlasting fire for I never knew you. I believe God is all wise and, too, he hath all power. There is no other power outside of God. He has said there is but one power, and the powers that be are ordained of God. Then all things are his for he hath made them. All things were made by him and for him they are. They fulfill his eternal purposes to a jot, not one faileth; he fills immensity. All things are clearly seen of him, he hath no covering. This is the God that speaks and it is done, commands and it stands fast. "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." All things come about as God hath predestinated they should for he hath set their bounds and habitation so they cannot go beyond the commands of God, nor thwart his decrees for he hath said to the proud waves of the sea, thus far thou shalt come and no farther. He is God and all things obey him. He it is that kills and makes alive, he wounds and he heals. Oh, what a wonderful God he is. He controls all things, not a part but all. He is the one that made all things; without him there was nothing made that is made, and it is all to his own glory and eternal purpose. He fashioned all things before they existed, things do not have to appear for him to know it for all things are present with him, yes, known unto God are all his ways. Well could it be said, "What his soul desireth, even that he doeth." As I thought so shall it be, what I have purposed it shall come to pass, for I am God and there is none other besides me. Then well can he

bring about all things as it pleases him. Yes, he is from everlasting to everlasting, the same unchangeable great I am. I believe he is the first great and grand cause of all causes, nothing could take place unless God willed it so. He hath made the wicked for the day of evil. It is said, "Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain." "I form the light, and create darkness: I make peace and create evil: I the Lord do all these things." I, the Lord, with my own hand have formed the crooked serpent, so I believe that God is the maker and builder, the upholder and controller, the supreme ruler and righteous disposer of all things, creatures, times and events.

He is the one and only one who could blind their eyes and harden their hearts and there was none to hinder. He can do all things, there is nothing too hard for him to do. "For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might show my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth. Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth." Why? Because it seemeth good in his sight. Then this is the God that purposed to make the heavens and the earth and the fulness therein. Yes, he purposed to people this old earth, so he spoke and it was done. I believe this is the God that chose his people in Christ before the world was, yes, long before the dust of the highest hills was laid or the brooks abounded with water. He holds the wind in his fists, and the water he holds in the hollow of his hand. He weighs the mountains in scales and the hills in balances.

Dear ones of my Father's family, I believe he is the only eternal, sovereign God, he is over and above all things.

There is no law over him, but he himself is the law maker, hence there is no sin in what he does. Sin is the transgression of the law, so what he does is just and right, holy and good. Then this great, all wise, eternal, unchangeable, all powerful God did foresee all his elect chosen ones even before they existed, but in his wisdom they were with him. These are the ones that he so loved that he gave his darling Son to suffer and die upon the shameful tree or cross. Yes, that he should redeem them from under the law. He has said, "I will ransom them from the power of the grave." The Lord says he is going to do that and he is fully able to do it. I believe that Christ came to this low ground of sin and sorrow to save his people from their sins. Paul said, "Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief." He did not come to save his own Spirit, but to redeem those of his chosen elect ones from under the law, that our foreparents fell under. So to me it seems that it is these old bodies of ours that are going to be benefitted in the final resurrection. We see that the Son of God was buried for our sins and rose for our justification. He was the first resurrection in fact he says, "Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power." Then if we be one of God's chosen ones there is no power that can hinder these old bodies from being raised from the graves. God hath all power over death, hell and the grave. Both the just and the unjust are resurrected, the just to life everlasting, the unjust to everlasting shame and contempt. Paul says again, "If after the manner of men I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantageth it me, if the dead rise not?" I believe he has reference to these old natural bodies for they are all that can die.

The Spirit of God never dies, then it must without a doubt be these old bodies of ours that are raised up from the grave, and changed and fashioned like unto his (Christ's) glorious body. Then is when we will see him as he is and be like him and be satisfied. If I am not deceived this is my meat and drink to hope I have a hope in the resurrection. Oh, what a glorious promise that these old bodies shall be changed and made like unto the precious body of the Son of God. That will be good enough. "For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive," that is all the chosen, that is the all he is speaking about that shall be made alive, for he says "in Christ."

Let me say again I believe God is all wise, has all power everywhere and over all things. Then all things are ever present with him. Things do not have to appear before he can know it for he hath made all things that are visible or invisible, whether thrones or powers or principalities. The all powerful God did before ordain and predestinate all things whatsoever comes to pass. He hath set their bounds and habitation. There is nothing that can go beyond the commands of God nor thwart his decrees for he hath said, "I have purposed it, so shall it stand." I believe that God has the power to do all things, and there is nothing that he cannot do. If so he would cease to have all power, but we read in his holy word that all power in heaven and earth are in my hands so there is no power but of God and the powers that be are ordained of God. All things fulfill his eternal purpose and there is nothing that is that God did not will it so. It is all here by the divine power of Almighty God, the one that spake as never man did; the one that said, "What his soul desireth, even that he doeth."

I want to say God is all in all. He

works and none can hinder, speaks and it is done, commands and it stands fast. He declared "the end from the beginning and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." So he is the controller, upholder, the supreme ruler over all worlds, creatures and events, the eternal sovereign over all good and evil. He is the one that speaks to Isaiah, telling him to comfort his people. Speak ye comfortably to the church, which is his chosen elect ones, by telling them "that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins." This is what all of God's true servants are commanded to do. To feed his sheep by telling them what the Lord hath done for them, not what we can do, no but that his own arm hath brought him salvation. Yes, and tell them of the sweet promises that he hath in store for them, to wit, the resurrection of these, our bodies. Again let me quote, "If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable." 1 Cor. 15:19.

I want to say to one and all of the dear household of faith, I mean the absolute predestinarian people, that I believe in the resurrection of these old bodies. That is my hope, if I have any, destroy that and you have destroyed my hope. In conclusion I want to say I do believe in the absolute predestination of all things, good and evil. I believe God is a God of purpose, There is not a thing, good or evil, that is here by chance. God hath before determined that they should be as they are. He hath said I am God and beside me I know of no other. Let me, an old sinner saved by grace if saved at all, beg an interest in your prayers when at a throne of God's rich grace, and, too, will all you

dear brethren and sisters throw the mantle of charity over my imperfections for they are many. I realize that I have only hinted at this great and glorious subject. I am nothing and less than nothing. I do not feel worthy of the least of God's blessings, but hope I am a beggar of God's mercy. Now I will sign your little, unworthy brother if one at all in hope of the resurrection of these bodies.

Route 2, Box 273, Plant City, Fla.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: I have delayed answering your letter with the hopes that I would be able to send you a remittance for subscription to the *Signs* but it looks as if I will be unable to do so at the present time. A freeze and rainy weather almost ruined our strawberry crop.

It is a blessed thought to me when I can see God's ruling hand in it all. He works all things after the counsel of his own will, "and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?" The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away, blessed be the name of the Lord. "All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." I feel that his purposes will ripen fast unfolding every hour; the bud may have a bitter taste, but sweet will be the flower. I feel that these troubles and trials are according to his mighty counsel, and that it will work to his honor and glory. He will provide for his own, but the thing that bothers me most is whether I am his or not. Such a vile sinner I feel myself to be and can only cry to God for mercy. God be merciful to me, a sinner, is my cry. It is not for justice I ask for if justice was meted out to me I would be lost, for the thing I would that I do not, and the things I would not that I do. Sin is mixed with all I do. I de-

sire to praise God for his mercy and grace bestowed upon one such as I, and all the blessings he hath bestowed upon me. It is not by works of righteousness which I have done for man's works are all in vain and are of no avail. "It is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." If man performs any good works it is God's work manifested through that individual, and he gives God all the honor and glory in all things.

I hope I have been made to see these things not through or by man, but it is God that has shown me. There is no other resting place with me except in Jesus who is the author and finisher of the Christian's faith. He leads us in paths of righteousness for his name's sake, and not in paths of sin. When we walk in sinful ways it is the lusts of the flesh caused by that old serpent, the devil, who God made for a specific purpose, and I believe he is carrying out the purpose for which he was made. This does not make God the author of sin or confusion, and as for me, even though I believe in God's predestination concerning all events whatsoever come to pass, I cannot hide behind that doctrine as a cloak for my sinful acts. This doctrine and salvation by grace and grace alone is sweet to me and I cannot rejoice in any other. Grace and works cannot be mixed; if of grace then no more works, and I am convinced it is all of grace which is a gift of God, not of works lest any man should boast.

Brother Dodson, these are a few of the things I hope I believe—that God is all powerful, the powers that be are ordained of God. I know that I have not learned these things of myself, but I hope that God in his infinite wisdom and mercy has revealed himself to me as the chiefest among ten thousand and the one altogether lovely.

The *Signs* has been coming to my

family for many years. My father and grandfather took it before me. I can remember when only in my youth I would steal away up in the attic and read them, and it seemed even then I would rejoice in those who wrote about God's wonderful mercy and grace. He is the same God yesterday, to-day and forever and changes not. I received the *Signs* you sent me and I can say I have enjoyed reading them and have been made able to rejoice. I want to thank you very much for your kindness toward me, a sinner saved by grace if saved at all, and less than the least of the saints if one at all. I trust that the Lord will bless me to be able to send you a remittance for the *Signs* in the near future so that I can renew my subscription. I hope I can be reconciled that his will not mine be done. I have written more than I intended and this is very imperfect like the writer. May God continue his blessing to you and all the dear writers for the good Old School Baptist publication. Remember this unworthy one when at a throne of grace. Your unworthy brother I hope.

ROBERT L. MILES

Beetle, Ky.

ELDER R. LESTER DODSON, DEAR BROTHER IN HOPE OF ETERNAL LIFE BEYOND THIS VALE OF TEARS: I want to thank you for sending me the *Signs of the Times* these many years. I read and re-read them. Received the June copy yesterday and sat down and read it through. It contained good, sound preaching and I surely enjoyed it. The letter from the "Little Sister from Texas" was wonderful. She surely has been taught by the Lord. Also the one to Elder H. C. Ker by you which was republished by request. I would like you to write on the subject of prayer. I believe a man can pray any time, any-

where and in any position if he has the spirit of prayer and if he does not have that he cannot pray. It must come from the Power House. The Lord must put it in the heart. Jonah prayed in the belly of the whale. Put a man's eyes out and he can pray just the same. Thank you again for sending me your wonderful paper. I hope to get it as long as I live. Hope the Lord will bless you and keep you by his grace. I believe he will give us grace to help in every time of need. Yours in love.

T. H. SALYERS

(See editorial column.)

Mansfield, Ga.

ELDER R. L. DODSON, DEAR BROTHER IN CHRIST: You no doubt think I have forgotten you but it is all my fault. I do not want to get behind with my paper but just could not get to it. I often think of you and family and think how you all took us in, in your home and at church also. I wish you would come to our home so we could repay you for your kindness. I want to tell you that I have enjoyed the *Signs* so much the last year or so, more than usual and want to have it in my home as long as I live. I have been reading it for over fifty years. When I go among my brethren I feel at home if I see the *Signs of the Times*. I am mailing you money-order for \$4 as I am in the red for 1947. I hope you will overlook my short comings. Your brother in Christ
WILLIAM F. ADAMS

"The days of our years are threescore years and ten; and if by reason of strength they be fourscore years, yet is their strength labor and sorrow."—Psalms 90:10.

In our youth, when we first begin to think for ourselves, we look forward to a long life of perpetual sunshine and happiness. We have our plans for the future, and in our weakness and ignorance we think as the common saying

is, "Life is what you make of it." We determine in our minds to make a success of it. We see only the bright side, and we determine within ourselves to make the world a better place for having lived in it. What anticipation we have in our young days! What hopes for the future! We have not learned that we are vanity and that our life is but a vapor that appeareth for a short moment and vanisheth away, or that "it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps" and that man in his best estate is altogether vanity.

But when we have come over what then seemed to us a long way, and the years, with their joys and sorrows, their trials and disappointments, have passed so swiftly away, and we find we have not attained unto that to which we had aspired, we feel to say, "Few and evil have the days of my life been." We begin to realize our weakness, and have learned that our boasted strength was only vanity. We are made to see that we are wholly incapable of doing any thing and cannot boast ourselves of tomorrow. Then we are made to cry, "Lord, make me to know mine end, and the measure of my days, what it is; that I may know how frail I am." Then we can look back on the years we have traveled, and though they may be filled with sorrows and disappointments, after we have tried our strength and found it to be but weakness, we feel how short is our allotted time; how swiftly the years have gone by; we must face the fact that we are old. The vanities of this life lose their charm and our hope is "for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God." We cling to the many promises that can never fail. "And even to your old age I am he; and even to hoar hairs will I carry you."

How sweet, how assuring! When we see the evening shadows gather around

us, and the twilight drawing near we can rely on the promise, "He shall deliver thee in six troubles: yea, in seven there shall no evil touch thee." We have been down in deep waters and passed through fiery trials, but he has been our God and will be our guide even unto death.

(Mrs.) EFFIE EDWARDS
827 - 47th Place,
Birmingham, Ala.

604 Lexington Rd., Pleasant Hill, Mo.

DEAR BROTHER DODSON AND THE SAINTS SCATTERED ABROAD WHO MAY READ THIS: I would like if, the dear Lord will guide my pen, to write you of our wonderful meeting at Little Flock last Saturday afternoon and Sunday. (July 1948.) We have felt very keenly the loss of our dear brethren, W. H. Morris and Elder W. L. Hall who was our Pastor for over thirty years, although we know for them it is better. The Lord is still mindful of us in that Brother L. L. Schenck of Williamstown, Kans. has been able to be with us and we have chosen him Pastor. He is faithful to come, not shunning to declare the whole counsel of God. He is so gifted to take a text or subject, cover it fully and then close. Sister Mabel Lindsey of Ione, California and her husband were with us and she placed her letter with us which is the church she united with and where her parents were members. At the April meeting my sister united by relation of experience and that was sweet.

Little Flock Church was organized in July 1870 and has held regular monthly services since. It is now the only church left in the Original Mt. Zion Association, and Elder Schenck is the only minister of our faith that we know of within three hundred or more miles so we feel alone. My husband and I have gone when the only other one there was the minister, yet we were fed. It seems we are less alone now for we had a full

house Sunday and a wonderful meeting. Sister Urquhart who lives in Kansas City, and whose children, all but two sons, were visiting her was requested by them to let them do something special for her on the Fourth. She told them the nicest thing would be for them to attend services at her church, Little Flock. They came in several cars, bringing their dinners as we always take dinner on Sunday. Not only her children but her grandchildren and great-grandchildren came, and when Brother Schenck began preaching you could have heard a pin drop. Lt. Commander, Oscar Urquhart, was from Panama Canal Zone, one from Omaha, Neb., two from California, two from Kansas City, one from Independence and one from here. It was a wonderful sermon we listened to.

After service we went by invitation to the home of Mr. Taylor's aunt, Mrs. J. P. Taylor across the road, which is also the home of her niece and nephew, Brother and Sister C. C. Odell. Here we spread our dinners and about fifty people were fed. It was all so lovely.

The week before we had the pleasure of having Sister Lindsey of Ione, Cal., and her husband in our home and what a wonderful visit we had. She has been in deep waters and is wonderfully gifted in deep things, and we did so enjoy talking on these subjects so close to us. I felt I wanted to tell you about it. If you publish it please make any corrections, and if you consign it to the waste basket that will be all right too. If any of your preaching brethren or you feel to visit us you will find a welcome indeed. Your unworthy sister I hope.

(Mrs.) J. W. TAYLOR

(We are glad to publish the foregoing good letter, and hope any of our ministering brethren who can will visit the brethren in Missouri. R. L. D.)

EDITORIAL

RUTHERFORD, N. J.

DECEMBER, 1948

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Rutherford, N. J.

CHURCHES and ASSOCIATIONS

In writing this article it is not my purpose to condemn the practice of holding Associations, but rather point out the danger, as I see it, of Associations exercising powers that do not belong to them. The Association is a creature of the church, formed for the purpose of communication, and the associating of God's people one with another, and when used for any other purpose only causes trouble. When conducted as the word signifies, (associate) they are truly a medium of much comfort and edification to the household of faith, but they are not a supreme court for the settlement of any local church trouble.

The Kehukee Association of North Carolina is the oldest Primitive or Old School Baptist Association in America, being formed in the year 1765. According to the record no Articles of Faith were adopted until the year 1777. The Rules of Decorum being adopted in the year 1782. These Rules of Decorum and Articles of Faith are practically the same to-day as when first accepted by their body, and are considered to-day

as in accord with the doctrine and order of the church of God. Most of the Associations of Old School Baptists in the United States have in substance the same Articles of Faith and rules, and are generally in harmony with the practices first adopted by the Kehukee Association.

One thing I think is generally accepted by our people throughout the country, and is clearly set forth in most association Rules of Decorum, or Articles of Faith, is the sovereignty of each church in matters of discipline and practice. Our people have in most cases adhered to that practice, but wherever it has been violated or ignored only trouble has followed.

Article number thirteen in the Kehukee Association Articles of Faith reads as follows: "WE BELIEVE THAT EVERY CHURCH IS INDEPENDENT IN MATTERS OF DISCIPLINE; AND THAT ASSOCIATIONS, COUNCILS AND CONFERENCES OF SEVERAL MINISTERS OR CHURCHES, ARE NOT TO IMPOSE ON THE CHURCHES THE KEEPING, HOLDING OR MAINTAINING ANY PRINCIPLE OR PRACTICE CONTRARY TO THE CHURCH'S JUDGMENT."

A number of Associations have this rule word for word. Others in substance. No doubt our forefathers saw the danger of churches being dictated to by Associations or other bodies, or conferences, even of their own organization, and adopted this rule.

If we examine the record, and trace back the troubles that have existed among the churches in the past, most of them have come from one of three causes, namely: Associations assuming authority over churches, or allowing outside meddlers to interfere with the internal affairs of a local church, or following men when they had left the word of God either in faith or practice. Paul exhorted his brethren to follow him as far as he followed Christ.

Most Associations at some time or other have perplexing problems within her borders, and as an advisory body they are at times a blessing, because in a multitude of councillors there is safety, but they should never attempt to impose on a church a practice contrary to the church's judgment. As an independent body each church is capable of governing themselves in all matters of discipline and practice. No one except the members of a local church themselves, can know in their heart what causes a church to take action in certain cases, and for outside influences to be brought to bear on a church to try to compel them to do things contrary to their own judgment, usually leads to trouble and confusion.

I shall here mention some of the things that could lead to confusion by associational interference or outside influence. A member or minister is sometimes excluded and somebody is in sympathy with them as is usually the case where it is a minister. When a man is excluded by a church, after he has had an opportunity to appear before the church to answer whatever charge they hold against him, and he has failed to satisfy the church because his conduct, whatever it may have been has caused him to die in their fellowship, all who uphold him or follow him place themselves in the same condition as he is. They have rebelled against the church, and such conduct is plain rebellion.

No outsider can reinstate that man in the church. The matter is for the conscience of that church to settle. The question will be asked, What about a minority of a church that does not agree with the majority in such a matter? Our rule usually reads that if a minority be grieved at the action of the majority, they shall immediately let it be known, and if satisfaction cannot be

obtained, it may be necessary to ask help of sister churches. For a minority to rend themselves off from the church, without making their grievances known, and staying in the church certainly places them in the same condition of the one excluded. How slow one should be in withdrawing from his church. Many things need patience, and there are some matters that only time and patience will settle, and how slow Associations should be in taking up any matter that pertains to the discipline and practice of a local church, unless they have left the doctrine and order of the church, and then their only course should be to withdraw from them.

To my understanding there are offenses that would be classed public offenses. Whatever one may do that causes a number of his brethren to lose confidence in him, such as drinking too much, dishonesty or a number of other things we might mention would be a public offense, and when one has been excluded for such no set of ministers, associations or conference has any right to try to impose on his church any practice contrary to their judgment, and to do so only causes trouble. Every trouble as far as possible should be kept localized.

We have had much published in the last few years on the doctrine of the church, and as a general rule our people seem to be agreed that all our salvation, both for time and eternity, is of the Lord. Would it not be all right for us to write some about the order of the house? Only true peace and fellowship can abound where churches are zealous of their order and discipline. Where one is a public transgressor against his brethren by his conduct in the world, he should be required to make public confession of the same, without ever trying to smuggle the mat-

ter up, and Associations should ever be mindful of the fact that they have no right to impose on a church any discipline or practice contrary to the church's judgment.

May God give us all to inquire for the good old way, and walk therein. Submitted in love and the interest of Zion I truly hope. May all these things be considered in the spirit of meekness and brotherly love, considering ourselves.

D. V. S.

... P R A Y E R ...

Three of our Associate Editors have written very ably on the subject of *prayer*, and while we do not feel that there is much that we can add to what has already been said, since brother Salyers has requested that we give our views on the subject, we will offer such thoughts as may be given to us. We agree with brother Spangler that the physical position of the body has little if any bearing upon the matter. We have scriptural authority for both standing and kneeling in presenting our petitions unto God. When Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead we are told that he lifted up his eyes, and said, "Father, I thank thee that thou hast heard me. And I know that thou hearest me always: but because of the people which stand by I said it, that they may believe that thou hast sent me." John 11:41-42. Again, when he had finished the work assigned to him by the Father he lifted up his eyes to heaven, and said, "Father, the hour is come; glorify thy Son, that thy Son also may glorify thee. As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him." John 17:1-2. In Luke we read, "And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me

a sinner." And we are told that he went down to his house justified, so this must have been an acceptable prayer unto God. "And as he entered into a certain village, there met him ten men that were lepers, which stood afar off: And they lifted up their voices, and said, Jesus, Master, have mercy on us." Luke 17:12-13. We also have the case of a leper coming to him, "beseeching him, and kneeling down to him, and saying unto him, If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. And Jesus, moved with compassion, put forth his hand, and touched him, and saith unto him, I will; be thou clean." Mark 1:40-41. When Jesus was in Gethsemane, he said, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here, and watch with me. And he went a little farther, and fell on his face, and prayed, saying, O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me: nevertheless not as I will, but as thou wilt." Mat. 26:38-39. Others have fallen on their faces upon the ground and poured out their hearts in prayer to their God and their Master..

In our section of the country it has been the custom in public worship for the minister to stand while speaking in prayer, and we follow this custom. In private homes, when asked to speak in prayer, we frequently feel to kneel. Many has been the time when we felt so overwhelmed with our burdens upon our bed at night that we have arisen from bed and knelt upon the floor with the fervent desire to commune with Him who discerneth the thought and intent of the heart; or it may have been that we felt such a deep sense of gratitude toward God for the many blessings which he continually bestows upon us, that we wanted to humble ourself in every way and give all thanks to him who supplies our daily needs. We have never felt that we had any gift in re-

turning public thanks at the table, but there have been many times while surveying God's goodness and mercy to us in giving us a good companion and comfortable home and the blessings of this life, and most of all a good hope through grace in his mercy, our cup has overflowed in praise and adoration to his most adorable name. Of a truth, He is the giver of every good and every perfect gift, and we rejoice that it is also declared of him that there is no variableness, neither a shadow of turning with him. We are persuaded that God looketh on the heart, the inward part, and unless this is right before him, there will be no real prayer. He, by the workings of his Holy Spirit, must indict that which is good and acceptable in his sight in the heart, otherwise he will not answer. Solomon said both the preparation of the heart and the answer of the tongue are of the Lord. We like the way the poet has it:

"Prayer is the saint's sincere desire,
Unuttered or express'd;
The motion of a hidden fire,
That trembles in the breast.

Prayer is the burden of a sigh,
The falling of a tear;
The upward glancing of an eye,
When none but God is near.

Prayer is the simplest form of speech
That infant lips can try;
Prayer the sublimest strains that reach
The Majesty on high.

Prayer is the Christian's vital breath,
The Christian's native air;
The watchword at the gate of death;
He enters heaven with prayer."

We most certainly do not believe that God's eternal plans and purposes are altered or changed one iota by what men call prayer. He sometimes creates conditions which of necessity causes us

to seek his face and guidance, that we may know how frail we are and be taught that he is able to do exceeding abundantly above all we may ask or think. God commanded Moses to say unto Israel, of old, "Thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God led thee these forty years in the wilderness, to humble thee, and to prove thee, to know what was in thine heart, whether thou wouldest keep his commandments, or no. And he humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; that he might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord doth man live." Deut. 8:2-3. God controls all of the circumstances which surround and affect our lives, and he will most certainly be inquired of by us. We will be made to realize our own inability to do one good thing, or to think a good thought, and be brought down in the valley of despair and despond before we seek help at the throne of grace. The publican prayed, saying, "God be merciful to me a sinner," and the thief on the cross cried, "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom." Peter, when sinking in the mighty waters, cried, "Save, Lord, I perish." We have often pondered over the depth of meaning to be found in the three word prayer of the poor Syrophenician woman when she worshipped Jesus, saying, "Lord, help me." It is not pleasing to the flesh to be brought to the place where we have to cry unto the Lord to undertake for us, to make a straight path for our feet to walk in and to lead us into life everlasting. We have to be brought low before we will seek help from the Lord, and then we will know that without him we can do nothing. There have been times in our

life when it seemed that our very soul was poured out before God like water upon the dry ground, and the sacredness of those seasons when we found access to the throne of grace by and through him that maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered, can never be expressed in words. We verily believe, on a few occasions at least, we have experienced what it means to be taken by Him into his private chamber and given the kisses of his mouth, when he whispered his message of undying love to our innermost soul; and the joy and bliss that was ours on those occasions, tongue can never tell nor pen relate. It was then that we worshipped Him in spirit and in truth, if we have any understanding of the meaning of true worship. Such memories are more precious to us than all the gold of Ophir, or the choicest of rubies, which are but as sordid dust at his blessed feet. We truly hope that our readers have experienced the preciousness of these things, for one must needs handle and taste the Word of Life before they can give acceptable testimony before the great Judge of heaven and earth.

Recently, a friend has raised the point of the privilege of prayer, asserting that "prayer is one of the greatest blessings we have. By night or day, no matter where or when that privilege is ours if our heart truly desires it." Much could be said of this phase of our subject, but before one can sincerely and earnestly desire something there must be a felt need for it. In the courts of our land when one is either unable to plead his own cause or pay for counsel, the judge frequently assigns proper counsel to plead the case of the poor, unfortunate one, and we have often felt how good it is that one of the names given by Isaiah by which our Lord should be called is "Counsellor." This is

the One who our heavenly Father appointed before time began to stand in our stead and make intercession for us. He is our Counsellor, Mediator, Intercessor, Husband and Friend. While men of a vile and sinful race cannot appear before the just and holy God in their own right, they are privileged to present or make known their petitions by and through his blessed Son. Jesus himself told his disciples to "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you: For every one that asketh receiveth; and he that seeketh findeth; and to him that knocketh it shall be opened." Again, he said, "And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son." We are also told that our "Father knoweth what things ye have need of before ye ask him." The Psalmist said, "Thou understandest my thought afar off." Again, we quote the Psalmist, "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise." The apostle Paul said, "The word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of the soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." He truly searches and knows the hearts of his people, and is acquainted with all their ways. We are glad after Peter was converted he confessed, "Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee." It is only by actual experience that we are made to know the true value of this Counsellor, and then we can exclaim with the Prophet that his name is also Wonderful, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. We are convinced then that he is abundantly able to plead our case successfully before his Father's throne, by

declaring that he finished the work which the Father gave him to do, and he presents us without spot or blemish before God in love. We heartily agree that it is a most blessed privilege, indeed, when we are enabled by the working of his Holy Spirit to take his holy name upon our sin polluted lips and cry, "Abba, Father." The following verses of a hymn bear upon this point:

"Have we trials and temptations?
Is there trouble any where?
We should never be discouraged,
Take it to the Lord in prayer.

Can we find a friend so faithful,
Who will all our sorrows share?
Jesus knows our every weakness,
Take it to the Lord in prayer.

Are we weak and heavy laden,
Cumbered with a load of care?
Precious Saviour, still our refuge,
Take it to the Lord in prayer.

Do thy friends despise, forsake thee?
Take it to the Lord in prayer,
In His arms He'll take and shield thee,
Thou wilt find a solace there."

We are taught in God's blessed word to pray without ceasing, and since Elder Lambert opened Vol. 116 in the January issue of our family paper with an article on prayer, it is quite fitting that we should close this volume with a similar article. As we do not know how to pray as we ought, we truly hope our dear Lord will teach us both how to pray and what to pray for, all in the name and through the meritorious work of his blessed Son, Jesus Christ, to whom be honor and glory now and for evermore. Amen. R. L. D.

CLOSE OF VOLUME No. 116

With this issue of our paper we come to the end of another milestone by closing Vol. 116, and we wish to leave on record another testimony of God's goodness and mercy to us in sparing our

unprofitable life and enabling us, by divine grace, to carry on the work so nobly begun over a century ago. We feel like adopting brother H. M. Bowden's language in the September issue of the *Signs*, by saying, "The paper is a monument to God's providence and sustaining care for during its 116 years of existence of continual publication there have been enough obstacles and discouragements in its way to have caused the abandonment of its publication had it been God's will for that to be," but we are thankful that God willed it otherwise.

We are truly grateful for the loyal support given us by our subscribers in various ways. Their financial support has been liberal and most helpful, which has enabled us to meet all necessary expenditures during these post-war times of high costs. We thank most sincerely all who have shared in this part of our work.

In this connection, we would also thank those who have contributed good letters and articles for the columns of our paper, and especially would we include in this group our Associate Editors, whose writings have been able and well pleasing to our readers.

Let us again remind our subscribers to watch the dates on the wrapper covers of their papers and renew promptly when their subscriptions are due. They can also help us materially by being on the alert for *new* subscribers. Many of our subscribers are advancing in years and are rapidly being called to their eternal home, and we need a considerable number of new subscribers to maintain our mailing list. At this season of the year, many of our readers can either recommend or send the paper to some brother, sister or friend who would enjoy reading it throughout the coming year. Any assistance along this line will be deeply appreciated. Please

remember the book, "Showers of Rain" by Flossie I. Faulkner is sent FREE to any one sending in a new subscriber, or to the new subscriber if sent to us direct.

With thankfulness for mercies past and with faith in an unfailing God to supply all our future needs, we say farewell to our readers for 1948.

R. L. D.

OBITUARIES

MISS MAGDALENA LEACHMAN DAVIS, lovingly known among us as "sister Lena," passed away from this present life August 27, 1948 at 1219 No. Edgewood St., Arlington, Va. She was born June 6, 1874, a daughter of Edwin and Jane Ashton Dodd Davis. Her mother was a member of Mt. Zion Church, Loudoun Co., Va. Sister Lena's membership was with the Frying Pan Church, Fairfax Co., Va., having been baptized there by the late Elder E. V. White the second Sunday in May 1898. She is survived by three sisters: Mrs. Minnie Thomas, Arlington, Va., Miss Ada Davis, Arlington, Va. and Mrs. Bessie Turner of Frederick, Md. There survive six nieces and two nephews. Funeral services were held at Ives' Chapel, Arlington, Va. Interment in the cemetery at Andrew Chapel. We have not had among us a more faithful member of the church, one more devoted to the cause, than sister Lena. With her, the church was first. Every other duty in life was subservient to her constancy to the kingdom of Christ. In this, she is indeed a gracious example to all of us. Despite her very weak condition, being far from well, she attended our last meeting at Frying Pan the 2nd Sunday in August although scarcely able to sit up. No matter by whom she was employed, no matter what her work might be, she always let it be understood by her employers that she required time off to attend her meetings. She wanted nothing to conflict with that privilege. She was obedient to Hebrews 10:25. Of all whom the Lord has taken from us in recent years, no one will be more missed among us than she. We have indeed a blessed hope for her that for her to die is gain. Being absent from the body, she is present with the Lord.

(Elder) H. H. LEFFERTS

J. W. STAGGS was born Aug. 30, 1866 and departed this life April 8, 1948, making his stay on earth 81 years, 7 months and 8 days. He united with the Old Baptists about 49 years ago. His wife, Sister Lillie Staggs, preceded him in death several years ago. He mourned his great loss when

she passed away, but would not call her back if he could, realizing that she was at rest with no more troubles and trials in this life. Brother Staggs leaves several children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren to mourn his passing.

The unworthy writer has enjoyed many meetings in their home, and sweet talks of our precious Savior and his mercies to poor unworthy sinners. Sister Staggs told me of their courtship before marriage. He would come for her on horseback and take her to meeting. Her folks would tease her calling her a little Hardshell. How little did they know how true this was as she was chosen by her Creator to be a companion to Brother Staggs. In his latter years he made his home with his daughter, Sister Carmine Anthony, San Antonio, Texas. When he became helpless he was placed in an Old Peoples Home and would be so glad when I would go to see him. I could not go as often as I wanted as I lived 265 miles from San Antonio.

We laid his remains to rest by the side of his companion at Stockdale, Texas to await the summons from on high to come forth in that glorious resurrection that has been prepared for all of God's little ones.

(Elder) E. E. AULT

MRS. LUCY J. MINOR, our sister in Christ, departed this life June 5, 1948 at the home of her sister Mrs. Bertha Belt, 517 E. Capitol St., Washington, D. C. She was born April 29, 1861. Her father was Louis Wright, her mother Margaret Orrison, both of Loudoun County, Va. Her mother's father, brother William Orrison, was the only surviving male member of the New Valley Old School Baptist Church at the time the late Elder E. V. White united by baptism with that church in the 70's. Immediately after that, several united with the church from time to time and there was quite a revival. Sister Minor was baptized into the membership of the New Valley Church September 17, 1928 but she had been a follower of our people many years. Her coming to the church was no momentary enthusiasm nor any temporary emotionalism, but the fruit of an abiding and constant faith which had been tested through much weakness and affliction on her part. She was wont to say that when she was baptized, she stood on the same rock on which her mother had stood at her baptism. Whether this were so literally, I cannot say, but I believe spiritually she and her mother were founded on the same Rock, Christ Jesus, and were indeed baptized with the same baptism. She is survived by three sisters: Mrs. Belt at whose home she died, Mrs. Nora Main of Middletown, Md. and Mrs. Alice Haines, Bowling Green, Va. besides nieces and nephews. She had been in failing health for a long time

preceding her departure from this world, so that her attendance at the meetings had been infrequent. Services for her were held at Lee's Funeral Chapel, Washington, D. C. Interment in Oakwood Cemetery at Falls Church, Va. Her husband, William T. Minor, died Jan. 4, 1936.

(Elder) H. H. LEFFERTS

It becomes my sad duty to write of the passing from this life of our dear sister in Christ and mother in Israel, MRS. MATTIE (DAVIS) BOYD. She was born in Arkansas, Dec. 22, 1858, and the Lord called her home June 13, 1948 at the age of 89 years, 5 months and 21 days. She was married to A. J. Boyd Jan. 13, 1872. To this union were born ten children, seven boys and three girls. Her husband and two daughters preceded her in death. She is survived by J. E. Boyd and Mrs. Bryan Hughs, Rising Star, Texas; J. R. Boyd, Crane, Texas; G. W. Boyd, Odessa, Texas; D. A. Boyd, Maple, Texas; J. N. Boyd, Port Arthur, Texas; J. T. Boyd, Dallas, Texas; J. G. Boyd, Buckeye, New Mex.; twenty-seven grandchildren; fifty-one great-grandchildren; one great-great-grandchild, and a host of friends who mourn her passing.

She united with the Primitive Baptist Church and was baptized by the late Elder Pace at Corinth Church, in Henderson Co., near Athens, Texas about 1904. She with her husband and family moved to Brown Co., Texas about 1911 and settled near Rising Star. They came into Macedonia Church by letter and remained devoted members until death. They were seldom absent from the meetings, enjoying the services and the company of the members very much. Sister Boyd never tired of doing what they could for the little band until failing health overtook her. She was tenderly cared for by her children in the home of her daughter, Mrs. Hughs. All was done for her that tender loving hands could do, good doctors and many friends, but the time had come and the Lord's will must be done, showing mercy in removing her from her bed of affliction to a land of delight where no sorrow and sadness can ever come. Let us not sorrow as though we had no hope, but let us look forward to the coming of our Lord, for when Christ who is our life shall appear then shall she appear with him in glory.

The writer was called to officiate at the funeral services as she had requested. We tried in our weakness to comfort the sorrowing family and their many friends, pointing them to the coming of Christ when the saints shall be raised from their graves incorruptible to ever be with their Lord, after which Elder C. Y. Osteen made an interesting and comforting talk. She was laid to rest in the Rising Star Cemetery to await the coming of the Lord.

(Elder) C. B. TEAGUE

The death of CLARENCE DONALD (TACK) MOFFETT occurred at his home near Jonesboro, La. July 23, 1948. Mr. Moffett was a life-long resident of Jackson Parish where he reared his large family. He was successfully engaged in farming operations and also served as Justice of the Peace. He had been a member of the Primitive Baptist church for the past sixty years and was Clerk of the Court.

Survivors include his widow, Mrs. Martha Moffett of Jonesboro; five daughters, Mrs. J. W. Savage and Mrs. W. H. Savage of Wyatt; Mrs. W. H. Harvey and Miss Thelma Moffett of Hodge; Mrs. Walter Pepper of Wyatt; five sons, A. P. Moffett, Quitman, Ga.; Mose Moffett, Monroe; Homer Moffett, Clarence Moffett and E. J. Moffett, all of West Monroe. Fifteen grandchildren, one great-grandchild, and two brothers, Arthur Moffett, Wyatt and Dock Moffett, of Texas, also survive.

Funeral services were held at the Springfield Church, July 25 with Mr. J. W. Buckner, Pastor of the Jonesboro Baptist Church, assisted by Mr. Harper of Jonesboro officiating. Interment was in Transport Cemetery under the direction of the Southern Funeral Home. Pallbearers were: Wayland Savage, Junior Robinson, Ira Reeves, Dennis Chappel, Cedric Crain and Pyburn Walker.

(Mrs.) W. H. HARVEY

AID FOR SENDING "SIGNS" TO INDIGENTS

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3.—That notices of Special Meetings should be sent to us at least thirty days in advance of the month in which the meeting is to be held.

If our readers will be kind enough to observe the foregoing suggestions they will aid us very materially in getting out the paper. R. L. D.