

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

INDEX TO VOLUME 163

EDITORIALS	PAGE		
Campbell, Elder Richard H.	74	Philpot, Elder J.C.	160
Campbell, Elder Richard H.	98	Philpot, Elder J.C.	205
Campbell, Elder Richard H.	146	Philpot, Elder J.C.	261
Campbell, Elder Richard H.	194	Raven, J.	150
Davis, Elder C.B.	2	Rowe, Elder Joshua Tillman	60
Wilbanks, Elder C.C.	50	Ruston, Elder George	138
Wilbanks, Elder C.C.	122	Shepard, Troy G.	79
Wilbanks, Elder C.C.	170	Shepard, Troy G.	199
Wilbanks, Elder C.C.	218		
Wilbanks, Elder C.C.	242	OBITUARIES	PAGE
Williams, Elder J.R.	26	Akers, Valsie Peters	21
Williams, Elder J.R.	266	Arnold, Marth Pearl Merrit	47
		Bailey, Troy H.	116
ARTICLES	PAGE	Barker, Ballard E.	69
kinson, Bruce	247	Barron, Ruby	216
eebe, Elder Gilbert	6	Blaylock, Burch	236
eebe, Elder Gilbert	175	Branch, Lemuel C.	143
eebe, Elder Gilbert	203	Cooper, Henry Bufford	263
hapell, Elder Wayne G.	56	Cox, Rosa Martin Stultz	22
odson, Elder R.L.	82	Curry, Bessi Denny	190
Jurand, Silas H.	259	Dalton, Guy Owen	70
Edwards, Lewis	179	Dorman, Maidline McLawhorn	71
Ford, Joseph	276	Everett, Nemhy Albritton	215
Fowler, Henry	284	Gearhart, Elizabeth Barlow	93
Gadsby, William	4	Gearhart, Floyd Lewis	93
Griffin, Elder W.D.	46	Gray, Nellie Kellum Morton	116
Griffin, Elder W.D.	185	Hopkins, Alveta Gaskill	94
Hazelton, John E.	268	Houchins, Elsie B.	191
Hunt, Frank	27	Keaton, Glenna Flint	238
Hunt, Frank	77	Law, Pearl Akers	117
Hunt, Frank	128	Lucas, Ralph	167
Lambert, Elder E.J.	10	Martin, Kathleen Graham	167
Lambert, Elder E.J.	41	Marze, Odessa Miers	238
Lambert, Elder E.J.	64	Mercer, Elbert Thomas	263
Lambert, Elder E.J.	87	Moose, Essie Dix	118
Lambert, Elder E.J.	110	Morgan, Floyd Knighton	288
Lambert, Elder E.J.	134	Morton, Joseph	191
Lambert, Elder E.J.	162	Mosley, Hilda	23
Lambert, Elder E.J.	170	Munford, Willie Robert	119
Lambert, Elder E.J.	207	Murphy, Oscar Perry	144
Lambert, Elder E.J.	234	Parks, Ollie W.	239
Lambert, Elder E.J.	260	Ray, Dewitt	264
Lefferts, Elder H.H.	61	Rice, Susan Emeline	239
Mewborn, Elder A.P.	257	Rowland, Helen A.	71
Mewborn, Elder A.P.	281	Shelton, Robert B.	23
Miles, Elder Robert L.	103	Short, Forrest L.	192
Paul, S.F.	225	Smith, Mary Jeanett	72
Paul, S.F.	250	Smith, John E.	215
Philpot, Elder J.C.	14	Snider, Mae Slough	48
Philpot, Elder J.C.	35	Stanaland, Benjamin P.	168
Philpot, Elder J.C.	64	Stanley, Leah Thompson	24
Philpot, Elder J.C.	109	Strader, Mildred	95
Philpot, Elder J.C.	132	Taylor, Mary Hedrick	95
		Walker, Mittie Mae	96
		Wolf, Laura Lewis	120

Signs of the Times

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THE UNCLOUDED DAY

*I dreamed one night of a storm so dark
And saw I had no shelter to use
The raging storm deadly and stark
Was for me a time of earthly dues*

*I felt great horror and deathly fear
Feeling my end would surely come
Yet through the storm a break so clear
And I thought of a Heavenly home*

*It sumed a voice loud and plain
Said " The sun still shines out of sight "
I know my soul searching was in vain
And I longed for more revealing light*

*Alas I feel I saw a city fair
In wonder I lay amazed
For all was peace with who were there
Having no troubles to mar the days*

*I hope some day to see that beautiful
place
With the fulness of the single eye
And know I have finished this earthly
race
To dwell forever with the Saints on high*

*The brightness of the glory of the Son
Will light that entire world of bliss
And Heaven shall ring with praise of
one
Who for the love shared with us Graces'
kiss*

*We long for such a perfect time
As we travel a pilgrim's road
Oftimes wandering here as if totally
blind
Carrying a burden of such carnal load*

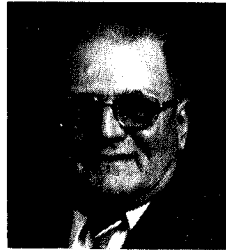
*At last a home of rest our own
 His promise eternal and true
 That we have a portion of even His
 throne
 We then can praise forever as praise is
 due*

*We find on record in Samuel 23 and 4
 A time waited for after losing our shrouds
 And see and be with our Christ forever-
 more
 As a perfect morning without clouds*

*With thanks for such a day,
 Elder C.B. Davis, Jr.*

EDITORIAL

WILLIAM COWPER



ELDER C.B. DAVIS, JR.

Cowper was born at Berkhamstead in Hertfordshire on Nov. 15, 1731. He started his schooling at 10 years age in Westminster

School learning Latin and Greek being taught by a Dr. Nicholls who was thought by all to be the best in religions discipline. The students in the school were touched by his manner and yet Cowper felt something was lacking. He writes that in his childish way he tried to pray in secret and was frightened at his own insensibility for lack of effect.

The mother of Cowper had died when he was about six years old and this struck a dreadful blow to his life. When 13 he had a severe case of smallpox and after much suffering desired death. This brought about a feeling of rejection as far as God was concerned and he began days of lying and cheating until 18 years old. He was forced to leave Westminster and returned home to find no peace of mind. He was sent to law school at age 21 and his studies of law but further condemned him.

The father of Cowper died when he was 25 and still in school. This came as another blow to his reasoning concerning religion and his spiritual welfare. He remained in a terrible state of depression because of sin and his

CONTENTS

EDITORIAL 2
 Elder C.B. Davis, Jr.

ARTICLES 4
 William Gadsby (Gospel Standard - Jan. 1994)

VOICES OF THE PAST.....
 Elder Gilbert Beebe
 Elder E.J. Lambert
 Elder J.C. Philpot

CONTRIBUTIONS 21

OBITUARIES 21
 Sister Valsie Peters Akers
 Rosa Martin Stultz Cox
 Hilda Moseley
 Brother Robert B. Shelton
 Sister Leah Thompson Stanley

doubts about the mercies of God and at this time he suffered his first attack of insanity. He existed in this state of mind for a period of time and losing all interest in what he had studied turned his thoughts to suicide. He felt if he destroyed his body of weakness and sorrow that all would be well.

Cowper did not realize he had now been overtaken by the Schoolmaster of Grace and his weakness of body and mind was but teaching him in a strange but an effectual way. God has His way of bringing understanding to His own and no matter how impatient we may be, in His own time and season He gives the spirit a sense of peace. There Cowper still from time to time was bent on self destruction because of the continuing doubts that satan was sending him in his nights of no sleep. He now set forth a plan to bring an end to it all.

In November of 1763 he purchased half an ounce of laudanum (a tincture of opium) which was deadly poison. He went into the field near his home and lay down in a ditch planning to drink the poison. His thoughts turned to the beasts of the field and the scavenger he knew would devour his body and arose and returned to the house. He placed the vial on a bedside table and lay down on the bed and while reaching for the poison was startled by a knock on the door. In the excitement of the fear of being caught in the act he tries to hide the vial and pours out the contents on the floor.

This attempt being prevented he designed that he would hang himself. He took a garter strap and placed it

around his neck and while standing in a chair hooked the strap over the top of the tall door. He then kicked the chair away and beginning to lose his consciousness thought that at last his peace had come. He did not yet realize that his peace was procured in the death of Christ rather than death to himself. The strap broke and he fell to the floor and was heard by a cleaning woman in his struggles. His plan was thwarted again but now he had a bruised streak around his neck and both eyes black from the clotted blood.

The friends of Cowper now seeing his wounds became very concerned about his desires of self destruction and tried to console and comfort him not knowing that man cannot console such a mind and spirit in despair. Cowper now calls a coachman and hires him to take him to Tower Wharf in order that he drown himself. When they arrived the tide was out and there was not enough water to effect drowning. He asks the coachman to carry him to another location but due to a blinding fog and night's darkness they became lost. The hand of Grace again is manifest and when Cowper leaves the coach he finds himself at his own home.

God now gave him understanding that all the times he tried and failed was indeed Divine intervention. He now declared that thus did He (God) break me and bind me up; then did He wound me and make me whole. He now began to rejoice and praise a God who was so merciful. His delight throughout his remaining years would be his work in poetry giving thanks

and praise always. In such a mind of relief of his burdens he goes to his desk and writes the hymn - God Moves in a Mysterious Way which is considered one of his greatest. He wrote and had published in the Olney Hymn book sixty eight wonderful hymns of praise and thanksgiving.

Cowper became acquainted with John Newton in 1767 and they enjoyed a treasured friendship discussing their experiences and both writing their poetry. He and Newton labored in a bond of love in the church and in poetry and Newton's death left a void in the life of Cowper from which he never recovered.

This information taken from a book on the lives of the hymn writers printed in the 1800's. Humbly submitted for the enjoyment of those who rejoice in giving praise to an eternal God.

Elder C.B. Davis, Jr.

ROMANS 15 : 1 - 4.

WE then that are strong ouget to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves.

2 Let every one of us please his neighbour for his good to edification.

3 For even Christ pleased not himself; but, as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me.

4 For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.

ARTICLES

WILLIAM GADSBY

This is the last will and testament of the William Gadsby, of the township of Cheetham, in the parish of Manchester, in the county of Lancaster, Baptist minister of the everlasting gospel of God our Saviour, by the matchless grace of God, through the invincible power of God the Holy Ghost, made and published as follows: that is to say,

First, I am brought firmly to believe and maintain that the Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Testament are the Word of God, and the only certain rule of faith and practice. And I also further observe that : I firmly believe in Three equal Persons, namely, God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Ghost, in one glorious undivided Jehovah; and that each glorious Person is an object of spiritual worship, and is loved, praised and adored as such by all the heaven-born family of God; and that a denial of this glorious truth is altogether Anti-Christian, and repugnant to the glory of God. I also believe in the glorious doctrine of absolute, personal and unconditional election; and that God's dear elect were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, both to grace and glory.

I believe in effectual grace in calling; and that God the Holy Ghost both has made and will make all the elect willing in the day of God's power. I believe that all the sins of the elect are absolutely pardoned through the glo-

rious atonement of the Lord Jesus Christ; and that their persons are justified in His glorious righteousness, without any idea as to their works, worth or worthiness as the cause, in any sense whatever, of their justification before God, but absolutely in and by the righteousness of Christ imputed to them; and that they stand complete in Christ. I believe in the eternal and inseparable union of the elect to the Lord Jesus Christ, as the glorious Head of the church. I believe that all spiritual blessings are treasured up in Christ, and that all grace and glory, necessary for the holiness and happiness of God's elect, are secured in Christ for them, and made sure to them.

I believe that nothing short of the divine quickening power and special teachings of God the Holy Ghost can make a sinner spiritually acquainted with the glorious truths of God's grace; and that all religion short of that which God the Spirit teacheth and leadeth into by His glorious, quickening, enlightening, teaching, guiding, anointing sealing power is at best but a fair show in the flesh; and every elect sinner must have his fleshly religion rooted up by the roots, to be fuel for the fire, in the day when God purgeth His people "by the spirit of burning" (Isa.4.4); for every real believer in Christ must and shall in this world have his works tried by fire (I Cor. 3.15).

I believe that the kingdom of God is a spiritual kingdom in all its bearings; and that God the Spirit sets up and maintains the kingdom of grace in the

hearts of all His people, and by His invincible power enables them to give God the whole of the glory. I believe that while God's quickened children remain in this vale of tears, there will be a constant warfare between flesh and Spirit, the old man and the new, but that "grace shall reign through righteousness unto eternal life." I believe that when God's people walk contrary to the will of God in Christ, as the Lord and Head of the church, He will visit (as a Father) their transgressions with the rod; nevertheless, He will not cease to love them, nor suffer faithfulness to fail. I believe in the final perseverance of all real saints to glory.

I believe in believers' baptism, by immersion, to the total exclusion of infant sprinkling; and that the Lord's supper is a privilege belonging to the church of Christ, to show forth the death of Christ till He come.

I believe in the resurrection of the body, both of the just and the unjust; and that the bodies of the saints will rise a glorious body, like unto the body of Christ, and that they shall live and reign with Him in glory, in the presence of the Three-one undivided Jehovah, for ever and ever. I believe in the last judgment and eternal punishment of all the ungodly.

The above solemn truths in direct union to and immediately connected with them, I firmly believe and maintain; and I pray that, if it be the will of God, the Lord will make all my dear family acquainted with the same.

(From January Gospel Standard,
1994)

VOICES OF THE PAST

FALLEN ANGELS*ALEXANDER D.C. JAN. 15, 1840*

ur attention has been called to the subject of the "fallen angels which kept not their first estate", Etc. by Brother Gaines, of Kentucky, who desires our views on Jude 6, and 2 Peter 2:4. It is rather a thankless undertaking to set forth our views upon a subject on which we must necessarily come in collision with the long established opinions and deep rooted traditions of others, among whom are to be found some friends for whose opinions and feelings we entertain sentiments of the greatest regard. When called upon, as to the present case, however, we feel bound to set before our readers such views as we have.

The celebrity of Milton's views, as given in his "Paradise Lost" has become universal. A few men of our age are found able to compete with that distinguished poet in eloquence of style or language, few have ventured the risk of their own popularity by offering a different view of the subject from that which he has given, while at the same time a child may easily detect and expose the fallacy of his reasoning concerning the angels. We have not been able to see with Milton and others, either beauty or scriptural authority for the notion that the angels here spoken of were ever residents of that heaven above, where the

saints are ultimately to rest, nor that they had an existence prior to that date to which God created the heavens and the earth, and all the hosts of them - to believe that they were once associated with those holy angels that sang the joyful anthems to the shepherds in Judea; nor to believe that in their creation they were created for or capacitated to enjoy the immediate presence of their maker, or that he designed them for any other purpose than that which is and shall be fully accomplished in their case, to us seems to conflict seriously with divine relation. Can we rationally suppose that the place originally provided for one description of beings shall ultimately be occupied by another so essentially different, without relinquishing the doctrine of the immutability of God. Or, if the saints are finally to occupy a place originally prepared for the devil and his angels, how can it be said in truth that the heavenly kingdom was prepared for the saints before the foundation of the world, when, according to Milton, it was not known that the place would be vacated until the world was founded, and the decree of bringing his Only Begotten into the world, and that all the angels should worship him? Again, would not the saints feel sad in prospect of being placed where angels could not stay? If a higher order or beings, holy, happy, and in a place where temptation and sin could not enter, and such beings as could have no predisposition to sin, did fall from that estate, and were cast over the battlements of glory, wouldn't the poor

lambs of Jesus who have all their lifetime been tormented with temptation and struggling against inbred corruptions, have great cause to fear that they also might fall from the height of glory and sink at last among the damned? But lest we be tedious, we will leave the negative part of our subject, and give our opinion of the angels.

By the angels that kept not their first estate, we understand the children of the devil. Satan is called an angel, and sometimes transforms himself into an angel of light; and as far as we have been able to discover from revelation all the names by which he is known in the scriptures are applicable to his seed. Hence satan is called "That old serpent, which is the devil and satan, "(Rev. 20:2) his children are also called "a generation of Vipers," (Matt. 3:7) also 23:33. So also is Satan called an angel, and in Rev. 12:7, his children are also thus denominated; "There was war in heaven; Michael and his angels fought against the dragon; and the dragon fought, and his angels."

The term angel also signifies messenger, and hence every emissary of Satan employed to disseminate heresy, to oppose the gospel of Christ, to afflict and persecute the children of God, are properly denominated as his angels. It can be by no means difficult to perceive that the dragon and his angels, mentioned in Rev. 12, are designed to show the power of darkness in array against the cause and church of Christ. Michael, the only archangel spoken of in the bible, is none other than Christ; his angels are those who are denominated. "The remnant of

her (the church's seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ" - Rev. 12:17. Admitting then, as we are compelled to do, that the disciples of Christ, in this case, are his angels, it is perfectly plain that the opposite angels are those unto whom Christ said, "Ye are of your father, the devil" (John 8:44). These two descriptions of angels, in our opinion, include the whole human family; the chosen generation, or that seed which Jesus saw when he poured out his soul unto death; a seed that should serve him, and that should be counted to him for a generation; these constitute the one family, and are all in time born of a spiritual birth, by the Holy Ghost, and when discipled in the ranks of the followers of the Lamb are known as his angels, keeping the commandments of God, and having the testimony of Jesus Christ. In the other division are found all who are without, such as dogs, sorcerers, whoremongers, murderers and who-soever loveth and maketh a lie. (Rev. 22: 15) These are called the seed of the serpent, (Gen. 3:15) a generation of vipers, etc.; and these are known as the dragon's angels. The angels spoken of by Peter and Jude, we understand to be such as were found in the family of national Israel, and were then known as false prophets, children of Belial, etc. Their first estate, confining the idea to those angels, was intermixed with the people of God under the legal covenant; here they had an habitation in Abraham's house, claiming him to their father, as when they come to John's baptism

(Matt. 3) and as they asserted and Christ admitted. (John 8:33-44). Both Peter and Jude, in the connection of our subject, are found exhorting their brethren to beware of false teachers, which admonition they enforce by the example of these angels; and then, going still further back, they mention the destruction of the old world, and the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah, etc., the judgement of which our Lord had said was more tolerable than that which awaited Jerusalem and the other cities of Judea.

We shall be understood to believe that the first estate and their own habitation of these angels was in the worldly sanctuary under the ceremonial law. Here they had rights in common with the rest of Abraham's carnal seed, of which they were not dispossessed until the breaking up of that disposition. The manner of their leaving their own habitation and losing their first estate is very clearly illustrated in Rev. 12. It had long been foretold that the day would dawn on Israel, when the children of God should, in a clearer light discern between those who served God and those that served him not; at length the voice of one crying in the wilderness is heard, the morning star sheds forth a glimmering light; the day spring from on high visits the benighted Jew. The people that sat in darkness discovered a light; and our Lord says, that which maketh manifest is light. To their great amazement, there appeared a great wonder in heaven a woman clothed in the sun, elevated

above the moon, etc. By which we understand the church of Christ, emerging from Judaism, and brought, by John's preaching and baptism, to view in her connection with Christ, into whose name John baptized them, and thus raised above that ordained to rule the night dispensation of the old covenant, whose borrowed rays were given through prophecy, types and figures, pointed forward to the day of our Lord Jesus. Above this moon the church was discovered in her connection with Christ her Son, and eventually the Head of the church, or woman, crowned with a crown of twelve stars. The church now looking forth as the morning. Cant. 6:10. According to the similitude of the morning, from the appearing of John, who was the day star, or harbinger of the rising Sun, the light must increase; and as the light became more clear, other objects were also discovered. The seed of the woman is born, Christ appears in the flesh as the promised Messiah, or as the archangel Michael; the Prince that standeth for the children of thy people. (Dan. 12:1) The same light that revealed the Redeemer coming out of Zion to turn away ungodliness from Jacob, made manifest the dragon, as first personated by Herod, standing before the woman, for to devour the child as soon as it should be born. "And there was war in heaven". Not in the world of glory above, nor in the Gospel Church, but in that heaven where these things appeared, viz. Israel. Christ is now born, has taken his place at the head of his little flock at Jordan, where he

was recognized by John and his disciples, as their head and ruler, their leader and king, by the descent of the Spirit like a dove, and the voice of the Father, who from his awful throne and majesty proclaims, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Immediately after this revelation of the Son of God, Christ was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil; and on this occasion the war broke out. Michael, the archangel, contended with the devil, the dispute was then, and has continued ever since to be about the body of Moses, i.e., the law. Here the great Captain of salvation leads on to battle, followed by his angels; the dragon also marshals his troops. "And the dragon, fought, and his angels, and prevailed not; neither was their place found any more in heaven. And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent called the devil and satan, which deceiveth the whole world; he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him." In view of this glorious triumph Jesus said to his disciples, when they returned and said, "Lord even devils are subject to us through thy name." "I beheld satan as lightening fall from heaven. Nevertheless, rejoice not that devils are made subject to you, (or are cast down) but rather that your names are written in heaven; that you were not included in the number of the vanquished." Here then is where the angels that sinned left their own habitation and their first estate. "And I heard a loud voice saying in heaven, Now is come salvation, and strength,

and the kingdom of God, and the power of his Christ; for the accuser of our brethren is cast down, which accused them before God day and night. And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony," etc. In anticipation of this glorious victory, the prophet cries, "Awake, awake! put on the strength O Zion. Put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem, the holy city; for henceforth there shall no more come into thee the daughters of the uncircumcised and the unclean." "Isa. 52:1. "There, rejoice ye heavens, and ye that dwell in them. Woe to the inhabitants of the earth and sea; for the devil is come down unto you, having great wrath, because he knoweth that he hath but a short time. "Rev. 12:12. The vanquished legions of the old serpent are cast down, and are held under chains of darkness, unto the judgement of the great day. All the angels of satan are thus bound in chains of darkness and Jesus rejoiced in spirit that it was so, saying, "Thank thee, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou has hid these things from the wise and prudent, and has revealed them unto babes." Not all the infant Schools, Sabbath or Theological Schools, Missions, Tract or even Bible Societies with all their machinery, brake asunder these everlasting fetters of ignorance of spiritual things, to which the devil and his angels are doomed; nor can all the preaching, praying or exhortations, anxious benches or protracted meetings, conducted by men or angels, ever make one of these fallen angels

wise unto salvation; they are chained, and in fetters of darkness they must remain for ever. Those angels particularly alluded to by Peter and Jude, were in a special manner chained in darkness concerning the true Messiah, the spirituality of his Kingdom, and particularly in regard to the fulfillment of these predictions of the destruction of Jerusalem, of their consequent judgment at that time, and of all those signs which should indicate the near approach of the judgment of that great and terrible day. From all these considerations, let the saints throughout all subsequent time be admonished. The destruction of these false teachers and prophets among the Jews, as also the destruction of the old world, the overthrow of Sodom and Gomorrah, were all presented by these faithful prophets as examples of what should be developed in the last days, when perilous times should come; when false teachers should come among the saints, bringing in damnable heresies and doctrines of devils, when they should turn away from the truth, and be turned unto fables; (crafts, fictitious stories, dairymen's daughters, and the like) and when they with feigned words, (professing great reverence for God, and extravagant love for souls, etc.) shall make merchandise of the saints; but the apostle adds, *"their judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not."*

"But on! their end, their dreadful end,

Thy sanctuary taught me so;

*On slippery rocks I see them stand,
And fiery billows roll below."*

Elder Gilbert Beebe

VOICES OF THE PAST

From Elder Lamberts book,
"Tried In The Furnace".

BAPTISM

February, 1951



ELDER E.J. LAMBERT

The subject of baptism has been a subject of great controversy throughout the centuries. Many false and erroneous theories have been advocated which have tended to confuse the minds of God's little children. This is due to the fact that theologians have attempted to supplant a theological meaning of the term that is foreign to the classical meaning in order to prop up their false theories in trying to hinge salvation on the volition and work of the creature. This has narrowed the conception of the term, baptism, to that ceremonial use of water to admit members into an organized body here upon earth termed the church. I do not believe the term is so narrow in its scope. When I think of baptism I like to meditate upon the classical meaning instead of the theological use of the term.

To baptize is to immerse, submerge, envelope, overwhelm or sink; to dip,

wash, or drench; to consecrate; to completely subdue. This is the essence of the classical meaning. Even theologians who advocate sprinkling as the proper mode of baptism admit this. I think that baptism in literal water is figurative and typical of the baptism that is essential unto salvation. No man is able, empowered or authorized to do that. This is the work of God.

I want to call your attention to one Scripture that will conclusively prove that water baptism is not meant every time the term is used in the Scriptures. Jesus said as recorded in Luke 12:50, "But I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished." The word straitened means pained. He was undoubtedly speaking of His baptism in death. He was speaking of the time when death would envelop Him, when He would be overwhelmed with suffering and submerged into death. This statement was made approximately two years after His baptism in Jordan. (I think His baptism in Jordan was pointing to, and figurative of, His baptism in death.)

Now, let us consider Romans 6:3. "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?" Paul did not say or hint at water in this expression. If Paul had said, know ye not that as many of us as were baptized in water were baptized in Jesus Christ and into His death; then, the modern theorists would have something to base their arguments upon. Since he did not say this, let us take for granted that he

said what he meant and meant what he said. He said, "were baptized into Jesus Christ." Can any man immerse one into Jesus Christ? We may baptize in water in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost but man cannot baptize into Jesus Christ. I believe that God chose His people in Christ in the annals of eternity before time ever began. "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world" (Eph. 1:4). "Whom he did foreknow, them he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son" (Rom. 8:29). The entire family of God was baptized into the body of Christ by God, our Father. "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body: so is Christ. For by one spirit are we all baptized into one body" (Cor. 12:12, 13). "We are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus" (Eph. 2:10). If we were chosen in Him, created in Him, and baptized in Him, we were mysteriously in Him being bone of His bone as He accomplished the law to a jot and tittle while He sojourned in this world of sin and sorrow. I believe that as Jesus performed the law to a jot and tittle, Jehovah could see the entire family of God performing it as they were members of His body, being baptized in Him. The one baptism spoken of in Ephesians 4:5 is that performed by God, the Father in the Son through the operation of the Spirit upon His children. This baptism is essential unto salvation but cannot be performed by man.

Yes, God's children were "baptized into His death." They went down with

Him into death because they were chosen, created, and baptized in Him. If we be children of God we paid the penalty of death in Him! This being true, justice is completely satisfied in Him for each and every child of God. Nothing can be charged to them.

We have touched upon the subject of baptism relative to all the family of God being baptized at once together into Jesus Christ and into His death. Now, we want to meditate upon the experimental phase of baptism. We want to consider the individual, personal baptism that is experienced by each and every child of God. This experimental phase of baptism is progressive in its application as we shall see, the Lord willing. It begins in regeneration and ends in the immortalization of the body. John preached the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins as recorded in Mark 1:4. All those who made manifest that they were in possession of this baptism by confessing their sins he baptized in the river Jordan, (Mark 1:5) which was an outward manifestation of being in this condition. The rule is according to the words of Jesus as recorded in Mark 16:16, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." The form of the verb used shows that it is not water baptism that is under consideration. The present tense of the verb shows that it is a condition they are now in. They are overwhelmed, immersed, or enveloped now. Are they now enveloped in water by the administrator? No, they are now enveloped in repentance by the Holy Ghost! This being submerged

in repentance affects the cry for deliverance or salvation from their sins. This salvation is promised in this statement by Jesus. The hope of each child of God, who is so baptized in repentance by the Holy Ghost, is salvation from their sins through the merits of God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. When one is baptized in water he outwardly manifests this condition and hope through the grace of the Father, the merits of the Son, and guidance, operation and revelation of the Holy Spirit.

"John answered, saying unto them all, I indeed baptize you with water; but one mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose; he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire" (St. Luke 3:16). The effect of the Holy Spirit baptism is regeneration. The souls of God's people are baptized into death and resurrected unto life here in time; and, the bodies of God's people shall be baptized into death and resurrected unto life immortal into the great beyond - the end of this sphere of time. This is that for which we patiently wait and hope.

The natural soul trusts in natural man being inspired by the natural carnal spirit. This is the soul that sins. It shall die (Ezek. 18:4). All people are born naturally in this condition. When it pleases God to baptize the soul of one of His people by the Holy Spirit, He kills and makes spiritually alive the soul. Yes, the soul is overwhelmed, immersed, and submerged into death and resurrected into a new life. The soul that has been so wrought upon by the Holy Spirit shall

never die. It is a new creature. According to Psalms 107 the experience of the redeemed is, "Hungry and thirsty, their soul fainted in them. Then they cried unto the Lord in their troubles and he delivered them out of their distresses." This is brought about by the baptism of the Holy Spirit. We read in Luke 3:3, "And he came into all the country about Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins." This does not say baptism of water but of repentance. This means that you must be overwhelmed, submerged, and immersed with repentance. It is a godly sorrow that worketh repentance unto salvation not to be repented of (2 Cor. 7:10). When you are overwhelmed with repentance you abhor yourself; you repent in dust and ashes. When you abhor yourself you die to the love of self. You sink into despair; you are immersed in trouble and distresses. As He did not leave Christ in the grave He does not leave your soul in despair but raises it up a new soul. This is verified in Psalms 23:3, "He restoreth my soul." You are then a new creature motivated by a spiritual soul. The mortal soul which is subject to death, has been baptized with immortality. This makes the soul immortal. Now, you are an immortal soul dwelling in a mortal body. This body has not yet been baptized with immortality. That will be the crowning work of the Holy Spirit.

Paul says in Romans 7:24, "Oh wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Paul realized the sinfulness and mortality of his body. All God's children are possessed with the thorn in the flesh

and infirmities of the flesh. Our bodies are subject to weaken and die. We cannot do the things we would because of the evil that is present in our fast decaying bodies. The body becomes lame and tottery with age. Our bodies become weak because of disease. Our natural eyes become dim and our natural ears deafen. Our memory fails and our ability to comprehend is affected. Our natural minds fail to function as they once did. I feel that as we experience these things we become more and more desirous of the immortalization of the bodies. "Even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body. (Rom. 8:23). Yes, the bodies of the saints shall be baptized into death and shall be completely submerged, enveloped, swallowed up, or baptized with immortality. "So, when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written death is swallowed up in victory" (1 Cor. 15: 54). This will be the answer to the prayer as recorded in 1 Thess. 5: 23, "And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly: and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ."

The baptism in water is figurative of this baptism that is essential unto salvation. This is not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God: which is a figure of the resurrection of Jesus Christ. See 1st Peter 3:21. There are two kinds of conscience. There is a natural conscience and there is a Holy Spirit

conscience. A good conscience is a Holy Spirit conscience. I believe that God's people are wrought upon by His Spirit and are made anxious to follow Jesus in baptism. They are desirous to outwardly manifest this faith in the Father baptizing them in the Son by the Spirit by submitting themselves to baptism in water in the name of the Father, and the son, and the Holy Ghost. As the candidate for baptism is passive in the hands of the administrator in the act of baptism in water, so he manifests that he is passive in the hand of God in Holy Spirit baptism which is essential unto salvation. He manifests his faith in being in Christ as He went down into the grave and came up out of the grave. As baptism into Jesus Christ and into His death is the door of entrance into the Church which is the one invisible body including all the children of God, so baptism in water is the door of entrance into the church in its organized form upon earth.

John required those whom he baptized to bring forth fruit worthy of repentance. I believe such characters are the only ones worthy to be received into the organized Church. When one comes confessing his sins, and considering himself as the chief of sinners and less than the least of all saints, speaking of his unworthiness, my heart goes out to him and I am given to fellowship him. When such an one comes testifying that his hopes for salvation from sins is solely based on the grace of God and the merits of the Lord Jesus, I consider him as a proper subject for baptism in water into the fellowship of the organized Church. None but those who have been

baptized with repentance would come bringing such testimony from the heart desiring a home with God's people. The Church receives such into their fellowship and one properly ordained will gladly administer the ordinance to that character.

I realize that I have just hinted upon this grand subject. These thoughts are my earnest and conscientious convictions. If they be true, may God be praised. If they be false, charge them to my ignorance and vain imaginations. May God bless this to your comfort and edification, if it be His will, is my prayer for Christ's sake.

Elder E.J. Lambert

LAW AND GOSPEL

(Part of a letter by J. C. Philpot, 1861.)

My dear Sir – In one of your letters you express the wish that I should give my views upon this point – Why, in my judgment, the law is not a believer's rule of life . . . In doing so I shall take occasion to offer my thoughts on these three distinct points–

1. Why the law is not the believer's rule of life.
2. What is his rule?
3. Disprove the objection cast upon us that our views lead to doctrinal or practical antinomianism.

By a believer, I understand one who by faith in Christ is delivered from the curse and bondage of the law, and who knows something experimentally of the life, light, liberty, and love of the

glorious gospel of the grace of God. By the law I understand chiefly, though not exclusively, the law of Moses. And by the rule of life I understand an outward or inward guide, by following which a believer directs his walk and conversation before God, the Church, and the world.

It is very necessary to bear strictly in mind that we are speaking here wholly and solely of a believer. What has the law to do with a believer in Christ Jesus? Is he required by the revealed will of God to take the law as the guiding rule of his life? I answer, No; and for several reasons.

1. God does not leave us at liberty to take at will one part of the law and to leave the other. It must be taken as a whole, or left as a whole, for God has so revealed it. I cannot find in any part of God's Word any mitigation of its terms, or any halving of it, so that, according to the views of many divines who have written on the subject, we may be dead to it as a covenant, and yet alive to it as a rule. The essential and distinguishing characteristic of the law is that it is a covenant of works, requiring full and perfect obedience, and attaching a tremendous curse to the least infringement of its commands. If then I, as a believer, take the law as my rule of life, I take it with its curse; I put myself under its yoke, for in receiving it as my guide, (and if I do not this, it is not my rule), I take it with all its conditions and become subject to all its penalties . . . The indispensable connection between a covenant and its rules is

clearly shown in Gal. v. 1-6, where the apostle testifies to "every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law". It is idle to talk of taking the law for a rule of life, and not for a covenant; for the two things are essentially inseparable; and as he who keeps the whole law and yet offends in one point, is guilty of all (James ii. 10), so he who takes but one precept of the law for his rule, (as the Galatians took that of circumcision), by taking that one, virtually adopts the whole, and by adopting the whole puts himself under the curse which attaches to their infringement.

People speak very fluently about the law being a rule of life who little think of the resulting consequences; for amongst them is this, that its written precepts and not its mere spirit, must be the rule. Now, these precepts belong to it only as a covenant for they were never disjoined by the Authority that gave them, and what God hath joined together no man can put asunder. To show this connection between the precepts and the covenant is the chief drift of the Epistle to the Galatians, who were looking to the law and not the gospel, and having begun in the Spirit were attempting to be made perfect by the flesh. Read with enlightened eyes, this blessed Epistle would at once decide in favour of the gospel as our guiding rule of Christian conduct as distinct from the law which was never given to believers in Christ as the rule of their daily conduct and conversation. Observe how Paul chides those who would so act; he calls them "foolish

Galatians", and asks who hath bewitched them that they should not obey the truth (that is, the gospel), "before whose eyes Jesus Christ had been evidently set forth, crucified among them". He appeals to their own experience and asks them: "Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law or by the hearing of faith?" He draws a line of distinction here between those works which are done in obedience to the law as a guiding rule, and that power of God felt in the heart which attends a preached gospel when heard in faith, and asks them under which of the two they had received the teaching and testimony of the blessed Spirit. But observe, further, now he bids them "walk in the Spirit" (Gal. v. 16). Now, to "walk" is to live and act, and the rule which he here gives for this living and acting is not the law but the Spirit, and he tells them the blessedness of this divine leading and guiding: "If ye be led of the Spirit, ye are not under the law"; that is, neither as a covenant or as a rule—that they were free from its curse as a condemning covenant, and from its commands as a galling yoke, which neither they nor their fathers could bear (Acts xv. 10). But to show them that this deliverance from the law did not set them free from a higher and more perfect rule of obedience, he bids them "fulfill the law of Christ", which is love, a fruit of the Spirit and not produced by the law which worketh wrath and gendereth to bondage (Rom. iv. 15; Gal. iv. 24).

If we are willing to abide by the inspired Word of Truth, we need go no further than this very Epistle to decide

the whole question, for in it we have laid down the rule according to which believers should walk, which is "a new creature" (or a new creation): "For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing nor uncircumcision, but a new creature. And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and on the Israel of God" (Gal. vi. 15-16). Is the law or the Spirit's work on the heart held out here as the rule of a believer's walk? The law is strictly a covenant of works; it knows nothing of mercy, reveals nothing of grace, and does not communicate the blessed Spirit. Why, then, if I am a believer in Christ and have received His grace and truth into my heart, am I to adopt for the rule of life that which does not testify of Jesus either in the Word or in my conscience? If I am to walk as a believer, it must be by a life of faith in the Son of God (Gal. ii. 20). Is the law my rule here? If it be, where are those rules to be found? "The law is not of faith." How, then, can it lay down rules for the life of faith? If I wish to walk as becometh a believer with the Church, what help will the law give me there? To walk as such must be by the law of love as revealed in Christ and made known in my heart by the power of God. If I am to walk in the ordinances of God's house, are these to be found revealed in the law?

We give the law its due honour. It had a glory, as the Apostle argues (II Cor. iii.) as the ministration of death and condemnation, but this glory is done away, and why are we to look to it now as our guiding rule? The minis-

tration of the Spirit, of life, and of righteousness "doth much more exceed in glory", and why are we to be condemned if we prefer the Spirit to the letter, life to death, and righteousness to condemnation? A rule must influence as well as guide, or else it is a dead rule. If you choose to be ruled by the killing letter which can only minister condemnation and death, and we choose for our rule that which ministers the Spirit, righteousness, and life, which has the better rule? It is much to be feared that those who thus walk and talk have still the veil over their heart, and know nothing of what the Apostle means when he says: "Now the Lord is that Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is there is liberty. But we all with open face beholding, as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord" (II Cor. iii. 17-18).

But not only have we these deductions to influence the mind in rejecting the law as a rule for a believer's walk, but we have the express testimony of God as a warrant for so doing. We read, for instance, that "I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God" (Gal. ii. 19); that "I am become dead to the law by the body of Christ, that I should be married to another, even to Him who is raised from the dead, that I should bring forth fruit unto God" (Rom. vii. 4). As a believer in Christ, the law is dead to me, and I am dead to it. The Apostle has clearly and beautifully opened up this subject. He assumes that a believer in Christ is like a woman

who is re-married after the death of her first husband; and he declares that "she is bound by the law to her husband as long as he liveth, but if the husband be dead she is loosed from the law of her husband" (v. 2). Of course the first husband is the law, and the second husband is Christ. Now, adopting this figure of Paul's, may we not justly ask: Which is to be the rule of the wife's conduct when re-married, the regulations of the first or of the second husband?

2. What, then, is the believer's rule of life? Is he without rule? a lawless wretch who because he abandons the law of Moses for his rule has no guide to direct his steps? God forbid! for I subscribe heart and soul to the words of the Apostle: "Being not without law to God, but under law to Christ" (I Cor. ix. 21). The believer then has a guiding rule which we may briefly call the gospel. This rule we may divide into two branches. The gospel as written by the divine finger upon the heart, and the gospel as written by the blessed Spirit in the Word of truth. These do not form two distinct rules, but the one is the counterpart of the other; and they are mutually helpful to and corroborative of each other. One of the four promises of the new covenant (Jer. xxxi. 31-34; Heb. viii. 8-12 compared), was: "I will put My law in their inward parts and write it in their hearts." This writing of the law of God in the heart, I need not tell you, is that which distinguishes it from the law of Moses which was written on tables of stone; and becomes an internal rule whereas the law of Moses was but an

external rule. This internal rule seems to be pointed out in Romans viii. 2 where we find these words: "For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." By "the law of the Spirit of life", I understand that guiding rule (for a rule in Scripture is frequently called a law; the word law in Hebrew signifying literally "instruction") which the Spirit of God, as communicating life, is in a believer's heart. It is therefore, the liberating, sanctifying, guiding influence of the Spirit of God in his soul which, as a law or rule, delivers him from "the law of sin and death"; by which I understand not so much the law of Moses, as the power and prevalency of his corrupt nature.

If this then be a correct exposition of the text, we have a guiding internal rule distinct from the law of Moses, and a living rule in the heart, which that never was nor could be; for it did not communicate the Spirit (Gal. iii. 2-5). But this internal rule, as being "the law of the Spirit of life", has power to lead all the children of God; for in the same chapter (v. 14) the Apostle declares that "as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God". This leading which is peculiar to the children of God and is an evidence of their sonship, delivers them from the law; for "If we be led of the Spirit we are not under the law" (Gal. v. 18) either as a covenant or as a rule, for we have a better covenant and a better rule (Heb. viii. 6). What is the main use of a rule but to lead? But who can lead like a living Guide? How can a dead law lead a living soul? The

very proof that we are the children of God is that we are led by the Spirit; and this inward leading becomes our guiding rule. And is it not a disparaging of the guidance of the blessed Spirit to set up in opposition to His guiding rule a dead law and to call those Antinomians who prefer a living Guide to a dead letter? This living Guide is that holy and blessed Spirit who "guides into all truth" (Jn. xvi. 13). Here is the main blessedness of the work and grace upon the heart, that the leading and guiding of the blessed Spirit form a living rule every step of the way; for He not only quickens the soul into spiritual life, but maintains the life which He gave, and performs (or finishes, margin) it until the day of Jesus Christ (Phil. i. 6). This life is eternal, as the blessed Lord at the well of Samaria declared, that the water which He should give the believer should be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life (Jn. iv. 14). It is then this springing well in a believer's soul which is the guiding rule, for, as producing and maintaining the fear of God, it is "a fountain of life to depart from the snares of death" (Proverbs xiv. 27).

But lest this guiding internal rule be abused, which it might be by enthusiasm, and that they might not be left to substitute delusive fancies for the teaching of the Holy Spirit, the God of all grace has given to His people an external rule in the precepts of the gospel as declared by the mouth of the Lord and His apostles, but more particularly as gathered up in the epistles as a standing code of instruc-

tion for the living family of God. Nor do these at all clash with the rule of which I have just spoken, but on the contrary harmonize entirely and thoroughly with it; for, in fact, it is one and the same rule; the only difference between them being that the blessed Spirit had revealed the one in the written Word, and by the application of that Word to the soul makes the other to be a living rule in the heart.

Now there is not a single part or particle of our walk and conduct before God or man which is not revealed and inculcated in the precepts of the gospel; for, though we have not minute directions, we have what far excels all such unnecessary minutiae - most blessed principles enforced by every gracious and holy motive, and forming, when rightly seen and believed, a most perfect code of inward and outward conformity to the revealed will of God, and of all holy walk and conduct in our families, in the Church, and in the world.

I would say then that a believer has a rule to walk by which is sufficient to guide him in every step of the way; for if he has the internal quickenings, teachings, and leadings of the Spirit to make his conscience tender in the fear of God, and has the law of love written upon his heart by the finger of God, and if besides this he has the precepts of the gospel as a full and complete code of Christian obedience, what more can he want to make him perfect in every good word and work (Heb. xiii. 21)? Can the law do any of these things for him? Can it give him life, in the first instance, when it is a

killing letter? Can it maintain life, if it be not in its power to bestow it?

But it may be asked: Do you then set aside the two great commandments of the law: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God," etc., and "thy neighbour as thyself"? No, On the contrary, the gospel as an external and internal rule fulfills them both, for "love is the fulfilling of the law" (I Rom. xiii. 10). So that this blessed rule of the gospel not only does not set aside the law as regards its fulfillment, but so to speak, absorbs into itself and glorifies and harmonizes its two great commandments, by yielding to them in obedience of heart, which the law could not give; for the believer serves in newness of Spirit, not in the oldness of the letter (Rom. vii. 6), as Christ's freeman (Jn. viii. 32), and not as Moses's bondsman. This is a willing obedience and not a legal task. This will explain the meaning of the Apostle: "For I delight in the law of God after the inward man"; for the new man of grace, under the powerful influence of the Holy Spirit, delights in the law of God, not only for its holiness, but as inculcating that to do which fills the renewed heart with inward delight—love to God and His people . . .

(From the December, 1961 issue of the Gospel Standard of England.)

PSALM 117

O PRAISE the LORD, all ye nations: praise him, all ye people.

2 For his merciful kindness is great toward us: and the truth of the LORD endureth for ever. Praise ye the LORD.

"For I will pour water upon him that is thirsty." - ISAIAH xliv. 3.

THIRST, as a feeling of the soul, in a spiritual sense, is certainly indicative of divine life. It is as impossible, spiritually viewed, for a man dead in sin to thirst after a living God, as for a corpse in the grave) ard to thirst after a draught of cold water from the well. I know for myself that such a feeling as thirsting after God had no place in my bosom until the Lord was pleased to quicken my soul into spiritual life. I had heard of God by the hearing of the ear. I had seen him in creation, in the starry sky, in the roaring sea, in the teeming earth; I had read of him in the Bible; I had learnt his existence by education and tradition; and I had some apprehensions of his holiness in my natural conscience; but as to any spiritual thirsting after him, any earnest desire to fear him, know him, believe in him, or love him,--no such experience or feeling, I can say for myself, ever dwelt in my bosom. I loved the world too dearly to look to him who made it, and myself too warmly and affectionately to seek him who would bid me crucify and mortify it. A man, therefore, I am well convinced, must be made alive unto God by spiritual regeneration before he can experience any such sensation as is here conveyed by the figure "thirst," or know anything of the Psalmist's feelings when he cried, 'As the hart panteth after the water-brooks,

so panteth my soul after thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God" (Psalm xlii. 1, 2). Now wherever God has raised up in the soul this spiritual thirst after himself, he certainly will answer that desire, "the desire of the righteous shall be granted" (Prov. x. 24). His own invitation is, "Ho! every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters" (Isaiah lv. 1); and Jesus himself says with his own blessed lips, "If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink" (John vii. 37). Nay, he opened his ministry by pronouncing a blessing on such, "*Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled.*"

J.C. Philpot

PSALM 95

O COME, let us sing unto the LORD: let us make a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation.

2 Let us come before his presence with thanksgiving, and make a joyful noise unto him with psalms.

3 For the LORD is a great God, and a great King above all gods.

4 In his hand are the deep places of the earth: the strength of the hills is his also.

5 The sea is his, and he made it: and his hands formed the dry land.

6 O come, let us worship and bow down: let us kneel before the LORD our maker.

7 For he is our God; and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand. To day if ye will hear his voice,

8 Harden not your heart, as in the provocation, and as in the day of temptation in the wilderness:

9 When your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my work.

10 Forty years long was I grieved with this generation, and said, It is a people that do err in their heart, and they have not known my ways:

11 Unto whom I swear in my wrath that they should not enter into my rest.

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR OCTOBER 1994

Mrs. Annie C. Lawrence, VA.....	\$2.00
Mr. & Mrs. J.M. Marshall, VA.....	5.00
Donald R. Arrington, NC.....	2.00
Mrs. Ruth Anderson, LA.....	7.00
G.M. Lockey, NC.....	2.00
Mrs. Opelene Cunningham, AL..	2.00
Mrs. Dessie Goodman, AL.....	102.00
R.L. Fleenor, TN.....	7.00
Mrs. Ida Taylor, MD.....	10.00
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Mrs. Ada Campbell, VA.....	2.00
Mrs. Sallie Hodges, VA.....	2.00
R. Allen Carroll, NC.....	2.00
Homie Dalton, VA.....	2.00

OBITUARIES

SISTER VALSIE PETERS AKERS

God in His infinite wisdom has seen fit to call our precious sister from this world of suffering. Sister Valsie Peters Akers was born September 3, 1903, died August 12, 1994. She was a daughter of the late William and Laura Dowdy Peters and the wife of the late Peter D. Akers, Sr. Surviving are one brother and sister-in-law Howard and Clara Peters, Bassett, Virginia. One sister-in-law, Elsie Peters, Roanoke, Virginia, a special friend, Katie Bennett, Rocky Mount, Virginia, special nieces and nephews, five step-daughters and sons-in-law, Eleanor A. Bowling, Vinton, Virginia, Thelma A. Montgomery, Boones Mill, Virginia, Beatrice Akers, Boones Mill, Virginia, Ruby and Jack Prillaman, Vinton, Virginia, Merle and Thomas Prillaman, Roanoke, Virginia. Four stepsons and daughters-in-law, C.W. and Mildred Akers, Rocky Mount, Virginia, P.D. and Ideal Akers, Jr., Rocky Mount, Virginia, John Herbert and Doris Akers, Culpeper, Virginia, E.C. and Irene Akers, Roanoke, Virginia. Several step-grandchildren, step-great grandchildren and step great-great grandchildren.

She was a faithful member of Republican Primitive Baptist Church for 54 Years. She and her husband, a former deacon of Little Creek Primi-

tive Baptist Church, loved to entertain the church and friends at their home with a bountiful meal and much love.

I believe she died in the triumphs of faith.

Funeral service was held Sunday, August 14, 1994 at 2 PM at Pigg River Primitive Baptist Church by the writer and Elder Lane Carter. She was laid to rest in Pigg River Primitive Baptist Church Cemetary while the congregation sang some of her favorite songs.

Written by request of Republican Primitive Baptist Church while in conference September 17, 1994.

Elder Junior Conner, Moderator
Grey Ingram, Clerk

ROSA MARTIN STULTZ COX

It is with much sadness that I endeavor to write the obituary of our dear beloved sister In Christ, Sister Rosa Stultz Cox. The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh... bless His holy name.

Sister Cox was born July 22, 1899 in Patrick County, Virginia. She was the daughter of the late Flem Lee Martin and Mary Elizabeth Martin and was reared by foster parents Mr. and Mrs. Larkin Cockran in Vesta, Va.

Sister Rosa was a firm believer in the doctrine of Salvation by Grace. She joined Dan River Primitive Baptist Church, Ruffin, NC on January 29, 1929 and was baptized in March, 1929

by her pastor, Elder D.V. Spangler. She attended her church regularly until her health failed but continued to be able to attend sporadically until her death. She died at Morehead Memorial Hospital, Eden, NC on May 11, 1994.

Sister Cox was a retiree of Fieldcrest Mills, Eden, NC and a member of the Happy Home Extension Homemakers Club. Sister Rosa married Mr. J. Henry Stultz on October 8, 1916 and to this union was born one daughter, Sister Margaret S. Carter. Sister Margaret and her husband, Brother Spencer Carter, kept Sister Rosa at her home in her latter years and gave her all loving care.

On July 10, 1956 Sister Rosa was married to Mr. Willie Cox who preceded her in death on August 16, 1978.

Sister Cox's other survivors are a grandson and two great grandsons. Also, six stepchildren who called her "Mama Rosa". They were as one family. The stepchildren are: Preston Cox, Ruffin, NC, Helen C Richmond, Danville, Va., Lucille C. Stone, Burlington, NC, Mabel C. Hurd, Reidsville, NC, Doris C. McAlister, Ruffin, NC, and Edna Earl C., McCormick, SC.

Sister Cox also leaves three sisters to mourn her passing: Flemmie Kinard, Orlando, Florida, Lula Cook, Reidsville, NC, Vioma Handy, Hebron, Md. Also Bessie Eggleston who predeceased Sister Cox several years ago.

Her funeral was held at Fair Funeral Home Chapel and was conducted by her pastor, Elder Kenneth Key. Her

body was laid to rest in Dan View Cemetery, Eden, NC.

May the Lord reconcile all that mourn her loss as only He can do.

Written by request of Dan River Primitive Baptist Church while in conference.

Lottie Minter
Elder Kenneth Key, Pastor
Bob R. Ccille, Clerk

Goad & Elder Lane Carter. I feel she is now waiting for the gloriest coming of our Lord and Savior. She is sadly missed.

Written by a sad Sister,
Ada Campbell
Sallie Hodges, Clerk

HILDA MOSELEY

In loving memory of my natural sister, and Sister in Christ, I hope, Hilda was my oldest sister. She was the daughter of Eugene Compton and Mae Hoskins Compton. She was born in the year of November the twenty fourth, 1901 and departed this life September 23, 1994 at Martinsville General Hospital. She was married to Lester Moseley and to this union was born one son David Moseley. She leaves to mourn, a granddaughter and a grandson David Moseley, II. Two great grandchildren, Dustan & Savana Sloom. She also leaves five sisters, and one brother and a number of nieces and nephews Hilda joined Norfolk Primitive Baptist Church at the tender age of sixteen.

She believed in the doctrine of Election and Salvation by Grace. She passed away after suffering a stroke. She was laid to rest beside her husband and son at Norfolk Church Cemetery.

Her funeral was held at McKeys Funeral home by her Pastor Raymond

BROTHER ROBERT B. SHELTON

Another one of our faithful members of Roanoke Primitive Baptist Church has fallen asleep in the arms of Jesus. Brother Robert B. Shelton passed away at his home on Monday, Sept. 19, 1994. He was born Oct. 1, 1899, making his stay on earth almost 95 years. He was preceded in death by his first wife, Sister Jennie D. Shelton Dec. 18, 1976. Also two sons. Robert A. Shelton and Carl W. Shelton predeceased him.

He is survived by his second wife, Sister Meta D. Shelton; one son Vern R. Shelton; five daughters; Odessa S. Moorman; Danes S. Naff; Katherine S. Short; Linds S. Stultz; Brenda S. Chittum. Seventeen grandchildren; seventeen great-grandchildren; two great - great grandchildren; two step children, Jeanette Hughes and Morris Dalton; three step grandchildren and one step great grandchild. One brother, Mr. James Shelton; four sisters, Sister Bertha Short; Mrs. Laura Parker; Sister Lucille Goad; Mrs. Hilda Hines.

Brother Shelton joined Roanoke Church June 20, 1943 and was baptized by the late Elder J.F. Stegal on

July 4, 1943. He was ordained deacon Nov. 1, 1969 and was a trustee of the church. He served these offices in much humbleness and he sat at the feet of his brethren in much love and meekness. His home was always open to the comfort of his church. He remained faithful to his belief – salvation by grace – to the end. We have lost a dear father in Israel and we will miss that sweet smile that seemed always present as he greeted his brethren, sisters and friends.

His devoted wife, Sister Meta was so good and kind to him and stood by, doing all for him that human hands could do. It was over two years since he was able to attend his church. His children were so kind and they too did all that loving hands could do. Some of them were there with him most of the time to minister to his many needs.

His funeral was conducted at Oakeys Vinton Funeral Home on Wed. Sept. 21, 1994 by his pastor, Elder Leonard J. Brammer and Elder Lane Carter. After which he was laid to rest in Blue Ridge Memorial Gardens under a beautiful blanket of flowers - there to await the day of the resurrection when his hope will become a reality.

May his beloved family be blessed to feel that their loss is his eternal gain.

This memorial was written and humbly submitted by an unworthy sister.

Mrs. H.C. (Rlee) Houchins

Elder Leonard J. Brammer, Mod.
Brother Hassell A. Hale, Clerk

SISTER LEAH THOMPSON STANLEY

God in His infinite wisdom has seen fit to call our precious sister from this world of suffering. Sister Leah Thompson Stanley was a daughter of the late Samuel J. Thompson and the late Laura Turner Thompson.

She lived 93 years and fell asleep in the arms of our Lord on August 10, 1994 at Eldercare of Franklin County, Virginia.

Surviving are two daughters, Nell Mullins of Collinsville, Virginia and Margaret Touchton of San Angelo, Texas, four sons, Lane Stanley of Roanoke, Virginia, James (Jimmy) Stanley of Tucker, Georgia, Warren Stanley of Ferrum, Virginia and Charles (Chris) Stanley of Roanoke, Virginia, seven grandchildren and six great-grandchildren.

She asked for a home with the church several months before she died and was graciously received by Republican Primitive Baptist Church. Although she was never able to be baptized, we feel her to be a member of the body of Christ. She was blessed to manifest a love for the church and her God by her walk and talk.

A graveside service was conducted August 13, 1994 at Republican Primitive Baptist Church Cemetary by Elder Lane Carter.

Written by request of Republican Primitive Baptist Church while in conference September 17, 1994.

Elder Junior Conner, Moderator
Grey Ingram, Clerk

Signs of the Times

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HUMBLE PLEADING

*O GIVE me, Lord, my sins to mourn,
My sins which have thy body torn;
Give me, with broken heart, to see
Thy last tremendous agony.*

*O could I gain the mountain's height
And gaze upon that bleeding sight;
O that with Salem's daughter's I
Might stand and see my Saviour die!*

*I'd smite upon my breast and mourn,
And never from the cross return:
I'd weep o'er an expiring God
And mix my tears with Jesus' blood.*

*I'd hang upon his breast and cry,
Lord, save a soul condemned to die,
And let a wretch come near thy throne
To plead the merits of thy Son.*

*Father of mercies, drop thy frown,
And let me shelter in thy Son;
O with my earnest suit comply
And give me Jesus, or I die.*

*O Lord, deny me what thou wilt,
Only relieve me of my guilt;
Good Lord, in mercy hear me cry,
And give me Jesus, or I die.*

*Show pity, Lord, and send relief,
To a poor sinner drowned in grief,
Who has no plea to bring him nigh,
Lord, save a soul condemned to die!*

*Didst not thou send thy Son to die
For guilty worms who pine and cry?
O let the vilest now come nigh--
Lord, save a soul condemned to die.*

CONTENTS

EDITORIAL 26
 Elder J.R. Williams

ARTICLES 27
 Frank Hunt

VOICES OF THE PAST 29
 Middletown, N.Y. (Nov. 15, 1861)
 Elder J.C. Philpot
 Elder E.J. Lambert
 Elder W.D. Griffin

CONTRIBUTIONS 47

OBITUARIES 47
 Marth Pearl Merrit Arnold
 Sister Mae Slough Snider

EDITORIAL



ELDER J.R. WILLIAMS

Again I'll try to write, if some unseen hand might guide my pen and thoughts.

I've thought recently of the end of all things, as we know it, which is sure to come and is near for some of us and ever drawing nearer and nearer for all. The bible promises such a time and we see it come daily to our brethren and friends, but the end of all things isn't yet.

Matthew 24:14 "And this gospel of the kingdom shall be preached in all

the world for a witness unto all nations; and then shall the end come."

This is the words of Christ while he was yet on the earth preaching and teaching his people. He is telling of the many false prophets that were to come crying, here is Christ or there; believe it not. We read the very elect would be deceived, if possible, but we see this gospel shall be preached.

By this promise of God that the gospel shall be preached in all the world, we believe it means to all the world of believers, although for a witness unto all nations. No doubt in my mind that God has a people in all nations, kindred and tongues, surely stating no one can say we never heard the truth, if not through the natural ear, then in the heart. Sure there are people that don't believe this gospel of the kingdom, but his people shall know the truth and the truth shall make them free. We see this same gospel that Christ preached here on earth in his day, still being preached by a few of his called preachers, yet claiming no credit for themselves, only fulfilling his promises, it shall be preached.

The end can't come until that is complete, preached in all the world for a witness unto all nations. At this moment the end will come, or this promise isn't true. I can't help but believe when the last heir of promise is born in this world and hears this gospel, either with natural ears or in the heart, (some are born deaf) the end will come. This good news to the believer in Christ is a living witness to the gospel of the kingdom, it being

that of all the Father gave me, I have lost nothing but will raise up at the last day.

Matthew 24: 35-36 "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away." "But of that day and hour knoweth no man, no, not the angels of heaven, but my Father only."

We can rejoice that though all else shall pass and cease to be, that the word of God shall not pass away. This isn't only in the recorded word left on record, but all words spoken in every period of time. Every word spoken in person or by a small still voice, that commands to a believer, come out from among them, and be ye a separate people saith your God.

We do believe an end shall come at His time, but not until all is accomplished, but to those that have heard this gospel of the kingdom preached, there is no fear of the end of the earth, but joy everlasting that their hope of heaven and immortal glory is fixed on his words of life hereafter to all that call on his precious name. Praise God from whom all blessings flow.

May His name have all praise,
honor and glory,
J.R. Williams

PROVERBS 7: 1-4.

MY son, keep my words, and lay up my commandments with thee.

Keep my commandments, and live; and my law as the apple of thine eye.

Bind them upon thy fingers, write them upon the table of thine heart.

Say unto wisdom, Thou art my sister; and call understanding thy kinswoman:

ARTICLES

The Lord willing I would like to share some thoughts with you on Luke 7:20 & 22. When the men were come unto him, they said, John the Baptist has sent us unto the, saying, Art thou he that should come? or look we for another?

Then Jesus answering said unto them, Go your way and tell John what things ye have seen and heard, how that the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, to the poor the gospel is preached.

When we consider this verse of scripture it gives us a lot to think about. Here we see John asking, art thou he that should come, or should we look for another? Lots of people could ask this question and we wouldn't think much about it, but John the Baptist.

Let us look now and see just who this John was. According to the words of Jesus, there was no greater man born among women than he. He was chosen before time began by the God who created this universe to be a forerunner of his Son, Christ, to make straight the way for Christ. He was blessed by the Holy Spirit while yet in his mother's womb. He went out in the wilderness, forsaking friends and the comforts of home, preaching Christ who was to come, saying, He that is to come is greater than I, whose shoe laces I am not worthy to unlace. He was blessed by the God of heaven to baptize his Son, on whom he saw the

Holy Spirit descend in the form of a dove. After all this we now hear him asking, art thou he who should come, or do we look for another?

In all fairness to John we will have to say he had faced some difficult times. While living a honest and moral life, we believe as much as it was possible in man, doing the will of God and preaching Christ as he was called and ordained to do, not joining with the worldly men and all their wicked ways. He was hated and rejected by men, and for an unjust cause was cast into prison. We can see where a man would have cause to wonder and begin to doubt. But John the Baptist, after all he had been blessed to see. And the messenger asked Jesus, art thou He that came, or look we for another? Jesus replied, Go show John again.

In just reading this, after seeing the wonderful blessings of John, the ways the Lord had dealt with him, we think maybe he should have been given a better answer. But wait, let us pause and consider this answer. Show John again.

We know that Jesus could have done any number of earth splitting wonders to reveal to John his true identify, such as he did for Stephen when Stephen was shown the glory and majesty of heaven. But he had a reason for this type answer.

The scripture says you must walk by faith we are saved by grace through faith. It also says, if you are my disciples you will have tribulations the world will hate you. We know through the Bible and living through the years, we can see how these things have

been. Some areas of the world are worse than others, some times are worse than others, these times during this period of change from sacrifices and the law of Moses to Jesus and grace was rather hectic sometimes, for followers of Christ. Back to the answer to John, we were talking of faith, and see Jesus wanted John to walk by faith, as he had decreed in ages past that his children would walk by faith. So he wanted to answer John in such a way as to increase his faith. Had he opened the heavens with a beautiful display, the answer would have been by sight, but the children of God must walk by faith.

Let us look at the wonderful wisdom in this answer. The God of heaven has laid out a course for each of his little children, and he said, walk with patience the race that is set before you. He has by his wisdom, foreknowledge and predestination placed each of his little children in such a place that they all just like John will be faced with problems, situations and times where they will be made to wonder and doubt like the poet said, cast down but not destroyed. All this is done to purify the gold and burn out the dross, to the building up of a holy temple. So we now see why John was given this answer. Jesus is giving this answer, made a promise, so to speak, set the pattern for all the ages to come, as his children found themselves in like situations, they would be brought to cry unto Jesus for deliverance. God's people are a begging people who have been shown from whence cometh their help. Show John again these things,

what blessed assurance we have as we live in this life facing the many trying and troublesome times, filled with doubts we know we have a Saviour who is able to take care of our every need. How sweet it is, who can understand the wisdom and the mercies of God? God's children are given a little bit here, a little bit there, precept upon precept.

They are given enough to build up their faith, to the point the Spirit within them cries Abba Father and they thank their God who has blessed them in such a wonderful way. They are blessed by God with a desire to meet with brethren and often times able to meet with them. Given spiritual food to meet their individual needs. While others who are on the sick bed, may not be able to attend meetings are often times blessed and fed by the same Spirit are often given to praise and thank their God and Saviour.

We know Jesus could have kept John out of that prison, but see it was beneficial for him to be there and a wonderful message to us. See all things are working together to those who love God, those who are the called.

May you be blessed with the loving kindness and tender mercies of God.

Your brother, I hope,
Frank Hunt

VOICES OF THE PAST

MATTHEW 25:14-30.

We have often been requested to give our views on this parable, and we have sometimes ventured to give such views as we have had on the subject; but we have never pretended to have any special light upon this subject, nor do we now feel competent to the undertaking. We have always found it difficult to explain satisfactorily to our mind any of the parables contained in the sacred volume, excepting so far as their obvious intention may be inferred from the subjects and circumstances on which they were spoken. God has been pleased to open his mouth in parables and to utter dark sayings of old (Psa. 78:2) and it was the practice of our Redeemer in the days of his flesh to use parables, and without a parable spake he not unto the multitude. (Matt. 13:34) "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. Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand. And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing

ECCLESIASTES 11:7.

Truly the light is sweet, and a pleasant thing it is for the eyes to behold the sun:

ye shall see, and shall not perceive.” (Matt. 13: 10-14).

Herein is the wisdom, purpose, and pleasure of God displayed in hiding these things from the wise and prudent of this world, and in revealing them unto babes in his kingdom; that no man shall glory in his presence; but he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord. The very parables which involve the instructions of Christ in impenetrable darkness to the multitude are employed by the Spirit to illustrate the same things to those unto whom it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom. A parable is in itself simply a similitude, or a supposed case, used to illustrate a reality. And these similitudes and comparisons are so chosen and used by infinite wisdom, as to secure the great design of God, both in concealing the things of the Spirit from the carnal, and in instructing his disciples. Thus, like the cloud which attended Israel in the wilderness, it afforded light and protection to them, while it was darkness to their enemies.

The parable now to be considered is given, with several others of like importance, for the special admonition of the disciples, as it was not addressed to the multitude, as there were none present but disciples, who had asked him certain questions privately, as he sat with them on the mount of Olives, and was therefore spoken to them for their exclusive benefit. (See Chapter 24:3.)

The subject on which these parables were spoken must be understood in order to know their designs and appli-

cation. Our Lord had been personally with these disciples from the time they were called to be his servants, but now he was soon to go into a far country, or to suffer, and die upon the cross, and then arise from the dead and ascend up into heaven, which from earth is a far country; but he was also to return again in due time. One of the three questions which they had asked him was, “What shall be the sign of thy coming?” To this he had replied, “Watch therefore: for ye know not what hour your Lord doth come. But know this, that if the good man of the house had known in what watch the thief would come, he would have watched, and would not have suffered his house to be broken up. Therefore be ye also ready: for in such an hour as ye think not, the Son of man cometh. Blessed is that servant, whom his lord when he cometh shall find so doing. Verily I say unto you, That he shall make him ruler over all his goods. But, and if that evil servant shall say in his heart, My Lord delayeth his coming; And shall begin to smite his fellow servants, and to eat and drink with the drunken; The Lord of that servant shall come in a day when he looketh not for him, and in an hour that he is not aware of, And shall cut him asunder, and appoint him his portion with the hypocrites; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.” (Matt. 24: 42-44; 46-51.)

From all these preceding admonitions in the twenty-fourth chapter we may safely infer that the three parables in the twenty-fifth chapter were used by our Lord to solemnly impress his

disciples with an understanding of the importance of their obligation to obey him as their divine Master, and especially when he should go to his Father, and they see him no more in the flesh. For although he was about to go away, he had assured them he would come to them again, and as a Master, who had an undisputed right to their service; he would hold them to a rigid account of their stewardship, at his coming. Now speaking of the time of his coming to reckon with them, he says, "Then shall the kingdom of heaven be likened unto ten virgins, etc. That is, at the time of his coming, which time they did not know for it should be as a thief in the night. The wise virgins represent the faithful servants, who shall be prepared for the coming of their Lord, as they were with lamps trimmed and burning at the coming of the bridegroom, and the foolish virgins represent the wicked and slothful servants which had concluded their lord delayed his coming and were carelessly mingling with the drunken. And in applying the parable of the virgins, he adds this parable of the talents, saying, "For the kingdom of heaven is as a man traveling into a far country, etc. These italicized words are supplied by our translators. Should we omit them, the text will read, "For, as a man traveling into a far country, called his own servants, and delivered unto them his goods. And unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another, one; to every man according to his several ability, and straightway took his journey." If we have understood the fore-

going correctly, Christ alludes to himself as the Lord, or Master of the servants, and to his being about to leave them, as stewards, in charge of his goods. The servants are said to be his own servants, and he invests them with talents, according to their respective ability. The talents and the ability of all the servants of our Lord Jesus Christ are furnished them by him. He is their Lord and Master; all that they have and all they are, are his property, and they are not their own hence he has a right to direct and control them, and to discriminate in the amount of talents and responsibility. And certainly Christ has done this: "When he ascended up on high, he gave some apostles, and some prophets; and some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ." There is a diversity of gifts, but all by the same spirit, and this diversity is set forth in our parable as five, two, and one talents. Having thus commissioned his own servant's straitway he took his journey. The very last interview he held with his disciples he breathed upon them and said, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost;" and bid them, "Go, teach all nations, etc., "And straightway a cloud received him out of their sight." But an angel informed them that he would return again in like manner as they had seen him go up into heaven; all of which

seems to agree perfectly with the import of this parable. But when he should so return he did not tell them; but bid them watch -- for it should be like a thief in the night, or at least at a time when the unruly servants would least expect his return. The servant which had five, and he who had two talents improved them, and received the approbation of their Lord at his coming, and were welcomed into the joy of their Lord. This was not, however, as a reward of merit, for they being servants, as we have before said, with all their ability and talents, belonged to and were the property of their master. This idea is expressly stated - these were his own servants, hence their service belonged to him; as a gracious act, he made them partakers of his joy. Thus Paul, while disclaiming all merit, says, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge shall give me at that day; and not me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." The crown is a gift, not a debt, or payment for service rendered; and as to Paul so also to all who love the appearing of Christ.

Thus far perhaps, our views of the parable may seem sufficiently clear to the sister who asked, and others, but the more difficult part of the subject remains to be discussed, or elucidated. The wicked and slothful servant also had a talent and did not improve it, and it is taken from him and given to him that had ten talents,

and he is cast into outer darkness, and there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.

The supposed difficulty will be obviated when we consider the difference between servants of the Lord and the children of God. Christ not only is the everlasting Father of that seed which God has said shall serve him and be counted to him for a generation, but he is also their Master, their Owner, their Lord, and their King. In all the parables and figures as in every express declaration of the Scriptures where God's people are brought to view in the relationship of children, their vital and indissoluble union and joint heirship with him is distinctly expressed, and they can no more fail of their inheritance of glory than Christ can fail of the glory which he had with his Father before the world began. But when the disciples are presented in the relation of servants, their relative duties, obligations, and punishment for delinquencies are implied. The servant abideth not in the house forever, but the son abideth ever. The discipline of the servant and that of a son, until the son becomes of age, may be alike, but the privilege and certain inheritance of the two are widely different. As it is said, "A seed shall serve him," etc. (Psa. 22:30). We infer that all the seed, or children of God, are called into the service of Christ, to obey his commands, walk in his precepts, and keep his judgments, and in doing this they are servants, as well as sons. But we presume Christ has servants which are not sons; or at least not manifest as sons. A servant

of Christ is equivalent to a disciple, and a disciple of Christ is one who serves, and obeys whatever he commands them. But Christ himself has said, "And whosoever doth not bear his cross and come after me, cannot be my disciple." (Luke 14:27) But he does not say they cannot be his children. To be a child depends wholly on relationship; but to be a servant, on allegiance and service. "His servant, on allegiance and service. "His servants ye are to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey."

The difference will more clearly appear by considering the disciples, or servants of Jesus to whom this parable was originally spoken. They were all certainly the servants of our Lord Jesus Christ, for he said he was their Master. But of at least one of them we presume it will not be contended that he was a son. Judas Iscariot was a disciple. Jesus called to him twelve disciples, whom he named apostles, and Judas was one of that number. And according to the sense of this parable, he received a talent - or a part of the ministry. "And in those days Peter stood in the midst of the disciples, and said, Men and brethren, this scripture must needs have been fulfilled, which the Holy Ghost, by the mouth of David, spake before concerning Judas, which was guide to them that took Jesus. For he was numbered with us, and had obtained part of this ministry." "For it is written in the book of Psalms, Let his habitation be desolate, and let no man dwell

therein; and, his bishoprick let another take." (Acts 1:15-17, 20).

Now should we suppose Judas to have been a servant, or disciple, as he is really called, and this ministry to be the goods divided among the servants, and Judas to have received one talent, and Paul to have had received five, and he labored more abundantly than all the servants, to have gained the other five; the one talent was ultimately taken from Judas, and given to Paul, for Paul, was called to take the bishoprick vacated by Judas, and Paul as we have shown, did finish his course with joy, and the ministry which he had received, and had entered into the joy of his Lord, to wear the crown of righteousness which the righteous judge has given to him; and Judas is fallen, and goes to his own place where there is darkness, weeping, and gnashing of teeth. The case of Judas among the disciples - his wickedness, and punishment, answers well to the servant who was cast out into outer darkness.

But not only Judas among the apostles, but there were multitudes of disciples who called Jesus Master, who could not endure his doctrine, and turned away and walked no more with him.

But as we have presented some servants who give no evidence of being sons, before we close we will enquire if there be not some sons or children who are not, strictly speaking, servants or disciples? Are there not some, yea, many, who have passed from death unto life, have tasted the good word of life and of the joys of the

world to come: - who have seen themselves poor, guilty, lost and perishing sinners, justly condemned by the righteous law of God; who in their extremity cried out, "Lord, save or I perish," who have felt the joy of pardoned sins, unto whom Jesus has been revealed as their Savior, the chiefest among ten thousand, and altogether lovely, who have never taken up their cross and followed their Lord and Master in baptism, or any of his ordinances? If there are such, and we believe we know of many, they certainly are children, for they are born again, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God - can they be disciples? Jesus says they cannot; and if they do not obey him, how can they be his servants? "A son honoreth his father, and a servant his master, if then I be a father, where is mine honor? and if I be a master, where is my fear? saith the Lord of hosts?" (Mal. 1:6) But how is it that a son who loves his father should withhold the honor due by obeying and serving him? How is it set forth in the parable? The undutiful servant says, "I knew thee, that thou art an hard man, reaping where thou hast not sown, and gathering where thou hast not strawed; and I was afraid, and went and hid thy talent in the earth." In the application of the admonition presented in this subject, let us enquire whether there be not some of God's children who are reasoning as did the slothful servant, and saying their Lord's requirements are hard and unreasonable? If he requires me to come out and improve my talent, by public profession of his name, and

obedience to his command, he would reap where he has not sown. If he would sow more plentifully, that is, if he would relieve me of all my doubts and fears, and give me more light, joy and comfort, more zeal and strength, and remove this troublesome cross out of my way, and give me a full assurance that my pathway shall be smooth and pleasant, then I would not think it hard that he should have my service.

Not only are there multitudes of this class of delinquents, but also among those who have publicly espoused his cause, there may be found those who say, "If the Lord would give me a greater gift so that I could speak like some who have five times the amount of talent that I have, I would lift up my voice as a witness for God and truth; but as it is, Why should I show my ignorance by exhibiting my one talent, and so perhaps bring down on me the scorn and reproach of the enemy?" And among the ministers of the word there may be some who say, "Alas! for me. The Lord requires me to preach his gospel that he has sowed sparing. I know so little, and am surrounded by so many hindrances which the Lord could, if it were his pleasure, so easily remove. My time and attention is so closely occupied to know how to answer the questions, What shall I eat? What shall I drink? And where withal shall I be clothed? How can I neglect my farm or merchandise, or whatever my worldly occupation may be, without injustice to myself and to my family?" Thus the earth of our carnal reasoning, and the affairs

of the world, may bury up, to some extent, if not altogether, the talent. But let us be assured, if we are the Lord's children, we shall be saved, yet as by fire; and as his servants, we shall feel his chastening scourge, and go into outer darkness where there is weeping and gnashing of teeth. Of course, we do not mean that God's children shall finally fail of their inheritance in glory, for God is faithful, he will not deny himself; but he is also righteous, and he will visit our transgressions with his rod, and our disobedience and slothfulness with many stripes.

When Israel for their disobedience and idolatry were sent down into Babylon, there some of them wept when they remembered Zion; it was to them a place of darkness - of weeping and lamentation; while there was also, on the part of their adversaries, gnashing of teeth. The tumults which now prevail in the world, the wars and rumors of wars which agitate the nations of the earth, and especially our own beloved States, should admonish us that God's righteous judgments are abroad; that the day of reckoning is at hand; that the Lord cometh in an hour when transgressors think not. And the prophet saith he cometh suddenly to his temple. But Who shall abide the day of his coming, and who shall stand when he appeareth?

Whatever our ability or opportunity may be, our Lord has given us the full amount of talent that he requires us to improve. He will reap no more than he has sown, he will not gather what he has not strawed. He will not require of

us the improvement of talents given to others. Where much is given, much will be required, and where little is given, but little will be required. If any of us cannot reap, perhaps we can bind some of the sheaves. Let us be active, for the harvest is great and the laborers are few.

Middletown, N.Y.,
November 15, 1861.

"Blessed is the man whom thou chastenest, O Lord, and teachest him out of thy law."—PSALM XCIV. 12.

We may observe in the words before us, that the Lord *puts chastening before teaching*. Is there not something, remarkable in this? Why should chastening precede teaching? For this reason. We have no ear to hear except so far as we are chastened. It was so with the prodigal. Until he was brought to his right mind by strokes of hunger, he did not think of his father's house; he had no heart to return; but a mighty famine sent him home. So it is with God's children; as long as they are allowed to wander in their backslidings, they have no heart to return. But let the rod come; let them be driven home by stripes; then they have an ear to listen, while God teaches them to profit, instructs them by his blessed Spirit, and speaks into their heart those lessons which are for their eternal good.

"And teachest him out of thy law."
"The law" in the Scriptures has a very

wide signification; it means, in the original, *instruction*. The word is *Torah*, which signifies "teaching," or "direction." Thus the word "law" is not confined to the law of Moses given in thunder and lightning upon Mount Sinai; but it includes also the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ--" the perfect law of liberty;" " the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus;" that law which was in the heart of the Redeemer, when he said, " I come to do thy will, O God; yea, thy law is within my heart."

Now, as the Lord teaches his children "out of the law," strictly so called, so he teaches them "out of " the gospel; and to my mind, there is something exceedingly sweet and expressive in the words "out of the law." It seems to convey, not only that the law is a treasure-house of wrath, but that the gospel also is a treasure-house of mercy. And as those who know most of the law are only taught " out of the law," and not the whole of the law, only a few drops, as it were, out of the inexhaustible wrath of God; so out of the heavenly treasure-house of the gospel, " the perfect law of liberty," it is but a little of grace and mercy that in this life can be known. As Christ said to his disciples in promising the Spirit: " He shall take of mine, and shall shew it unto you." He cannot take "all," and shew it unto them; for none could live under the sight. The Spirit, therefore, takes of the things of Christ, and shews here a little, and there a little; some little blessedness here, and some little blessedness there; a suitable promise, a gracious testimony, a comforting text, an encouraging word, a sight of atoning blood, a smile of his counte-

nance, a view of his Person, a discovery of his righteousness, or a glimpse of his love. This is taking, of the things of Christ, and revealing them to the soul. And thus, the man whom the Lord takes in hand, he teaches ' out of' the gospel by making Christ experimentally known, and revealing his dying love. And thus he teaches each and all " out of his law"-- both the law from Sinai, and the law from Zion.

J.C. Philpot

I CORINTHIANS 2: 7-10.

But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory:

Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.

But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.

But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God.

From Signs of the Times, (May, 1950)

"The devils also believe and tremble." James 2:19

I have tried to write for many hours, weeks and months in vain. I have become so exhausted and nervous in the many attempts, that I am thoroughly convinced that I am just at dependent upon the direct operation of God's Holy Spirit to write as I am to preach the gospel of the blessed Son of God. I am making the attempt again with fear and trembling, trust-

ing that God will be pleased to lead my mind into a fruitful field of thought, and give me the words to comfort, console and edify God's little children.

I am now reminded of a request made by P.L. Kenly of Roanoke, Va. to write upon James 2:19 especially the last part to wit: "The devils also believe and tremble." James did not say that the devils had faith. No place in the scriptures do we find any statement that would intimate that the devils trusted in God or were in possession of faith. We are forced to admit that the devils gave assent to the fact that there is but one God, even to the acknowledging of Jesus - the Holy One of God - as we shall find when we consider certain scriptures. We would like to compare and contrast belief and faith to further clarify that expression of scripture.

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

Yes, the devils believe there is one God. They do not choose to believe

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

I want to call your attention to the eighth chapter of the gospel according to Matthew 29, "And, behold, they cried out, saying, What have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God? art thou come hither to torment us before the time?" The devils were forced to recognize Jesus as the Son of God. They cried out unto him, fully aware of his power over them. Let us consider their question, "What have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God." They had nothing indeed to do with him. They had no interest in his grace, blood or righteousness. He was no Savior and Redeemer for them. But contrary to this they realized that he had to do with them. They trembled at

his presence and knew they would have to obey his all commanding voice, though terrible against their wills. They knew he had power to cast them out, "so the devils besought him, saying, If thou cast us out, suffer us to go away into the herd of swine. Even Jesus exercised power over the devils to the extent that his word returned not unto him void, but accomplished that which he pleased, and it prospered in the thing whereto he sent it. It was astonishing to the observers to see a character who exercised such power and authority that he could command the unclean spirits to come out of men and they would come out.

Let us now notice Acts 19:15, "And the evil spirit answered and said, Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are ye?" Paul had been disputing daily in the school of Tyrannus for two years. During this long time both Jews and Greeks were privileged to hear the word of the Lord. God wrought special miracles by the hand of Paul in healing diseases and casting out evil spirits. This became so well known that even exorcists attempted to imitate. Some vagabond Jews, who were exorcists, attempted to imitate Paul and Jesus in casting out evil spirits. They would say to the evil spirits, "We adjure you by Jesus whom Paul preacheth." These evil spirits recognized this false claim of power as evidence in their statement and question. "Jesus I know, and Paul I know, but who are ye?" They knew that Jesus had the power to cast them out because he had done so in many in-

stances. It was an intimate knowledge because they had heard his command and had been forced to obey him. They had come on direct contact with him in the demonstration of his power over them. They had also come in direct contact with Paul and he had commanded them to depart from individuals and they were forced to obey his command. They knew Paul to be a servant of the Lord because he was given power over them. The question, "Who are Ye?" suggest that they did not believe that these vagabond Jews were given this power over them. The evil spirits proved that their surmise was true when they that were possessed of the evil spirits pounced upon these Jews, overcame them, and were victorious over them so that these exorcists had to flee wounded and naked. I am of the opinion that those who are possessed of these evil spirits today may and do fight among themselves, but they are made to tremble when they come into contact with the true servants of the all powerful God. The devil is as a roaring lion, walking about, seeking whom he may devour. (1 Peter 5:8) He is made to know that some he cannot devour. Those who resist the devil are empowered to do so by Almighty God, and the consequence is that the devils flee from them. (James 4:7) It is indeed comforting and consoling to me to think that the devils are subject to the power of God and can do no more than what my Father pleases. They must bow to him and tremble.

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

James uses two characters to prove that works accompany faith. He cited the works of Abraham and of Rahab, the harlot; and asks if they were not justified by works. As you recall, Paul used these same two characters in his treatise of faith in the eleventh chapter of Hebrews. He is contending that faith prompted them to do these things. Paul says that faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. This substance and evidence comes only from God as a gift to his children. There are no contradictions in the writings of

James and Paul concerning the subject of faith and works. We would like to examine Eph. 2: 8-10, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." Salvation, both for time and in eternity, is the gift of God. Through his mercy, goodness and gifts we are saved here in time. This is proved by the tense of the verb used in the expression, "By grace are ye saved." We are saved through faith, and that not of ourselves. This faith is not to be obtained through our merits. It is not as a result of any good works of ours, but it is the gift of God. It is not an offer or proposition conditional upon any acts of man, but it is the gift of God. "Not of works lest any man should boast." Boasting is excluded. No man can rightly glory in himself nor boast of his goodness. "For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus." God is the workman, we are his workmanship; God is the creator, we are the creatures. "Unto good works" - not by good works. It is not that good works beget faith, but faith begets good works. It is by the grace of God that we are enabled to walk godly in this present world. "Which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them." God said through one of his prophets, "As I have thought, so shall it come to pass; as I have purposed, so shall it stand." If this be true, surely, if he ordains something it will be just

that way. We find the word "ordained" as being rendered "prepared" when we consult the marginal reference. I believe God prepares his people to walk in good works by working in them. He works in them "both to will and to do of his good pleasure." The good works are just as certain as is the faith, and is as much the gift of God as is the faith. "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." Your walk and conversation will be godly in this world. We conclude that James and Paul contended that faith and good works were characteristic of God's little children.

A child of God need not boast of his faith and love for these are made manifest in his deeds. He feels little, insignificant and unworthy, and much of the time wonders whether or not he be in possession of this faith and love. If you watch his walk and listen to his conversation, you will find him doing good deeds for his fellowman, and preferring others above himself. There is a change wrought upon one in which it has pleased God to implant this faith and love. It affects his actions and stimulates his conversation. His desires are to obey the commands of Jesus Christ, do the will of God and to praise him from whence all blessings come. Because of the infirmities of the flesh - the thorns that buffet him about lest he be exalted above measure - he is not able to do the things that he would. This forces him to be constantly in prayer to Almighty God to be merciful unto his unrighteous-

ness and to forgive him of his sins. This character boasts not of his faith nor of his works. James called those who boasted of their faith "vain men." We see then that boasting either of faith or works would be erroneous, and do not characterize God's little children.

May God grant us this living faith and enable us by his grace to walk worthy in good works. May God grant us this living faith and enable us by his grace to walk worthy in good works. May he bless us to give him the praise for it all. May we look forward and press toward the mark of the prize of the high calling in Christ Jesus when we shall be called from this low ground of sin and sorrow up into that heavenly realm where and when we shall perfectly praise him in that endless eternity. May he add his blessing to this writing as edifying to the household of faith. Amen.

Elder E.J. Lambert

PSALM 103: 17-22.

But the mercy of the LORD is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children's children;

To such as keep his covenant, and to those that remember his commandments to do them.

The LORD hath prepared his throne in the heavens; and his kingdom ruleth over all.

Bless the LORD, ye his angels, that excel in strength, that do his commandments, hearkening unto the voice of his word.

Bless ye the LORD, all ye his hosts; ye ministers of his, that do his pleasure.

Bless the LORD, all his works in all places of his dominion: bless the LORD, O my soul.

From Elder Lambert's Book,
"Tried In The Furnace."

A SAVIOR BORN
MAY, 1951



ELDER E.J. LAMBERT

"For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful,

Counsellor, The mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." — Isaiah 9:6

MORE THAN seven centuries before the birth of Jesus in the city of Bethlehem these words were written by the prophet, Isaiah. There can be no doubt in the minds of true Bible readers that Jesus Christ is the character under consideration. We pray God will bless us to consider this text in such a wonderful way that we may be comforted and edified. May we be blessed to gloriously rejoice upon some of the beauties contained in these thoughts. We desire to consider the text by phrases in the order in which they are written.

"Unto us a child is born." Who is included in the term "us?" Isaiah is writing to the Israelites, the chosen people of God. National Israel is a type of spiritual Israel. Spiritual Israel is in existence today. Paul was an Israelite as he stated in his letter to the Corinthians (2 Cor. 11:22). I believe

that all God's children who are chosen unto eternal life are members of spiritual Israel. True Israelites are the only ones who are included in the pronoun us in this text. If you are a child of God you are included in this term. Isaiah did not say unto each and every Adamic creature, but "unto us a child is born." He is born unto a specific people. Yes, He is born to you. He was born of the virgin Mary, in the city of Bethlehem almost two thousand years ago, and people have set a date to annually attempt to celebrate His birth; but when did you and do you actually celebrate the birth of Christ? You actually celebrate His birth when He is born in you as your precious hope of glory (Col. 1:27). When God knows a person by the direct operation of His Holy Spirit in individual relationship there is a conception. The result of this conception is a birth, the birth of Christ in you as your hope of glory.

"Unto us a son is given." This Son is peculiar in the fact that He is the Son of God as well as the Son of man. He is both human and divine. There are two erroneous theories concerning Jesus Christ prevalent today. One theory is that He was solely divine which would deny Him as being the Son of man. The other theory is that He was solely human which would deny Him as being the Son of God. Jesus, as the Son of man, was acquainted with grief, was tempted, wounded and bruised, and did suffer and die on the cross. Jesus Christ, as the Son of God, performed miracles, was glorified, overcame temptations,

accomplished the law, conquered death, and is at the right hand of the throne of God making intercession for the saints of God according to the will of God. This Son is *given*. He is not offered subject to acceptance or rejection of the creature. If it be necessary to raise a hand, say a word or do anything in order for the creature to receive this Son it would not be a gift--it would be an offer or reward. I believe this Son is given to each and every one who has learned through sad experience appointed to them that they are unworthy, unable, and that it is utterly impossible to do anything to merit any favor or mercy of God. Paul said, "We 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 which is *given* unto us" (Rom. 5 :3-5)."

"And the government shall be upon his shoulder." This one who is given unto us is our King. The preacher said, "Where the word of a king is, there is power" (Eccl. 8 :4). This King has all power in heaven and upon the earth. This being true, when He speaks it is done, when He commands, it stands fast. The word that goeth forth out of His mouth shall not return unto Him void; but it shall accomplish that which He pleases; it shall prosper in the thing whereunto He sends it (Isaiah 55:11).

We, being creatures who are created equal, believe in the democratic form of government as being proper

in our political and earthly organizations. Even in our organized churches we do not believe that one creature should have the authority to lord anything over others with exception of that One who has the government upon His shoulder. We maintain that Christ is the Head of His church. He calls, qualifies, sends and uses each and every one of His subjects when, where and how He pleases. He never makes a call in vain. He never fails to qualify; when He sends they go. Each and every one fits and functions properly. You show me any church that places the government of that church upon the shoulder of any mortal man or group of men, and I will show you one that is not the Church of Christ. You show me a church that has to have boards, auxiliary societies and many organizations to assist in the business of the church, and I will point to that one as not the Church of Christ. The government of Christ's Church is upon His shoulder and He is sufficient to attend to its business. No business is good business when it concerns the Church. Some think that gathering sheep into the fold is the function of the Church. This is the work of Christ as He said, "Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice" (John 10:16). If the government be upon His shoulder-- and His words are true -- do you think He needs any assistance in this work? They tell us of a person who is begging, pleading and trying to get people to accept Him; thousands of people and organizations who are

assisting Him and holding Him up; notwithstanding all this He is unsuccessful to the extent that the devil gets the majority of them. This person is not the One under consideration in the text.

“His name shall be called Wonderful.” He is wonderful. When I think of wonderful I think of something astonishing and singular. Words cannot express the amazement I experienced when I was given to trust in the work of Jesus Christ as accredited to my account. I was astonished that He should have compassion upon a hell-deserving wretch such as I felt myself to be. His name is above every name. It is the only name given whereby we must be saved. He is the Way, the Truth and the life of each and every one of God’s children. It is wonderful that He is God manifest in the flesh. It is wonderful that He could accomplish the law to a jot and tittle for His people. It is wonderful that He could pay the penalty and satisfy justice for His people’s sins by dying on the cross. It is wonderful that He could conquer death, hell and the grave and come forth from the tomb and walk and talk with His disciples. It is wonderful that He could ascend into the heavens and leave the comforting thought with His disciples that at some future time He would come again without sin unto salvation to gather His people into that eternal home. It is wonderful that He is so acquainted with all your temptations and troubles, that He can intercede to God for you as your Counsellor.

Yes, His name is to be called *Counsellor*. You hire and pay your counsellors in earthly courts, but this Counsellor is given to you. He is the one who pleads your case before the Judge. He is in a position to tell the Judge that He met all the requirements in your stead. Earthly counsellors do not agree to pay the penalty assessed against you by the court, but this Counsellor paid the penalty assessed. When you look for one to represent you in the courts of the land you want one who is thoroughly acquainted and experienced with your type of case. Here is the Counsellor who was tempted in all points like as we (Heb. 4:15) . He was forsaken, grieved, suffered, and experienced poverty. He also experienced inability as he said, “I can of mine own self do nothing” (John 5:30). When you give all the facts in the case that you can think of to earthly counsellors at their inquiry you find later that you have left out something vital to the case that you wished you could have told them. This Counsellor already knows your every trouble and has all the facts in your case. Earthly counsellors may be busy and you have to wait for your time before you can talk with them, but this Counsellor is not neglectful and has ample time and ears to hear your cries and beseechings. You may have tried to tell your troubles to your friends here and pour out your heart to them, but have you ever experienced the relief of mind and peace in your heart as you did when you poured out your heart and was blessed to pray through this Counsellor to Al-

mighty God? As long as you are capable of handling your affairs, even as long as you think you are capable, you have no use for a counsellor. When things get beyond your knowledge and power you seek a counsellor.

I maintain that as long as a person feels capable of pursuing any distance toward gaining eternal life upon his own merits he does not feel the need of a counsellor. He is acting upon his own strength and self-righteousness and will not call upon this Counsellor. When a person learns by sad experience that he is nothing and all his seeming self-righteousness is but filthy rags in the sight of God, he feels the need and desires the aid of the Counsellor. Jesus Christ is officiating as Counsellor when He is at the right hand of the Father making intercession for the saints of God according to the will of God. He is officiating as the Counsellor when He is speaking words of comfort to the trembling child of God. He is officiating as the Counsellor when He is calling, qualifying, sending forth, and using each child of God to the praise of His glorious name. Dear trembling child of God, do not put your trust in any man upon earth, or any set of men to give you wisdom. James was inspired to say, "If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God." May God grant you grace to trust all to this Counsellor!

This same character is also to be called "*The Mighty God.*" The scriptures affirm that the three in the Godhead are *One*. God the Father; God the Son; and God the Holy Ghost; these three are *One*. Jesus Christ was once

without power but now He has all power in heaven and on earth. If Jesus Christ be the *Mighty God* He has all power in heaven and on earth. He worketh all things after the counsel of His own will. "Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure" (Isa. 46:10). If He be the *Mighty God* do you think He will fail in bringing any of the subjects of His grace to the knowledge of the truth? Do you think that any one for whom He gave His life will fail to be saved in heaven and immortal glory in the end of this timely sphere I cannot conceive the idea that any of His purpose will fail in the least degree.

His name is rightly termed *The everlasting Father*. He is because He is founder and builder of His Church. Jesus Christ is Father because He is the Chief Ruler of His people. He is King of His kingdom. He is the Author and Finisher of our faith. The term *everlasting* signifies unchangeableness. We change but His care for us never wavers. He loved us even when we were dead in trespasses and in sins. When we are cold and careless He is interceding and caring for us. He is the everlasting Father because He finishes anything He begins. Our earthly fathers may forsake us but He knows what we need and gives us exactly what is best for us though we may not think it best. He keeps each and every one of His people from falling finally away and saves them eternally from the dominion, power and presence of sin.

His name shall be called *The Prince of Peace*. Those of you who have been in severest of troubles, and have experienced that deep soothing calm that came from no earthly source can rightly call Him the Prince of Peace. I heard a soldier once relate an experience concerning this peace. He said he was in the midst of one of the severest battles of World War II where bombs were exploding all around. Every one of his comrades had been critically wounded and killed by falling shrapnel. He was so afraid and distressed that there were indescribable throbbings and surgings of his troubled and depressed mind. All at once there was such a wonderful, deep, calming influence that affected him that he was not afraid or troubled even though the bombs were still exploding, and shrapnel still falling all around. He was made to know that God absolutely controlled everything and that nothing could hurt him. This Prince of Peace caused this boy to peacefully rejoice in the midst of battle. This Prince of Peace causes His people to be content with their lot and gloriously reconciles them to His will. Is it not a peace that surpasseth all things else to realize that God cares and is mindful of you He takes care of sparrows and not one falls without Him, and even the hairs of your head are numbered. He understands your thoughts afar off and there is not a word in your tongue that He does not know altogether. He becomes your Prince of Peace when He causes you

to feel that His providence will protect and His grace will direct you aright. He becomes your Prince of Peace when He takes your feet up out of an horrible pit of self dependence and places them upon the Rock, Christ Jesus, as your hope for eternal life. He becomes your Prince of Peace when He puts a new song in your mouth which sings praises unto God instead of the old song of praise of yourself. He comes as a Prince of Peace when He picks you up on the balmy wings of His love while you are hopelessly falling down--down into the abyss of destruction and ruin. That wonderful peace that you experienced when you are blessed to pray, sing, speak, write and meditate upon His wonderful goodness to the children of men is inexpressible. What a calming peace when you are blessed to speak kind words to some cast down individual. What a blessed peace when you are given to assist some fallen creature and do deeds of kindness to the less fortunate.

May the Prince of Peace be pleased to soften the hearts of the political leaders of the countries of this war-torn world that lasting peace be the result. If this be contrary to His will may He cause us to be content with our lot and make us reconciled to His will, for He knows best. May God direct the words that have been written to the comfort of some poor soul is my desire. Pray for me because I feel to be the chief of sinners and less than the least of all saints so much of the time.

Elder E. J. Lambert

... PRAYER ...

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 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 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 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 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 knowl-

edge 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 often, 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 prayer (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?

Elder W. D. Griffin (Sept., 1947)

CONTRIBUTIONS

DECEMBER 1994

Mrs. Ralph C. Lucas, VA	10.00
Smith Walton, VA	2.00
Mrs. Meta Mills, AR	2.00
Mrs. Anna W. Harper, NC	2.00
Vance Duncan, VA	2.00
Mrs. A.R. Patterson, LA	7.00
Mrs. Myrtle Thompson, VA	7.00
Mrs. Charles M. Lovell, VA	2.00
Charles Alders, TX	7.00
Eli T. Smith, Jr., NC	2.00
E.F. Dyer, VA	2.00
Marian Meaks, NC	2.00
M.T. Dalton, VA	7.00

OBITUARIES

OBITUARY OF
MARTH PEARL MIRRITT ARNOLD

It is with sad heart to write obituary of our beloved Sister Arnold. She was 80 years old. Our Lord and Saviour called her home September 26, 1994 at the V. A. hospital in Little Rock, Arkansas.

She was born in Nevada County, Arkansas December 22, 1913 to G. W. Dixon and Annie Mirritt. She was a member of Pilgrim Rest Primitive Baptist Church. Was baptised by Elder Clovis Townley. She came to her Church every time her health would let her. She loved the Preaching and Brothers and Sisters. She believed The Doctrine of Old School Baptist.

She was the widow of John H. Arnold. He was also a member of the

Church. He passed away November 17, 1986.

She is survived by one son Johnny Arnold of Stuttgart, Arkansas. Two Brothers: Tom Dixon of Tenn, and Jim Dixon of Arkansas. Three Sisters: Ruby McCeby of Florida, Opal McCullanig of Arkansas and Seloma Sheppard of Texas.

She will be missed by all that knew her; Family, Friends, Church Members.

This was requested in Conference at Pilgrim Rest Primitive Baptist Church.

Frances Townley
Church Clerk

THE OBITUARY OF SISTER MAE SHOUGH SNIDER

We, the members and friends of Liberty Primitive Baptist Church deeply feel the loss of our dear friend and Sister Mae Shough Snider

It pleased our Heavenly Father to remove her from our midst August 31, 1994. She was faithful to the church when her health permitted her to go. For several years she had health problems. We will miss her very much.

Sister Mae was born September 18, 1917, one of a set of twins in Patrick County, Virginia to Thomas Shough and Minnie Ingram Spencer Shough.

She was married to Watson Snider on November 7, 1952. He was a devoted husband to Sister Mae.

Sister Mae joined Liberty Church by experience on August 3, 1964; and

was baptized by then Elder Bennie N. Clifton, Moderator of Liberty Church.

She is survived by an adopted son James Snider, two grandsons, one granddaughter, and her husband Watson. Also brothers Leo Spencer of Martinsville, Virginia and James Cleve Shough of Stuart, Virginia. Also three sisters Sister Virginia Ziglar of Stuart, Virginia; Rada Shough Durham of Bassett; and Reda Shough Martin of Archdale, North Carolina.

She was preceded in death by Cecil Spencer, Carl Spencer, Akers Shough, Raymond Shough, and Dorella Spencer Nester. Her twin Sister Faye Shough Snider followed her in death by approximately 24 hours.

A double funeral was conducted by Elder John T. Wingfield, Elder Leonard Corns, and Reverend J.C. Spence at Howell Funeral Chapel for Mae and Faye on September 3, 1994. They were laid to rest at Pleasant Grove Primitive Baptist Church Cemetery.

Therefore we the church at Liberty Primitive Baptist Church resolve that 3 copies of this resolution be made. One for the church record, one for the family, and one to be sent to the Signs of the Times.

Done by order of Liberty Church in conference October 1, 1994.

By Committee of
Sister Clara Freeman
Sister Iris Puckett
Sister Virginia Ziglar

Elder John T. Wingfield, Moderator
Deacon Paul A. Puckett, Clerk

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POEM

**BEHOLD the lilies, how they grow!
They toil not, neither do they spin;
Yet Solomon could never show
Such raiment as God clothes them in.**

**And you, poor souls, who weep and
mourn**

**Because your works cannot supply
That spotless robe that must be worn
By all who dwell with God on high;**

**Blessed are you if you strive in vain,
And all your works no comfort yield;
For when you cease to toil and spin,
You are as lilies of the field.**

**And he who richly clothes the flower,
Which passes almost as a breath,
Will show his richer grace and power,
In you, O ye of little faith.**

**Infinite wisdom, power and love
Prepared the robe that you shall wear;
And in the realms of bliss above
'Twill shine forever bright and fair.**

**As sun and dew afflictions come,
Making the heavenly lilies grow;
And bringing forth a lovelier bloom
Than all the fields of earth can show.**

**Through trials thus prepared to wear
The robe of righteousness, they prove
Their heavenly Father's tender care,
And reach the fullness of his love.**

Silas H. Durand

CONTENTS

EDITORIAL	50
Elder C.C. Wilbanks	
CORRESPONDENCE	55
ARTICLES	56
Wayman G. Chapell	
VOICES OF THE PAST	60
Elder Joshua Tillman Rowe	
Elder H.H. Lefferts	
Elder J.C. Philpot	
Elder E. J. Lambert	
CONTRIBUTIONS	69
OBITUARIES	69
Ballard E. Barker	
Guy Owen Dalton	
Maidline McLawhorn Dorman	
Helen A. Rowland	
Mary Jeanette Smith	

 EDITORIAL

THE WINDS OF GOD



ELDER C.C. WILBANKS

The winds upon this earth move gently or with great force. Not men nor devils have any control over them, for God hath gathered

them in his fists. (Pro.30:4). The freezing arctic winds, the warm gentle, southerly breezes, the winds that move the clouds which bring rain, sleet, hail and snow, that causes great storms upon the seas and the lands are all obeying the commands of our omniscient, omnipotent, and omnipresent

God. Did not Jesus rebuke the winds and the sea, and there was a great calm? And the men marvelled and said, What manner of man is this, that even the winds and the sea obey him! Every wind that blows accomplishes the purpose of God whereto it is sent. Without the winds to bring water when needed, all living things, plants, animals and people would soon wither and die. *"For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it to bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: so is my word that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I send it."* (Isa.55:10-11). Not only does the wind bring the water that is necessary to life, but it also brings death and destruction with violent force. Not only do the winds kill and destroy by force, but at times decreed of God it brings water in such abundance that it causes great floods that kill and destroy. There are many people who say that nature causes these things, not God. Let us ask, Who made and controls nature as well as all other things? God himself declared, *"See now that I, even I, am he, and there is no god with me: I kill, and make alive: I wound, and I heal; neither is there any other that can deliver out of my hand."* (Deut.32:39). *"For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth,*

visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him." (Col.1:16). Surely he did not create any thing that he does not have complete control and power over. *"For there is no power but of God; the powers that be are ordained of God". (Rom.13:1).*

By his almighty power God sent his rain upon the earth for forty days and nights, the fountains of the great deep were broken up, and the windows of heaven opened. Flood waters covered the earth, even over the highest mountains, and all the things that had breath of life, except those shut into the ark by God, were destroyed. The waters prevailed upon the earth an hundred and fifty days and then God made a wind to pass over the earth, and the waters assuaged. Is this not a comforting figure to the chosen children of God who were lifted up from the depths, when the storms of life threatened to overcome them? They will never be overcome by the trials, tribulations, and persecutions that they must face in this sin filled world, for they are secure in Christ Jesus (the Ark) by faith which is given them, and he hath said, *"Be of good cheer; for I have overcome the world."* (John 16:33). Neither shall they be tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine. (Eph.4:14). Christ is their hiding place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest. (Isa.32:2).

Now let us move on. God sent his people, the Israelites, into Egypt, where they were to be in bondage four

hundred and thirty years. God raised up Moses in that time, that he should lead them out of Egypt. God sent Moses to Pharaoh, saying, Let my people go. But God hardened Pharaoh's heart that he would not let the people go. Then God sent several plagues upon the Egyptians, one of them being the plague of the locusts. The LORD brought an east wind upon the land all that day, and all that night; and when it was morning, the east wind brought the locusts. They filled the land, so that the land was darkened; and they did eat every green herb that was left in the land, and all the fruit of the trees which the plague of hail had left. The Israelites dwelt in the land of Egypt in the country of Goshen, yet none of the plagues that God sent upon the Egyptians fell upon them. God protected his beloved children then even though they rebelled against him often, and he protects his children even to this day, and will continue to do so. We read *Ps.89:31-33: "If they break my statutes and keep not my commandments: then will I visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes. Nevertheless my lovingkindness I will not utterly take away from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail."* What a glorious and consoling promise from our everloving Father! And in Heb,12:5-8 we read, *"--My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him: for whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye*

endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons."

Pharaoh in haste called for Moses and Aaron and begged them to entreat the LORD to take away the locusts. Moses entreated the LORD and he turned a mighty strong west wind, which took away the locusts, and cast them into the Red sea. Not one remained. Still Pharaoh refused to let the children go and more plagues were sent upon them. Pharaoh continued his defiance of God until the death angel slew all the firstborn of both man and beast in the land of Egypt. Then Pharaoh quickly sent them out, but after that they had gone out God again hardened Pharaoh's heart, and he pursued them with his armies to bring them back into bondage as servants, but the LORD protected his children, and Pharaoh and his armies could not overtake them. They drew nigh unto the children at the Red sea, and when they were seen the children were sore afraid and cried unto the LORD. Is this not the way we do today? We go as far as we can in our own strength, but when we have exhausted all we cry unto God for mercy. And, praise his holy name, he always hears and answers! His answer is most always different to our request, but he surely knows what we need, and we do not. As he said to Paul, "My grace is sufficient for thee." The Israelites complained to Moses that he

had brought them out into the wilderness to die. They thought it was better to serve the Egyptians than to die in the wilderness. And Moses said unto the people, "Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the LORD." There was nothing else they could do, for they were completely cut off by the mountains, the sea and Pharaoh. We find ourselves in that same condition at times, but Jesus speaks peace unto us, saying, "***In this world ye shall have tribulations: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.***" What a wonderful consolation it is when he applies these words of comfort to us personally.

God again used a strong east wind to divide the waters of the Red sea, and the children went into the midst of the sea upon dry ground; and the waters were walls on both sides of them. To me these walls represent the walls of salvation to the chosen children of God, but unto the Egyptians, the ones who would keep the children in bondage, they are the walls of death. We are now able to sing the song that Moses and the children of Israel sang-- "***I will sing unto the LORD, for he hath triumphed gloriously.***The LORD is my strength and my song, and he is become my salvation: he is my God.***"

As the children of Israel traveled in the wilderness of Sin they again murmured against God, for they hungered for the flesh pots and bread of Egypt. The LORD heard them and rained bread from heaven upon them. They were commanded to gather a certain rate each day, and on the sixth

day they were to gather twice as much that they might have enough bread for the sabbath, for there was no work allowed on the sabbath. The people did not keep the LORD'S commandment, but gathered more than they needed for one day and kept that which was left over for the next day. But it bred worms and stank. That is the way it is with us today. God feeds us each day that which is sufficient, and it will not suffice for tomorrow, except he blesses us to feed upon it on the morrow as he did for the people on the sabbath days.

The bread that God rained upon them they called Manna, for they knew not what it was, but it was a perfect food and all they needed during the forty years they travelled in the wilderness. But again they wept, saying, *Who shall give us flesh to eat, for they remembered and desired again the flesh pots of Egypt. They said, "But now our soul is dried away: there is nothing at all, beside this manna, before our eyes." The anger of the LORD was kindled and he gave them meat to eat, but said unto them, "Ye shall not eat one day, or two days, or five days, neither ten days, nor twenty days; but even a whole month, until it come out your nostrils, and it be loathsome unto you: because ye have despised the LORD which is among you."* (Num. 11:19-20).

The meat which the LORD gave them was quails. He sent forth a wind that brought quails from the sea, which covered the face of the ground as it were two cubits high. The people gath-

ered them for two days and a night and did eat. *"And while the flesh was yet between their teeth, ere it was chewed, the wrath of the LORD was kindled against the people, and the LORD smote the people with a very great plague."* And those who had lusted after the flesh were buried there. Should not this be a warning unto us now that we should not lust after the things of the flesh? The Israelites *"lusted exceedingly in the wilderness, and tempted God in the desert. And he gave them their requests; but sent leanness into their souls."* Brethren, let us beware! Let us always remember to thank God and praise him for the love, mercy, and all good and perfect gifts that come down from above, and not seek after the rudiments of the world: which perish with the using thereof.

Now let us move forward lest this writing become far too long.

You know how it was that Jonah fled from the LORD after he was commanded to go and cry against Nineveh because of their wickedness. He paid his fare and went into a ship going to Tarshish, but did not know that he was going the way that the Lord had prepared. He did not know that a man's heart deviseth his way: but the Lord directeth his steps. that it is not in man that walketh to direct his own steps. But he did learn and confess that salvation is of the Lord. The LORD sent out a great wind to accomplish his purpose. This wind caused a great tempest in the sea, and because of it Jonah was cast overboard, and as

soon as he was cast out the sea ceased her raging. The crew of the ship, as well as Jonah, surely believed that the sea would claim him in death, but they did not know the power nor purpose of God, for he had prepared a great fish to swallow Jonah and he was there just at the moment needed as purposed by God. Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights. Jesus spoke of this as a sign, saying, *"An evil and adulterous generation seeketh after a sign; and there shall no sign be given to it, but the sign of the prophet Jonas; for as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth."*

"Then Jonah prayed unto the LORD his God out of the fish's belly. And said, I cried by reason of mine afflictions unto the LORD, and he heard me; out of the belly of hell cried I, and thou heardest my voice. For thou hast cast me into the deep, in the midst of the seas; and the floods compassed me about: all thy billows and thy waves passed over me. Then said I, I am cast out of thy sight; yet will I look again toward thy holy temple."

Brethren, have you ever felt cast out into the deep, into the belly of hell when your sins rose up before you as mountains, and rolled over you as great billows and waves? Were you not made to know that God was the one who cast you into the deep, and into the belly of hell? Did you not then

in great fear and trembling cry unto him for mercy? Did he fail to answer your prayer? When you are faced with afflictions, trials and persecutions do you not cry unto him? And does he not always deliver you? God always hears prayers of faith and always answers, for he said, *"And it shall come to pass, that before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking I will hear."* What a gracious and comforting promise this is to a troubled and cast down child of God! God hath also said, *"When thou passeth 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."* How wonderful it is when we are blessed to remember and believe and rest upon the promises of our great Jehovah! And he hath also said, *"I will never leave thee nor forsake thee."*

Jesus was in a little ship with his disciples and he was asleep on a pillow when a great tempest arose. His disciples awoke him in fear, saying, Lord, save us: we perish. And he said unto them, Why are ye so fearful, O ye of little faith? Then he arose, and rebuked the winds and there was a great calm. When we feel endangered by the storms of this life we also greatly fear because our faith is so weak, but when we call upon our Saviour he calms us as nothing else can.

I realize I have barely touched on a few scriptures concerning this text, but I have written the thoughts that

came to my mind and some of the scriptures that came to mind, and I trust that the Lord has directed me. If any one receives any comfort from this, may God receive all the praise, honor and glory.

Elder C.C. Wilbanks

CORRESPONDENCE

Elder Key,

I had what is to me a most precious moment and up lifting experience and if the editors of the signs deem it worthy I would like to share it with the readers.

I awoke this morning as I do at times and could not go back to sleep. I went into the living room weary and longing for more rest, but as the vain world would say, by chance I turned on the T.V. If one understood my life style and how I feel about most of what is on T.V. they would see the sovereignty of God at work.

There was a documentary on and it was discussing the ant. It said that when the ants home is invaded by the caterpillars, the ant does not attack or try to kill the enemy, but diligently watching every move the enemy makes sets about with hard labor to repair all damage. After a while the caterpillar for whatever reason moves on to another place. Well as primitive baptists we certainly know the reason and who it was that moved the caterpillar to another place.

OH MY! If the world had eyes to see as they set about worshipping the creation more than the creator Rom. 1:25. It would frighten them to death to know what lay ahead for them. **OH!** that God would prompt us to pray that his word would have free course II Thess. 3:1 for brethren we all know that if God, the holy trinity, the omnipotent God, does not move us to pray we will not know what to pray for as we ought Rom. 8:26.

I thought what a beautiful picture the ant makes of the Christian that follows the meek and lowly Jesus, for he hath taught us to love our enemies and feed him as the ant did the caterpillar Rom 12:20 leaving it to God to heap coals of fire upon his head. For he hath promised us with promises that are yea and amen in Christ Jesus II Corinth. 1:20 that he will handle our enemies for we know him that hath said vengeance belongeth unto me I will recompense saith the Lord and again the Lord shall Judge his people Heb. 11:30.

May God be pleased to bless this article to the hearts of his people whom he is saving from their Sins. Matt. 1:21 For he hath given us this promise that all the world shall bow at the lovely name of our Lord. How beautiful are the words **THOU SHALT CALL HIS NAME JESUS.**

Brethren though I am not a member, as yet, I take the liberty of calling you Brethren for you have become dear to my heart and though the number are small he hath assured us that a remnant shall be saved and when the enemy shall come in like a flood the

Lord shall lift up a standard against him. Isaiah 59:19.

OH! how beautiful is the sovereignty of God in the absolute predestination of all his firm degrees. Including moving the caterpillar from the ant's home.

Brethren PRAY for me II Thess. 5:25.

Larry Gibson

ARTICLES

RESTITUTION OF ALL THINGS

In the third chapter of Acts the miraculous healing of the lame man is recorded. The apostle Peter uses this restoration of the strength and the curing of the man, that was lame from his mother's womb, as the background for presenting the doctrine of "...the restitution of all things,..." Acts 3:21. It should be noted that this took place shortly after the day of Pentecost when the Holy Ghost filled them and brought about a response that had not happened before; they began to speak with other tongues, and when the Jews, devout men from every nation came together they heard the disciples speak in his own language. Yes, something new was taking place, Peter explains, in the 18-20 verses of Acts 3, that God had foretold these things by the mouth of his prophets how Jesus must come and suffer and "Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things....". So if Jesus is now in heaven, where he ascended,

until the restitution of all things, and if we are to watch and pray expectantly, then does it not follow that the restitution is in progress now, in time? Because, when restitution is complete He will return.

In the 18th chapter of Jeremiah we are given, I believe, a capsule picture of restitution. Even though the example is given to the house of Israel, to me it is also applicable to spiritual Israel and thus to the whole elect family of God.

In the 18:3, of Jeremiah he writes, "Then I went down to the potters house, and, behold, he wrought a work on the wheels. And the vessel that he made of clay was marred in the hand of the potter: so he made it again another vessel, as it seemed good to the potter to make it."

Do we know of any vessel that is marred and that needs restoring? The image of a marred vessel appears clearly any time we look in a mirror. This vessel is marred by sin and needs to be restored if it has not already been accomplished. But, restored to what? Or, when did the marring start? Where did sin start? Was it not in the garden of Eden? Sin marred our Adamic head when he disobeyed the command of God. "Hast thou eaten of the tree, wherefore I commanded thee that thou shouldest not eat?"

"So he drove out the man; and placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life." This is what we often call "the fall," and which is the root of "original sin".

In this fall, or in this marring, what did Adam fall from? "And God said, let us make man in our own image and after our likeness" Gen. 1:26. Thus man, in the garden was, in some way, in the image of God. "God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and truth." John 4:24. In there any image other than a spiritual image in which man could be in His image", seeing that God is a spirit? So, does it not follow that if man, Adam, was made in God's image that Adam in the garden was spiritual? Adam was in a generate state. He could eat of the tree of life in the midst of the garden, (the tree is Christ figuratively), and he could talk with God.

In the fall Adam fell from a state of generation into degeneration. "...the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden..." This sinful, degenerate state is the condition of the whole family of man, and would forever be except that God, in his infinite wisdom, determined from all eternity to save his people. They will be born again; they will be quickened; they will be regenerated: all being similar phrases describing the restoration. This renewing, or restoring will include the whole family of God, the church, before Christ's return. It will be experienced by each individual saint through the change wrought by the Holy Ghost. See John 3:3 and Titus 3:5.

If the fall was in the garden of Eden, then when does the restoration take place, when does it start? As we mentioned above Peter stated that Jesus

must be received in heaven until the restoration of all things.

It is apparent that the apostles understood something of the restoration, and understood that it had not yet been. Acts 1:4-6. It was after the resurrection that Christ instructed them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait, " ... ye shall be baptised with the Holy Ghost not many days hence." Then they ask "... wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?" Even though they may not have understood that the restoration was to be a spiritual, and not a natural restoration of the natural kingdom, they did understand that it was to take place after the coming of the Messiah. Christ also emphasized that it was associated with them receiving power after the Holy Ghost had come upon them, which is Pentecost. See Acts 1:7-8. This also related back to John 7:39, "...for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified".

The Holy Ghost was not given, in a restoring sense, in olden times but the restoration is given of the Father, through Jesus Christ by the Spirit in the latter days. Jesus tells his apostles in Luke 24:49 "...behold I send the promise of the Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high. Although they did not know then what was being told them, but did later. They were being told to wait until the coming of the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost where restoration was first experienced.

A fuller appreciation for the greatness of this restoration and the fulfillment of promise which was first realized on Pentecost can be seen by reviewing the 11th chapter of Hebrews. Great things were accomplished by our old testament forbearers through faith, yet they received not the promise (were not restored in Christ). "And these, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect." Heb. 11:39-40.

The fullness of the promise is, of course, in Jesus Christ with the application of his finished work, in the generation of his elect, by the Spirit. Those of the old testament did not receive the promise, which is the restitution in Christ, but looked forward to it. Saints of today receive the promise in being born again, or quickened, or made alive unto Christ and look back to what made it possible in the full and finished work of Jesus Christ. And, look back to when the restitution first began at Pentecost when the Holy Ghost infused, or indwelt, in a different way."if any man be in Christ he is a new creature...." 2 Cor. 5:17.

The promise to the old testament saints, is it not the former rains spoken of in the second chapter of Joel? Did salvation not flow to the former seas from Christ? In like manner do not saints of these latter days rejoice in the salvation of the latter rains? Does salvation not flow from Christ to the saints of today, which are of the hinder seas? Notice in Joel that the

former rain and the latter rain came in the same month. With this can't we say that salvation for the old testaments, as well as the saints of these latter days, came from the same source and in the same reason - the death burial and resurrection of Christ?

In summary thus far we have looked at (1) the fall of Adam, (2) the prophets foretelling of Christ's coming to restore, (3) the foreshadowing of the law in showing the things to be done by Christ, (4) Christ coming and fulfilling the law, being crucified, buried, and raised again to make the restitution possible, and (5) the coming of the Holy Ghost to institute the beginning of restitution.

It seems to me that the same story of the restoration is told to the church, or illustrated in the "keeping of the way of the tree of life." You will recall that when God drove man out of the garden he placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way, to keep the way of the tree of life. Man, being driven out of the garden, could no longer eat of the tree of life, as he could when he was in the garden. But, there was, and is a way kept of the tree of life. The keeping of the way, it seems to me, is kept sealed until the restitution, and opened to His people in their restoration. Is not this flaming sword, that is accomplished by Cherubims, the porter that openeth to the shepherd of the sheep? John 10:2-3. Is this flaming sword not the Comforter that will receive the things of Christ and show them to his people, John 16:7-14. And lastly, is this not

what John the Baptist was speaking of, one that cometh, Christ, that "...shall baptise you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire." Mat. 3:11?

In the restoration, it seems to me, that his people are restored to the place where they can eat of the tree of life, the way of which is kept by the Holy Ghost. This is what his people spiritually partake of, in this life, which is symbolized when partaking of the bread and the wine at the Lord's table. In a figurative as well as a real sense the saints are restored to where they can eat of the tree of life, which is Christ, in the spiritual garden of Eden. This is the spiritual place, while yet in this wilderness, prepared for his people, the bride, the church. See Rev.; 2:14. "And to the woman were given two wings of a great eagle, that she might fly into the wilderness, into her place, where she was nourished for a time, and times, and half a time, from the face of the serpent." What wonderful nourishment to be able to feed upon the tree of life. And the tree of life is still in the spiritual garden of Eden, which is the place to which the church has spiritually flown to be nourished.

And now to return once more to the text, Christ "Whom heaven must receive until the time of restitution of all things..." If the restitution began at Pentecost, then when is it fulfilled or finished? There would seem to be a marked order to the events of the fulfillment. In Romans 11:25 we read "... blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in." So, the restitution of

the Gentile will come first, as is now taking place in our time. Then does it not follow that blindness will be taken away from Israel and by grace they will receive spiritual sight, be born again, which is regeneration and restoration and all the words that relate to salvation?

Concerning the latter days and the bringing in of Israel see Isaiah 66:5-12, particularly part of verse 8. The answer to the question seems to be in the affirmative, "Shall the earth be made to bring forth in one day? or shall a nation be born at once?" When the nation Israel is born the restitution of all things, that began at Pentecost, will be complete, and it seems to indicate that the restitution of Israel will be done quickly, as if in a day. Then with the restitution fulfilled Christ will return. He will return mighty to save for the church, but to visit vengeance on the wicked. Isaiah 63:1-4.

The above touches only lightly on many points of doctrine relating to the restitution of all things. It is hoped however, that the reader be able to see a thread of the plan of restitution presented in the scriptures from Genesis to Revelation. A clearer picture might be seen if some of the points were more fully explored. But there is never an end to this matter or this subject, for it is all centered in Christ. With many words or few, if the Spirit gives understanding, there will be understanding.

Wayman G. Chapell

VOICES OF THE PAST

THE LORD REIGNS

The Bible tells us that God made the earth and all things in it, and we Old Baptists believe what the Bible says. He is the King of all the earth and will do right in adversity and prosperity. He is our only hope. In the midst of this fearful drought now afflicting our beloved nation, God reigns and will mete out to the nation, and to individuals, only that which is just and right. We have turned away from Him and His judgment is upon us. The rain cometh down from heaven; in other words, God sends the rain upon the just and the unjust and withholds it when he pleases, and we believe that all His ways are right and when He judges and punishes us it is for our good and His glory; although no affliction for the present is joyous, but grievous, nevertheless, it worketh the peaceable fruits of righteousness to them who are exercised thereby.

I once heard the late Elder Andrew J. Moore, of N.C., say that in the thick of battle of the Civil War, when as yet he had no hope, a bullet whizzed by his ear so near that he felt the wind of it and a still small voice said, "God reigns." He answered "what? Here among these Bullets?" The voice said "yes, among these bullets." And so they could not kill him. He was to preach the everlasting gospel of the Son of God. So despite all our fear and worry in every affliction that comes, the Lord will do the thing that is right,

according to His love and mercy. If we are brought to want and suffering, the Lord deals with us in righteousness. And He sends His judgments that men should fear before Him.

The world has gone wild over what it calls a good time. Lovers of pleasures more that lovers of God. And many of the Lord's people are gone with the world. I am reminded of the poet who said:

Scarce in this cold declining day,
Can one for God be found,
Christians have lost their zeal to pray,
And yielded up the ground.

Yes, many have forsaken the assembling of themselves together for the worship of God.

They are too tired, or not well enough, but can attend to their secular affairs, seemingly not stopping to think that without the Lord's blessing upon their labor, it will not bear the desired fruit. Ye earn wages to put it into a bag with holes. Dear ones, let me ask you to read and consider that short prophecy of Haggai, also the 9th and 10th. Verses of the 3rd chapter of Malachi. God does not change. So He will as surely judge and punish us for our sins as He judged and punished His people in the days gone by.

May the God of our Salvation lead us to consider our ways and return us unto the Lord, Who will have mercy, and abundantly pardon; and to His name be the praise forever.

Elder Joshua Tillman Rowe
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FELLOWSHIP

Elder H.H. Lefferts

Fellowship between the children of God is of two kinds. There is church fellowship and there is Christian fellowship. Church fellowship exists between members of the church; that is, between baptized believers of the same faith and order. Christian fellowship is wider, and exists between all who are believers in Christ, whether baptized or not.

Fellowship is always between equals. It cannot exist between individuals of different standing or of different experience or condition. There must be equality of condition in order for there to be true fellowship. For instance, fellowship cannot exist between an unbeliever and a believer, because there is a difference of condition between the two which cannot be bridged. Further, there cannot be church fellowship existing between one who has been baptized and is obedient to the ordinances of Christ and one who, though a believer, has never been brought into subjection to his brethren. Here, too, is a difference in condition, and while there may be, and truly is, Christian fellowship existing in this last instance, there cannot be church fellowship.

This matter of fellowship does not come and go according to our will; it is a fruit of the Holy Spirit, and not to be controlled by the human will. When one has ever had real fellowship for another it cannot be forfeited.

To make our meaning clearer; if one is a member of the church and becomes guilty of some breach of church order, it may become necessary to set that one aside from the fellowship of the church, but if that one has ever been in the hearts and affections of the church he will still be loved, and for him there will still be Christian fellowship, even though he be cut off from partaking of the privileges and ordinances of the church.

Thinking of the church as the spiritual mother of us all, fellowship is the great, brooding, yearning motherheart that watches over all her children. If they stray from the fold fellowship goes after them, seeking to reclaim them. If they behave themselves unseemly, fellowship seeks their correction, not their destruction.

Mother-love is one of the most beautiful things in all nature. How insistently a mother will cling to an erring child, how longingly goes out her heart after the wanderer, earnestly desiring that he may realize his wrong and come back to her feet for forgiveness.

If spiritual things transcend the natural (and we all believe they do), then how patiently and prayerfully should the fellowship of the church go out after that one who, pursuing wrong, seems blinded to his course. The fellowship of the brethren will long and gently labor with that one to endeavor to show him his wrong; they will pray the Lord to grant him repentance, that thus he may be saved to the church, and not be cast off from it.

Exclusion is an ugly word. The church should not have much use for

it. It is never to be employed except as a very last resort to the house clean after all efforts at reclamation have availed nothing. The whole purpose of Christ and his gospel is to save, not to destroy.

Christ himself sought the lost sheep to restore them to the fold. He himself says he came not to destroy the world, but that the world through him might be saved. No one ever loved the sinner more, or ever served the welfare of sinners more wholeheartedly than the blessed Jesus. He bared his back to the scourgers for sinners, he even gave his cheeks to the spittle of his enemies, that sinners through him should be cleansed from sin, raised from the dead and restored to the glory of the Father which they had with him before the world began.

The gospel which Jesus sent his apostles to preach is filled with love and mercy and patience, and long-suffering to poor, erring creatures. By no means did the disciples have the patience with men which Jesus himself had. The disciples rebuked mothers for bringing children to Jesus that he might lay his hands on them. But Jesus quickly showed them their shortness of sight when he said to them, "Of such is the kingdom of heaven." Again when the disciples came across a man who was healing in Christ's name they asked Jesus to command the man to stop it. Jesus, however, told them to let the man alone, that he who is not against us is for us.

Thus we shall never while in the flesh be able to comprehend the great heart of Jesus. His love is high enough, deep enough, wide enough, to embrace sinners of every class and condition. Where once he bestows his love he loves unto the end. He never casts away. He does reprove our backslidings, corrects our ignorance, instructs us in righteousness and rebukes our sins. He chastens his children with his fatherly chastisements, but never with the rod of wrath or condemnation.

Following out the great principle of the gospel of Jesus, which owes its vitality to the eternal love of God and his inexhaustible grace, what use can the church have for exclusion? Certainly it is so harsh, and an instrument of such severe discipline, that never should it be employed by any church until every shred of patience has been utterly worn out in seeking the restoration of the erring.

If ever we need the mother-love of the church it is when we are weak and easily yielding to wrong. Should the brethren desert us in that cruel time of our deepest need, where then is the evidence that Christ is in their midst?

By all we have said we do not mean to imply that the church should be slack in keeping its house clean, that it should cease to administer the discipline of the church to its members as laid down by inspiration. Of course all this must be done, but very many times churches are too quick to condemn a brother for a fault, without due examination into the matter; too quick

to exclude without first laboring with the sinner and seeking to reclaim him or to save him to the church.

Fellowship is a precious thing. It is not to be tossed about like a rubber ball, as though it were something to be treated with lightness and insincerity, yet at times we talk of fellowship, and about taking it away from this one or that one, as though it were something that we could handle, like sugar or some other commodity. The Spirit of Christ can alone give us spiritual fellowship for another, and when so given cannot be taken away.

It has been our privilege to have this fellowship with the Lord's people, and we feel that no matter what they might do to us we could not cease to love them. It would be a shame could we not have like confidence that no matter what we might do the fellowship of God's people would still be ours. Nor does such confidence in the fellowship of the church encourage us to want to do wrong. No, but rather spurs us to maintain a good behavior, that we may, in some slight measure at least, be worthy of their love and fellowship.

Salvation is ministered through the fellowship of the brethren to each member of the church. Many things which one might do if one were not in the church, one does refrain from doing because he fears to offend the brethren. This fear is not because one fears exclusion, but fears to hurt the feelings of those one loves.

The more we reflect upon what fellowship means the more should we exercise great care and longsuffering

in dealing with transgressions against the order of the church. Too much patience there cannot possibly be, but too much haste there certainly often is.

As to what is the order of the church our people are not unanimous. Various constructions are put upon certain passages of the New Testament, which leads to variations in church order throughout the country. In view of this variation, whenever any one church is considering a matter of discipline or order, it is well to get the mind of the whole church before taking any radical action; not simply to be guided by the pastor, who is but a man and may err as easily as any, nor simply to be guided by a section of the church, but labor to get the minds and counsel of the whole church, and then in the light of such counsel proceed to act.

Part of a church might not see any given matter in its right light, but the whole church, if left to act with perfect freedom, and without any coercion whatever, will seldom decide any matter wrongly. The Catholics have unbounded confidence in the infallibility of the Pope. We have no confidence in any man, but we do have confidence in the infallibility of the whole church, for the mind of the whole church is Christ himself. He never errs.

Editorial of Elder Lefferts
Feb. 1, 1921.
Republished by request.)

"Who loved me, and gave himself for me." -- GALATIANS ii. 20.

MANY of the saints of God may not be so highly favoured as to take up into their lips Paul's language of strong, personal assurance. They may hope, and at times may rise beyond a hope, into a sweet confidence, by the shining in of the Sun of righteousness, that the Son of God has loved them, and given himself for them. But the strength of Paul's persuasion and the full expression of his confidence so far outstrip both their assurance and their language, that many real saints of God confess they come short both in heart and tongue. Yet their coming short of this blessed certainty as an enjoyed reality in the heart, and as a declared confidence by the mouth—for conscience and tongue must move together where God works—does not affect the fact. Clouds and mists sometimes obscure the sun, but they do not blot him out of the sky. So the mists and fogs of unbelief may obscure the Sun of righteousness, yet they do not blot him out of the spiritual hemisphere. He still loved you and gave himself for you who believe in his name, though you may not be able to rise up to the faith of Paul, or speak with the same fulness of assurance. The bud has the same union with the vine as the branch, but not the same strength of union; the babe is as much a member of the family as the grown-up son, but has not the same knowledge of its relationship; the foot is as much a part of the body as the eye or the hand, though it has not the same nearness to the head, or the same honours and employments.

Elder J.C. Philpot

*From Elder Lambert's Book,
"Tried In The Furnace."*

**"THE STEPS OF A GOOD MAN
ARE ORDERED BY THE LORD"**

December, 1951



ELDER E.J. LAMBERT

The expression that heads this article is found in Psalms 37:23. We trust that we have learned by

experience and revelation the truthfulness of this statement. There was a time in our sojourn here that we could not receive this as a true statement. We thought we could order, command, decree, or perform our own steps within and of ourselves. We thought this was the right way and that we possessed the ability to direct our steps aright. But, alas! we found by sad experience that this was the way that seemeth right unto man but the ends thereof are the ways of death! In our desperation we were made to cry out as the prophet, "O Lord, I know the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps" (Jer. 10:23). We did not know this until we had tried with all our might to walk aright and every trial met with defeat. All of our own devising was fruitless. Then we were made to trust no longer in ourselves for deliverance; we were forced to look to another source for salvation; we were made to cry to God; and, He heard our cry! We trust that we experienced the deliverance as recorded in Psalms

40:2, "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."

Have you ever been in an horrible pit and tried to walk when your feet were in miry clay? Your feet slip and slide so that you cannot direct your steps. Every trial leads you deeper into the mire until you are stuck. It is in this helpless condition that you pray for deliverance. When the Lord hears your cry and brings you up out of the pit and miry clay and sets your feet upon a firm foundation and directs your steps - you are, then made to agree with Proverbs 16:9, "A man's heart deviseth his way: but the Lord directeth his steps."

Is it your experience that you have to be shown again and again these things? My experience is that this primitive deliverance and primary experience was not sufficient to make me to be at all times conscious of my dependence upon Him. Sometimes, it seems, that God graces me with a godly walk for a period of time and my body is kept under subjection and I begin to gloat over my steadfastness in my walk and feel that I shall never stray from the paths of righteousness. Then I am brought to my true status and made to embrace the language as expressed in Psalms 73:2, "But as for me, my feet were almost gone; my steps had well nigh slipped." I notice in Psalms 37:24 regarding the good man of the text the psalmist says, "Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down: for the Lord upholdeth him with His hand." If I know what this fall is I have experienced it many times

in my pilgrimage here. I believe Peter experienced it when Satan was permitted to sift him as wheat. Jesus did not tell Peter: I have prayed that you fail not: but, "I have prayed that thy faith fail not." Peter failed to do that he had avowed to do. He desperately failed, but that faith that had been given him by the Lord was not faith in Peter but faith in Jesus Christ. These falls are destined to strengthen our faith in Him who is able to deliver us from these terrible conditions. These falls enable us to rejoice in the mighty Hand of the Lord that upholds us so that we shall not be utterly cast down.

We read in Psalms 37:31 of a good man that, "The law of his God is in his heart: none of his steps shall slide." None of his steps shall slide because God orders by His law; directs by His spirit; and, enables and performs for him by "working in him both to will and to do of His good pleasure." We are informed by Proverbs 16:1 that the preparations of the heart in man and the answer of the tongue is of the Lord. According to the Scriptures He takes from us the stony heart, gives us a heart of flesh, writes His law in our hearts: and, enables the heart to believe and the tongue to confess by the direct operation of His Holy Spirit. It is no wonder that none of the steps of God's children shall slide when we consider that He is so gracious to them by establishing their goings and causing them to know from whom cometh their strength!

We want to consider now some of the steps that are ordered by the Lord. The steps that God orders would not

be the steps that man would voluntarily take upon his own initiative. Man would naturally try to escape the first step that we shall mention. We maintain that man is not able or desirous to take any of them.

Suffering must be a step, for we read in 1st Peter 2:21, "For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps." This emphatically states that you are called to suffering. Suffering is necessary in order that we reign with Him according to 2 tim. 2:12. The writer to the Hebrews in speaking concerning Jesus said, "Though He were a Son, yet learned He obedience by the things which He suffered and being made perfect, He became the author of eternal salvation unto all them that obey Him" (Heb. 5:8,9). Suffering was necessary in order that Jesus learn obedience. Suffering is necessary for us in order that we obey. We learn obedience by the things which we suffer. Were it not for suffering we would yet be satisfied with our own righteousness and ability. Severe afflictions were blessings in disguise, causing us to realize the filthiness of ourselves and our need of Him and His guidance, love and mercy. "Not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulations worketh patience; and patience, experience; and experience, hope; and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given to us."

Yes, severe afflictions work patience, the next step the Lord orders. We are brought into humble submission to His ruling. He causes us to be still and know that He is God (Ps. 46:10). He makes us to know that He works all things after the counsel of His own will. We are made to be content with our lot and reconciled to His will. We are blessed to endure hardships and constantly look to Him for deliverance.

Experience is the next step recorded by the apostle. After that we have been caused to suffer until we have been made to patiently wait upon Him - then we begin to experience and realize the hand of God in the matter. He comes to our rescue and begins to manifest Himself as our deliverer. We experience His grace, loving-kindness and tender mercy. We begin to look upon Him as our Rock, our Refuge, and our hiding place. He has stilled the tempest, calmed our minds, and delivered us from trusting in self and has caused us to look to the merits of the blessed Son of God for our salvation. This has worked a hope.

We are not yet delivered from sin for we find that sin is mixed with all we do and "When we would do good evil is present with us." We earnestly desire and expect some day to be delivered from the presence of sin through the merits of Jesus and the amazing grace of Almighty God. This is the hope of God's children. "For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? but if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it" (Rom. 8:24,25). When

blessed to be in the sweet embrace of His love, we realize, "Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil? (Heb. 6:19). This hope maketh not ashamed.

The subjects who have been ordered to take the aforesaid steps are not embraced to own Him as their total Savior. Jesus will not be ashamed of us because we are made not ashamed of Him. We are not of them that Jesus referred to as recorded in Mark 8:38, "Whosoever therefore shall be ashamed of me and of my words in this adulterous and sinful generation; of him also shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his father with the Holy angels." Do you consider it a disgrace to believe and avow that God is sovereign over all things? Do you blush in contending for the doctrine of salvation solely by grace through the merits of Jesus?

*Ashamed of Jesus! Sooner far
Let evening blush to own a star;
He sheds the beams of light divine
O'er this benighted soul of mine.*

*Ashamed of Jesus! yes I may,
When I've no guilt to wash away,
No tear to wipe, no good to crave,
No fears to quell, no soul to save.*

Repentance is a step that is ordered by the Lord. No doubt Ephraim of old tried to repent of himself thereby ordering his own steps. He certainly was unsuccessful in the attempt and was made to cry to God, "Turn thou me and I shall be turned; for thou art the Lord, my God. Surely after that I was turned, I repented" (Jer. 31:18,

19). You see that repentance must be ordered by the Lord. When it is so ordered it is sure. It is certain because Christ gives it to spiritual Israel for it is recorded in Acts 5:31, "Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Savior, for to give repentance to Israel, the forgiveness of sins. When God revealed Himself to Job it caused him to say, I abhor myself; I repent in dust and ashes" (Job. 42:6). We are made to hate sin and pray for deliverance from it.

Faith is a step that is ordered by the Lord. Faith is the evidence of the new birth. "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God" (1 John 5:1). The faith that was once delivered to the saints is the trust in the three-one God. Do you have faith in the Father who chose His people in the Son; predestinated them unto salvation; made all the provisions for their salvation; and who is so perfect in power and wisdom that none of His decrees shall fail but all shall have the desired effects - all things were ordained by Him and for the perfecting of His grand purpose, the salvation of His people? Do you possess faith in that Son who accomplished all the requirements of the law for you; took your sins upon Himself, paid the penalty, satisfied justice by shedding His blood for you; is now at the right hand of God's throne making intercessions for you according to the Father's will? Have you been made to feel the calming influence of the Holy Spirit that reveals these things to you that the Father has designed and the Son has accomplished? Has the Com-

forter ever soothed your aching heart and made you to cry with joy, "My Redeemer liveth"? This faith is the gift of God, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that [faith] not of yourselves: it [faith] is the gift of God" (Eph. 2:8). We find by reading further that it is not of works but unto good works. So, the next step we find ordered by the Lord is good works.

These good works are the result of that faith which is a living or working faith - not the dead faith spoken of by James 2:17, "Even so faith, if it hath not works is dead, being alone." This living faith activates the subjects and causes them to "... warn them that are unruly, comfort the feebleminded, support the weak, be patient toward all men. See that none render evil for evil unto any man; but ever follow that which is good, both among yourselves, and to all men" (1 Thess. 5:14,15). When it pleases God to work in us both to will and to do of His good pleasure a godly walk is the result and our conversation is godly. All these good works are inspired by faith and motivated by love.

We love God because He first loved us (1 John 4:19). He did not love us because we loved Him, for "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins" (1 John 4:10). We are not capable of loving divinely until He manifests His love toward us in giving us this divine love by the Holy Spirit. Then, we love Him and love one another. It is an order of God that we love one another and this order is effectual. He said through the

mouth of the prophet, "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 whereunto I sent it." Love is one of the fruits of the Spirit and is made manifest in the lives of God's children. Those who are not born of the Spirit act solely upon selfish desires in hope of reward or in fear of punishment. Those born of the Spirit are stimulated by love in their actions to one another. Love is a step that is ordered by God. Love is the law He indelibly imprinted in this new heart of yours.

Many of God's children are ordered to follow their Lord in being baptized in water which is an outward manifestation and figure of being enveloped by the body of Jesus - being in Him as He accomplished the law, paid the penalty of death, and was resurrected. (See Romans 6:3). Baptism in water is an outward manifestation of being enveloped and immersed in repentance. Baptism in water is signifying a hope of the mortal body being some day baptized with immortality. As baptism into Jesus and His death by God creating them in Him was the entrance into the Church universal, so then, baptism in water is the proper entrance into the church militant.

God orders, directs, inspires and empowers His children in the steps of singing, praying, preaching, communing, and doing all that is becoming to saints. When He says, "sing," we sing with the Spirit and understanding. When He says, "pray," we pray without ceasing. When He says, "preach," we preach

the Word. When He directs us to teach we teach transgressors His ways. When He directs us to run, we are enabled to lay aside every weight and the sin which doth so easily beset us and run with patience the race that is set before us - looking only to Jesus as the Author and Finisher of our faith.

Time, space, nor ability will permit us to put in words our many thoughts upon this great subject. We have briefed the steps mentioned. Many steps that arrested our thoughts have not been written in this manuscript. Suffice it to say, we trust that God will bless these few hints to your comfort and edification. May He stir up your pure minds to recall the many steps in your experience that God has ordered. I desire to close this article on "The Steps of A Good Man Are Ordered By The Lord" by quoting Philippians 1:6: "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."

Elder E.J. Lambert

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FOR NOVEMBER 1994

Buford Thompson, VA	2.00
Mrs. Geneva Pettis, LA	5.00
Mrs. Lavenia Biggs, TN	2.00
Mrs. Rachel J. Green, WV	2.00
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Mrs. Albert H. Davidson, LA	20.00
Mrs. Iva L. Souter, TX	7.00

OBITUARIES

Ballard E. Barker

It is with a sad and lonely heart, I will try to write in memory of my loving husband, Brother Ballard Barker. He was born May 2, 1912 in Pittsylvania County, A son of William B. Barker and Mitchel Jennings Barker. The last member of his immediate family. His early life was devoted to his family, He kept his mother and dad as long as they lived. His dad died May 16, 1947. His mother died June 13, 1959. Oct. 25, 1959, He married Addie Henderson Williams, Who died March 1, 1972. He married Sarah Harward Walton Barker on Nov. 27, 1975. He leaves to mourn, 6 step children 15 step grand children and 3 step great grand children, Who loved Him as their own. He was A firm believer in Salvation by Grace, And pre-destination of all things. He joined Old Mountain Primitive Baptist Church April 17, 1977, at the water, and was

baptised with his wife by Elder Julian Williams. A faithful member, always ready and willing to do any thing he could for the church as long as health permitted. Always enjoyed the meetings and entertaining Primitive Baptist in our home. Having suffered so much in 1987, The loss of A leg in 1988, and open heart surgery in 1993. Was in a wheel chair or walker until he was called home, Sept. 30, 1994. Where there will be no more pain (cerebral hemorrhage) Never complained, but often spoke of how good the Lord had been to him, who felt so unworthy. His Funeral was held at Wrenn and Yeatts Funeral home chapel, Oct. 2, 1994 at 2:00 P.M. by his Pastor Elder C.B. Davis. He was layed to rest in Highland Burial Park, beneath A beautiful mound of flowers, A token of love, from his family and many friends to await the sound of the trumpet, When Christ will call his children home. Done in conference at Old Mountain Church. Jan. 15, 1995.

Written by one who loved him.
Elder C. B. Davis. Moderator
Sarah Barker, Clerk

IN MEMORY OF GUY OWEN DALTON



f the Lord will bless me, I will endeavor to write the obituary of our beloved Brother Guy Owen Dalton. He was born June 24, 1909, in Pittsylvania County and passed away November 21, 1994, at his residence at the age of 85.

He was the son of Joe Terry Dalton and Sister Dolly Dalton. He was married to Mildred Younger Dalton and to this union ten children were born.

He is survived by his wife, Mildred Younger Dalton of the residence, seven sons, Berkley of Hurt, Jerry of Penhook, Gary, Malon, Ronnie, Doug and Guy Jr. all of Gretna, four daughters, Barbara Hawkins of Lynchburg, Louise Woolard of Altavista, Betty George and Geraldine Ayers both of Gretna, one brother, Bill Dalton of Lynchburg; 20 grandchildren and 17 great-grandchildren.

Brother Guy was given hope and joined Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church on July 25, 1993 and was baptized on August 22, 1993 by Elder Raymond Goad. He was sincere in his convictions and believed in Salvation by Grace.

Brother Guy was blessed with hospitality to divide what the Lord had given him naturally with his brethren and friends. The door of their home was always open with warm love and wanted all that visited them to eat and feel welcome.

Brother Guy became ill and was confined to Lynchburg General Hospital several times but was blessed to come home a few days before his death. His wife and family stood by his side and did all human hands could do for him to make him comfortable. The Lord saw fit to call him home on Monday evening November 21, 1994. His funeral was conducted at 11:00 a.m. November 23, 1994 by Elders Raymond Goad and Marvin Brumfield. His body was laid to rest

beneath a beautiful mound of flowers to await the glorious resurrection morning.

He will be greatly missed by his wife, family, church and friends. May all that mourn his passing be reconciled to the will of our Heavenly Father.

Written by: Pam Betterton

Elder Raymond Goad - Moderator
Elder Marvin Brumfield -

Assistant Moderator

Phyllis Goad - Clerk

MAIDLIN MCLAWHORN DORMAN

God in his infinite wisdom has seen fit to call home my mother, Maidline Dorman. She passed from this life May 16, 1994. She was born October 28, 1908, the daughter of the late Alexander and Ida Susan Robinson McLawhorn. She was married to Lynwood Dorman who preceded her in death.

Her survivors include a son Robert L. Dorman of Morgan Hill, California, a daughter Frances Tripp of Tarboro, N.C., three sisters Nina B. McLawhorn and Mabel C. McLawhorn both of Ayden, N.C. and Lavenia Tripp of Stokes, N.C. a brother William E. McLawhorn of Warren, New Jersey, two grandchildren and two great grandchildren.

She joined Hancock Primitive Baptist Church on June 15, 1958 and attended faithfully as long as she lived. She never missed a meeting unless providently hindered. She not only attended her church but visited many others of the same faith and order.

She enjoyed being with the brethren and God blessed her to attend Hancock's yearly meeting the day before she died. She enjoyed it very much.

She lived a simple quiet life and her greatest pleasures was working in her flowers and attending her church.

She will be truly missed by her family and all that knew and loved her, however we feel our loss is her eternal gain.

Her funeral was conducted at Farmer's Funeral Home by her pastor Elder Joe Sawyer. Her body was laid to rest beside her husband in Evergreen Memorial Estates at Grifton, to await the second coming of Christ.

Written by her daughter,
Frances D. Tripp

OBITUARY OF HELEN A. ROWLAND

With much sadness in my heart, the dear Lord willing I will write a few words in memory of our beloved Sister Helen A. Rowland. She was born June 20, 1914, in Pittsylvania County, the daughter of Stephen E. and Martha D. Adams.

She is survived by two sons, Marvin C. Rowland and wife, Doris and Edward L. Rowland and wife, Geneieve, four grandchildren, Cheryl R. Layne, Madelyn R. Meadows, Bryan L. Rowland and Suzanne M. Rowland.

She loved her church. She was a good wife, mother and grandmother. They all loved her and did all human hands could do for her.

Sister Helen was given hope and asked for a home with Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church on September 14, 1952, and was baptized by her Pastor, Elder O.K. Tench, on September 28, 1952. She was faithful to attend her church meetings. When she was unable to drive, her family members saw to it that she had a way to church—her granddaughter, Cheryl, brought her on several occasions.

Sister Helen departed this life on October 20, 1994. Her funeral was conducted at Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church at 2:00 p.m., October 22, by Elders Raymond Goad and Marvin Brumfield. Her body was laid to rest beneath a beautiful mound of flowers in Altavista Memorial Park to await the glorious resurrection. She will be greatly missed by her family, church and friends.

I feel we have been highly favored by God to have been blest with sweet fellowship with this dear Sister who worshipped with us at Weatherford Church.

May we all who mourn her loss be reconciled to the will of our Heavenly Father who never makes a mistake; it is He who giveth and He who taketh away. Blessed be his holy name.

Written by: Phyllis Goad at the Request of Elder Marvin Brumfield

Elder Raymond Goad, Moderator
Elder Marvin Brumfield, Assistant Moderator
Phyllis Goad, Clerk

MARY JEANETTE SMITH

With sadness in our hearts we attempt to write a few words in memory of our dearly beloved sister in the Lord, Mary Smith. God, who does all things well, saw fit to remove her from our presence on October 1, 1994. She is sadly missed by all who knew and loved her, but we feel that our loss is her eternal gain. She was born July 26, 1905, making her age 89 years, 2 months and 6 days.

Sister Smith was baptized into Union Primitive Baptist Church in 1941, and was a faithful member, always filling her favorite seat, unless providentially hindered, until her death in Homer Memorial Hospital at Homer, La.

Sister Mary leaves behind her faithful husband Deacon John Eliga Smith of Homer, La., 1 daughter and son-in-law, Mary Irene and Franklin Williams of Magnolia, Ark.; four sons and daughters-in-law, William Franklin & Doris Smith of Ohatchee, Ala., John Thomas & Betty Smith of Alexandria, La.; Alton Clyde & Faye Smith of Marion, La.; and Fred & Nary Smith of Homer, La. Also thirteen Grandchildren and twenty-one Great-Grandchildren.

Memorial services were conducted before a large crowd of friends and relatives by her co-pastors, and interment was at Union Church Cemetery,

Co-pastors
Eld. J. Theron Jones
Eld. Clifford Wilbanks

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STRING OF HOPE

*In nature I'm a sinful wretch,
Sometimes I feel that I'm a goat,
But I thank God that he has let,
Me have a little string of hope!*

*I have no confidence in my flesh,
With trials sometimes are hard to cope,
When in confusion I'm a mess.
But thank God for the little string
of hope!*

*By the Grace of God, I'm what I am,
In worldly things I win no votes,
But I thank Christ the perfect
Lamb,
That he gave me a little string of
hope!*

*I'm weak and needy in this life,
So many times I felt the jolt,
But through my Lord and Savior's
stripes,
I'm thankful for a little string of
hope!*

*Some troubled times have cast me
down,
I groan within me prone to mope,
But through the blood of the pre-
cious Lamb,
I'm thankful that I'm given a little
string of hope!*

Katherine Mathews

CONTENTS

EDITORIAL	74
Elder Richard H. Campbell	
ARTICLES	77
Frank Hunt	
Troy G. Shepard	
VOICES OF THE PAST	82
Elder R. L. Dodson	
Elder E.J. Lambert	
MEETINGS	91
CONTRIBUTIONS	93
OBITUARIES	93
Elizabeth Barlow Gearhart	
Floyd Lewis Gearhart	
Alveta Gaskill Hopkins	
Sister Mary Hedrick Taylor	
Sister Mildred Strader	
Mrs. Mittie Mae Walker	

 EDITORIAL

For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of: for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is me if I preach not the gospel. 1st Cor. 9 vs. 16.



ELDER R.H. CAMPBELL

The Apostle Paul was, in the hearts and minds of most Christians, the most gifted of men in the revelation and the understanding of the doctrine of God our Savior and his Son Jesus Christ. He was given the most fluent knowledge of the mysteries of God's plan of salva-

tion and the way and manner in which man is involved in this plan. He was blessed to leave on record, in his epistles to the churches and to the brethren more of the experimental knowledge and instructions to those who were to follow in this way than any other man and yet he said he had nothing to glory of because he did it as a result of the necessity that was laid upon him.

Saul was a Jew, grew up under the teachings of the law and was a strong defender of that form of worship, and well versed in the knowledge of the Mosaic law and the ordinances contained therein. As he stated in Gal. 1 vs. 14-15 he was exceedingly zealous of the traditions of the fathers and was successful in his endeavors among the people of his own nation. He was satisfied in his religion and aggressively persecuted those that did not agree with him in an attempt to make them see the error of their way. He even went to the extreme of obtaining letters of authority from the rulers in Jerusalem to act in their behalf in his pursuit of this goal. It was at this particular point in his career that the Lord Jesus was revealed unto him, and made known unto Saul his plans for his future and told him the things he must do. After this encounter, Saul was blind and had to be led about by the hand of those who were with him to complete his journey into Damascus. The necessity was made very plain, here to Saul and he was given further instructions by Ananias of the things he must suffer for Jesus' sake. Jesus had told Saul that he was ap-

pearing to him to make him a minister and a witness of the things being revealed unto him then and the things that would be revealed unto him in his journey the remaining days of his life.

The Apostle Paul, when relating of this experience in his letter to the Church at Galatia simply said "But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen: immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood: neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were Apostles before me; but I went into Arabia and returned to Damascus." The only reason he gives for preaching the gospel was that it had pleased God to reveal his Son in him; no reference to anything that he had contributed to the calling, it was simply because it was God's pleasure for it to be so. Then he said immediately he began to preach the gospel without conferring with those who were Apostles before him: he did not need to know of their experience or calling, for he could not preach from that: he would preach Jesus who had appeared unto him in the way, and the power of that appearing. As he wrote to the Colossians Chap. 2 vs. 6, "As ye have therefore received, Christ Jesus the Lord so walk ye in him." Each one is saved and called with a holy calling and their faith and hope of salvation is based upon their own experience: even moreso the preaching must be based upon the necessity, urgency and power of that calling that sends forth those that are to preach the gospel.

In the verses preceding the above text the Apostle had been writing on the subject of the care and sustaining of those who preach the gospel and the logistics of how this would normally be done in the economy of the Church. He referred to the law and how that it made provisions for the priests and how it would be normal that those who preach the gospel should live of the gospel, even to the point of saying that the Lord had ordained this. 1st Cor. 9 vs. 14. But Paul says immediately, "But I have used none of these things: neither have I written these things that be so done unto me: for it were better for me to die, than that any man should make my glorying void." Paul said in 1st Cor. 6 vs. 12, "All things are lawful unto me, but not all things are expedient: all things are lawful unto me, but I will not be brought under the power of any." It was lawful but the Apostle did not feel that it was expedient for him in this matter. He felt, as Peter did, that money had no part in this matter and he would not reduce his ministry to the level of including a temptation that could become a stumblingblock in his way, or have it considered that way in the mind of others. His calling was not of man, his gift was not from man and he did not want his reward to be in the things of this world.

The Apostle had nothing to glory of because his preaching was not in his power or wisdom but rather a burden that had been placed upon him. It is not something that natural men can do of themselves and yet they cannot fail to do it when called by God to so

do. A God called minister is not preaching for what he can receive as a result of his labors but rather because of the necessity that is received in his calling: he will not even acknowledge that he has been called until he can contain it no longer. Elihu said, Job 32 vs. 18-20 *"For I am full of matter, the spirit within me constraineth me. Behold, my belly is as wine which hath no vent, it is ready to burst like new bottles. I will speak, that I may be refreshed: I will open my lips and answer."* When he reaches this point, in his experience, he goes forth and proclaims the gospel when and where called upon, but in fear and trembling not proud and boastful. They go forth and fellowship Paul when he said, *"As much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also."*

A sister was once talking to a minister that the church had called as their pastor and was apologizing for their calling him since he lived over two hundred miles from the church and his response was, dear sister I am not coming up here because the church called me but because of a higher calling I felt to have received years ago. Any number of churches may call a minister to serve as their pastor but the reason they go is because of the higher calling and this is just another part of that calling.

The Apostle Paul says, following the text, *"For if I do these things willingly I have a reward: but if against my will, a dispensation of the gospel is committed unto me."*

If one is called to preach, they will preach, willingly or unwillingly. Moses was not excused from his calling because he had a stammering tongue and could not speak: nor Jeremiah, because he was but a child, and could not speak. Jonah was commanded to go to Ninevah and preach against it: instead of going willingly, he paid his fare and boarded the ship to go to Tarsish from the presence of the Lord. In all three of these instances what was commanded was done even though all were unwilling to do it in the beginning. I think that all ministers will acknowledge that when they first experienced an impression to speak they could give dozens of reasons, including those above why they could not do that which they felt that they would do in time.

Man cannot volunteer to preach the gospel because man has nothing to preach but the things of man. To preach the gospel he must first be partaker of the afflictions of the gospel and this he can only do as they are applied to him by the power of God. God is a spirit and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth and surely they that preach him must also be a partaker of that spirit and heavenly calling which enables them to do what is impossible for the man in nature. As Paul said Eph. 3 vs. 7 *"I was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me by the effectual working of his power."* Surely Paul was not on his way to Damascus to volunteer to become a Christian and certainly not to be made a preacher of the gospel, in

his own mind, but, in the mind and purpose of God that's exactly why he was going to Damascus. Necessity was laid upon him in the appearing of Jesus and that was sufficient, and is in every case.

These are the reasons why the Apostle Paul took the position that he did in this matter and, I believe is the reason God's ministers do today. There may be nothing unlawful about paying the preachers to preach but personally I could not accept the position on that basis. Just as oil and water do not mix, neither does the idea of a heavenly calling and a salaried ministry. The Apostle Paul went as a servant and preached the power of his calling to all who would listen to his message and said, "I am made all things to all men that I might save some. And this I do for the gospel's sake, that I might be partaker thereof with you." There is the reward that he looked for: that he might be a partaker of the blessings promised to those that love the appearing of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, and that he might see the proof of his calling in the love and fellowship among the brethren to whom he ministered.

In bonds of love,
Richard H. Campbell

ISAIAH 40:31.

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

ARTICLES

HEBREWS 10:14.

"For by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified."



With the help of a merciful God, I hope to write a few lines on this verse of scripture.

For by one offering, this one offering contrasts sharply with the many offerings made by priests under the Mosaic Law, where the priests had to stand daily, ministering and offering, sometimes the same sacrifices, which could never take away sin. Under the law the priest laid his hand upon the head of the lamb, confessed his sins. Although innocent the lamb was slain and consumed upon the brazen altar by fire into ashes. Jesus lived a perfect and holy life, from the manger to the cross meeting all the requirements of God's holy law, thereby producing a righteousness that presents his bride perfect before God. He was taken and crucified by wicked hands, nailed to that cruel cross by his hands and feet. He endured the wrath of a offended God for us, while he lived, not after he died. His blood was so much better than that which Abel offered, and while Christ poured out his blood, God saw the travail of his soul and was satisfied. By this sacrifice God's righteous servant will justify many, for he bore their sins. Surely he hath bore our griefs and carried our sorrows. Therefore by this one offering he has per-

fectured forever them that are sanctified.

By one offering, he has perfected forever-see what this verse is saying, he has perfected forever. What God does, is done forever, with no variables or shadow of turning. This is not something that is done for a year or two, but this is a finished work, it does not depend on any act or work of the people. Where then is all these claims and beliefs of all these false doctrines who say and believe that a man has to do all these so called good works, such as tithing, witnessing, etc. the same with all the little things that he better not do or he will be lost. The scripture says that no man can live without sin, and yet even against such clear words as these, all these self-righteous people and their false beliefs are all ready and able to cast the first stone at anyone who makes a small mistake. I don't intend to run down or condemn other doctrines and beliefs. I only intend to set forth the difference between right and wrong for everyone believes what they have to believe. I am only trying to set forth the wonderful work of God in this one offering, compared with the false beliefs the devil has instilled in the hearts of many. So to sum up the truth, God has done it all with this one sacrifice, there is nothing we have to do, and when we go astray, now that has been taken care of also, even like the thief on the cross. Perfected forever - one other thing, this is a finished work and to show more clearly the great power

of the blood of Jesus, this is done forever. Yes forever, not until we make a mistake, or fail to witness, or fail in our tithes, but forever. Webster's dictionary defines the word perfected as meaning to be near perfect. So who can lay anything to the charge of God's elect, it is God who justifies us.

Sanctified - Webster says it means to be set aside, from what, or to what. I believe this is to be set aside means, to be set aside from the love of worldly things, to be set aside from false doctrines, to be set aside from unrighteous and ungodly things, to set aside to the love of the truth as it is in Christ Jesus, the love to the brethren, and things pertaining to the gospel, all those that believe Jesus is the son of the living God. Now the question will surely arise, when are we sanctified, and I will say, at God's appointed time. God sanctified Jeremiah while still in his mother's womb, he was set aside to be a prophet, others for different reasons. In other words they were sanctified to be translated (1 Col. 1:13) into the kingdom of his darling son.

We sing of amazing grace, just think, elected by God before you were born, perfected by his one offering, set aside to be translated into the kingdom of his darling son. How could it be any better? Thank God from whom all blessings flow. May these few lines be a blessing to some of his dear ones, love and peace to you all.

A brother, I hope,
Frank Hunt

TO THEM WHO BELIEVE IN THE
ABSOLUTE PREDESTINATION
OF ALL THINGS:

In the beginning of my endeavor to write this, I desire to say this; If it so be, that I have any knowledge of the truth, as it be in the Lord Jesus Christ; then, it had to have come unto me, as a free and unearned and unmerited (on my part) gift from God. And that very same does apply, if I be so blessed, as to write down any of His truths here; for I do feel and believe that, He is the one and only source, by which any Holy truths could ever come unto a poor sinner, such as I feel myself to surely be.

This question often comes to my mind; what could be God's purpose in, keeping this poor sinner here, now for more than eighty two years, showering His blessings upon one such as I; not that I have any doubt, that He does have His purpose in it so being; for otherwise, I just simply would not be here. But it is just, that I feel to be of no profit at all to anyone, by staying here. Though I do feel and hope, that in my feelings, concerning these things; I would not dare question God's perfect and Holy right, to do His every pleasure, both in heaven and upon the earth. For I feel, that the fulfillment of His pleasure, is the sum-total of, His purpose in and for, bringing all things into existence.

Sometimes, when thinking about the robbing, stealing, raping, maiming and murdering, and other such wicked actions of mankind; I, in my fleshly ways of thinking, I find myself won-

dering, if all is not completely out of control; and then, by the grace of the merciful God, my mind is arrested, and removed from thinking in such fleshly manner; and then for a little space of time, I find my thought and feelings dwelling upon the greatness of the almighty God; and their feel the certainty of His absolute power and unhindered control, over all things, beings and activity; whatsoever be or exist throughout all eternity; it is at such blessed time, I feel there is not enough devils on earth and in hell, to cause doubt to enter my mind and feelings, concerning the absolute certainty of my God and Lord, having full and absolute control over it all; and therefore, all what be, shall surely come at its exact appointed time, place and manner, as already foreseen, fore-ordained, and established by Him, back in the annals of eternity, before His creation of this time world.

Just as it were with Joseph, his brothers, the king of Egypt; and all what had to do with all events concerning them; it all was a direct proportional part of the whole, of what shall be, in the exact fulfillment of every instant of time so allotted, for this world to stand; just as it is with any and all events, to ever take place in all time; and that does apply also, to all activity of satan or the devil; all shall serve to that very end, whereby God's power, shall be made known; and all shall work together for the good of His chosen people; and to the glorification of Himself. That was His purpose in and for having brought all things into existence; and there is no

thing, with anything, what could ever hinder or alter its exact fulfillment to every jot and tittle. For without His furnishings of strength, no thing or being could ever exist or function, outside Himself. Man, in and of his fleshly self, is of such weakness, that satan or the devil has power over him; But, thanks be unto God, He has power over the devil; and so, the devil can do no more, than just what, God furnishes him with ability to do with; of which points directly unto that fact of Holy truth, all existence, outside God Himself, is under Him, and therefore is always and all way subject to and under His absolute control; in other words, all, is already weighed and measured, and all consequences developing from them. Which brings my mind to the subject of the Predestination of God. Not, that man concocted (so called) predestination, of just some things, but not all things. But, that Predestination of all things, that be absolute, by reason, it is "God", who Predestinated it all.

No, the true and living "God," I refer to here, would never, no never, leave any part or portion of the operation of His government, up to man and his chance system. For with Him, absolute certainty, is His only way and working. For with "God", success, is always absolute. Even, as He has thought, so shall it be. His thoughts are, in perfect accord with His purpose; and, as is His purpose, so shall it stand. His will is, to do all His pleasure, in both heaven and earth, and none can stay His hand or say, what doeth Thou. He holds it all in His hand,

to do with as He pleases. And so, His thoughts, are His purpose, are His will, are His pleasure; and, in that He holds and controls all power both in heaven and earth; and, in that all powers that be, are only those that He ordained; and, in that all strength, must come from that power that He holds and controls; therein, establish that Holy truth; that His will, confirms that very fact, that all outside Himself, Shall be and do in complete accordance with, what He did foresee and foreknew, that it all shall surely be and do.

Now, the worldly religionist would no doubt say to the above remarks; what then could be the purpose in prayer? Well, my answer in part, would have to be thusly, Every true prayer ever uttered or groaned unto God, during all time for this world to stand; was already known, back in the annals of eternity, before this time world were a time reality; and also, all answers to all those prayers, were already provided for and prepared; and His answer to them everyone, is just as sure, as it is sure, of them being uttered or groaned; And all that, simply, by reason, He is "God".

Some say, it is not necessary to use the word "absolute;" when referring to the Predestination of God, for with Him, it must be absolute; I could not agree more, so far as be His working of all things; but I feel as some Old Baptist have expressed their reason for using the word absolute; that it might convey the message to others, that I do not hold with any, partial Predestination; but with all Predesti-

nation, or either, none at all; for I feel and believe, "God" to be, the all in all God; that, He never left anything up to chance, or maybe so; for, to be unsure or uncertain, of anything whatsoever, to be or come or take place, in all eternity; is to be subjected to a state of confusion; of which is, a complete opposite, of all the attributes, of the true and living God.

In accord with the inspired word of God, He choose His people in His Son, back in the annals of eternity, before this world were a time reality; and so therefore, it can rightly be said, all His children, are, of the exact same age; and in that they shall all arise, on the morning of the resurrection, be like Christ and be satisfied; they all must be the same size, and of the same importance, in the sight of God; for He sees them through the shed (pure) blood, of His Son Jesus Christ. And as to whom the Law does apply, when Christ, while still hanging upon the cross said - it is finished; from that instant forward, none for whom He died, are under the law, but are, under Grace; Why? because He (Christ) had fulfilled every jot and tittle of that law for them; He had done for them, that which were an impossibility for them to do. He had then cancelled all their debts owed, for all their sins ever committed, or ever to be committed, while living here in this world. He said every farthing for them; of which, they had not even one farthing of their own, for to pay with; which does point directly unto that Holy truth of God's word, when He said - My grace is sufficient for thee. It was the applica-

tion of that sufficiency, through His Son Christ Jesus, He spake of; And it is that very same grace, will deliver them every one, unto heaven and immortal glory, And every one, through and by His arising and coming forth from that tomb, fully justified them, for a place with Him and their Heavenly Father forever. The Father sees his chosen children, through the shed blood of His only begotten Son; Holy innocent and white as snow; with not one blemish or charge against them; For Christ washed them every one with His pure shed blood; all their sins were banished away into the sea of forgetfulness, to never again be remembered. Now that, is just how everlastingly thorough and complete a work, the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ did for them (and I hope me), while He was down here in this lowground of sin and sorrow. He just completely finished all that His Father sent Him down here to do, shall never effect, even one iota of change, in that whole process; for that simple reason, God is God, and changeth not. And that, my precious Brethren, is that "One and only God" I have any desire, that my trust and hope be in.

May His name be praised, honored and glorified, both now and forever more, Amen:

Troy G. Shepard
103 East Tateway Rd.
Kitty Hawk, N.C. 27949

P.S. If I never again meet any of you Dear Brethren, while on this sin cursed earth; I have a hope, that is so very sweet and precious to me; that I could be gathered to gather with you, on the

right hand of our Lord and Savior, on that final morning or day of the Resurrection, and carried on the wings of His love, to the presence of our heavenly Father; to ever sing undivided never ceasing praise, unto His great and Holy name; the one and only name, ever worthy of any praise, honor and glory, in all eternity. May we be blessed, to prayerfully ask ourselves; what do I have, which I did not receive? and I feel the answer shall be, No thing or nothing. Of which does surely include our very existence and being; for without Him, we could neither be anything, nor do anything; not even have a soul, much less, a body or form. And so, when tempted, to praise any of mankind; may we be reminded of, from where and who, comes our every furnishing.

Troy G. Shepard

VOICES OF THE PAST

ACTS VIII. 33.

“In his humiliation his judgment was taken away.”

We have been asked by a sister to use the above words at the head of an editorial. As much as in us is we desire to comply with such requests from our kindred in Christ. If the Lord stirs up the pure mind of his people and implants in their hearts a desire to know what the Scriptures teach, he is able to give the pen of a ready writer whereby their questions will be answered to their satisfaction, edification and comfort. All who have

been taught of him know full well that he must enlighten the mind of his servant and give him understanding in order that he may be able to set things in their proper place. If we know our own heart we earnestly desire, both in speaking and in writing, to shew ourself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. While we do not wish to court the favor of man, we are confident if we give expression to the things of God they will find lodgment in the hearts of those begotten of him and we will have their approval. There is abundant scriptural proof of the fact that God dwells in his people, and we can trustfully affirm, if we have any knowledge of the Lord's mercy, his longsuffering, his forbearance and lovingkindness, it has come to us in a way of life at the hands of our brethren. Surely they have not dealt with us as we have deserved to be treated by them. It has greatly encouraged us at times to realize that we have brethren who can and do feel for us, whose prayers are continually going out to our covenant keeping God to make bare his arm in our behalf and fill our mouth with such things as will be suited to the needs of his children.

The words referred to are only a portion of the thirty-third verse of the eighth chapter of Acts, and considered by themselves at best can present only a part of the picture. In order that we may have a more complete background it will be necessary to bring to view some of the surrounding scenery, or the conditions leading up to

and following after the utterance. In those days, as in these times and all other ages, the world was not a friend to the cause of righteousness. The forces of good and evil have ever been arrayed against each other. Paul tells us in the beginning of the chapter, "At that time there was a great persecution of the church which was at Jerusalem." He, himself, as Saul, having no knowledge of God, "made havoc of the church, entering into every house and haling men and women, committed them to prison." Because of this persecution, the saints were "scattered throughout the regions of Judaea and Samaria," but "they that were scattered abroad went everywhere preaching the word." Though scattered, they were the "elect according to the foreknowledge of God," and "the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his." God's people can never be so scattered, or so far off but that his all-seeing eye is ever upon them, and he supplieth all their needs. "The angel of the Lord spake unto Philip, saying, Arise, and go toward the south, unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza, which is desert." The eunuch of Ethiopia is a type of the church in nature; she is black as the tents of Kedar, and her place of dwelling is desert, and she is as powerless to change her condition as the Ethiopian is his skin or the leopard his spots, but God having begun a good work in the eunuch's heart, continues that good work by sending Philip to meet with him. As the eunuch read Esaias the

prophet, "The Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot. And Philip ran thither to him, and heard him read the prophet Esaias, and said, Understandest what thou readest?" Philip's heart seemed to have delighted toward this one with whom the Lord was dealing, for he "ran thither to him," and the question he asked of the eunuch was evidence of the bond that bound them. It was the very question which he desired most of all to have answered. As the king of old was troubled about his dream, which none of his wise men or magicians could tell him, and Daniel, the prophet of the Lord, came telling not only the dream, but the interpretation thereof, so Philip saw into the very depths of the secret places of the soul of this one who realized he was black and in a desert land, and as he spoke the language of his heart he had the witness within that Philip was a true prophet of the Lord. His reply could only have endeared Philip to him more than ever: "How can I, except some man should guide me?" What a confession to helplessness and dependence upon the great Teacher. "And he desired Philip that he would come up and sit with him." Oh how the poor heart that is hungering and thirsting after righteousness yearns for the messenger of the Lord to come this way, that he might come in and tarry in his house, in the place where he dwells, and deliver the message of the power and the peace of the gospel of the Son of God. "The place of the scripture which he read was this, 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." What an appropriate figure inspiration uses here to typify the spirit that moved every thought and action of our blessed Lord. Guile was never found in his mouth, and when he was reviled he reviled not again. As a sheep, inoffensive and harmless, he was led to the most ignominious slaughter of all ages. While his humanity was weak and cried out against the bitterness of the cup, being led of the Spirit, he could say, "Nevertheless, not my will, but thine, be done." He "made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and being obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." When his hour had come, he opened not his mouth to utter a word of complaint or objection, not a single struggle did he offer against his crucifiers. Unto such an hour and to die such a death came he into the world, according to the will of God. What great condescension that the King of glory should bow the heaven and come down into this world of degradation, to hang upon Calvary's cross between two thieves, and yet without assemblance of revenge or pride in all that he said or did. He was thus manifested to be the Son of God, or the Son of love, for God is love.

"In his humiliation his judgment was taken away." In his mortification and

abasement he was deprived of his capacity to judge, and as they crucified him, "and the malefactors, one on the right hand, and the other on the left," he said, "Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do." In the Spirit he was perfectly resigned to the Father's will, and there is nothing on record to indicate that he desired any compromise, or that his own will should prevail in any way whatsoever, for he rendered a perfect obedience. Who, then, shall declare his generation? Who shall tell of the manner of his coming? He was conceived of the Holy Ghost, born of a virgin, in a manger, and there was no place for him in the inn. Who shall declare the purpose of God in his advent into the world, his sufferings, death and resurrection? Who shall explain the necessity of his life being taken from the earth, the dying of the Just for the unjust, and the power which wrought in him when God raised him from the dead? There can be but one answer to these queries: Those to whom is given "power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God." Only they that go down to the sea in ships, that do business in great waters, see the works of the Lord and his wonders in the deep. They must pass through the gall of bitterness, and be made to know that vain is the help of man, and cursed is the man that maketh the arm of flesh his trust, before they can discover the pearl of great price and know that great and marvelous are the

works of our God in the salvation of his people. No others can declare the generation of him whose life was taken from the earth, whose kingdom was of this world. "And the eunuch answered Philip, and said, I pray thee, of whom speaketh he prophet this? of himself, or of some other man?" What is the answer? "Holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost;" they prophesied of one whose name was "Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace." Truly he was full of wonder, the man of wisdom and the government of his kingdom is upon his shoulder. In that kingdom where Jesus reigns, peace prevails and he is the "Prince of Peace," and those who are bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh seek peace, and pursue it. In the day when the Lord alone shall be exalted the lofty looks of man shall be humbled, and the haughtiness of men shall be bowed down. "Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same Scripture, and preached unto him Jesus." How wonderful when the Lord fills the mouth of his servant and he is enabled to preach Jesus, the Alpha and Omega, the first and the last, the beginning and the end, who liveth, and was dead, and, behold, is alive for evermore; preach Christ, and him crucified, as the Way, the Truth and the Life. The Scriptures testify of him. Therefore, whatever Scripture is used, whether in the Old or the New Testament, Jesus is the sum and substance of it, and "the word of God is quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even

to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Neither is there any creature that is not manifest in his sight: but all things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do." This is the word that searches all things, yea, the deep things of God, and when it is preached in demonstration of the Spirit and with power to one it shows him all things whatsoever he did, and he is made to ask, Is not this the Christ? It shows him that Christ is all his worthiness and that he should not trust in himself; that to be like Jesus he must be humbled, brought low, and "in his humiliation" his judgment must be taken away. He is thereby made willing to submit his case to the brethren and be subject unto them. In the case of the eunuch it had to do with one outside of the visible church, and there was such power and sweetness in the opening up of the word to his understanding he was made to say, "Here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both unto the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him." There are evidently many who are followers of the flock to day who have not been brought sufficiently low as to have their judgment taken away in their humiliation, who do not really and truly believe with all their hearts that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, else they would do as the eunuch did

and follow in the footsteps of their Lord and Master. We would that it might please our heavenly Father to lead in a plain path and make straight the way of the Lord before them, that they might take up the cross and follow him. This matter is one between the individual and his God. All the servant can do is to preach Jesus, and this is done only as he is endued with power from on high. We wish to emphasize, however, that the humility of Christ did not end at the water's edge. Truly he did humble himself in demanding baptism at the hands of John, and none realized this more keenly than did John, as was clearly shown by what he said, but the humility of Jesus was unchanging, ever abiding. There are those in the church to-day who act as though they left their humility outside when they were received into the fellowship of the church and were baptized. They are no longer willing to subject themselves unto the brethren, but in the lusts of their pride and desire for leadership boast that they will not take orders from any one on earth. Nothing but wreck and ruin can follow such a course. We would to God that he might make known unto them that he dwells in his people, that "the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God?" One may proclaim love and peace from the housetop, and yet every action proving selfishness to be the foundation upon which they are building. Let the servant remember Peter's exhortation to "feed the flock of God

which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock. And when the chief Shepherd shall appear, ye shall receive a crown of glory that fadeth not away. Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder: yea, all of you be subject to one another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble." We would like to impress indelibly upon the mind of all the inspired writing: "How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings." In other words, how beautiful is the walk, the life, that makes for peace, and unity, and love. "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." Brethren, let us be nothing, and less than nothing, that Christ may be all and in all.

*"Jesus the great, the mighty God,
A man of grief became;
In paths of meekness here he
trod,
And bore the sinner's shame.*

*Humility, how bright it shined
In every act he wrought;
What lowliness of heart and
mind,
Appeared in all he taught.*

*His love to men of sinful race,
Glowed in his tender breast;*

*For man be yielded to disgrace,
Forsaken and distressed.*

*Led as a lamb to meet the sword,
He bowed beneath the stroke;
Not one revengeful, angry word,
The dear Redeemer spoke.*

*Oh may his meekness be my
guide,*

*The pattern I pursue;
How can I bear revenge or pride,
With Jesus in my view?"*

Elder R.L. Dodson

PSALM 119: 129-136.

*Thy testimonies are wonderful:
therefore doth my soul keep them.*

*The entrance of thy words giveth
light; it giveth understanding unto
the simple.*

*I opened my mouth, and panted:
for I longed for thy command-
ments.*

*Look thou upon me, and be mer-
ciful unto me, as thou usest to do
unto those that love thy name.*

*Order my steps in thy word: and
let not any iniquity have domin-
ion over me.*

*Deliver me from the oppression
of man: so will I keep thy pre-
cepts.*

*Make thy face to shine upon thy
servant; and teach me thy stat-
utes.*

*Rivers of waters run down mine
eyes, because they keep not thy
law.*

From Elder Lamberts book,
"Tried in The Furnace."

TONGUES

SEPTEMBER, 1952

BEFORE ENTERING upon the discussion of the text of this article, I beg to make an apology. I have been so nervous the past several months that it has been impossible for me to sit still and concentrate long enough to write a letter. I trust the readers of the *Signs* will find in their hearts a spirit of forgiveness to forgive me for not writing before now. I have to be convinced over and over again that the will to write is not sufficient. I must be given the ability in the self-same hour that I attempt before I can write.

May I evade further to tell you that we have been highly honored to have Elder Spangler and Sister Spangler, Elder Griffin and Sister Griffin to visit us in our little home, as well as the homes and churches in this vicinity since writing you. Their graceful preaching at the churches and over the radio will long be remembered in this section of the country as inspirational, edifying, and very comforting. Now, may the Lord bless us to meditate upon the text in answer to a request from an esteemed elder.

The best definition of tongue, as used in the Scriptures, is that it is a particular language or dialect spoken by any particular people. We want to base our remarks upon one of the five signs that shall follow them that believe, as recorded in Mark 16:17, "They shall speak with new tongues." The

believers are the particular people, and the new language given them by the Lord by the direct operation of His Holy Spirit, is the new tongue. We maintain that the new language spoken by God's people after the work of regeneration is unknown to the world and cannot be learned or understood by them.

The early ministrations of the Spirit in the manifestation of the power thereof was evidenced in the performance of natural miracles which were signs, types or figures of spiritual miracles. Jesus raised the natural dead, signifying His power to raise the spiritual dead unto spiritual life. Natural blind eyes were opened; natural deaf ears were unstopped; the lame walked; the palsied were made whole; they spake in different natural languages;--all to figurate the spiritual work in regeneration of His people. This was evidenced on the day of Pentecost according to Acts 2:3,4, "And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them: and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the spirit gave them utterance." Even though there were people of many different languages, each heard in his own tongue. Today, if we speak the truth to the edification of the Lord's little children we have to speak as the Spirit gives utterance with the tongue as of fire from heaven. All hear in his own language.

I shall never forget attending a meeting of colored people one time. The colored minister was so blessed to

tell my experience and to speak my thoughts and belief that I said to those accompanying me, "They speak our language." It is marvelous to note the similarity of expressions in the different parts of the country. I was so deeply impressed on my first trip to the east coast that I said to those strangers in the flesh, "I am persuaded that we all have the same Teacher, as we speak the same language."

I am glad the record says that, "On the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost, for they heard them speak with tongues and magnify God" (Acts 10:45, 46). This new tongue magnifies God, thus abasing man. The gift of tongues in those days caused them to Prophesy according to Acts 19:6, "*And when Paul laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues and prophesied.*" Paul said in Cor. 12 :4, "*He that prophesieth edifieth the church.*" Jabbering that can neither be understood by the speaker nor any of the hearers could not be edifying.

I do not believe God gives gifts in vain. I believe the gift of tongues is the gift of a particular language--not something that is a language that cannot be understood by anyone. We can see the necessary use of these special natural gifts of the Spirit as several languages were spoken by the people of the same locality. It would be foolish for me to make a display of the gift to speak the French language in a congregation where there were none who understood French. If I should go to a country where the people only

spake and understood Latin, it would be improper for me to speak English in the church there unless there was an interpreter, according to 1st Cor. 14:27, 28.

If my lot were cast among people who spoke many different natural languages, to prophesy there would be a necessity for the gift of speaking different languages. I believe this could be just as possible in this day as in days gone by and is the case when necessary. I know of men who have the special gift of speaking several languages. Paul said in 1 Cor. 14:9, *"Except ye speak words easy to be understood, how shall it be known what is spoken for ye shall speak in the air."* Paul said he had rather speak five words with understanding in the church than ten thousand words in an unknown tongue (1 Cor. 14 :19).

I think the true significance of the gift of tongues as prevalent today is whether they speak with the tongue of men or the tongue of angels. Paul inferred a possibility of being in possession of the gift of the tongue of angels and at the same time having not charity. He states that the result of this would be as "sounding brass or tinkling cymbal." This would give an uncertain sound (See Cor. 13:1). We would like to contrast the "tongue of men" and "the tongue of angels" or the "old" tongue and the "new" tongue.

We call your attention to Psalms 58:3, "The wicked are estranged from the womb; they go astray, as soon as they are born, speaking lies." So, the tongue of men is a lying tongue. David's natural tongue was a false and deceitful tongue, as he prayed, "Deliver my soul O Lord, from lying lips and a deceitful tongue.

What shall be given unto thee or what shall be done unto thee, thou false tongue?" (Ps. 120:2,3.) David realized something had to be given to, or done for that terrible tongue which he was unable to do. Therefore, he prayed to God. In Proverbs 4:24, we read of "A froward mouth and perverse lips."

This kind of tongue speaks contrary to right reason, contrary to the law of God; things that are foolish, filthy, unjust, and untrue. According to Eccl. 5:2,3 and Prov. 10:19, hasty speech and multitude of words are sin. The tongue has to be restrained, bridled, and tamed. The tongues of men enter into contention, become a snare to their soul, and are as whisperers and tale bearers as proved by Proverbs 18:6-8. Yes, it talks of fornication, uncleanness, covetousness, foolish talking and jesting; (Eph. 5:3,4) anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, and filthy communication (Col. 2:8).

James 3:5 says that the tongue is a little member and boasteth great things. The natural tongue boasts of the ability of man. When we hear one boasting of what he can do we may be assured that he is speaking in the old or natural tongue which has never been supplanted by the new. The natural tongue boasts of self-righteousness.

When one speaks boastfully of his own righteousness, we may know that it is the old tongue. James also says that it defiles the whole body, being an unruly evil which is full of deadly poison.

Can the tongue be tamed? Man may put bridles into horse's mouths and direct them. He may tame beasts, birds and serpents, and may direct a ship with a very small helm wheresoever he desireth even against fierce winds, but

can he tame the tongue? According to the third chapter of James many may do all the above *“but the tongue can no man tame” (James 3:8).*

According to the words of James and my experience, it is impossible for a man upon the volition of his own will to tame the tongue that it will not lie, deceive, wound, talk foolish and jest. If man cannot tame or bridle the tongue, then I want to know as David did, what must be given or done to it? and who can do it?

I am persuaded that the Lord must give us the new tongue by the direct operation of His Holy Spirit before we can manifest a bridled tongue. If you will notice in Mark 16 :17, that it says, *“They shall speak with new tongues,”* not in new tongues. The tongue must be given them.

Let us read Isaiah 50:4, *“The Lord God hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary: He wakeneth morning by morning. He wakeneth my ear to hear as the learned.”* If I am in possession at any time of the learned tongue it is because it has been *given* me by the Lord. I believe there is a time and a season for every word properly spoken to the weary to their comfort and edification.

I cannot learn how to do this. I do not know when certain words ought to be spoken. Even though I try to learn when, how, and what to say to certain people on certain occasions, I learn by sad experience that I cannot learn those things, but must depend on the words being put in my mouth that would edify and comfort. The learned tongue is the *gift* of God. The learned tongue speaks

words in proper season. The learned tongue gives a soft answer that turns away wrath. The learned tongue confesses Jesus as our Savior. Quoting Romans 10:10, *“For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.”*

God does not begin something that He doesn't finish. He begins by giving the new heart that believes. He continues that good work begun by giving the new tongue that confesses. You may be a believer and think you are hiding it, but are not, your *speech betrays you.* You talk of your unfitness, unworthiness, and of your inability; you say if you are saved it will be solely because of God's mercy and grace based on the merits of Jesus. You speak a different language; you sing a different song.

Let us meditate upon Psalms 40:3, *“He hath put a new song in my mouth even praise unto our God.”* You sing of His mercy, grace and truth; you sing of His power, wisdom and holiness. Your song is now in harmony with the Scriptures. It is in perfect accord with the experience of your brethren. The old song was sung in the key of man—the praise of man being the keynote. The new song is sung in a different key—the key of Jesus. This new song praises God. If you want to hear a discord in natural singing try singing in a different key to the others in the class. If you hear some praising man and some praising God, you hear a discord. The old tongue can't learn to sing a new song. The new song must be put into the mouth by the direct operation of God's Holy Spirit, thereby the new tongue is given to sing the new song.

We read in St. Luke 12:12, *"For the Holy Ghost shall teach you in the same hour what ye ought to say."* The instructions say to take no thought how or what ye shall answer. As I stated before, I am guilty of taking thought, which manifests one of my many weaknesses. I learn continually by sad experience, that my efforts are in vain. I am allowed at times to speak upon the subject that I have premeditated to use at a certain time, and often it makes me sick. Sometimes I have tried to re-use a line of thought that was so inspirational to me when I experienced it, but behold, worms have gotten in it and it is stale; it has lost food value.

James says, *"If any man among you seem to be religious, and bridleth not his tongue, but deceiveth his own heart, this man's religion is vain"* (James 1:26). True religion must manifest a bridled tongue. No man is able to bridle it; so, it must be the new tongue that God enables you to bridle. This bridled tongue is a wholesome tongue. In Proverbs 15:4 we read, "A wholesome tongue is a tree of life. . ." It is soothing and healing to be in the company of those who speak words that are edifying. The wholesome tongue speaks sound doctrine which cannot be condemned. Those in possession of this tongue speak healing words to wounded consciences. They speak of the pardon, peace, righteousness, redemption and salvation through the life and blood of Jesus, motivated by the love, mercy and grace of God, our Father.

May God bless us with this new tongue that drives away wrath instead of stirring up anger. May He bless us to edify, comfort and heal. May we not be

hasty in speech, but may we speak *"As the oracles of God."* Peter wrote by inspiration, *"If any man speak, let him speak as the oracles of God. . ."* (Peter 4 :11). If man speak as the oracles of God it is by divine utterances. It would be in accord with the Scriptures.

I realize that I have not been enabled to do justice to the text. I trust that the readers will be charitable to forgive imperfect expressions and that you realize all errors are expressions of the old tongue. If there be anything wholesome in this article, it is evidence of the new tongue, and be assured that God is to be praised for it.

Elder E.J. Lambert

MEETINGS

HOPEWELL MEETING

The good Lord willing, the twentieth annual 5th Sunday meeting will be held at Hopewell Church, Winnsboro, Texas, beginning on Friday, April 28th and continuing through the 29th and 30th. Hopewell Church is located about six miles west of Winnsboro, Go west on Coke Road (515) about four and one-half miles and follow the signs.

By God's sovereign grace, and in accordance with His Holy Word, we are encouraged to gather together for singing -- "Oh, sing unto the LORD a new song; for He hath done marvelous things: His right hand, and His holy arm, hath gotten Him the victory." -- Ps. 98:1; praying -- "He will

regard the prayer of the destitute, and not despise their prayer." Ps. 102:17; preaching -- But it is good for me to draw near to God: I have put my trust in the Lord GOD, that I may declare all Thou works." - PS 73:28; and sweet fellowship - "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" - Ps. 133:1.

We pray you will be given a mind and a way to be with us. God is so good.

Elder Jimmy Hamrick, Pastor
John Hamrick, Clerk

REHOBETH CHURCH Destroyed By Fire

Early in the morning of January 28, 1995 an arsonist burned the Rehobeth Primitive Baptist meeting house to the ground. Rehobeth church has met at this location north of El Dorado, Arkansas since 1891. The original frame building was enlarged and bricked in the 1940's. The fire has been a great emotional and financial trial for the members and friends of Rehobeth. We plan to rebuild on the site as soon as possible. The church had no insurance on the building, so we will need to raise the entire replacement cost. Thanks to the gracious providence of God and the loving generosity of many friends, several thousand dollars have been donated already. If anyone reading this notice desires to contribute to the rebuilding fund, contributions may be sent to either of the following:

Rehobeth Church Improvement
Fund

First National Bank
Main St. and Washington Ave.
El Dorado, Arkansas 71730

Mrs. O. E. Bishop (Church Clerk)
208 South Flenniken St.
El Dorado, Arkansas 71730

Due to the loss of the meeting house, Rehobeth church will not host the South Ouachita Association union meeting in April. The union meeting will be held, God willing, with New Hope church at Spearsville, Louisiana on the first Sunday in April and Saturday before. All who love the truth are invited to visit with us.

Shannon Vaughn, Moderator
Rehobeth Primitive Baptist Church

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The next session of the Staunton River Union Meeting will be held the Lord willing at Strawberry Church the 5th Sunday and Saturday before in April the 29th and 30th.

Take State road 41 to Woods store turn on road 750 to church about one half mile on right.

We invite all lovers of the truth to meet with us, a special invitation to all ministers of our faith and order.

Sister Gertie Holley,
Church Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR JANUARY 1995

Cecil Crawford, OK	\$2.00
Mrs. Susan Chandler, FL	2.00
J. Cline Chandler, NC	2.00
Mrs. Elizabeth Helms, VA	2.00
Mrs. B.J. McLaughlin, TX	2.00
Mrs. Phyllis Snyder, VA	7.00
Mrs. Phyllis Farlow, MD	2.00
Hoyt Sparks, NC	2.00
Millard F. Sizemore, WV	5.00
Mrs. Virginia Apple, NC	2.00
Mrs. Emmie L. Grayson, AL	2.00
Mrs. Pearl McNelia, MD	2.00
Mrs. Audrey V. Dyer, VA	7.00
Mrs. Vera N. Potter, MS	7.00
Bruce Barron, LA	4.00
Mrs. C. Weaver, WA	15.00

OBITUARIES

ELIZABETH BARLOW GEARHART

It is with much sadness that I endeavor to write the obituary of our dear sister in Christ, Sister Elizabeth Barlow Gearhart. The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh...bless His holy name.

Sister Gearhart was born November 21, 1934 In Floyd County, Virginia and passed away October 1, 1994, making her stay on earth 59 years. She was the daughter of the late Zebadee and Ethel Barlow. She is survived by her husband Floyd Lewis Gearhart , Floyd Virginia; one son and daughter-in-

law, Jeffrey L. and Charlotte V. Gearhart, Chesapeake, Virginia; three grandsons, James and Thomas Gearhart and Horace Cooper III, all of Chesapeake, Virginia; four brothers, Grover C. Barlow, Panama City, Florida, Earnest A. Barlow, Floyd, Virginia, Frank D. Barlow, Bassett, Virginia, and Fred H. Barlow, Floyd, Virginia.

Her funeral was held at Salem Church and was conducted by her pastor, Elder Hale Terry. She was laid to rest in the Barlow Family Cemetery, Floyd County, Virginia.

Sister Elizabeth was afflicted with several health problems but attended church whenever she could. She joined Salem Church and was baptized by Elder Roy Agee on April 14, 1968 along with her little son, Jeffrey who was only seven years old. How well I remember that special day.

May the loved ones left behind be blessed to feel that their loss is her eternal gain.

This memorial was written at the request of Salem Church and humbly submitted by an unworthy sister.

Mary Poff

FLOYD LEWIS GEARHART

In November 11, 1994 it pleased our Heavenly Father to call from our midst Brother Floyd Lewis Gearhart, just 42 days after his lovely wife had been laid to rest.

Brother Lewis was born April 4, 1934 to Curtis and Pearl Gearhart of Floyd

County, Virginia. His funeral was conducted at Salem Church by his pastor, Elder Hale Terry, and he was laid to rest by his wife's side in the Barlow Family Cemetery, Floyd County, Virginia.

He is survived by one son and daughter-in-law, Jeffrey L. and Charlotte Gearheart, Chesapeake, Virginia; three grandsons, James Gearheart, Thomas Gearhart, and Horace Cooper III, all of Chesapeake, Virginia; one sister, Oweeda Conner, Pulaski, Virginia; two brothers, Lenwood Gearhart of Floyd, Virginia and W. Wayne Gearheart of Pilot, Virginia.

Brother Lewis was baptized October 15, 1994 by his pastor Elder Hale Terry. He was blessed to attend church the last few times under heavy afflictions from terminal cancer.

The members of Salem Church send our sincere sympathy to Brother Jeff and family, trusting that God will be their comforter.

Written by request of Salem Church and humbly submitted by one who loved this family.

Mary Poff

ALVETA GASKILL HOPKINS

Sister Alveta Gaskill Hopkins, a member of the Goose Creek Island Primitive Baptist Church, Lowland, North Carolina, passed from this life November 16, 1994. She was born September 29, 1906, the daughter of Elder James G. and Sister Challie H. Gaskill.

She married Robert A. Hopkins of Hobucken, North Carolina. To this union was born one daughter, Doris. Besides her daughter Doris, she is survived by 3 grandchildren, 3 great grand children, and 2 great-great grandchildren.

Her daughter and son-in-law cared for her as long as they possibly could at their home in Winsor, Virginia. She spent the last year and a half of her life in a nearby nursing home in Waverly, Virginia.

She joined Goose Creek Island Primitive Baptist Church in February, 1950 and was baptized by Elder William Barnes.

As we reflect on the sweet memories of Sister Alveta, we remember her strong faith and belief in the doctrine of Election and Salvation by Grace. The Lord blessed her with many beautiful experiences which were very precious to her. She was given a hope that God loved her and that hope remained with her throughout her days.

She was laid to rest in Barnett Cemetery in Hobucken. Funeral services were conducted by Elders Henry Jones, Oliver Allen, Jesse Foreman, and Lester Eason who all spoke with power and humility and the sweetness of the Savior she loved and worshiped. May God grant her eternal peace and may He have mercy on all of us.

Written at the request of
Goose Creek Island
Primitive Baptist Church
by her niece and Sister, I hope,
Ila D. Leary

SISTER MARY TAYLOR HEDRICK

It pleased our Lord to call home, Sister Mary Taylor Hedrick. Sister Hedrick was the daughter of Charlie Douglace Taylor and Beulah Brunfield Taylor. She was born February 28, 1907. She passed away from this life November 19, 1994.

Sister Hedrick was a member of Springfield Primitive Baptist Church. She was received by experience and baptism, July 29, 1947.

Sister Hedrick was married to Russel Berkley Hedrick, who preceeded her in death in 1962. She was preceeded in death by two sons; Clarence Berkley and James Elbert Hedrick. Her survivors include one son, Shirley " Tee " Hedrick of Danville; three daughters; Elizabeth H. Adkins of Martinsville, Gladys H. Milam of Ringold and Gypsy H. Farthing of Gretna; one sister Beulah T. Adkins of Gretna and one brother, John R. Taylor of Danville; 20 grandchildren and 24 great-grandchildren.

Sister Hedrick wasn't able to get to church often, but she always enjoyed the love and fellowship of her brethren. Her funeral was conducted at Springfield Prmitive Baptist Church by her Pastor Elder Marvin Brumfield. She was laid to rest in the Chatham Burial Park. She will be missed by all that loved her. May each one be reconciled to God's will.

Written in love and hope.

Carol R. Pickral
Elder Marvin Brumfield - Moderator
Oscar Pickral - Clerk

IN MEMORY OF
SISTER MILDRED STRADER

Sister Mildred was called home to be with her Lord on July 6, 1994. She is survived by her dear companion, Brother Coley Strader, her daughter, Colleen Shumaker of Greenville, S.C.; son, Jerry W. Strader of Reidsville; brothers Wharton Carroll, Brother Allen Carroll, both of Reidsville, David "Harvey" Carroll of Ruffin; eight grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. She asked for a home in the Dan River Primitive Baptist Church on May 26, 1951 and was baptized on June 24, 1951.

Attempting to write of one who, I feel, was truly a mother in Israel and who daily bore the fruit of the Spirit in her countenance and walk is a very humbling thing. I've known Sister Mildred since childhood and she has always been a very special lady to me and, I hope, sister in Christ. One of my most precious memories of her is how she always treated me just like one of her own children. I remember on the night of my high school graduation, when I arose to deliver the farewell address, seeing the faces of Sister Mildred and Brother Coley in the audience. I was not, at that time, a member of the church, but I remember the comforting warmth of knowing they were there.

The Scriptures tell us in Proverbs 31:10, 28 *"Who can find a virtuous woman for her price is far above rubies. Her children arise up and*

call her blessed: her husband also, and he praiseth her." Sister Mildred walked in an humble and meek manner and would never have taken praise unto herself or have wished to be eulogized. The Lord blessed her to always be there for her Church, her companion of over 50 years, her children, and her friends and neighbors. She will be sorely missed. There are no words to express the loss, but I feel confident that she could say with Paul, "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."

Her final years were shadowed by physical ailments and yet she was blessed to bear those with her characteristic gentle spirit. May the Lord bless her family, especially our dear Brother Coley, to view their loss as she did her physical pain -- in the words of the hymn writer, "Not a single shaft can hit, unless the God of love sees fit." May the kind, heavenly Master bless them with his Presence in the days to come.

Humbly submitted
Mary Hawkins

EPHESIANS 4: 4-6.

There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling;

*One Lord, one faith, one baptism,
One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.*

MRS MITTIE MAE WALKER

It is in sadness that I attempt to write this obituary of our beloved friend and sister in Christ Jesus, but we bow in humble submission to the will of God who does all things well, and we believe her spirit is now dwelling in the glorious presence of her Saviour in whom she trusted and had a good hope. Sister Walker expressed her faith and hope many times to us, but never was blessed to ask for a home. She was as one who was "fed by the shepherds' tents." Unless providentially hindered she was always present at our meetings, many times even when she was barely able to do so.

Sister Walker (Aunt Mittie, as she was lovingly called) was born March 4, 1909 and was called home January 16, 1995, making her age over 85 years. Her survivors are 2 sons: Billy C. Walker of Albuquerque, N.M. and Jerry Walker of Choudrant, La.; 2 daughters: Barbara Walker of Ruston, La. and Johnnie Impson of Choudrant, La.; 1 sister: Mrs O.C. Parks of Spencer, La.; 4 grandchildren, 1 great-grandchild, a host of nieces and nephews, and many friends.

Funeral services were conducted by Elder Graydon Smith on January 17, 1995 in Kilpatrick Funeral Home at Farmerville, La., and interment was in Union Primitive Baptist Church Cemetery, Linville, La. beside her beloved husband Will E. Walker.

Elder C.C. Wilbanks

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

" *The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon* "

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SONG

***I LOVE thy kingdom, Lord,
The house of thine abode;
The church our blest Redeemer
saved
With his own precious blood.
I love thy church, O God,
Her walls before thee stand,
Dear as the apple of thine eye,
And graven on thy hand.***

***For her my tears shall fall,
For her my prayers ascend,
To her my cares and toils be
given
Till cares and toils shall end.
Beyond my highest joy
I prize her heavenly ways;
Her sweet communion, solemn
vows,
Her hymns of love and praise.***

***Jesus, thou friend divine,
Our Saviour and our King,
Thy hand, from every snare
and foe,
Shall great deliverance bring.
Sure as thy truth shall last,
To Zion shall be given
The brightest glories earth can
yield,
And brighter bliss of heaven.***

CONTENTS

EDITORIAL	98
Elder Richard H. Campbell	
CORRESPONDENCE	102
ARTICLES	105
Elder Robert L. Miles	
VOICES OF THE PAST	109
J.C. Philpot	
Elder E.J. Lambert	
CONTRIBUTIONS	115
OBITUARIES	116
Troy H. Bailey	
Sis. Nellie Kellum Morton Gray	
Sister Pearl Akers Law	
Essie Dix Moose	
Willie Robert Munford	
Sister Laura Lewis Wolf	

 EDITORIAL

"Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of heaven".



ELDER R.H. CAMPBELL

This scripture is one of the most popular and often quoted scriptures to be found in the pages of inspired writing and yet I wonder

how often people are blessed to really stop, analyze, and realize the depth of the wisdom contained in this short verse of scripture. It seems that this one verse, if completely ex-

pounded, would surely cover the whole of wisdom as revealed unto the saints of God as they journey in this time world. It states as simply and as matter of factly as only Wisdom can, the only way in which the heirs of God can come into possession of the kingdom of God. These are the words of the only begotten of the Father; the only Person born into this world with sufficient wisdom to declare the whole truth and the whole counsel of God. Jesus was speaking to Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews, who came unto Him in the darkness of human wisdom inquiring of Jesus, who He was; and regarding the kingdom of God. He stated, *"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"*. And Jesus answered him with the above statement. In nature's darkness man cannot know the things of the kingdom of God.

For man to inhabit the earth he must be born into the world of nature in the way and manner that God has decreed for the population of this planet earth. It is according to the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of the eternal God of heaven and earth and is true of all except the first two. Adam was created of the dust of the ground and a rib removed from Adam's side was made Eve. When *"God created man in His own image, male and female created he them"*, He said unto them, *"Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it"*. This has continued down thru the annals of time as children are born unto men

according to the laws of nature. Each man, at the time appointed of the Father, has a beginning as a creature of flesh in his mother's womb, is separated from her and becomes an individual of the human race. This, in nature, is the way in which man is born into the world.

Man's being born into the world is in such a manner that the most intelligent or the most unlearned of men would concede that it was by no effort, thought or action on the part of the one being born. The one being born has no consciousness or knowledge of the world into which they are being born until they are a part of it. They have no opportunity to decide or to determine any of the circumstances into which they are born, no option as to race, sex, or physical form, and have no prior knowledge upon which to base such a decision if they had the opportunity.

This man that is so born into this world is of the earth, earthy, and has a knowledge only of the earthly kingdom and the things that he can learn by the use of his natural senses. Many are born into this world of the flesh and live few or many years and die having known only those things of this natural physical kingdom of the flesh into which they were born.

I do not believe that Jesus just happened to use this illustration, "*Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God*", when talking to Nicodemus on this occasion. He was setting forth that basic truth that "*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". The things of the spiritual kingdom are in a different realm from the things of the flesh and just as a man must be born of the flesh to be a part of the natural kingdom and know and realize the things pertaining thereto, so he must be born into the spiritual kingdom to see the things of the kingdom of God, and enter into it.

Jesus further tells Nicodemus, "*Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again. The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whither it goeth: so is everyone that is born of the spirit.*" Nicodemus replied, "*How can these things be.*" In nature's darkness, with only the wisdom of the world, man cannot understand the mysteries of the spiritual realm. The realization of a spiritual birth can only be known by those who have experienced it, in the same way that the natural man can understand his natural life by the experiencing of it. Until one is quickened by the Spirit and experienced the change of heart and mind his question will be the same as Nicodemus, "*How can these things be*".

The experiencing of having been born again was for the Apostles, on the day of Pentecost, and again it is referred to as compared to the wind like Jesus has said to Nicodemus. "*And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled*

all the place where they were sitting, and there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance". What a wonderful experience of these Apostles and yet every child of God will acknowledge that there is a fellowship for these brethren because there is a degree of this same blessed revelation in their own experience. For the first time they understood the expression, "Ye must be born again". As fearful as it is to claim this precious heritage, you must acknowledge that your whole hope of eternal life is in the fact that you believe that you, too, have been born of the Spirit of God. As the Apostles began to speak with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance, so did you. You began to speak of things you had not before. Your mind and your speech was of things that you had no knowledge of before. You may not have thought that you said very much, but those who have been there could see in your countenance, your conversation, and your careful fearful walk that you were alive unto the things of the Spirit. You, as they, no longer ran eagerly in pursuit of the fleshly pleasures of life. You had been born of the Spirit and your whole desire was to show forth the love that you had for God and for those of kindred spirit.

As on the day of Pentecost those round about the Apostles said, "What meaneth this?" They, as Nicodemus could not understand what was happening. Some mocked and some

thought they were drunk. This is true today as each tells their experience they will invariably relate how friends and loved ones in nature became estranged and separated from them because they could not understand what had happened to the individual. They were left behind in nature's darkness to question and wonder, "What meaneth this". They have no basis for comparison and therefore will never understand unless blessed by God with the same wonderful change from nature's darkness into the marvelous light and life of the children of God. This experience, I believe, is what Jesus is referring to as being born again. They are certainly made alive to the things of the Spirit and immediately have fellowship for all who have been quickened within their very heart and soul.

The Prophet Zephaniah records, "*For then will I turn to the people a pure language, that they may all call upon the name of the Lord, to serve him with one consent*". This scripture was fulfilled on the day of Pentecost as the Apostles began to speak in other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance. There was no period of learning for the Apostles, they spoke it as soon as they were filled with the Holy Ghost in the same manner as when God breathed into Adam the breath of life and he became a living soul. It was instantly complete, a finished work, a new beginning, a new birth, if you please, and it is the sovereign work of the God who created the heavens and the earth. The pure language that they speak is the language

of love, love for God and all His creation but especially for those who understand the language and speak it also. This is the joyful sound that the saints of God hear. Psa. 89:16, "Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound: they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance. In thy name shall they rejoice all the day; and in thy righteousness shall they be exalted". This is the heritage of all that are born of God.

If man's being born into this natural realm is the sovereign work of God and Jesus uses this term in stating the only way that man can see kingdom of God is to be born again then it, too, must be the work of God alone. One is just as impossible, for the thing being born, as the other, since the birth

is the beginning and not a transition or transformation. It is the beginning of that which is born. Man will agree with you unanimously as regarding the natural birth and yet deny that this is true regarding the spiritual birth. They do not truly believe in God the Omnipotent, Omniscient, Omnipresent Creator of all things that are and do not believe the things that He says. They do not realize that when He speaks it is done and when He commands it stands fast regardless of whether all the wisdom and efforts of man are aligned with or against it. They will not concede that when He says something that it is true, absolute, no variance, and that it will be forever true whether it is believed by all or none of His creatures.

Jesus told the woman at the well, "God is a spirit; and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth". This confirms the necessity of all of the saints of God being born of the Spirit, since they were not created with a spiritual nature, originally. This is why it is such a wonderful experience when they are born of the Spirit and simultaneously realize the need and the full meaning of it. At that time they feel that the world is so complete that they will never be in the ruined undone condition again, but will ever praise and adore this Giver of every good and perfect gift for this mercy so graciously bestowed upon them. They learn though by experience that this is not the way that it is to be with them. Just as the baby in nature must experience a long and tedious learning process before it reaches maturity in becoming a man or woman, so must this new born child of grace also experience a long and tedious learning process and it will consume the rest of their natural life. They will grow in grace and in the knowledge of their Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, but they will never reach full maturity in this life. That will only be realized when they are raised in the likeness of their Elder Brother, when they will know even as they are known. This is reserved until they all come in the unity of the faith, and the knowledge of the Son of God unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.

They will never reach the fulness of maturity in this life, but this new birth is the beginning of a spiritual life that

will reach full maturity in that world that will be. God does not begin a work that He will not finish. He does not quicken one to see it they meet certain standards. His work is only making manifest what was determined before the beginning of time and will stand when time is no more. It is to honor and glorify His Holy Name and to acknowledge the atoning work of the only begotten of the Father, in the sacrifice of Himself for the sins of all that were chosen in Him before the foundation of the world.

The atonement has been made, the bride has been chosen, and being born again is but the manifestation of these truths in the heart of the individuals at the appointed time of the Father. The new birth is manifested in their walk, their talk, and the* heart's desire being set on things above They, for the first time, acknowledge the weakness and unprofitableness of the flesh and long for the time when they will reach maturity in the Spirit and lay aside the vanity and pride of this body of clay and dwell in the presence of God; in the fulness of His love and in the full knowledge of the glory and blessedness of that Kingdom into which they were born, while yet living in the body of flesh.

In bonds of love,
(Elder) Richard H. Campbell

JOEL 2:21.

Fear not, O land; be glad and rejoice: for the Lord will do great things.

CORRESPONDENCE

433 Heritage Place
Morehead, Kentucky 40351
March 2, 1995

Dear Brethren:

I want to say that I am so thankful, I hope, for the Signs of the Times. No other paper contains so much good spiritual reading, at least as far as I know. Whether written in this day, or brought back from years gone by, there is manifest a kindred of spirit in the writers. Also, if written in a way of exposition, or written as experience, they all speak of salvation by the grace of God. Each article exalts God as Absolute Sovereign in all things, and each gives all praise to Him. I certainly would miss the Signs, if I were not able to receive it.

May it please the God of all grace to continue to bless the editors, and all who labour to send forth the Signs of the Times each month.

May I ask an interest in your prayers?

Yours in hope,
Bill Slack

LUKE 1:35.

And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.

March 9, 1995
Elgin, Or. 97827

himself to be very very good," and on hearing this my mother stooped over and Kissed me.

To the Occupants of the
Household of Faith:



As I reach the eventide of this natural life, I desire to leave a testimony as to the mercy of an all wise God to a Hell Deserving Sinner.

"Go home to thy friends and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee." Luke 5-19.

I was born 5/1/15, the first of seven children born to earthly parents who loved their children and often did without the necessities of this life in order that their children could be fed and clothed.

In the year of 1921 my mother joined the Primitive Baptist Church and was baptized by the late Elder C.W. Bond, and from that time forward the Baptist people visited our home and I often remember the discussion of the word of God and his way of salvation, Jesus Christ.

When I was ten years old, I being a sickly child, had dyptheria and was isolated from the rest of the family except for my mother who tended my every need. During this illness she spent much time with me and read aloud from the Bible. One day she read the text, "And again I say unto you, it is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter the Kingdom of God." Matt. 19-24. To this I said, "Mama that don't mean that the man had a lot of money, but means that he thought

During this time, even into young manhood a Brother Peter Jones, whom I loved dearly and was later ordained to the work of a Gospel Minister, often visited our home and talked long into the night about Jesus the way of salvation. This dear Brother often visited our home after I was united in marriage, in 1936 to Miss Florence Walter by the late Elder C.W. Bond. This dear man worked for my Father and was called upon to return thanks at every meal and I so well remember the ending he uttered at each thanks offering saying, "Pardon our transgressions and guide our minds in the way of alltruth." How beautiful these words seem as I reflect upon them.

During World War II I was drafted into the U.S. Navy and served in the Pacific Theater of War.

On one occasion I overheard a young man who's ship was sunk and during the course of battle found himself in the ocean with all the sea ablaze from oil burning upon the water and he told of praying for deliverance and that the Lord rolled back the fire upon the water and a corridor was formed through which he swam to safety. This young man was injured and on his way back to the States for hospitalization. Yet he was praising God for his mercy and said that when the war was over he was going to a school of theology and devote the rest of his life unto the Lord. I could not help but believe that this young man was right then and there being schooled by the

hand of God. Even so he was the only one that I met who gave thanks unto God for his tender and loving mercy.

I served as a Carpenter's Mate and spent most of my time when not on duty in the carpenter shop away from the idle chatter of my fellow seamen. This gave me many hours in which to correspond with my family and to read the scriptures.

Many is the hour that I searched my soul and finding nothing within, was caused to pray that I might be given a sign for the hope that I felt within. Then one evening while reading Luke 5/31/32, "They that are whole need not a Physician; but they that are sick. I came not to call the righteous, but the sinner to repentance." What a joy I then received for it was like as though two gentle hands reached within my breast and for the space of but a few seconds held my heart in the sweetness of endearing love. I cannot describe it in all it's fullness except to say that were it possible to set upon a journey that would take me away from friends and family for a two year period knowing that this same gentle expression of love would be waiting for me, I would gladly forsake all and leave within the hour.

Upon returning home Elders Bond and Jones soon passed away but God by his mercy sent another to serve in their stead and I was received into the Church and baptized by the late Elder R.R. Wolf who later moved to Colorado. We were once again blessed for God raised up one from among us to preach the word of God. Ernest J. Attebery was ordained and served as

pastor until his health deteriorated at which time the burden fell upon the late Elder Ben F. Preston.

Prior to my being received into the Church I was so burdened by the evil within that I cried again and again for his mercy and that I might again receive a sign to substantiate that hope within. Had my home burned down or had I had an arm or leg severed I would have praised God for this token of mercy, but God's mercy was provided in another way.

I went hunting in the fall and as the weather was cold, in addition to a heavy coat I wore two pair of pants and in the late evening hours on a rather dark and cloudy day when the shadows cast dark forms among the trees, another hunter in the same area mistook me for an elk and shot. His bullet passed across my back cutting the suspenders off from my out pants and cut the belt into on my inner pants and only marked my back in a spot no bigger than my thumb nail. I was immediately made to give thanks unto God once again for an answer to my prayer and though like Paul who felt to be Chief among sinners, I was made to praise his Holy Name.

Since that time my blessings are beyond measure for my Dear Wife has grown to love the doctrine of salvation by grace and was baptized by the late Elder David V. Spangler on one of his several trips to the Northwest.

Though God from time to time withdraws his restraining power, that we might know to what depths we as sinners may sink into the mirey clay.

He has assured us that he will never leave nor forsake one of his little ones.

Rejoice, Rejoice the Lord is King.

"The Lord found Jacob in a desert land (void of anything worthy of God's love) and in a waste howling wilderness; (the condition of sin) he led him about, he instructed him, he kept him as the apple of his eye." Deut. 32 / 10. Oh! Dear Friends is this not the state in which he finds us all? Let us praise him for his goodness and mercy to usward all the days of our lives.

"And Jacob was left alone; (no help from any flesh) and there wrestled a man (Jesus) with him until the breaking of day." Gen. 32 / 24 This being the beginning of knowledge that Salvation is of the Lord. Thereafter Jacob's walk was halted and he leaned upon a staff (Jesus) for all confidence in self was destroyed.

Thus Dear Ones is the way in which we all must be led and my hope is, that I have tasted a small bit of this Wonderous Grace.

Remember this poor sinner when at the Throne of Grace.

Your unworthy brother if one at all;
Lloyd C. Spikes

PSALM 150:4-6.

Praise him with the timbrel dance: praise him with stringed instruments and organs.

Praise him upon the loud cymbals: praise him upon the high sounding cymbals.

Let every thing that hath breath praise the Lord. Praise ye the Lord.

ARTICLES

THOUGHTS ON JOB



he Lord willing, I desire to make some comments on the Book of Job. There are a great number and a variety of subjects in this marvelous book that might be expounded if the Spirit of the Lord would enable me to write upon one or more of these subjects. But in all scriptural comments that may be written or spoken, the one and only name that can be honored and glorified is that of the Lord Jesus Christ, which is embraced in the one true and living God: The Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

In order to describe Job we will quote Job 1:1: *"There was a man in the land of Uz, whose name was Job, and that man was perfect and upright, and one that feared God, and eschewed evil"*. Let us not get the idea or thought that Job was perfect in the sense of being without sin for that is not the case, for he was of the posterity of Adam and thus a sinner by nature as well as by practice. I believe the perfection of Job spoken of here was that he was able by the Spirit to worship and serve God in spirit and in truth. The same way as the ones spoken of by Paul in Ephesians 1:4: *"According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love"*. Not in action for all have sinned and come short of the glory of

God. The only one born of a woman without sin was our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Job's perfection in serving God was a direct result of being guided and directed by the Holy Spirit. But there was one present named Satan who gave another reason and said that he was hedged in by God's great blessings. This was in answer to the Lord's question to Satan ("Hast thou considered my servant Job?" Job 1:8). The Lord permitted or suffered Satan to afflict him in many ways which I will not take the space to relate as I am sure you are acquainted with the many afflictions Job was persecuted with; but one thing Satan was told he could not do was to take Job's life. Satan's power was limited to the extent that God had delegated to him. This is proven by Romans 13:1: "Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God".

Job was so sorely afflicted and tried that even his wife said to him: "Curse God and die". But Job answered and said: "What? shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil? In all this did not Job sin with his lips". Job 2:9,10. He also said: "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord" Job 1:21. I speak these things to show that no evil or unrighteousness originates with God in the carrying out of His divine purposes. He does, when it pleases Him, overrule evil for good; as the scriptures say: "Surely the wrath of man

shall praise thee; the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain". Psalm 76:10.

Let us go a little further in Job's trials and afflictions. Job had three friends (?) whose names are Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar. (The reason I question these three as being true friends, I will bring out later in this writing). They had previously made appointment together to come to mourn with him and comfort him. It is said they sat down with him on the ground seven days and seven nights and none spoke a word to him for they saw that his grief was very great. (Job 2:11-13).

It would seem to me that if they were truly his friends that this would have been the very time he would have needed comfort from them. James 2:15,16: "If a brother or sister be naked and destitute of daily food, and one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit?". Jesus Himself told those on the left hand: "Inasmuch as ye did it not to one of the least of these, ye did it not to me". Mt. 25:44.

No doubt Job was in a very low frame of mind, having lost all he had, including his children. Cast down in every way for he said: "Let the day perish wherein I was born, and the night in which it was said, There is a man child conceived". Job 3:2. The three "friends" continued much speaking to Job and said many things in an effort to give him encouragement. But it would appear that during their efforts to console him, they would say

things that would indicate that they thought Job had the ability to bring himself out of the condition he was in; that by his own efforts he would be able to return to his former joy. Zophar said: *"If thou prepare thine heart, and stretch out thine hands toward him; if iniquity be in thine hand, put it far away, and let not wickedness dwell in thy tabernacles. For then shalt thou lift up thy face without spot; yea, thou shalt be stedfast, and shalt not fear; Because thou shalt forget thy misery, and remember it as waters that pass away"*. Job 11:13-16.

The condition here stated was that if Job would do these things then the Lord would restore him to his former state. Then Job answered and said: *"No doubt but ye are the people, and wisdom shall die with you"*. Job 12:2. He continues on to establish God's eternal existence and sovereign power over all things. I will not quote all he has said in this connection, but one of the statements he made was: *"Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? not one. Seeing his days are determined, the number of his months are with thee, thou hast appointed his bounds that he cannot pass"*. Job 14:4,5.

In chapter 15, Eliphaz continues to speak to Job in such a way as to criticize Job for the things he had spoken as being directed in the wrong way. He said: *"Should a wise man utter vain knowledge, and fill his belly with the east wind? Should he reason with unprofitable talk? or with speeches wherewith he can do no good? Yea, thou castest off fear,*

and restrainest prayer before God. For thy mouth uttereth thine iniquity, and thou chooseth the tongue of the crafty. Thine own mouth condemneth thee, and not I; yea, thine own lips testify against thee". Job 15:2-6.

Much more follows along the same lines berating Job. Then in the 16th chapter Job sort of sums up what they have been saying to him and replies: *"I have heard many such things: miserable comforters are ye all."* (Job 16:2). Then following more words from these "miserable comforters", Job replied to them much more but one specific answer is this: *"How then comfort ye me in vain, seeing in your answers there remaineth falsehood?"* (Job 21:34). This was Job's answer to those who were supposed to be his friends; but whom he regarded as "miserable comforters". Dear brethren, think on these things. Prayerfully read and consider all things said. Many truths were expressed by these "friends" but in substance their theme was admonishing Job that he could by his own free will and actions bring about a change in the trials and afflictions he was beset with. But let us remember that in the very beginning of this book it is written that Job was perfect and upright, one that feared God and eschewed evil.

The children of God desire to do the will of God in all things, and to be able to follow more closely in the footsteps of our dear Lord. But the scripture says that when we do all these things we have only done that which is our duty. And the very best of our righteousness is as filthy rags. We will

never be free of afflictions in this life; and oftentimes in the very midst of these trials and afflictions we are made to cry as did Jonah: "I cried by reason of mine affliction unto the Lord". Jonah 2:2.

While in the book of Job, I will now attempt to mention some thoughts in regard to the sovereignty of God. "But he is in one mind, and who can turn him? and what his soul desireth, even that he doeth. For he performeth the thing that is appointed for me: and many such things are with him". Job 23:13-14. God is eternal and His promises are eternal. Man in his finite mind cannot understand the workings of God. Until one is born of the Spirit, he cannot understand the things pertaining to God only in the sense of the letter. The letter killeth; but the Spirit giveth life. "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? or who hath been his counselor?" Rom. 11:33-34.

Now let us go to the 26th chapter of Job. There is too much to try to quote all of it here. But dear reader, carefully consider the things that are said. This so beautifully outlines the supremacy of the Godhead. We are only able to understand a small portion of the wonders of God. But when it is said so plain; just what the facts are; we dare not try to change what it says. John said: "If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book; and if any man shall take away

from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book". Rev. 22:18,19. (This certainly does not mean that one of those for whom Christ died will ever lose his inheritance in heaven and immortal glory).

Now a few more thoughts in connection with the 26th chapter of Job. In this chapter Job clearly declares the sovereignty of God and the indisputable fact that He is God and there is none like Him. Job says: "By his spirit he hath garnished the heavens; his hand hath formed the crooked serpent. Lo, these are parts of his ways: but how little a portion is heard of him? but the thunder of his power who can understand?". Job 26:13,14.

Now in conclusion I will say just a little more in connection with Job's three "friends". "And it was so, that after the Lord had spoken these words unto Job, the Lord said to Eliphaz the Temanite, My wrath is kindled against thee, and against thy two friends; for ye have not spoken of me the thing that is right, as my servant Job hath. Therefore take unto you now seven bullocks and seven rams, and go to my servant Job, and offer up for yourselves a burnt offering; and 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". Job 42:7,8.

"Then came there unto him all his brethren, and all his sisters, and all they that had been of his acquaint-

tance before, and did eat bread with him in his house; and they bemoaned him, and comforted him over all the evil that the Lord had brought upon him; every man also gave him a piece of money, and every one an earring of gold. 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." (Job 42:13)

There is no end to the things contained in this wonderful book. For it is said the half has not yet been told. So I will say in conclusion, please remember that I am very imperfect in my ways, but the perfection of holiness can be seen and felt by His children in this life as they are led by the Spirit. I trust that I have been so led in what I have written. Pardon all errors for they are mine and if anything has been said to comfort you in a small measure, the glory and honor belong unto God. Farewell in the Lord and pray for me.

Yours in afflictions of the Gospel
Elder Robert L. Miles

DEUTERONOMY 32: 10-12.

He found him in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness; he led him about, he instructed him, he kept him as the apple of his eye.

As an eagle stirreth up her nest, fluttereth over her young, spreadeth abroad her wings, taketh them, beareth them on her wings:

So the Lord alone did lead him, and there was no strange god with him.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"I will cry unto God most High; unto God that performeth all things for me."—PSALM lvii. 2.

In the word "most High," there is something to my mind very expressive. It is to "God most High" that prayers go up from broken hearts, in all parts of the world where the Lord has a quickened people. "Unto God most High" every eye is pointed, every heart is fixed, and every breath of living prayer flows. Jesus sits in glory as "God most High," hearing the sighs and cries of his broken-hearted family, where they dwell in the utmost corners of the earth; and he is not only sitting on high to hear their cries, but also to bestow upon them the blessings which he sees suitable to their case and state. Now when shall we thus come "unto God most High?" When we are pleased and satisfied in self? when the world smiles? when all things are easy, without and within? when we are in circumstances for which our own wisdom, strength, and righteousness are amply sufficient? We may, under such circumstances, appease our conscience by prayer, or rather its form; but there is no cry "unto God most High." Before there is a real, spiritual cry raised up, we must be brought to that spot, "Refuge failed me; no man cared for my soul" (Psalm cxlii. 4). Here all the saints of old were brought; Job upon his dunghill, Hezekiah upon his bed, Hannah by the temple gate. All were hopeless, helpless, houseless, refugeless, before they cried "unto God most High." And

we must be equally refugeless and houseless before me can utter the same cry, or our prayers find entrance into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth. "Unto God that performeth *all* things for me." If God did not perform something for us; nay more, if God did not perform *all* things for us, it would be a mockery, a delusion to pray to him at all. "The Hope of Israel" would then be to us a dumb idol, like Ashtaroth or Baal, who could not hear the cries of his lancet-cutting worshippers, because he was hunting or asleep, and needed to be awakened. But the God of Israel is not like these dumb idols, these dunghill gods, the work of men's hands, the figments of superstition and ignorance; but the eternal Jehovah, who ever lives to hear and answer the prayers that his people offer up.

J.C. Philpot

**From Elder Lambert's Book,
"Tried In The Furnace."**

**SPIRITUAL SONGS ACCORD WITH
GOD'S STRINGED INSTRUMENTS**

January, 1953



ELDER E.J. LAMBERT

and other places has stimulated me with a greater desire to write to the Household of Faith through this medium. The visit with the Welsh Tract, Hopewell, and other historical meet-



My late visit with the editors and many readers of the Signs in Virginia, Delaware, New Jersey, Maryland, Pennsylvania

ing places of God's children through the centuries past has peculiarly affected me. It is inspirational to learn that the same principles of Truth have been loved, cherished and contended for by His people these hundreds of years in the same meeting place.

While attending Salisbury Association held at Delmar, Delaware, the text of this article began to arrest my attention. God willing, I shall use Isaiah 38:20, as basis for my remarks: "The Lord was ready to save me; therefore we will sing my songs to the stringed instruments all the days of our life in the house of the Lord." We shall attempt to prove that the songs of God's people are their spiritual experiences and the stringed instruments are the harp of God, the hearts of His people, the Bible, etc. We want to show that a psalm or an hymn is not necessarily a spiritual song to one of God's people at all times. We expect to show that the stringed instruments under consideration are not pianos, organs, or any like instrument made and tuned by man - which will get out of tune - but, that which God has tuned, strung, and prepared, which never gets out of tune.

Re-read the paragraph above and may it become fixed in your mind before we meditate further upon the text. Read Isaiah 38, and then prayerfully consider the following meditations.

The expression found in the 20th verse was made by Hezekiah, King of Judah, after undergoing critical experiences brought about by the Lord dealing with him. Even though he be

king he was brought low by the Lord. He was sick unto death, and word came to him from the Lord, "Set thine house in order; for thou shalt die and not live" (Isa. 38:1). We read a similar command in Amos 4:12 to Israel, "Prepare to meet thy God, O Israel." I am persuaded a similar command comes to every spiritual Israelite in the beginning of an experience of grace. When we try to cope with the situation in trying to set our house in order in preparation to meet God, we find ourselves as miserable failures in the attempt. This forces us to pray to God for mercy. Surely Hezekiah's attempts were in vain to set his house in order and he was made to depend upon God for this. We would all sink into death were it not for what the Lord adds unto our life. Our life is sinful, He adds holiness; our life is unstable; He adds stability; our life is earthly, He adds heaven; our life is ungodly, He adds godliness. We come to the end of our path. He leads us into a new path. We die, He adds life. Dear trembling child, has the Lord added unto your life? Our life is unstrung and untuned. He tunes and strings our hearts to sing His praise! This must have been Hezekiah's experience as he said, "The Lord was ready to save me."

We learn that we cannot save ourselves. It is not the question: am I ready for the Lord to save me? But, is the Lord ready to save? All things are so ordered and arranged, tuned and strung by the Lord that events so fall in perfect order and rhythm that a fixed time, place, and circumstance comes for the Lord's salvation to be

made manifest to each and every one of the trophies of His amazing grace.

Because the Lord was ready to save me - "we will sing my songs to the stringed instruments." We read in Ephesians 5:19, of "Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord." What were the songs Hezekiah had under consideration? Psalms and hymns would include all compositions written with natural verse to be used in religious worship. When any hymn or psalm is in perfect harmony with our experience and feelings, it becomes our spiritual song. Paul says in 1st Cor. 14:15, "I will sing with the understanding also." There is a natural song and there is a spiritual song. There are experiences that are natural and there are experiences that are spiritual. The song that is natural is the old song and the song that is spiritual is that the Lord adds by putting into your mouth the new song. We would like to contrast the old song and the new.

The old song is sung in the key of man - man being the central keynote. The new is sung in the key of Jesus Christ - He being the foundation key. If you want to hear a discord, try singing the old and the new together. They will not harmonize, for the old song praises man the new song praises God. The old sings of the ability of man and the new song proclaims man's inability. The old song utters salvation is hinged upon the volition and works of the creature, while the new bases the creatures' salvation upon the volition and

work of the three-one God. The new song being opposed to the old prevents the harmonization of the two.

You will note that Hezekiah says, "my songs." This means his own personal spiritual experiences. Unless the Lord has added to your individual life you cannot sing these songs. There are more spiritual experiences than one. Sometimes you sing, "All things work together for good." Sometimes you feel, "All things are against me." Sometimes you are asking, "Is God gone forever?" Sometimes you say, "I know that my Redeemer liveth." Sometimes you sing, "Jesus, Lover of my soul"; and at other times, "I am a stranger here below." Sometimes you ask, "My God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Sometimes you sing, "The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want."

The stringed instruments these new songs perfectly accord with are the instruments God has prepared, strung, and tuned. The word "instrument" is translated from a word meaning "prepared." Our songs are sung to that which God has prepared. We find recorded in Proverbs 16:1, "The preparations of the heart in man and the answer of the tongue, is from the Lord." When the Lord strings and tunes the hearts of His people there is perfect harmony in their experiences. When your experience harmonizes with the experience of Hezekiah, Jacob, Paul, and others whose lives are recorded in the Bible, it is singing your songs to the stringed instruments. When your experience harmonizes with the fundamental principles expressed in the Scriptures, and held

sacred by your brethren, it accords with the stringed instruments.

Pianos and organs are made, strung, and tuned by man. These may be damaged, get out of tune, and the strings broken. Natural musical instruments only give forth natural mechanical tones. The instruments under consideration give forth spiritual godly melody. The command to the Church is to "speak to yourselves, singing," - not, to play a mechanical instrument. The question should be, "Is our singing to accord with the mechanical instruments or spiritual instruments? Is our singing to be in accord with the piano, organ, or heart? I am persuaded the singing should be in harmony with our hearts that God had prepared, tuned and strung; thus, "making melody in the heart." When brethren are blessed to come together and sing with the Spirit and understanding in sweet fellowship and harmony it is much greater and sweeter melody than the best of singing without the Spirit accompanied by the best mechanical musical instruments. The accompaniment of mechanical musical instruments is pleasing to the natural ear. The accompaniment of the Spirit and understanding is pleasing to the spiritual ear.

We read in the Psalms of the harps of God, and also in Revelations. According to Josephus and what we can find in the Scriptures, these harps had ten strings. We can call your attention to Psalms 33: 2,3 "Praise the Lord with harp; sing unto Him with psaltery and an instrument of ten strings. Sing unto Him a new song. We want to

quote the following stanzas from the hymn "There Is A Fountain":

*Lord, I believe thou hast prepared
(Unworthy though I be)
For me a blood-bought free re-
ward -
A golden harp for me.*

*'Tis strung and tuned for endless
years
And formed by power divine,
To sound in God the Father's ears
No other name but thine.*

Hezekiah stated in the same chapter from which the text of this article was taken, "He hath both spoken unto me and himself hath done it" (Isa. 38:15). Here is a double. He commanded "Set thine house in order," and He performed the command Himself by setting it in order.

He works both the will and the do. Children of God receive "of the Lord's hand double" (Isa. 40:1). Scores of doubles come to our mind that neither time nor space will permit us to mention. Suffice it to suggest that the harp of God consists of a number of double strings. If the harps used back at that time under the ceremonial worship had ten strings, the spiritual harp must have five doubles which results in ten. Let us turn to the 8th chapter of Romans to find these five principles of the doctrine briefly stated. As we read them let us keep in mind that He has both spoken and Himself hath done it. Now, "For whom He did (1) foreknow, He also did (2) 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 (3) called and whom He called, them He also (4) justified: and whom He justified, them He also (5) glorified. What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?" (Rom. 8: 29-31).

This foreknowledge is an intimate relationship with His people even before the manifestation of His decrees in time. He chose them in His Son. "Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect and in Thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned when as yet there were none of them" (Psalms 139:16). He knew them in eternity; they shall know Him in time. He predestinated them to be conformed to the image of His Son. He has ordered, arranged, and fixed all things to fall out at appointed times and seasons so that all things work together for the fulfillment of this grand purpose. See Romans 8:28. He calls and they shall answer. He performs the double as the word that goes forth out of His mouth returns not to Him void, but accomplishes that which He pleases and prospers in the thing whereunto He sends it. He decreed the justification of His people and He justifieth them by sending His Son into the world to pay the penalty for their sins, thus satisfying justice. The just bore the sins of the unjust that justice divine might be perfectly satisfied. He not only justified them but also glorified them through the divine righteousness of His own Son. "For if, when we

were enemies, we were reconciled (justified) to God by the death of His Son, much more being reconciled, we shall be saved (glorified) by His life" (Rom. 5:10). We are glorified by the imputed righteousness of His Son. These five wonderful things are both spoken and performed by God the Father, Son, and Spirit. These ten strings ring clear the melodious song of praise to Him. This ten-stringed harp becomes ours when it pleases God to give it to us that we receive it with praise and thanksgiving. Then we are harpers harping with their harps. See Revelation 14:2. We have the harps of God (Rev. 15:2). We sing to the accompaniment of these harps in the "house of the Lord," Zion, the new Jerusalem, the Church, or with the children of God. We sing "all the days of our life." Sometimes the day is gloomy because of the clouds of trouble and despondency which hides the view of the brightness of the Son of Glory. Sometimes the day is cold because of the felt sense of our unworthiness. We experience cloudy and bright days; but, they are all days because it takes the light to manifest the darkness that is in our heart and the coldness in our thoughts. Nevertheless the expression of days in the plural shows that there are night times in our experience.

We hang our harps upon the willows by the river, Babylon, during the nights of our experience (Psalms 137). We have no use or regard for the Lord, nor Zion nor His people during the night. We are then resting in our own carnality and we are at ease. We do

not think upon Zion nor His people. We forget Zion as is intimated in the expression, "We wept when we remembered Zion" (Ps. 137:1). When the dwellers in Babylon require of us in mirth to sing one of the songs of Zion, we are made to realize we cannot sing the Lord's song in a strange land. We must be brought again out of Babylon into Zion before we have any more use for the harp. It is not in the night that we feel unworthy, unfit, and so wretched but on dark and cloudy days. In the night we have no feeling, no sense of guilt, no deep concern over our spiritual welfare, neither any regard for His house. It is when we are awakened in the morning that we are made to weep because of our forgetfulness and unconsciousness of His providential care over us. It is when we are awakened by His Spirit before the rising of the Son of glory. Thanks be to God, when the Son rises and we see the brightness of His face whose rays warm and calm our troubled breasts, fear is driven from our souls and love springs forth. Songs of praise again are sung to His matchless and glorious name for His amazing grace toward us.

You notice that Hezekiah says "our life" in the text. It seems to the natural mind that he should have said, "my life" or "our lives" to have been consistent with the proper usage of language. Let us see. The Lord added unto his life. My life had its end as my life when the Lord added His life to my life. My natural life ended as only a natural life when the Lord added that which is spiritual to my life. The life of

a child of God prior to regeneration (or the addition of the graces of His Holy Spirit) is only a lustful fleshly life. After God adds that which is spiritual it becomes our life. When the Lord adds His Spirit there is set up a dual character in one. This results in a warfare. The flesh lusts against the Spirit and the Spirit against the flesh so that you cannot do the things that you would, these being contrary one to the other. See Gal. 5:17. What the Lord adds is contrary to that naturally possessed.

One more thought and I shall close. The last night will be when death shall come at the end of our sojourn here. Then will be the dawning of the final day when we awaken in His likeness and shall be satisfied. There will be no night there but one eternal Day of perfect joy and peace. No cloudy and cold times to mar our peace. There will be no night nor river of Babylon. There will be no hanging of harps in the willows. We will all sing the song of Moses and the song of the Lamb harmoniously to the harps of God forever and forever.

Elder E.J. Lambert

ROMANS 15: 4-6.

For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our leaning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.

Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be like-minded one toward another according to Christ Jesus:

That ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

NOTICE

If it is agreeable with you and the other editors of the "Signs of the Times," would you please let your readers know about the book our mother has compiled of the lives and experiences of herself and her late husband, Elder Bennie N. Clifton, entitled "As the Days of A Tree." She compiled the book from writings he left behind, adding her own experience, in a desire to leave on record the things Elder Clifton believed and stood for during the thirty-three years he was blessed to preach and to serve the flock.

Should anyone have an interest in purchasing the book, they can contact Edrie Clifton, at Post Office Box 30, Vesta, Virginia 24177 or by calling (703) 952-2083. She has books bound in hard back for \$12.00 and in soft back for \$7.00.

In appreciation,
The Children

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR FEBRUARY 1995

- Homer E. Wade, VA \$2.00
- Mrs. Garlon Vick, NC 10.00
- Mrs. Beatrice Miller, NC 2.00
- Mrs. Lottie Minter, NC 2.00
- Lloyd C. Spike, OR 7.00
- Mrs. Rosa Troytt, NC 2.00
- A Friend, VA 100.00

Mrs. Bruce McKinney, VA.....	46.00
Mrs. Catherine Combs, NC.....	5.00
Mrs. F. Mae Williamson, LA	4.00
Mrs. Alice Johnson, TX	7.00
Mrs. Herman Alders, TX	7.00
Reed Harper, TX	2.00
Tommy Wall, VA.....	2.00
Mrs. Dorothy M. Cassell, VA	2.00

OBITUARIES

TROY H. BAILEY

We bow in humble submission, in the taking from our midst, Brother Troy H. Bailey. He was born December 28, 1908 in Mercer County, W.V., the son of the late Jameson and Virginia Bailey, and died December 23, 1994. Brother Bailey was the last of his immediate family of eight brothers and three sisters, surviving are several nieces and nephews.

Brother Bailey asked for a home with Glenwood Church August 14, 1983, the first time he was in our midst, as a stranger to all. He was baptized September 11, 1983 by the late Elder W.E. Branch assisted by Deacon Richard Lawless. He remained a faithful member until his death. Brother Bailey had concern for the welfare of the church and supported her in all ways, attending some meetings when ill health could have kept him home. Brother Bailey had a quiet, humble manner and loved the doc-

trine of Salvation by Grace. He will be missed at Glenwood Church. We desire to be submissive to the will of the Lord.

Services for Brother Troy Bailey were held December 26, 1994 at Bailey Funeral Chapel, Princeton, W.V. by his pastor Elder Larry Hollandsworth, with burial in Roselawn Memorial Gardens.

Resolved that three copies of this Resolution of Respect be made, one for the Church record, one to the niece, in whose home he spent his last months, one to The Signs of the Times for publication. Done by order of the Church while in conference January 15, 1995.

Elder Larry Hollandsworth,
Moderator
Sister Marilyn Shaw, Clerk

Sister Nellie Kellum Morton Gray

In memory of Sister Nellie I endeavor to write: Even though I'm weak. With God's blessing I'll be able to do so. For all power comes from him.

Sister Nellie was the daughter of Bryant and Sue Kellum. Born Jan. 1, 1907, in Pamplico County.

She married Bannister W. Morton the first time. The Lord blessed them with two children. One daughter and a son.

Her first husband died April 25, 1955. Major Gray was her second husband. He passed away June 12, 1982.

Sister Nellie attended a quarterly May meeting at Sister Susan Humphry's in 1942. She asked a home with the church that night there. Making her a member for about fifty-two years.

She was a faithful, loving member and supported her church. Until health problems arose. Great hope and love was shown in her everyday life.

In 1987 she was admitted to Charles McDaniel Rest Home. Then to Britt Haven in Jacksonville 1988. Was there for six years.

Sister Nellie passed away October 25, 1994. Her survivors are Marie Riggs of Jacksonville, Millard Gene Morton of Texas. Two sisters; Beulah Shipley and Dorothy Welton of Portsmouth, Virginia. One Brother Herman Kellum of Long Beach, California. Ten grandchildren and 14 great-grandchildren.

Sister Nellie left a lovely family and to them I say; press onward to the Mark of the "High Calling" which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Try to walk that straight and narrow path; which leads to "Life Eternal" - and in the "End meether There" where there's no more Sickness, Pain or Sorrow.

Place of Burial: Bannister Morton Family - Jones Funeral Home Cemetery - Oct. 27, 1994. Funeral services were conducted by Elder J.T. Prescott.

By the order of North East Church in conference third Saturday in February 1995.

Written by Mary Lillie Hall
1597 Hall Town Road
Jacksonville, N.C. 28546

SISTER PEARL AKERS LAW

Safe - Oh so safe in the arms of Jesus is our precious Mother in Israel, Sister Pearl Akers Law, member of Roanoke Primitive Baptist Church.

Sister Law was born March 21, 1900 in Franklin County, Va. and passed away at Brandon Oaks Nursing Home in Roanoke, Va. on Jan. 21, 1995. She was married to Brother D.A. (Ford) Law Dec. 26, 1921. He passed away March 1, 1978.

She joined Roanoke Primitive Baptist Church Sept. 4, 1955 and was baptized by the late Elder Cecil E. Turner Sept. 18, 1955.

She is survived by her son and daughter-in-law Max C. and Anne Johnson, Alexander, Va., one Sister Ms. Grace Waddell, Richmond, Va. and many devoted nieces and nephews.

Mrs. Waddell passed away two weeks after Sister Law and was buried in Roanoke, Va. Feb. 6, 1995 with Elder Leonard J. Brammer conducting a lovely service at Oakey's North Funeral Chapel.

Nothing was left undone that could have been done for this dear one. Her son and daughter-in-law was most caring and devoted to her. They visited her so often and after her stroke in Nov. they were there most of the time, assuring her of their loving care.

She loved her church and her pastor and was always interested in their welfare. She was a firm believer in Salvation by Grace. Whenever we visited her, we left feeling that we had attended a church service. She spoke

so sweetly of her hope and belief, always of the Goodness and Mercy of God. Her mind was clear up until the stroke struck her about two months before her death.

The Church sorrows because of her passing but rejoices in a precious hope for her in her safety in her Heavenly Home.

Her funeral was conducted at Oakey's Roanoke Funeral Chapel Jan. 23, 1995 by her so comforting to the almost filled chapel of her Brethren, Sisters, Family and Friends - after which she was laid to rest in Mountain View Memorial Park, Franklin County, Va. by the side of her beloved husband. There with Brother Law she sleeps, to await that bright and glorious day when Christ shall bring them forth to forever be with Him in all his Glory.

What can we then say? Safe - oh so safe in the arms of Jesus.

We at Roanoke Church will always cherish her memory in our hearts.

Written by an unworthy sister, but one who loved her dearly.

Mrs. H.C. (Rlee B.) Houchins

IN LOVING MEMORY OF
ESSIE DIX MOOSE

Sister Essie Dix Moose was born on August 19, 1910 to Mollie and Larkin Dix. in 1932 Aunt Essie was married to Bedford Apple. To this union was born one daughter, Mary Wallace Apple Riggin of Butner, North Carolina. But this marriage did

not last and in 1953 she was married to Eugene Moose who predeceased her.

Sister Moose united with Dan River Primitive Baptist Church on Sunday, April 27, 1947 and was baptized on June 21, 1947. She loved her church and enjoyed meeting with her brethren and friends. She was a very happy outgoing person who loved to be with people...she stayed on the go, choosing not to be alone to brood. She was always laughing and talking and enjoying life. She attended church regularly, even after she was unable to drive. She loved going to her meeting, and to the "singing". Though her short term memory was greatly affected in her last few years, when weekend approached, her spirit stirred, knowing it was nearing church time, and she began bright and early calling those with whom she rode to church. It is mysterious how our minds can be so totally forgetful of some things but be brought to remembrance by things of God. God moves in a mysterious way His wonders to perform.

The night of her homegoing, Aunt Essie again expressed a desire to leave this world. I believe God prepares His people for Heaven and enables them to say, "Come welcome Death, I'll gladly go with thee." "Oh, death where is thy sting, oh grave, where is thy victory."

Sister Moose departed this life on September 2, 1994 and was laid to rest in the church cemetery on September 5 to await the second coming of our Lord when the dead in Christ shall rise

to meet Him in the air and ever be with the Lord. What a glorious day that will be!

We, as humans, feel much sorrow when a loved one is called from our midst, but the inner man rejoices when a soul departs to be with the Lord in the place He has prepared for us. To be absent from the body is to be present with the Lord. For this reason we can not grieve as others who have no hope.

May God be with her family and cause them to say "Thy will be done". For it is far better to depart and be with the Lord than to remain in this wicked world.

Written by request of Dan River Primitive Baptist Church while in conference.

Jean Moran

WILLIE ROBERT MUNFORD

We believe that GOD in his infinite wisdom and mercy has called another one of his loved ones home. Brother Willie Robert Munford passed from this life on December 6, 1994. Brother Robert was born on March 31, 1929 to the late Boyd and Hattie Munford.

On May 30, 1947 he married Margaret Eubanks who survives him. To this union, one son Willie R. (Bobby) Munford, Jr. was born and preceded Brother Robert in death on August 26, 1982. He is also survived by two sisters, Maggie Parham of Roanoke, VA and Marie LeVine of Clarlton, NC.

Brother Robert was received into the fellowship of Bethel Primitive Baptist Church at Grantsboro, NC on October 5, 1980. He was ordained to the office of Deacon on August 12, 1984 and served faithfully until the onset of his illness. He was the clerk and last member of Bethel Church.

From time to time he traveled many miles in North Carolina and Virginia to attend church meetings. He was a firm believer of Salvation by Grace and Predestination of all things. Brother Robert especially enjoyed Church Unions and Associations where he often used his gas grill to cook fish and hush puppies. This was Brother Robert, always willing to share his worldly goods with friends, neighbors and the brethren.

During the last two years of his life Brother Robert suffered much. He was taken ill just after Christmas in 1992 and remained in the hospital and nursing home until his death. Through it all, I never heard him complain. Elder Marvin Brumfield, Elder Jesse Foreman and I visited with Brother Robert in the hospital just a few days before death came and although very weak, he was receptive to the prayers offered by the Elders and reconciled to the will of GOD.

We miss Brother Robert at our Church meetings but I feel he is at rest waiting for the return of his Lord who will one day call him from that rest to inherit that heavenly home prepared for him.

His funeral was held at Pollock-Wells and Best Chapel, New Bern, NC by his Pastor, Elder Jesse Foreman. He was

laid to rest in the Eubanks Family Cemetery at Pollocksville. We express our deepest sympathy to his wife Margaret and all who were near and dear to him by the ties of nature.

Done by request of the Contentnea Primitive Baptist Union in Conference on 29 January 1995. A copy to be included in the Union Record, a copy for publication in the Signs of the Times and a copy for the family.

Written by a brother, I hope
Gene Lupton

SISTER LAURA LEWIS WOLF

Sister Laura Lewis Wolf was born October 8, 1911 in Roosevelt County, New Mexico (near Clovis, New Mexico) to the home of Ina and T.D. Lewis. It pleased our Heavenly Father to call Sis. Wolf from the walks of this life on December 8, 1933 in a Portales hospital.

She was reared in Clovis, New Mexico and was blessed to, have Primitive Baptist parents. She graduated from Clovis High School in 1979, she also attended business college in Waco, Texas.

On November 4, 1935 she was united in marriage to the late Elder Reggie R. Wolf. To this union one son was born.

They lived in Colorado, and Oregon most of their married life. After her husband retired they moved back to, New Mexico settling in Mountainair. In the early eighties she lost both her husband and son.

She soon moved to, Clovis, New Mexico to live with one of her sisters, later to a retirement at Portales.

She joined the Little Flock Primitive Baptist Church, Altus, Oklahoma in May 1987 and remained a faithful member as long as health permitted; traveling many miles by bus to church. It was surely a long and trying trip. Sister Wolf was a firm believer in the doctrine of grace. Between those long trips and not getting to come to Church she was blessed to have many sermons of Elder Spangler, Lambert and many other ministers to turn to for comfort.

Surely we can say with David, Psalms 34:19, "Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the Lord delivereth him out of them all. "Sister Laura surely was one of the righteous and one of many afflictions along the way, but we must say we truly believe she is now asleep in Jesus awaiting His second coming.

She was laid to rest in Mission Garden Memories Clovis, New Mexico.

She is survived by two sisters, Eva Crumley of Clovis and Elsie Stroud of Portales, several nieces, nephews and her church family and friends.

Her funeral service was conducted by her pastor, Elder C.M. Haygood.

It was requested that a copy be sent to the Signs of the Times, to her sisters and a copy be placed in the Church records.

Written in love for my
dear sister-in-law,
Elder C.M. Haygood

Signs of the Times

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SONG

*In heaven my choicest treasure lies,
My hopes are placed above the skies;
'Tis Christ, the bright and morning star,
Draws my affections from afar.*

*O that my anxious mind were free
From this vile tenement of clay,
That I might view th' immortal word,
And live and reign with Christ my Lord.*

*Then should I see, and feel, and know,
What 'tis to rest from sin and woe;
And all my soul be tuned to sing
The praises due to Christ my King.*

*Hail, blessed time! Lord, bid me come,
And enter my celestial home,
And drown the sorrows of my breast,
In seas of unmolested rest.*

Gadsby's Col.

CONTENTS

EDITORIAL 122
 Elder C.C. Wilbanks

CORRESPONDENCE 126

ARTICLES 126
 Newspaper (Editors)
 Frank Hunt

VOICES OF THE PAST 132
 Elder J.C. Philpot
 Elder E.J. Lambert
 Elder George Ruston

MEETINGS 141

CONTRIBUTIONS 143

OBITUARIES 143
 Lemuel C. Branch
 Oscar Perry Murphy

EDITORIAL

IN THE IMAGE OF GOD



ELDER C.C. WILBANKS

After God had created the heavens and the earth and every living thing thereon, God saw that it was good. It was then that he said, "Let

us make man in our image, after our likeness:" (Gen. 1:25-26), and in verse 27, "So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him: male and female created he them." In the 5th chapter verse 2 it is written also that he created them male and female.

Before I attempt to address this marvelous, amazing, soul inspiring text, I would like to state emphatically that I do not desire to discredit, undermine, invalidate or find fault with the views, witnesses or beliefs of any of the brethren whom I deem to be the children of God. Nor do I desire to set forth my views as being superior to any. Yet I do feel a strong desire to write my views on what I understand these Scriptures teach for the prayerful consideration of all who may read them.

There is truly only one Interpreter of the Holy Scriptures, and he will open our understanding to any Scripture, that we may know the true meaning as soon as we have need of it. When any one presents a view or interpretation of a Scripture to us, regardless of how eloquently put forth, or how plausible and good it may seem to be, we are not to accept it as truth unless the Spirit commends it to our hearts, and when it is seen and felt to be in accord with the inspired Scriptures. If it is commended to us by the Holy Spirit then it comes to us in the sweet power of His light.

My understanding of these particular Scriptures did not come suddenly and at one time, but began a number of years ago, and when I am blessed to mediate upon them, I am given, at times, to see even more of their beauty than before. What I see now is not different from my first view, but I see things that I had not before seen; and O, how sweet it is to view even a small portion! May God direct my thoughts to express to your understanding what I see, if it be his good pleasure to do so.

Now to the subject. An image or likeness of any man, or of any thing, is a representative figure of that man or thing. In that respect in which it is an image it must of necessity be exactly like the original; not almost like it, but exactly like it. An image may be made of any material, as silver, gold, wood or stone, and may be of any size; but the form and features must be exactly imitated so that it cannot be mistaken or it is not an image. The question now is, In what sense can man be said to be in the likeness of God? Surely not in his body, we must all acknowledge, for God is a Spirit and man is a flesh and blood creature made of dust. Neither can it be in mind or ways, for God hath said, "*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). God's understanding, his will, his judgment, his affections and his every attribute is perfection and infinite. In that respect we cannot be in his likeness, for we are finite and all of our attributes are directly opposite to his.

As mentioned above, an image must be an exact likeness of that which it represents, but may be different in size, and it must be of different material. If not of a different material then it would not be an image, but the real thing. But an image or likeness of an invisible thing, such as mental or spiritual capacities, must be simply the same thing. This is so with Christ, for it is said that he is "*the image of the*

invisible God;" and "*the express image of his person.*" (Col.1:15, Heb.1:13). He was in the "form of God," and "equal with God." (Phil.2:6). And in Col.2:9, "*For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.*" In all these things he is the image of God, and is God, and yet he is distinct from the invisible God of which he is the image, in the fact that he is the Son, the Head of the church, which is his body and bride, for whom he would suffer and die in his flesh as the Son of man. In his Godhead he could not die, therefore he must become incarnate. "*But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.*" (Gal.4:4). "*Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil.*" (Heb.2:14). This he did, "*that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.*" (Eph.5:27). God sent his Son "*in the likeness of sinful flesh,(man), and for sin, to condemn sin in the flesh.*" He had all of our infirmities and temptations, bore all of our shame and guilt and the curse of our sins; and yet he was holy, harmless, and undefiled. He knew no sin, and no guile was found in his

mouth. The preceding Scriptures show that Christ is the express image of God in his Godhead, and that he became incarnate in the likeness of man. Now let us consider in what sense man was made in the image of God. If at this point I have not proved to you that it cannot be in body, in mind, in spirit or in attributes, then it would be useless for you to read further. Yet to my understanding the Scriptures very clearly and very distinctly show the nature and character of the similarity to God in which he created man.

There are those who suppose that Adam was the image of God in a spiritual sense; but the Scriptures deny this. Adam was made of dust, and God breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul. Nothing here was said about a spirit or spirituality. (Gen.2:7). In 1 Cor.15 we read, "*There is a natural body and there is a spiritual body. And so it is written, The first man Adam was made a living soul; the last man Adam was made a quickening spirit. Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual. The first man is of the earth, earthy; the second man is the Lord from heaven.*"

When God made Adam he made him upright (Eccles.7:29), he was sinless, for sin had not yet entered the world, and sin is the transgression of the law, and no law had yet been given. Adam knew neither good nor evil, for God said after Adam transgressed his commandment, "*Behold, the man*

is become as one of us, to know good and evil." (Gen.3:22). God said, "as one of us." Which one? Was it not Christ who was to come? We read in Rom.5:14 that Adam is a figure of him that was to come. Being a figure of Christ, he was necessarily in his likeness or image. Adam was the name given to the first man, but that name applies to all mankind, both male and female. In Gen. 1:27 we read, "*So God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them.*" And in Gen.5:1-2: "*This is the book of the generations of Adam. In the day that God created man, in the likeness of God made he him; male and female created he them; and blessed them, and called their name Adam, in the day when they were created.*"

Eve was in Adam in the creation, and God took one of his ribs and made her a woman. When God brought her to the man, Adam said, "*This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: and she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of man. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and they shall become one flesh.*" (Gen.2:24).

Adam was the progenitor of all mankind, and Eve was the mother of all living. (Gen.3:20). Adam was a figure of Christ and Eve was a type of the church. Join these together and we have a lovely image of Jesus and his bride, for she was in him before the foundation of the world. (Eph.1:4). Before the earth was made Christ said,

"Then I was by him, as one brought up with him: and I was his delight, rejoicing always before him, rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth; and my delights were with the sons of men." (Pro.9:30-31). And in Ps.139:15-16: "My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth, Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; when in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them." To me this shows that as all mankind were in the loins of Adam, so were the members of Christ in him. Paul wrote in Eph.5:30-32, ***"For we are members of his body, of his flesh and of his bones. For this cause shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church."*** This is in perfect accord with Gen. 2:24. And in Col.1:18 he said, "And he is the head of the body, the church."

The serpent tempted and deceived Eve, and she did eat of the forbidden fruit, and gave to Adam and he did eat. ***"Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression."*** (1 Tim.2:14). God said, ***"In the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die,"*** therefore Adam knew when he ate the forbidden fruit that he would die. He could not restore life to his wife, therefore he

willingly, because of his love for his bride, ate the fruit that he might be with her. This was in likeness of Christ, for Christ also loved his bride with an everlasting love, and he took her sins upon himself and would lay down his life for her, that he might redeem her from the curse of the law. He was the only one who could redeem her, for he had no sin of his own to condemn him; and she was his own. No man can redeem something that did not belong to him. She also has a living unity with him that can never be separated.

I would ask you to read Paul's admonition to wives and husbands in Eph.5, especially verses 22 through 33. I will here only quote a portion of them. ***"Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved his church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word. That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, of any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish."*** Christ offered himself once without spot to God, and by one sacrifice he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified. (Heb.9:14 & 10:14). ***"For both he that sanctifieth and they that are sanctified are all of one: for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren."*** (Heb.2:11). I have a hope, small as it may seem at times, that I am one whom he has sanctified with his precious blood.

Brethren, I hope that I have presented my views in such a manner

that you will understand what I see, at least in part, as the image in which God created man. If you do not now understand what I have written, I believe it would be of no value to you to extend my views further. May God bless you to understand each and every scripture according to his own good pleasure.

Brethren, my hope also is, that I am a part of the church, which is his glorious body, and at that last day when he shall return in the clouds with great glory, I shall see him as he is and be like him. We have borne the image of the earthly; let us hope that we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.

Elder C.C. Wilbanks

CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Editors of The Signs of the Times:

I do, so much love to read the "Signs". "O how I long to be blessed to see His Face in that sweet happy home." Hope I am one CHOSEN through God's eternal sweet love. There are so many dear sweet letters by the dear one's in the Signs. They are so sweet to my hungry, weary soul. I do love to read them. I am about 230 miles from my home church. The dear sweet ones are missed so much. I can't get used to not meeting the Dear Ones at Union Church. I am so weak I can hardly sit up long enough to write a letter. May the Blessed Lord Jesus continue you Dear Editors with

his loving mercy like He has thus far, if it be the Blessed Lord Jesus' will.

The reason I am just sending for the Signs just one year, I am almost ninety years old. God Bless you every one, and may it please him to Bless you all to pray for me, a poor sinner I need him to keep me. My prayers don't seem to go over my head and O how I long and crave the loving, guiding and keeping of our Blessed heavenly Lord Jesus. Certainly your least and less than the least Sister I hope in sweet Jesus.

Callie Clark

ARTICLES

BAPTIST MINISTER REMEMBERED FOR ROLE IN RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

SHOCKOE - Dan River Chapter of the Virginia Society Sons of the American Revolution remembered Baptist minister John Weatherford on Saturday Nov. 5. A wreath was placed on his grave near Shockoe in Pittsylvania County.

Weatherford played a significant role in obtaining religious liberty for all Americans.

He was born around 1743 in Charlotte County just a year after his parents moved from Hanover County. His family was among the dissenter families in the Richmond area dissatisfied with the established or state supported Church.

As a teenager, Weatherford was converted under the preaching of Samuel Harris, an inspirational Bap-

tist minister. Weatherford began to study the scriptures but could not understand them in light of Samuel Harris' preaching.

He went to various "divines," but found no satisfaction. Finally one is reported to have told him, "I perceive you will be a Baptist, and the Lord be with you."

Though uneducated Weatherford began to preach. In time and through hard study he learned to read the scriptures and successfully attracted listeners.

Like other dissenting preachers who did not support the state church, Weatherford was required to be licensed by the General Court at Williamsburg and preach only in a registered meeting house. Of course, only one was allowed per county.

By failing to comply with these laws, he was often fined and imprisoned, yet he remained courageous and would preach from a jail cell to crowds outside.

His preaching gained an audience because people realized that the established church was "religion created by law, devoid of genuine piety, with small emphasis on the saving grace of God."

The laws of colonial Virginia had required the people to pay taxes to support the established church and its clergy. Citizens not only resented this, but the inability to worship God according to their own initiatives, build their own churches, and have their own preachers. It left them disenchanting with "royal religion."

The simple services of the Baptist as well as the democratic government of their churches and the emotional approach appealed to the common people. They flocked to hear the dissenting preachers whose influence alarmed royal authorities.

The persecution of these nonconformist ministers brought lawyer Patrick Henry into the forefront of colonial politics as a powerful advocate of religious freedom.

Henry became a friend of persecuted preachers and especially helped Weatherford.

In 1773 Henry obtained an order for Weatherford's release after he had been in Chesterfield County jail for five months. Having no money to pay his jail fees, Weatherford was released after Henry anonymously paid them. Twenty years later, when they were neighbors in Charlotte County, Weatherford found out about Henry's generosity.

In the intervening years came American independence and by 1786 Virginians were granted the complete religious liberty that Weatherford insisted upon.

Weatherford reared a large family while living on the Charlotte-Campbell County border. In 1813 he moved to Halifax County and to Pittsylvania County in 1823.

Weatherford died Jan. 23, 1833, and is buried at Shockoe Baptist Church. His grave is a simple stone marker in a wooded area bearing the initials "JW."

A stone monument was erected in the church graveyard by the Roanoke

Baptist Association in 1906. Weatherford's role in obtaining religious liberty is memorialized by the inscriptions "An earnest and faithful minister of the Gospel" and "A sufferer for conscience sake."

During the upcoming Thanksgiving season, Dan River Chapter president Larry Aaron said we should remind ourselves of the perseverance and courage of men like Weatherford.

REVELATION 7

And after these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on the tree.



And after these things, which means things that happened in the preceding chapter, and after opening six of the seven seals, after the demolition of heathen deities, worship and magistrates in the Roman empire, this vision seems to point to a time when the church will enjoy a period of peace and tranquility after the blustering storms of pagan persecution ceased, and great numbers of God's elect were converted and sealed, between the time of the sixth seal and the seventh seal which brings on the seven trumpets. Before John sees that seal opened, a pause is made, and this vision is shown him to assure him that in spite of the devastations by the Gaths and Vandals, the rise, progress and power of Mahamet,

the dreadful apostasy of the church of Rome, and all the miseries of it, yet God would have throughout all this, and in every age of time, a sealed number, a true church, hidden and secured until the seventh angel has sounded his trumpet and time shall be no more, and the mystery of God shall be finished.

And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea. Saying, hurt not the earth neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads.

Hurt not the earth, etc. There was to be a period of time of peace for the church before the blowing of the seven trumpets, they let loose the winds which blew in the Gaths, Huns, Vandals, Sacraens and Turks into the empire and after that poured out the vials of God's wrath upon the Roman antichrist. Until we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads, men who serve God with grace in their hearts, from a principle of love, in the exercise of faith with reverence and Godly fear, with a view to his glory and worship him in spirit and in truth. The sealing of them does not mean the seal of the spirit, which is common to all the saints in all ages, but it denotes the hiding and concealing and so securing the saints amidst all the calamities of the empire and throughout the whole time of the Roman apostasy, from the first to the last, and respects the time when the church

fled into the wilderness and was hid and nourished with the hidden manna for a time and times and half a time. (Rev. 12-14).

And I heard the number of them which were sealed: and there were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel. Of the tribe of Judea were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Reuben were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Aser were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Manasses were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Simeon were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Levi were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Issachar were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Joseph were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Benjamin were sealed twelve thousand. After this I beheld and lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindred, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands;

And to a great multitude which no man could number, which pictures all the elect of God in the new Jerusalem church state, the bride, the Lamb's wife; these will appear to be a great multitude, not in comparison of the inhabitants that have dwelt upon the earth, with respect to these they are but few, a seed, a remanent, a little flock, but as considered in themselves, they are many who are ordained to eternal life, whose sins Christ has borne, for whom his blood has been

shed, whom he justified, and who are called by his grace, who are brought to glory, and who make up such a number as no man could number. Man can't number them, but indeed God can. He calls them all by name, and their names are written in the Lamb's book of life. They will be of all nations, kindred, people and tongues, therefore must consist of Jew and Gentile. These were some of all nations, and such as God has chosen, Christ has redeemed, and the Spirit called. God has not chosen all the Jews, but a remanent, according to the election of grace; nor all of the Gentiles, but has taken out of them a people for his name.

Stood before the throne and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes and palms in their hands. The throne of God will be in new Jerusalem. The tabernacle of God will be with men, and He will dwell among them. The Lamb will then be presented to the church, his bride, without spot, wrinkle or any such thing, and they will behold his glory and see him as he is, clothed with white robes, which shows their complete justification by his righteousness, and likewise, their spotless purity and holiness, sanctification and them being now perfect, which was before imperfection for now they will be clothed upon with their house from heaven and will have put off mortality and corruption and have put on immortality and incorruption and appear with Christ in glory.

And cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb.

And all the angels stood round about the throne, and about the elders and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God.

This is a wonderful picture of how the saints of God will be able to worship their God and savior in heaven. It will be perfect love, fellowship, adoration, praise and worship with nothing to hinder, slow down or stop this amazing worship. Talk about heaven, words can't describe it, but all his children here on earth who have tasted of this love have a faint but wonderful idea of the sweetness pictured here.

Saying Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen.

Here a seven-fold praise is given to God by the angels. They rightly give blessings to God who is blessed within himself and is the source of all blessedness to his creatures, angels and men, and also glory, the glory of his divine perfection who is the God of glory and of all his works of nature and providence and especially of men. And wisdom, by being the only wise God, where wisdom is to be seen in all the works of creation and in the government of the world and the scheme of redemption for fallen men; and thanksgiving for all mercies and favors temporal, spiritual and eternal enjoyed by angels or by men; and honor which is due him from all his creatures, as he is the creator of them, and from all his children, as he is their father; and power which he has ex-

erted in making all things out of nothing, supporting the whole universe in its being and in saving and preserving his own people; and might as he is the almighty God.

And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these arrayed in white robes? and whence came they? And I said unto him, sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

These are they that came up out of great tribulations. I believe this group is the group of saints who lived and have suffered such great and terrible things during the first three centuries of the church here on earth. The persecutions of the Christians by the Jews at the first publication of the Gospel, the persecution under the Roman emperors, both Pagan and Arian, and the cruelties and barbarities of the Roman antichrist, during the time of that apostasy, and particularly the last struggle of the beast which will be the hour of temptation that will come upon all the world.

Washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb, not in the blood of bulls and goats which could not take away sin nor in their own blood, their sufferings for Christ on which they could not depend, nor in any works of righteousness done by them which are imperfect and filthy and need washing, but in the blood of Christ which cleanseth from all sin. The robes which they wear were robes

of righteousness and garments of salvation, or their justification, which is by the blood of Christ. The act of washing from sin by the blood of Christ is here ascribed to these saints, and pictures the concern which faith has in the blood of Christ which deals with it for justification, peace and pardon for the removing of sin from the conscience and from cleansing from all impurity both of flesh and spirit. The effect of this is that their robes were made white, that is they were free from all sin, were without fault before the throne, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing. This shows that these persons had no trust in themselves or dependence on their own merits and works, but wholly trusted on and were dependent on the blood and righteousness of Christ which is the only way to come out of tribulation and enter the kingdom.

Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them. They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat. For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.

Just look at the situation these saints are now in. They are now before the throne of God continually. Can you even imagine anything that could be better? There will be no more hunger or thirst, no more sorrow, no more

pain, no more tears. This sounds wonderful to us here now, but think how much it must mean to a group who have passed through periods of great tribulation. Many in this group knew the hardships of suffering, hunger and persecution in so many ways that believers of today know nothing about. This chapter or the prophetic vision, I believe, show faith or pictures a great victory for the young church here on earth. The church had suffered much during that first 300 years of its building, but this vision here sets forth its victory. It pictures a relative peace for the church while God is sealing vast numbers of his chosen, but as it stated in verse three of this chapter, hold back the winds, hurt not the earth until God has sealed these chosen ones.

The book of Revelation shows some wonderful and, yes, some terrible things but one thing it shows throughout the book, regardless of how awful the scene, God is always taking care of and protecting his own. This peaceful scene here will soon change on earth as it is pictured in the next chapter. The people responsible for some of the suffering of the church will see things they need to see and realize that there is only one true and living God. In verse three it says "hold back these things for a little while". In the next chapter they are turned loose.

I hope and pray that I have been directed in writing this by the blessed God in heaven. I hope it offends no one, but rather it may be a little comfort to some.

A brother, I hope,
Frank Hunt

VOICES OF THE PAST

WALKING IN LOVE*By J.C. Philpot (1802-1869).*

The gospel directs and regulates our walk with and before our believing brethren. In that as in the service of God, "Love all defects supplies." Without a loving, affectionate spirit, it is impossible to perform those precepts which inculcate mutual forgiveness and forbearance, "kindness, tenderness of heart, bowels of mercies, humbleness of mind, meekness and long-suffering." To do all this from the heart, and not merely in lip, we must "walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us and given Himself for us." Without this love we may have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge; we may bestow all our goods to feed the poor, and give our body to be burned, and yet be nothing and have nothing. But if blessed and favoured with this love, we shall obey those precepts which direct our walk with our brethren unto God and from the heart.

Who that has seen much of Christian churches does not know the difference between the hard, cold, contentious, unforgiving spirit of some, and the tender, loving, affectionate spirit of others? Who that has a feeling heart has not been cut, wounded and grieved by the pride, obstinacy, selfishness, hardness and unkindness of the one, and been softened, melted

and blessed by the tenderness, meekness, humility, loving and affectionate spirit of the other? Love is so the spirit of the gospel, and therefore of the precept as a part of the gospel, that we may unhesitatingly say that few more break the precept than some of the very persons who most contend for what is called practice.

Practice is excellent, admirable, indispensable; and the want of it grievous, lamentable, disgraceful. But let us be clear in our views as to what practice is and what it means. If it be the mere doing of what are called good works, as alms-giving, visiting the sick, strictness of life, dress, deportment, accompanied with unblemished conduct, a sister of mercy will outshine us all, and Father Ignatius be pattern of holiness. It is plain, therefore, that something more is needful for acceptable obedience than external practice, and this something is love - love to the Lord and to His people.

Nor is it less evident that this love must be made manifest by our general spirit as well as our conduct; for love is not a mere occasional spurt, a now and then warming up, like a hot fit of the ague, or the slow, relenting gripe of a miser over a charity plate, but a living principle, ever discovering itself in words and acts of kindness, forbearance, self-denial, self-restraint, consideration of the feelings of others, meekness, gentleness, and a humble, affectionate, conciliating manner and bearing. You may be outwardly very consistent; but if you are harsh, censorious, self-willed, obsti-

nate, unforgiving; if you would sooner see the church torn to pieces with strife than give way on some point which involves neither truth nor conscience, but merely some concession of opinion, you are breaking the precept as much by your disobedience to its spirit as others by their disobedience to its letter. God, who searcheth the heart and reads our inmost thoughts, feelings, and motives, descries with unerring eye our spirit as well as our conduct; and if, indeed, we see light in His light, we shall read our own heart too, and distinguish between the proud, obstinate, self-willed, contentious spirit of the old man and the humble, forgiving, affectionate spirit of the new.

As, then, love must animate every precept that teaches us what we owe to the Lord for all His goodness and mercy to us, so must love equally animate every precept that guides and regulates what we owe to our believing brethren. Look at the following precepts and see if love be not the ruling, animating spirit of them all: "I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." What but love can enable us to walk "worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called?" Are we not called according to God's purpose, that we may love Him? And called also to walk in love with His people? How plain too are the words: "Let all bitterness, and wrath,

and anger, and clamor, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice. And be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you. Be ye, therefore, followers of God, as dear children; and walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given Himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savour." In a similar spirit writes the same "apostle of Jesus Christ" to the Colossians. "Put on, therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering; forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any; even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye. And, above all these things, put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness." O that this kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering, forbearance, and forgiveness more animated our spirits and guided our words and actions. There would then be no stormy church meetings, no broken friendships, no shy looks, no harsh words, no resentful memories, no magnifying and dwelling on infirmities and defects, no raking up of buried injuries, no malicious insinuations, or slanderous reportings. Having had so much forgiven us, we should freely forgive our offending brethren; and feeling ourselves to be the chief of sinners and less than the least of all saints, we should rather wonder at their forbearance of us, and admire their kindness to us, than cherish a resentful, unforgiving spirit, even

against those at whose hands we may have suffered real or imaginary wrong.

Elder J.C. Philpot

From Elder Lambert's book,
"Tried In The Furnace".

WHAT SHALL I CRY ?

February, 1953



ELDER E.J. LAMBERT

Please get your Bible and open to the 40th chapter of Isaiah and read the entire chapter. May the Lord now enable us to meditate together upon this

Scripture using the first part of the 6th verse as basis for our meditations: "*The voice said, 'The voice said, 'Cry,' and he said, 'What shall I cry?'*"

Cry means to utter, proclaim, groan, shriek or speak. When you cry it is involuntarily brought about by a stimulus that causes you to speak, proclaim, and say things that, were it not for this stimulating influence, you would not utter. We believe that the "Spirit of the Lord" is the stimulating influence that prompts God's people to cry. When the "Spirit of the Lord bloweth upon" us it prompts the opposite cry from that of the spirit of man. (See 7th verse). There is such a drastic change brought about by the direct operation of the Spirit that there always is a question. A question intimates that you do not know.

When the Spirit fell upon them on the day of Pentecost they asked, "What shall we do?" (Acts 2:37). When it ar-

rested Paul on the way to Damascus he asked, "Who art thou, Lord?" and, "What wilt thou have me to do?" (Acts 9: 5,6). Those who were pricked at heart by the Spirit on the day of Pentecost did not ask what may we do? But "what shall we do?" Paul did not ask, what do you want me to do? But, "What wilt thou have me to do?" The one in the text did not ask, what may I cry? but "What shall I cry?" All upon whom the Spirit of the Lord has blown are made to realize that God has all power and that they have no power. They are made to realize that "He speaks and it is done; He commands and it stands fast." When I was identified with another order of religion I outlined my sermons before-hand and delivered them according to outline. I knew what to cry because the Spirit had not withered my flesh and caused my goodness to fade. I was certain, sure and proud of myself. Since my flesh withered until I have no power and the goodness thereof faded until I have no self righteousness, I have been entirely dependent upon God to give me at the self-same hour light of thought and liberty of speech. I go groaning, wondering, "What shall I cry?" (I trust this has been brought about by the Spirit of the Lord blowing upon me.)

It has already been intimated that those who cry the Truth do so because of the stimulating influence of the Holy Spirit. They wonder what to cry because they have nothing of themselves to cry. When the voice says, "Cry," they know they must cry. I am persuaded that every time the Voice commands to cry the child of God does cry that which God puts in his mouth. Now, "What shall I cry?"

"All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field: The grass withereth, the flower fadeth: because the Spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it: surely the people is grass" (Isaiah 40: 6,7). How is all flesh as grass? The grass withers. Therefore, all flesh withers. How is all the goodliness of the flesh as the flower? The flower fadeth. Therefore, all the righteousness of the flesh fadeth. What causes the flesh to wither and the righteousness thereof to fade? The Spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it. Has the Spirit of the Lord ever blown upon you? If your natural power has so withered that you realize you cannot lift yourself up to the extent to be approved of God I am persuaded that the Spirit of the Lord has blown upon you. If all your righteousness has faded in beauty that it appears as filthy rags, I am convinced that the Spirit has blown upon you. "But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousness is as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away" (Isaiah 64: 6).

What shall I cry concerning all nations as a whole? Can they combine and unite their strength and accomplish anything of their own power? Let us see. All nations are "counted as the small dust of the balance" (Isa. 40:15). The small dust upon the balances that the merchant uses in weighing his commodities are so insignificant that no purchaser would ask the merchant to remove the small dust from the balances before weighing in order that what he has purchased would weigh less. If all nations combined would be so insig-

nificant, what would one man be? We are to cry that they are less than that! (Isaiah 40:7). ***"All nations before Him are as nothing; and they are counted to Him less than nothing and vanity."*** If all nations are counted to Him as nothing and less than nothing - what would one man be counted as? Using the expression of the late Elder A.D. Wall of Amity, Arkansas, ***"Nothings split open and both halves thrown away, would be about the best way I know to express the size of one man's power as counted by God."*** Who can boast of the power and righteousness of puny man in the face of these startling statements! God forbids His people to boast of their righteousness and power because of the withering and fading effects brought about by the Spirit.

What shall I cry concerning God? ***"It is He that sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers."*** ***"That bringeth the princes to nothing; He maketh the judges of the earth as vanity" (Isa. 40: 22,23).*** He did this to Hezekiah though he was a king. Each and every one upon whom the Spirit blows (read v. 24) is brought to nothing and vanity whether they be king, prince, judge, rich or poor, bond or free, - regardless of their status in this world they are all brought to the same low level. What shall I cry concerning that which God does for those upon whom He hath blown His Spirit to wither and fade into faintness and weariness? ***"He giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might He increaseth strength" (v. 29).*** When their life ends; He adds His life. (See

Isaiah 38:5). When their power becomes as vanity He gives His power. When they are weak then they become strong in the Lord. When the Lord is your strength you run and do not become weary because **"He is strong in power; not one faileth"** (v. 26).

What shall I cry to the Lord's people? **"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. He shall feed His flock like a shepherd; He shall gather the lambs with His arms, and carry them in His bosom."** I am persuaded that Jesus and the Spirit are the strong arm and hand that shall rule for Him in the lives of His people. He gathers, carries, and feeds those that are His. Jesus came to seek and save that which was lost. It is not left upon the volition of the creature to find God. This is the work of the strong arm and hand of God. He carries them in His bosom. They were chosen in Him before time began. They are bone of His bone. None of these shall fail for the Lord carries them and feeds them. **"My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me; and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father which gave them me is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand"** (St. John 10:27-29). We see the certainty of all the sheep of God hearing the voice, following after, and persevering unto life eternal without the loss of one.

What shall I cry to Jerusalem, God's people? **"Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned; for she hath received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins"** (Isa. 40: 1,2). Take notice that the cry is to be made only to God's people. This cry is to be of comfort to the church - or those whom He hath called out. God's ministry tells her that Jesus was the lone Warrior who accomplished this warfare by fulfilling the requirements of the law in her stead. He is a Warrior in whom God was well pleased. He came to **"give eternal life to as many as thou hast given Him"** (St. John 17:2). **"And this is the record, that God hath given us eternal life, and this life is in His Son"** (1 John 5:11).

Not only did He accomplish our warfare but also paid the penalty for our iniquity! He suffered and died that Holy Justice might be perfectly satisfied, the penalty for our sins fully paid; that we might appear before His judgment seat with a record without blemish. He did not stop by just accomplishing the law for us, which would have left us with our sins against us. Neither did He only atone for our sins, which would have left the task to us of strictly obeying the ten commandments with all of its supporting laws. But, He performed double for us. He reconciled us unto the Father by His death, and He also saves us by His life. (See Rom. 5:10.)

We receive of the Lord's hand double in all things pertaining to eternal life. He speaks and also does it. He commands and causes it to come to pass. Jesus is Author and Finisher of our faith. He works in us both to will and to do of His good pleasure. He commands to repent, and gives you repentance. He says, "Awake," and awakens you. He commands to live, and gives you life. He says, "Come unto me," and draws you to Him. He says, "Hear," and gives you a hearing ear. He says, "Cry," and puts the words into your mouth to cry. He says to Zion, "Get thee up into the high mountains," and sets them on high.

What shall I then cry concerning the salvation of God's people? I must cry that salvation is solely by the grace of God through the merits of Jesus Christ both in time and unto eternity. I must do as Jonah, acclaim that salvation is of the Lord. I must cry that it is certain and sure to each and every one of the subjects of His amazing grace. I must cry that boasting is excluded. I must praise Him from His wonderful goodness to the children of men. In Him we move and have our being. The breath that we breathe belongs to Him. Even natural possessions are in His hand and He distributeth them to whomsoever He will. All the hairs of your head are numbered by Him and not even a sparrow falls without Him.

What shall I cry to the discouraged? God providentially cares for you and so sovereignly controls all things that they work together for your good. God has a noble purpose for you to fulfill in life and He will so protect you and

guide you that you will completely fulfill this purpose before He takes you from this sojourn of sin and sorrow. Even though you feel so insignificant, God's purpose in your being here is just as important as the greatest ministerial gift that has ever graced the pulpit. May God bless you to take courage with these thoughts and press on toward the mark of the prize of the high calling - looking unto Jesus who is the Author and Finisher of this precious faith. God had so arranged, fixed and decreed that we have need of each other and we do serve one another; thereby serving Christ. (See Matt. 25:31-40). We are made to do as Paul - thank God for the brethren.

What shall I cry concerning our conduct one toward another? Forgive a brother his trespasses as our heavenly Father hath forgiven us. Esteem a brother higher than ourselves. Do good unto all men; especially unto the Household of Faith. As much as in you is, live peaceably with all men. Do unto them as you would have them do unto you. *"And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves: for charity shall cover the multitude of sins. Use hospitality one to another without grudging. As every man hath received the gift, even so minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God"* (1 Peter 4:8-10). *"But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief or as an evil doer, or as a busy body in other men's matters - yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on this behalf"* (1 Peter

4:15, 16). As the body has need of each and every one of its members, so the church has need of each other.

What shall I cry to God? *"Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy loving kindness: according to the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me"* (Psalms 51: 1,10). Perform for me that my walk and conversation may be godly in this life. *"Do good in thy good pleasure unto Zion."* Cause strife and confusion to cease - if it be Thy will - that God's little children may live together in sweet fellowship one with another. Cause us to be content with our lot and reconciled unto Thy will. Give us this day our daily bread. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. Finally, save us in that eternal abode where and when all will be peace, love, joy, and fellowship forever and ever is the prayer that we beseech in the name of Jesus Christ who art Thy Son, and our Redeemer. Amen.

Elder E.J. Lambert

"And the cup was found in Benjamin's sack." (Genesis 44:12)

The sons of Jacob had already been down to Egypt for corn, and had left Simeon there bound and in prison. When the corn was gone their father said unto them, "Go again, and buy us a little food." Judah assured his father that they could not possibly go unless Benjamin accompanied them. Jacob hesitated, for he had lost Joseph, and Benjamin, the only remaining child

of his beloved wife Rachel, was very dear to him; but at last he bade them take of the fruit and carry it down to the man as a present. Also said he, Take double money in your hand, and the money that ye brought again in the mouth of your sacks, carry it again in your hand, and take Benjamin; and Jacob concluded, I am bereaved."

They returned to Egypt with Benjamin, and when Joseph saw them, he commanded the ruler of his house to slay and make ready, for these men shall dine with me at noon. The brethren were filled with fear because they were brought into Joseph's house, thinking that Joseph sought occasion against them. They communed with the steward of Joseph's house regarding the money that was returned in their sacks, but he said, "Peace be to you! fear not." When Joseph came home they bowed themselves to him to the earth, and he lifted up his eyes and saw his brother Benjamin, his own mother's son, and said, "Is this your younger brother, of whom ye spake unto me? And he said, God be gracious unto thee, my son."

Joseph made haste, for his bowels did yearn upon his brother, he sought where to weep, and entered his chamber and wept there. After he had washed his face and refrained himself, he commanded his servants to set on bread. His brethren were then seated before him, the first-born according to his birthright, and the youngest according to his youth; and the men marvelled one at another, and Joseph sent messes unto them from before him, but Benjamin's mess was five times as much as any of theirs. Then Joseph commanded his steward to fill their sacks with food, as

much as they could carry, and to put every man's money in his sack's mouth; and to put his silver cup in the sack's mouth of the youngest, as well as his corn money.

When they were gone out of the city, and not yet far off, Joseph commanded the steward, "Up, follow after the men; and when thou dost overtake them, say unto them, Wherefore have ye rewarded evil for good?" He overtook them, and spake unto them these words. Then took they down every man his sack to the ground, and opened every man his sack. The search began at the eldest and left at the youngest, "and the cup was found in Benjamin's sack."

Here we shall cease to follow the narrative, as our intention is to write of the cup in its spiritual significance; also of the characters with whom this cup is found. Rachel, the beloved wife of Jacob, bear him two sons: Joseph first and then Benjamin. Jacob loved Joseph more than all his sons, and Benjamin, being the youngest, was also greatly beloved, for it is written, Jacob's life was bound up in the lad's life. Joseph was therefore Benjamin's elder brother, and Joseph being a lively type of Christ, Benjamin, to our understanding, is a wonderful type of the church in the gospel dispensation. The steward is the servant of Joseph, and represents the gospel ministers, who are stewards of the manifold grace of God.

It was the steward who ministered to the brethren when in distress over their returned money. He said, "Peace be to you! fear not: your God, and the God of your father, hath given you treasure in your sacks." He it was also who searched the sacks; he stood in Joseph's stead

and spoke the words given him by Joseph. He also declared that they had the divining cup, and they denied it, for the thing was impossible with them. So wherever there are those whose iniquities encompass them around, they stand before their Judge self-condemned, depending entirely upon the mercy of him with whom they have to do. Such, in their confession, deny that they have the cup.

The cup represents the sorrows, travail and separation which Joseph experienced while passing through the afflictions that were his lot according to God's purpose. The cup therefore was a type of the cup of our Lord Jesus Christ. He came down to the Egypt of this world where he was crucified, was sold by his brethren, and at Gethsemane he said, "*My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death.*" He fell on his face and prayed, saying, "Oh my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me! never-the-less, not as I will, but as thou wilt."

"How bitter that cup, no heart can conceive, Which he drank quite up that sinners might live."

As Joseph partook of his cup, he divined the very things transpiring in his life to be according to the purpose of God revealed to him in the two dreams given him long ago. It was in a sense of loneliness he partook of that cup. It could not be shared with the Egyptians: he was alone. As our Lord partook of his cup, he divined, and could say, "This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears." He had a full cup. "He was oppressed, and he was afflicted; yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep

before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth." This blessed Person is none other than our Elder Brother, though we knew it not. We have seen him pierced, and we mourn for him; when brought into judgment, we expect chains and death, and say, "What shall we speak?" We know not what to say, nor how to clear ourselves.

The brethren on their second visit for corn, dined with Joseph; and it is written, "Joseph made haste, for his bowels did yearn upon his brother: and he sought where to weep; and he entered into his chamber, and wept there." Whilst here on earth our dear Redeemer ate with publicans and sinners, and his bowels of love yearned over them. Often in the secret chamber of his solitary life, he offered supplication with strong cries and tears for them, and for all his brethren. It is said that Joseph took and sent messes unto all of them from before him, but Benjamin's mess was five times so much as any of their's.

The least notice or favor of our Lord to a poor sinner, is not according to good works, but according to his love, and love is the fulfilling of the law. While the brethren representing the Jews received the law, yet Benjamin (the gospel church) received five times as much: which signifies a fulfilled law. With those who are born of the same mother (Jerusalem above) the cup is found. They say it is not in their sack of life, yet they are grieved for the afflictions of Joseph: they are vile, sinful. When they would do good, evil is present with them. This is my cup. Yet when it is shown to them, they tremble, for they fear it is stolen, that they are taking that which belongs to another. They feel God-forsaken, are fearful of death and offer supplications with strong cries and tears; they hate

sin, but find it in their members, and are made to cry out, "Not my will, but thine be done."

As the steward, or preacher, by the Holy Spirit's guidance, searches, the cup is found: and it is in Benjamin's sack; that is, in his who is the smallest and least in the family. There is little Benjamin with their Ruler, partaking of the same cup. "And of Benjamin he said, The beloved of the Lord shall dwell in safety by him; and the Lord shall cover him all the day long, and he shall dwell between his shoulders."

The rest of the brethren could return to their father, but Benjamin shall dwell in safety by him. Only in a realizing sense of our own weakness, is there safety; and then we know we have no righteousness; nevertheless our near kinsman Jesus the Lord shall cover us with his righteousness all the day long, and we shall dwell between his shoulders. What a safe place for poor weak sinners: between his shoulders. He carries the lambs in his bosom. It is also written, "The government shall be upon his shoulder." As partakers of his cup, though babes, they yet divine and see things that are hid from the wise and prudent. They clearly discern what holy men of old wrote as moved by the Holy Ghost. To the Jews under the legal covenant, it was not revealed, but it is revealed unto us. In these things we have fellowship with God, and are partakers of his cup. Not one shall come short of his glory, for if we suffer with him, we shall also reign with him. The father's life was bound up in the life of the child. Jesus, our Elder Brother, is God-man, therefore in him God's life is bound up in our life.

As Joseph made himself known unto his brethren, so does our Lord Jesus make himself known with the glory of a risen Lord, who, like a bridegroom coming out of his chamber, rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race. He showed to the two disciples on their way to Emmaus that his going forth is from the end of heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it. His blessed presence gives joy and gladness; and the five changes of raiment given Benjamin, are but a faint type of the blessed raiment with which, from time to time, his bride, the gospel church is adorned.

G.R.

(The above Editorial by Elder Ruston was published in the Signs August 1, 1923. It was his first after his announcement that he would consent to be an associate editor.)

MEETINGS

OLD PINE CREEK CHURCH



The annual Old Pine Creek Church meeting will be held this year on the 4th of July.

The church is located off Hwy. #221, 5 miles north of Floyd, Va. Those coming from Floyd, turn left on to road #682. Those coming from Roanoke, turn right on to road #682.

All lovers of the truth are invited and especially all ministers of our faith and order.

Elder Hale Terry

MINUTES OF THE PRESBYTERY

Pursuant to the request of Knob Primitive Baptist Church, Franklin County, Virginia. A presbytery met March 11, 1995 at 2 o'clock PM, for the examination of Brother Wayne Hundley and if found qualified in accordance with the written word of God at the satisfaction and discretion of their judgement ordain the above mentioned to the full work of the office of Deacon.

The solemnity was begun with prayer by Elder Larry Hollandsworth. All Elders of our faith and order present constituted the presbytery. Those present were: Elders Clarence Stone, Hale Terry, Carl Terry, Larry Hollandsworth, Junior Conner and Leonard Brammer.

All Deacons were asked to sit together. 24 were present.

The presbytery was organized by electing Elder Clarence Stone as Moderator and Deacon W.G. Parsons as Clerk. Elder Leonard Brammer was chosen to perform the examination of the candidate. Deacon Joe Cahill having been duly appointed by Knob Church in conference Feb. 11, 1995 as spokesman for the Church delivered Brother Hundley to the presbytery.

Examination was made by Elder Leonard Brammer using scriptural reference: The Acts Ch. 6 V. 3-6 and 1st Timothy Ch. 3. V 8-13. The presbytery being satisfied with the examination and answers given by the candidate, administered the laying on of hands with the ordination prayer being delivered by Elder Carl Terry. The charge was delivered to the candidate by Elders Hale Terry and Junior Conner

using scriptural reference the written word of God.

The Moderator asked Knob Church if they were satisfied with the work of the presbytery which was answered in the affirmative.

A certificate of ordination was presented to Brother Hundley and the right hand of fellowship and brotherhood given. The ordained Brother was delivered back to the Church an ordained Deacon of the Old School Primitive Baptist Church at Knob. The minutes consisting the work of the presbytery were read and adopted.

The presbytery was dismissed with prayer by Elder Larry Hollandsworth.

Elder Clarence Stone - Moderator
Deacon W.G. Parsons - Clerk

MINUTES OF THE PRESBYTERY



ursuant to the request of Thompson Grove Church, a Presbytery met at Thompson Grove on 4-1-95 for the examination of Brother Robert Smith if found qualified in accordance with the written word of God, at the satisfaction and discretion of the judgment, ordain the above mentioned to the full work of the office of deacon.

The solemnity was begun with prayer by Elder Willard Cox. All Elders of our faith and order present constituted the Presbytery. Those present were Elder Lane Carter; Elder Willard Cox; Elder W.T. Conner; Elder Hale Terry; Elder Larry Hollandsworth; Elder Noel Conner and Elder Junior Conner.

Deacons present were as follows: Jamie Cooper; R.W. Akers; Herbert Dodson, Lester Hagood, Wilton Sutphin; John Plunkett; Tiras Conner, Woodrow Abshire; Jesse Tyree; C.T. Abshire; Alfred Ratcliff; Grover Semones; Grey Ingram; Andrew Agee; Wade Poff; Julian Rutrough; Allen Terry; Donald Agee; Guy Holly; Hansel Conner, Fred Murphy; Harry Perdue.

The Presbytery was organized by electing Elder Lane Carter as moderator; Jamie Cooper as clerk; Elders Hale Terry & Larry Hollandsworth were chosen to lead in the examination of the candidate. Elder Noel Conner having been duly appointed by Thompson Grove Church, delivered Brother Robert Smith to the presbytery. Examination was made by Eld. Hale Terry and all present Elders invited to participate using Scripture reference 1st Timothy Ch. 3 - V 1-14. The presbytery being satisfied with the examination and answers given by the candidate, administered the laying on of hands, with the Ordination prayer being delivered by Elder W.T. Conner. The charge was delivered to the candidate by Elder Junior Conner.

The Moderator asked the Presbytery if they were satisfied with the work of the Presbytery which was answered in the affirmative.

A certificate of ordination was presented to Brother Robert Smith and the right hand of fellowship was given. The ordained Brother was delivered back to the church as an ordained Deacon of the Old School Primitive Church at Thompson Grove. The minutes consisting of the work of the

presbytery were read and approved. The Presbytery was dismissed with prayer by Elder Hale Terry.

Elder Lane Carter, Moderator
 Jamie E. Cooper, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR MARCH 1995

Maxey R. Delp, VA	\$10.00
Mrs. Mary Russell, TX	
In memory Eld. E.J. Lambert....	32.00
Mrs. Lillian C. Wood, NC	2.00
Joseph Plaster, VA	2.00
Victor H. Laws, MD	17.00
Bill Slack, KY	2.00
Levie D. Goard, VA	5.00
Carl L. Bryant, LA	2.00
Otis N. Freeman, AL	10.00
Levie Thompson, VA	2.00
Mrs. Reba Wise, TX	3.00
Banks H. Conner, VA	2.00
Mrs. Glenn Savage, KY	10.00
Tim C. Barron, TX	7.00
Frank Hunt, VA	12.00
A Friend From NC	482.00
Mrs. Frances Townley, AR	2.00
Charles Oakley, NC	2.00
Ms. Joyce Farley, TX	10.00
Tom G. Tompson, NC	2.00
Edgar & Carlie Cook, FL	5.00
Mrs. Rebecca Smith, FL	2.00
Raymond Oxley, WV	2.00
Samuel Blankenship, VA	2.00
Mrs. Mildred Hanks, VA	2.00
Eld. Noel F. Conner, VA	12.00
Mrs. E.J. Marslender, NC	2.00
Mrs. Clara Jones, VA	7.00
Pete Phillips, VA	2.00
Tiras Conner, VA	2.00
Eld. Theron Jones, LA	2.00
Eld. Robert Miles, FL	2.00

OBITUARIES

BROTHER LEMUEL C. BRANCH

With sorrow for our loss but joy for his great gain, we record the death of Brother Lemuel Carlos Branch on October 22, 1994 at the age of 77.

Brother Branch was born in Premier, West Virginia on September 4, 1917, a son of the late Thomas Green Branch and Lucinda French Branch. On October 27, 1942 he was united in marriage to Hildred Napier. To their union of nearly 52 years were born five children: Alfred "Bill" Branch and Carlos R. Branch, Mrs. Sylvia B. Nolte, Mrs. Linda B. Margraff, and Mrs. Pearl B. Koch, all of whom survived him.

For a number of years Brother Branch lived in Ohio and West Virginia, where he worked in coal mines for his natural living. During that time he united with Davy Primitive Baptist Church at Davy, West Virginia, and was baptized by the late Elders S.J. Priddy and C.A. Marshall. Later, he removed his membership to Glenwood Park Church at Princeton, West Virginia. He and sister Branch came to Liberty Church by letter during the 1st weekend in May 1990.

In his last years Brother Branch was much afflicted by sickness and disease. He spent a good bit of time in the hospital at Roanoke, Virginia, but was at home when the Lord called him from this life. His funeral service was held at Arrington-Bussey Chapel in

Rocky Mount, Virginia by his pastor, Elder John T. Wingfield. His body was laid to rest in the Liberty Church Cemetery, to await the Second Coming of the Lord from heaven.

In addition to Sister Branch and the children, Brother Branch was survived by two brothers, Brother Howard Branch of Sophia, West Virginia and Bernice Branch of Phoenix City, Alabama; and three sisters, Mrs. Sylvia Barber of Abingdon, Virginia, Mrs. Goldie Saunders of Oklahoma City, Oklahoma, and Mrs. Allie Cook of Damascus, Virginia; eight grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren; and several nieces and nephews.

We agreed to prepare three copies of this obituary: one for our church records, one to be given to his family, and one to be submitted to the Signs of the Times for publication.

Done by order of Liberty Church in conference, the 31st day of December 1994.

Elder John T. Wingfield, Mod.
Brother Paul A. Puckett, Clerk

OSCAR PERRY MURPHY

It is with sad heart I attempt to write brother Oscar Perry Murphy's obituary. He was born July 31, 1903, in Union County, Smackover, Arkansas. He lived in Houston, Texas, for the last fifty plus years where he passed away December 22, 1994, at age of 91 years. Brother Murphy was the son of brother George Francis Murphy and Sister Jennie Murphy who were members of Rehobeth Primitive Baptist Church at Eldorado, Arkan-

sas. His Father was a deacon. Brother O.P. married Lucille McBee some forty plus years ago. He had two sons and a daughter, Francis Perry Murphy and another son preceded him in death, and Mary Helen Murphy Knighten both of Houston, Texas. Brother O.P. had 12 grandchildren, 27 great-grandchildren, and 1 great, great grandson. He has two surviving sisters, Emma Dell Murphy of Smackover, Arkansas, and Patty R. French of Baton Rouge, Louisiana.

Brother O.P. Murphy joined Shepherd Fold Primitive Baptist Church on November 6, 1960, and was baptized by the late Elder W.W. Fleet. Brother Murphy came under the hands of a presbytery and was ordained as a deacon of Shepherd Fold Primitive Baptist Church on January 28, 1989. He served the church well as a deacon and dearly loved the church and his brethren. Brother O.P. believed in the doctrine of grace and the sovereignty of God. He was faithful to help his church and brethren. Brother Murphy dearly loved to hear preaching and sing the songs of Zion. His funeral was on December 23, 1994, and Forest Park Lawndale Funeral Home Chapel with Elder G.D. Shipman, his assistant pastor, officiating. He was laid to rest in the Forest Park Lawndale Cemetery to await the second coming of Christ.

A copy to be sent to his wife, and one to the Signs of the Times, and one to be put on the church book. Approved in conference on April 1, 1995.

Written by Elder Gerald Shipman

Signs of the Times

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Route 1, box 420, Keeling, Virginia 24566

SONG

***I LOVE thy kingdom, Lord,
The house of thine abode;
The church our blest Redeemer
saved***

***With his own precious blood.
I love thy church, O God,
Her walls before thee stand,
Dear as the apple of thine eye,
And graven on thy hand.***

***For her my tears shall fall,
For her my prayers ascend,
To her my cares and toils be
given
Till cares and toils shall end.
Beyond my highest joy
I prize her heavenly ways;
Her sweet communion, solemn
vows,
Her hymns of love and praise.***

***Jesus, thou friend divine,
Our Saviour and our King,
Thy hand, from every snare
and foe,
Shall great deliverance bring.
Sure as thy truth shall last,
To Zion shall be given
The brightest glories earth can
yield,
And brighter bliss of heaven.***

Dwight

CONTENTS

EDITORIAL 146
 Elder Richard H. Campbell

ARTICLES 150
 Sent in by Elder N.F. Conner
 (Preached by Mr. J. Raven)
 The Editors (William Tyndale)

VOICES OF THE PAST 160
 Elder J.C. Philpot
 Elder E.J. Lambert

MEETINGS 165

CONTRIBUTIONS 166

OBITUARIES 167
 Ralph Lucas
 Kathleen Graham Martin
 Benjamin P. Stanaland

EDITORIAL

The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want.



ELDER R.H. CAMPBELL

Many scriptures in the bible refer to God and to Christ as a shepherd, and to the children of God as sheep. This is, in fact, a very

good analogy of the bond and the relationship that exists between them as they live out their lives here in this time world and experience their salvation as it unfolds in their life. It is a beautiful description of the total dependence of the sheep on the shepherd for their every need, and the care,

concern and commitment of the shepherd to the sheep. He is constantly with the sheep and never leaves nor forsakes them day or night; so is God's care for this chosen vessels of mercy prepared unto glory. As David said Psa. 139 vs. 7-10 "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." He could never stray away and become lost because God is everywhere present and aware of everything that affects the elect, and manifests himself to them in ways that causes them to realize that he is still there.

David was a shepherd in his young life, tending his father's sheep, and he knew, from experience, the care and the concern that the shepherd had for his flock. He experienced it to the point of placing his own life in peril for the sake of his own, when he faced the lion and the bear that attempted to take a lamb from the flock. He slew the lion and the bear but he knew the concern that he felt in defending his own. When David came to the battle lines as the children of Israel faced the Philistines and Goliath challenged the Israelites to face him; David told Saul that he would fight the Philistine giant. Saul said he could not fight him because he was but at youth and Goliath had been a man of war from his youth. David then related his experience as a shepherd and said as the

Lord had delivered him from the paws of the lion and the bear he would deliver him out of the hands of this Philistine: and Saul said to David, go and the Lord be with thee. When David faced Goliath he did not say what he was going to do to him, but rather, *"Thou comest to me with a sword, and with a spear and with a shield: but I come to thee in the name of the Lord of hosts, the God of the Armies of Israel, whom thou hast defied."* David knew where his strength was and that it would not fail him because it was always present with him.

In the entire Twenty Third Psalm, David was blessed to leave on record, in just six short verses, volumes of truth that have given comfort and inspiration to the wayfaring pilgrims down through the ages as they trust in the glorious doctrine of God to strengthen them in their travels under the watchful care of the Shepherd and Bishop of their souls. They have provided love to comfort them in times of distress; deliverance from enemies that would overwhelm them if left in their own strength; food to sustain them when they hunger and thirst after righteousness; restores their hope when they are cast down and fear that it is clean gone forever. The shepherd never leaves nor forsakes them regardless of what they may do, as David said in his last days *"Although my house be not so with God; yet he had made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure: for this is all my salvation, and all my desire, although he make it not to grow."*

David fell and did things that were a grievous sin against God, but God did not cast him away, but continued to be with him in all of his ways, to the end. David realized that God was with him when he fled before Saul and his son Abraham when they were seeking his life: he could witness with Paul when he wrote, *"What shall we say then to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us."*

Ezekiel Chap. 34 vs. 11-12 "For thus saith the Lord God: behold I even I will both search my sheep, and seek them out, as a shepherd seeketh out his flock in the day that he is among his sheep that are scattered: so will I seek out my sheep, and deliver them out of all places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day." The false shepherds had ceased caring for the sheep in Ezekiel's day and began feeding off of the flock in the same manner that the sons of Eli had ceased to follow the law in eating of the sacrifice in their day: they refused to eat the boiled meat and insisted on taking their portion out, before it was boiled, and roasting it on the open fire. The shepherds in Ezekiel's day had thus ceased to follow their mission and left caring for the sheep. He is writing, above of the day in which the true shepherd (Christ) will come and seek out his flock that have been scattered and confused by the false shepherds. The true shepherd will, in that day, gather the scattered sheep, bring them to their own land and feed them upon the mountains of Israel; the land which he gives them, and

cause them to lie down in a fat pasture. God's promise, in that day is that he will set one shepherd over them, even his servant David, he shall feed them and he shall be their true shepherd: He will make with them a covenant of peace and they shall dwell safely in the wilderness. The sure and certain promises of God, by the mouth of Ezekiel, declaring the coming of the Messiah who will fulfill all things that are written of him, as the shepherd of the sheep.

Before Jesus was born into the world there was a period of about five hundred years in which there were no inspired writings to give a record of God's dealing with his people; there was no open vision and seemingly the scattering of the flock mentioned by Ezekiel continued so that the temple and temple service were far removed from what they were in David's day. The worship service had deteriorated so that they were mere formalities and Jesus told them, "*Ye have made the commandments of God of none effect by your tradition.*" It was into this setting that Jesus was born and began to preach and to do all of the things that the law and the prophets had written about him. He began to do, in deed and in spirit those things that David recorded in the twenty-third Psalm. As the work of the Shepherd; the providing of all things needful to the sheep.

Luke 19 vs. 10, "*For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost.*" These words were spoken by Jesus to Zacheus when he went to his home to abide with him.

Jesus did not come to make sheep or convert and save the world, but rather he came to seek and save those that were scattered and lost from the fold as recorded in Ezekiel: those that had wandered aimlessly in the wilderness with no one to guide or to direct their way, or comfort their souls. They were in a land of great darkness with no light and Jesus came to them saying, "*I am the light of the world: he that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life.*" Oh, the joy that fills the heart when one has lived all of their life in darkness, not even realizing it, and are suddenly made to see the light and bask in the beauty and glory of it. This is what happened to the Apostle Paul, on the road to Damascus and to all of God's children when the light first shines in their heart and soul. They then can shout from the house top, the Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want: I shall not fear what man may do to me; I will not want for anything because I have everything; I know the shepherd. Jesus told them, "*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.*" And by revelation of the spirit they believe and rejoice in these truths and claim them as their heritage and go by faith in the way of peace. Jesus told others, "*But ye believe not because ye are not my sheep, as I said unto you. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life: and they shall never*

perish. Neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand."

John 10 vs. 2, "*But he that entereth in by the door is the shepherd of the sheep. To him the porter openeth: and the sheep hear his voice: and 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. And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him, for they know not the voice of strangers.*" In the sheepfold there are many flocks kept at night that they not wander off and get lost or killed. When the shepherds come in the morning to take the sheep out to pasture he does not have to find a brand or identifying mark to know his sheep: he calls them by name and they follow him because they know his voice. They will not follow another shepherd even if all of the rest of the sheep follow one shepherd: they will follow the voice of their shepherd, the one who has protected them and demonstrated his care for them: the one who would leave the ninety and nine and come to them in their time of need or distress. They will follow the one who has found them the green pastures, the still quiet waters and who restored their faith when they found they could not hold onto it in their own strength.

"When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all his holy angels with him then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory; and before him shall be gathered all nations: and

he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: and he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world: "The analogy continues to the end; The shepherd who has led them all the days of their lives; calls them all by name and leads them out of the wilderness where they have been; separates them from the world around them, and proclaims that they are his; the ones for whom he laid down his life. As Jesus said in his prayer unto the Father, "I have glorified thee on earth: I have finished the work thou gavest me to do."

The Apostle Paul's benediction in his letter to the Hebrews Chap. 13 vs. 20, "*Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant. Make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory forever and forever. Amen.*" Surely goodness and mercy shall follow us all the days of our lives and we shall dwell in the house of the Lord forever.

In bonds of love,
Elder Richard H. Campbell

 ARTICLES

 THE JUSTIFICATION OF
 THE UNGODLY

Sermon preached by Mr. J. Raven (either at Smallfield or Redhill) on Easter Sunday, April 9th, 1950

TEXT: *"Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us" (Rom. 8:33, 34).*

The apostle sets before us in this chapter the ground of his rejoicing, of his rejoicing over sin, indwelling sin and all the power of the enemy, and he opens the chapter on this note: *"There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus."* *"He found that good and solid ground to stand upon. The ground upon which he stood was nothing other than the finished work of the Lord Jesus Christ, yea even "God which always causeth us to triumph in Christ"; and in the midst of all the soul agony that he experienced by reason of the sin that dwelt and worked within him, he was enabled to "rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh."* He realized that though he found so much evil within him as he said, *"In me (that is in my flesh)*

dwelleth no good thing," although he had continual matter for mourning and for self-loathing, yet he was enabled to believe this, to find comfort and sure standing in this: *"There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus."*

Then in the words preceding our text he says, *"What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?"* He had just spoken of the foreknowledge of God and His predestinating grace, His purpose of grace toward His people, and we have that wonderful chain, as it has been called: *"Moreover whom He did predestinate, them He also called: and whom He called, them He also justified: and whom He justified, them He also glorified. What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?"* He saw salvation to be the work of God alone. Salvation had its rise in the bosom of God; it was the product of His eternal love and of His mighty power. So the apostle goes on to say, *"If God be for us, who can be against us?"* O happy is the man that has the God of Jacob for his Refuge, happy is the man who has the Christ of God for his Friend.

"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." We notice in reading our lesson (Romans 5 and 6) how that the apostle, in setting forth the wonders of divine love and what that love had done, said, *"When we were yet without strength, in due time Christ died for the*

ungodly"; and again, "God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. The business of the Lord Jesus Christ as He dwelt here below, was with sinners. The gospel He had to preach, the things that His Father commanded Him to preach, were for sinners. "The Spirit of the Lord is upon Me, because He hath anointed Me to preach the gospel to the poor"; and He said in His message to John the Baptist, "The poor have the gospel preached to them," The gospel which the Lord Jesus preached was only suited to sinners, to poor people: there is nothing in it for the Pharisees or the Scribes, or for the lawyers who were so full of pride and self-conceit, who had so much religion that was only of the flesh, and thought themselves to be healthy and in no need of a Saviour. There is nothing in the gospel for them. "Woe, woe it was to them. Woe unto you that laugh now!" O how unspeakable solemn it is to come under the woe pronounced by the Christ of God! But the gospel that He preached was for the healing of the broken hearts and wounded spirits. It was for the comfort of those who were cast down, for the relief of those who were burdened and the deliverance of those who were captives and in the prison house.

So in that wonderful fifth chapter we see the love of God set forth in this: "God commendeth His love towards us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." Are you a

sinner? "Though all are sinners in God's sight, there are but few so in their own," said Mr. Hart. Where are the people who are sinners in their own sight? Sinners by deep, heart-felt conviction? Sinners who can do nothing towards their own salvation, and who can produce nothing, no not a thought that is good? Guilty, polluted, helpless? O the gospel is for such. "While we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." And that was the outpouring of the love of God, as we read, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee." The Father draws poor sinners to Himself through His dear Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, who said, "No man cometh unto the Father but by Me."

"Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect?" God's chosen ones, people whom God hath set apart for Himself. "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect?" However men may quibble the fight against it, the doctrine of election and of predestination shines like a sunbeam throughout the whole of the Scriptures. From Genesis through to the end of Revelation you find that doctrine clearly set forth, and you cannot deny it without making a lie of the Word of God.

Well, here the apostle says, "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth." Now, those who are called "God's elect," His chosen people whom He foreknew and whom He had predestinated to be conformed to the image of His Son, and whom He had justified in

and through Christ Jesus, and whom He ultimately will glorify, these people are, every one of the, sinners worthy of everlasting condemnation. One says, *"My sins deserve eternal death,"* but then God had found a way whereby His justice can maintain all her rights, whereby the perfections of the Godhead can receive the fullest honour, and yet sinners be justified. O, it is a wonderful thing to contemplate that God can be just and yet be the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus, Of course, if you think of sin as a trifling thing, then justification will be in your view a trifling thing, but if you are led to view sin and feel sin as that hideous monster, that hateful thing that it really is, to be justified will be a great matter to you. *"How should man be just with God?"* How can a sinner stand in the presence of infinite holiness, in the presence of Him who is of purer eyes than to behold iniquity? *"Wherewith shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself before the high God?"* Such questions will be burning questions in your heart and conscience, and until the Spirit of God reveals Himself the way of salvation, you will not, for the life of you, be able to see how the thing can be done. You may be familiar with the letter of the gospel, you may be familiar with such phrases as this, *"Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners,"* and the chiefest of them, but the words alone will convey nothing to your heart. It is when the Holy Spirit conveys the words with power and unction to your heart that you feel and rejoice in the truth of them.

Well, for God to justify a sinner is a great matter. How can He do it? How does He do it? Why, He sent *"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."* That is the way God has taken. *"He spared not His own Son."* *"God so loved the world, That He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."* He *"spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all."* We read of Christ that *"being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain."* O what does it all mean? There was something more in the crucifixion of the Lord Jesus than His being taken by wicked hands and crucified something more than that. *"It pleased the Lord to bruise Him"; "The Lord hath laid on Him,"* said Isaiah, *"the iniquity of us all."* The Lord Jesus Christ stood as the responsible Surety of His people. He loved the church and gave Himself for it, He bore her sin in His own body on the tree. He stood before His Father with the guilt of innumerable transgressors, the guilt of multitudes of people, laid to His charge, and that guilt was punished in Him. *"It pleased the Lord to bruise Him."* It means just this, that the God against whom we have sinned, came and took the punishment, yes,

"The Offended dies to set the offender free."

The God who made all things, the eternal Word who built the earth and skies, came into the world to save sinners, and to save them by bearing the curse and the condemnation due to their sins. One may well say.

***"On such love, my soul, still ponder,
Love so great, so rich, so free;
Say, whilst lost in holy wonder,
Why, O Lord, such love to me?"***

O, if this is brought home to you, it will break and melt your heart. It will be to you the fulfilment of that Scripture, ***"I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and will give you an heart of flesh."*** Nothing can melt the heart but the love and blood of Jesus.

Well, ***"It is God that justifieth."*** A holy God takes His stand to speak upon the Person, the righteousness, the atoning death and resurrection of His dear incarnate Son, and on that ground He pronounces the sinner just. He is ***"just, and the justifier of him that believeth in Jesus."*** He is just, and the justifier of the ungodly. O that precious declaration: ***"To him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly!"*** I am ungodly, I have been ungodly all my life, I was born in born in sin and shapen in iniquity, and one can hardly bear the thought of sins that one has committed in the course of one's so sin-polluted life. Ungodly! People may say, ***"Well, you never seem to do much that is wrong."*** Ah, but God

knows what my heart has been privy to. God knows what a cesspool of iniquity my heart is by nature, and that word has been to me a great word: ***"To him that worketh not, but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness."*** If God were not the justifier of him that is ungodly, the justifier of the poor, ungodly sinners, I should have no hope. My works could not procure justification for me; not my fears, nor my prayers, nor my preaching, nor anything else that I do that may appear to others to be right and godly, none of these things can procure justification for me. The only ground of my justification is the atoning death and the obedience of the Lord Jesus.

***"Jesus, Thy blood and righteousness,
My beauty are, my glorious dress;
Midst flaming worlds, in these arrayed,
With joy shall I lift up my head."***

The Lord grant that the substance of all that may be revealed and wrought in our hearts.

Well, ***"it is God that justifieth,"*** and there is no higher court. There is no appeal from this judgment. ***"It is God that justifieth,"*** and if God pronounces me just, who can say that I am unjust? If God pronounces me just, who can lay anything to my charge?

"Who shall lay anything to charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth." Look for instance, at the penitent thief on the cross. I often

think of him when I think of those words: *"To him that worketh not but believeth on Him that justifieth the ungodly."* My mind, when I repeated the words just now, went at once to the thief on the cross. What had he done? Why, he had lived a life of crime and violence, and richly deserved the death he died, and he was brought to confess it when he believed on Him that justifieth the ungodly. An amazing act of faith was that wrought in the dying thief. "Lord," he said. And you think of the scene. There was Jesus of Nazareth surrounded by a mocking, howling mob, surrounded by people who hated Him and thirsted for His blood, who rejoiced to see Him brought so low. Yet that thief on the cross looked upon that bleeding form, and he saw something that drew this prayer from his heart: *"Lord, remember me when Thou comest into Thy kingdom."* It was an amazing act of faith to see the glory of the Son of God shining in the mangled form, that bleeding, dying Man. The thief was justified - a remarkable instance of an ungodly man being justified by faith and having peace with God through Jesus Christ.

"Who is he that condemneth?" Do you ever condemn yourself? Do you ever have to look at your sinful self and look back upon your sinful life and condemn yourself? The publican did, for hear what he said: "God be merciful to me a sinner," the sinner. He condemned himself; he bore witness against himself that he was a sinner. But *"Who is he that condemneth?"* Then again, conscience

condemns; and the devil is called the accuser of the brethren, he condemns. Martin Luther tells how one day Satan presented to him a long list of his transgressions, and Luther stood and looked at it and said, *"Satan, it is all true and more besides, but write underneath 'The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth from all sin.'"*

"Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died." I remember years ago having this feeling, that though my sins caused me much pain and shame, and my sinful heart was a continual source of trouble to me, yet these things did not terrify me because *"it is Christ that died."* There seemed so much in that: "It is Christ that died." Had any other stood in Christ's place and attempted what Christ did, it would not have done us an atom of good. But since it is Christ that died, all the blessings that flow from His death, the peace that comes by His death, the forgiveness of sin, the free justification, all comes to sinners through His atoning death.

"It is Christ that died." What a victory! What a sacrifice! What a death! The poet said, *"The rocks could feel Thy powerful death."* O, there is something inexpressible about the death of Christ, as there is something inexpressible and inexplicable about the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ. I was thinking as I sat in the vestry just now of when I heard a minister preaching somewhere about fifty years ago. And as he preached I had this thought: *"O, I love to hear great things of Christ!"* It was wonderful to my heart to hear great things spoken of Christ.

Would you say to your minister, "*Minister, lift up Jesus Christ. Lift Him up. Preach great things concerning Him.*"

Well, the apostle here says, "*It is Christ that died.*" When He died He offered a mighty offering, an offering of infinite virtue and sufficiency, so that His death cancelled all the sin that was imputed to Him. He made an end of sin by the sacrifice of Himself, and the Father looks with infinite satisfaction and approval and delight upon the Person and offering of His dear Son. That was a little sweet to me while I was ill for a short while earlier this year. It came to me in a dream which was presented to me like this: that the Lord Jesus Christ was in His Father's eyes an Object of ineffable delight and perfect satisfaction, and that He was in the eyes of infinite justice fully satisfying and perfect. When I awoke, the savour of it still remained with me, and it gave a turn to my thoughts for a little while afterwards, and I did feel that in some measure and degree my thoughts were harmonious with the thoughts of the Father concerning His Son. I hope I know what it is to look upon Christ and think upon Christ with some sense of His preciousness and some realization of the infinite satisfaction the Father has in Him, and the satisfaction that justice has in Him, that the Father is satisfied, that infinite justice is satisfied. O how good it is for a poor sinner to be satisfied with the same precious Object!

"It is Christ that died." *"Who offered Himself without spot to God."*

But then, the apostle does not stay there. He says, "Yea rather." He does not stop at the cross. Some people are very fond of setting up a crucifix, and putting it about their homes and churches, or images representing the crucifixion, and in some cases the burial of the Lord Jesus, or His agony in the Garden. But the apostle leads us beyond all that. It is not a dead Christ that he preached but a living Christ, who said, "*I am He that liveth and was dead; and behold, I am alive forevermore.*" The apostle says, "*Yea rather, that is risen again.*" There is a note of triumph in those words of the apostle in the 15th chapter of 1 Corinthians where he says, "*Now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept.*" He had been saying what the consequences would have been had Christ not risen from the dead: "*Then is our preaching vain...your faith is also vain, yea and we are found false witnesses of God*"; and, "*Ye are yet in your sins*" if Christ not be risen; and "*We are of all men most miserable.*" The men of this world have as least sort of satisfaction out of this world and the things of it, but to the people of God who, for His sake have renounced the world and have for His sake gone forth to Him, if Christ be not risen, then for nothing have they followed Him. But the apostle triumphantly says, "*But now is Christ risen from the dead, and became the firstfruit of them that slept,*"

"Yea rather, that is risen again," in token that the debt is paid, that the

redemption is accomplished, that the Father is well pleased, that the God of peace hath *"brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant."*

"Yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God." Here is another precious thing for believers to keep in mind. It is well to have this in view, that Christ is not only risen from the dead but was raised by the right hand of the Father and set with Him upon His throne. "Him hath God highly exalted, and given Him a name which is above every name." "Who is even at the right hand of God in all the sufficiency and validity of His atoning sacrifice, His everlasting righteousness, His finished work, As Toplady beautifully phrases it,

*"His love intense, His merit fresh,
As though but newly slain."*

"Who is even at the right hand of God." In the Epistle to the Hebrews, the Apostle Paul tells us of the Lord Jesus Christ, that because He continueth ever, (He) hath an unchangeable priesthood. Wherefore He is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him, seeing He ever liveth to make intercession for them.

"Who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us"; that is to say, presents the merits of His atoning death and the glory and the preciousness of His obedience continually before His Father. The Father looks upon His Son with infinite satisfaction and delight, and the apostle said, "Hath made us,"

that is, made His people, "accepted in the Beloved," "who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption."

"Who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and today, and for ever, is at the right hand of God; Christ Jesus the propitiation, Christ Jesus who hath obtained eternal redemption for us, Christ Jesus who is the righteousness of His people, who is their prophet, their sacrifice, their wisdom, is eternally and unchangeably at the right hand of the Father.

"Who also maketh intercession for us." O, His thoughts are with His poor people, His thoughts are with those for whom He died, and He maketh intercession. I like that word in Isaiah 53, where he said, *"He made intercession for the transgressors."* It might have been said that *"He made intercession for the elect,"* and it would have been true. It might have been said that *"He made intercession for broken-hearted sinners and for the penitent souls"* - it would have been true. But it says, *"He made intercession for the transgressors."* There He meets His believing people at the lowest point, where they feel their deepest woe, where they realize their utterly undone condition. There He meets them in that Scripture: *"He made intercession for the transgressors."* The poet says,

*"He passed within the veil,
Did on His bosom bear,*

Those worthless names, that did prevail

With Him to enter there."

"Who also maketh intercession for us." He ascended into heaven itself, the firstfruits, "Christ the firstfruits, afterwards they that are His at His coming." And as He is the firstfruits, so ultimately and most surely all His redeemed, every member of His mystical body, will be with Him in glory, according to His own request: "Father I will that they also whom Thou hast given Me be with Me where I am that they may behold My glory." Do you covet an interest in that? Do you ever wonder if Christ had you in His thoughts when He said, "Father, I will that they also whom Thou hast given Me be with Me where I am"? Do you covet an interest in Christ? Is it your desire to be enabled to look up to Him and say with Thomas, "My Lord and my God"? If so, the Lord fulfill all your petition for His name's sake. Amen.

Sent to "Signs" by Elder N.F. Conner
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PSALM 89 : 6-9.

For who in the heaven can be compared unto the LORD? who among the sons of the mighty can be likened unto the LORD?

God is greatly to be feared in the assembly of the saints, and to be had in reverence of all them that are about him.

O LORD God of hosts, who is a strong LORD like unto thee? or to thy faithfulness round about thee?

Thou rulest the raging of the sea: when the waves thereof arise, thou stillest them.

WILLIAM TYNDALE

R Recently most Christian magazines have been publishing articles on William Tyndale, the reason being the 500th anniversary of his birth.

Who then was Tyndale? Certainly no one has ever surpassed him in the influence for good that he had. In 1526 he produced the first New Testament ever printed in the English language. Only the great day will declare the effects of that little book, under the blessing of the Holy Spirit, in the hearts of men and women.

Five hundred years ago, probably at the end of 1494, William Tyndale was born somewhere in Gloucestershire. He studied at Magdalen Hall, Oxford, and later probably at Cambridge. Early in life he proved to be a brilliant scholar, specialising in languages. In fact, he could speak seven languages so fluently that people could not tell to what nationality he belonged. Quite early in life he was graciously dealt with by the Spirit of God, though we do not know any details.

The influence of the "new learning" was spreading, and Erasmus had produced in print a New Testament in the original Greek. The seeds began to be planted in young William Tyndale's heart of a longing to see the Bible in English so that all could read it.

At that time Bibles were in Latin, which few could understand; the Roman Catholic church wanted the people to remain ignorant. An ancient law dating from 1408 forbade anyone to attempt to put the Latin Bible into

English. About the time when Tyndale became concerned, six men and one woman were burned at the stake for the sole crime of teaching their children the Lord's prayer, the ten commandments and the apostles' creed in English. The result was that people were utterly ignorant of what the Bible taught, and the way of salvation. So, as to result, on the one hand there was terrible superstition; numerous pilgrimages took place to see holy relics, supposedly of the Lord Jesus or New Testament (and later) saints. On the other hand, immorality was rampant.

There were a few Bibles in English circulating, produced by the Lollards, followers of Wycliffe. However, here were two difficulties. There were no printed copies; all were laboriously written out by hand - and so they were scarce. But also, the translation was inaccurate, having been translated from the faulty Latin Vulgate version, not from the original language.

Now Tyndale's desire was that there should be a good, faithful translation in English. But was it possible? Could it be done?

After leaving university, Tyndale (as was the custom) would have been ordained as a priest. As such he took up residence in the home of Sir John Walsh, Little Sodbury Manor, not far from Bath. Here he would conduct prayers and no doubt act as tutor to the children.

It was at Little Sodbury he made the statement for which he has become famous. There were various visitors to the manor, among them clergy as well as laity. It was to one of these

(speaking of how terrible for ordinary people to have the Bible in their native tongue) that young Tyndale (now in his 20's) exclaimed, "By the help of God, I hope to see the day when any ploughboy in England will understand the Bible better than you" (or words to that effect). The manor house still stands, and we understand visits can be made by appointment through the local vicar, Mr. Ensor, who loves the reformed faith, and is an enthusiast for William Tyndale.

From this time, Tyndale was a wanted man, and as such hunted for the rest of his life. Hearing that Cuthbert Tunstall, Bishop of London, was favourable to the new learning, he sought an interview with him, only to have his hopes dashed. The Bishop was afraid, and still clung to the Roman faith. Not only did he forbid any translation of the Word of God, but Tyndale began to realise his life was in danger.

For a time he found sanctuary in the house of a wealthy merchant, Humphrey Monmouth, and attempted to begin the translation - but soon he realised that there was not only no place for him in the thoughts of the Bishop of London, or in the house of Monmouth, but also not in the whole of England. So he determined to go into exile, where he spent the rest of his life, chased and hounded, yet determined with God's help to provide an accurate copy of the Word of God in English: "God's outlaw" is the way he has been described. The statue to his memory on the Thames embankment has on it beautiful lines concerning his forsaking his beloved land for Jesus' sake.

On the continent he was hounded from pillar to post. An order went out from King Henry VIII for his arrest. So we see him fleeing from place to place, first Hamburg, then Cologne, then other places, hiding away in cold attics or cellars, anywhere he could find refuge, still laboriously translating. At Cologne his work went on well, till he was betrayed by one of his helpers who, plied with drink by spies from England, told all about his master's whereabouts. At last, going to Worms, he finished the New Testament. Long days and nights of weary study, solitary confinement, hardly seeing a soul, hardly able to venture out - just the one object: that England should have the Word of God.

At length it was ready. But how could it reach England? Protestant merchants began to smuggle it to England, at times hidden away in bales of cloth. At last hundreds were circulating in England (3s. 11d. a copy - a week's wage for a skilled labourer).

The Bishop of London and the Roman Catholic church retaliated; if any of these copies were found, they were burned. So keen were the authorities to seize them that they paid high prices for them. So a godly man gathered them together, sold them to the authorities, and then forwarded the money to Tyndale - with the result that he could produce many more Bibles, of better quality!

As well as translating the New Testament (and later parts of the Old), Tyndale wrote godly books himself. One book, on loyalty to the King, actually reached Henry VIII via Queen Anne

Boleyn, always sympathetic to the cause of the Reformation. So the King, impressed by this, now sought Tyndale's aid - only to find he refused as Tyndale had no sympathy with the King's divorce proceedings, and wrote against the evil of divorce. So Henry redoubled the efforts to capture this outlaw. In this he was aided by his Chancellor, Sir Thomas More (whom the Roman Church has now canonized). More was virulent against Tyndale, calling him "that beast and hell-hound of the devil's kennel." Tyndale's only crime was to desire that his fellowcountrymen might read the precious Word of truth.

At length Tyndale settled in Antwerp in Belgium, where his work seemed to proceed well. Here he was encouraged by an apparent friend, an Englishman, Henry Philips. But Philips proved to be a traitor, and betrayed him to his enemies. He was one of the King's spies.

For a full year and 135 days Tyndale languished in the prison at Vilvorde, near Antwerp. A pathetic letter he wrote still exists, speaking of his ill-health and his desire for some warmer clothes because of the cold; also aids for his writing and translating. For, even in prison, he faithfully continued with his loved work.

As last, broken in body and in poor health, he was condemned to death, on seven grounds:

1. He believed a sinner is justified by faith alone.
2. He believed that faith in Jesus is sufficient for forgiveness and salvation.

3. He believed that conscience should not be bound by tradition.

4. He said we do not have a free will.

5. He said there was no purgatory.

6. He said neither Mary nor any of the saints pray for us.

7. He said Scripture forbids us to pray to Mary or any of the saints.

On October 6th, 1536, he was brought out by the executioner to the stake prepared for him. Having been chained to the stake, he was strangled and then burned. "A monument now marks the spot.) Before he died, one sentence could be heard: "O Lord, open the King of England's eyes." He died praying for England. He was only about 42.

Was William Tyndale's prayer answered or not? In one sense it was not, for Henry VIII lived and died an ungodly man. But the very year after Tyndale's martyrdom, the King was prevailed upon by new advisors, Thomas Cromwell and Thomas Cranmer, to give orders that a Testament in English should be placed in every parish church. It did not appear under Tyndale's name, but almost all of it was Tyndale's work.

The British Museum is housing a most interesting William Tyndale exhibition. This is in the Crawford Room and entry is free. The exhibition continues till February 19th.

Among items of interest are: an original Lollard Bible, handwritten; early copies of Foxe's Book of Martyrs; a book written by Cuthbert Tunstall; a first copy of Luther's Bible in German;

Tyndale's works and fragments of his Old Testament translations. Pride of place, in the centre of the exhibition, is a 1526 William Tyndale New Testament, the only existing copy. This the British Museum has purchased for L1,000,000. (The word of God is, of course, worth far more than this! Our wonderful authorized version follows Tyndale very closely.) By the side of the 1526 New Testament is the original letter that Tyndale wrote in Vilvorde prison, the only thing we have in Tyndale's own handwriting.

The Editors

ST. MATTHEW 6 : 1-2.

For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light.

VOICES OF THE PAST

OCTOBER 27.

"Peace, peace to him that is far off." ISAIAH lvii. 19.



FAR OFF! What means that? It means that the soul passing through that experience is separated, in its feelings, and at an infinite distance from God. Now this inward sense of being "far off" is one of the most painful feelings that a quickened soul can experience. The ungodly, who are really Far off, know nothing experimentally of distance from God, for they have never been brought spiritually near. They have felt no "cords of

love, no bands of a man" drawing them with sweet attraction to the throne of the most High; they have never sighed after the sweet manifestations of God's mercy and love; but they live gladly, and wallow willfully in those things which separate the soul from its Maker. But those who are "afar off" in their feelings, are such as have seen something of the beauty of the Lord, and felt the evil of sin, who spiritually know Jehovah's purity and the creature's impurity, and have experienced the inward curse, bondage, and condemnation of a holy law. A spiritual discovery of his purity and holiness, making manifest their own vileness, has thrust them down from their self-righteous or presumptuous standing, and made them far off from him; not daring to draw near, nor able to approach; not feeling any spiritual access, but sighing and mourning over their evil hearts in the wilderness, in desolate places; and unable to move a single step forward, because the Lord does not draw them by his smile. A man must know something experimentally of this before he is brought near. How can we know a feeling of nearness if we have not known a feeling of distance? How can we know what it is to be brought "from the end of the earth" (Psalm lxi. 2) by the manifestation of God's mercy and love, unless we have been driven there, in our feelings, by some manifestation of the wrath of God against sin? But to see the blessed Lord, and not be able to draw near to him; to view his atoning blood at an infinite distance from us, his glorious righteousness

well-nigh out of sight, and his lovely Person out of the reach of our spiritual view, so as not to enjoy any access to these glorious realities -- to know this experimentally and feelingly, is to be "far off" from God. And I believe that God's people know very much of this feeling. There is not much nearness in our day; not much dandling upon the knees, not much smiling upon the soul, not many love visits, nor love tokens communicated. There is, indeed, a great deal of talking about them; and there are abundance of people who profess to have them; but I fear they are, for the most part, cheats and counterfeits. The real people of God, the true-hearted family are, for the most part, "afar off upon the sea," for it is a dark and cloudy day in which we live.

Elder J.C. Philpot

ST. JOHN 14 : 1-6.

LET not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me.

2 In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you.

3 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.

4 And whither I go ye know, and the way ye know.

5 Thomas saith unto him, Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way?

6 Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.

From Elder Lambert's Book,
"Tried In The Furnace."

BACKSLIDING ISRAEL
AND HOPE OF RESTORATION
July, 1953



ELDER E.J. LAMBERT

*"I will heal their
backsliding, I will
love them freely: for
mine anger is turned
away from him."
Hosea 14:4.*

The above quotation is a stated promise of God to raise again each and every one of His people from backsliding and His reason for such a wonderful promise. May God grant us, first, to meditate upon backsliding; and then, discuss the reason for this promise; finally, study the certainty of this promise being fulfilled.

A thorough understanding of what is meant by the term backsliding is necessary before we can determine whether or not we have experienced it. If the true meaning is revealed to us from the Lord and we have experienced it, then, not until then, we will truly know what it means. Backsliding is falling from or sliding back from a higher position you once occupied. Sliding back is returning toward a lower position from which you were once raised. Have you experienced it?

Have you experienced the backsliding heart? Solomon says in Proverbs 14:14, *"The backslider in heart shall be filled with his own ways ..."* The heart being the seat of affection (or love) sometimes becomes cold and

leaves the "first love" as did the Church at Ephesus. *"Nevertheless, I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love"* (Rev. 2:4). Have you experienced a falling from the joy of salvation and made to pray as David, *"Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation"* (Psalms 51:12). Have you ever fallen from the sweet enjoyment of that precious faith in Christ to such an extent that you are finally made to cry, *"Help thou mine unbelief"*? (Mark 9:24). Do you ever question and pray as Cowper expresses in the hymn we sometimes sing:

*Where is the blessedness I knew
When first I saw the Lord?
Where is the soul-refreshing view
Of Jesus and His Word?*

*What peaceful hours I then enjoyed!
How sweet their memory still!
But now I find an aching void
The world can never fill.*

*Return, O holy Dove, return,
Sweet messenger of rest;
I hate the sins that cause my mourn,
And so disturb my breast.*

We are made to realize an aching vacancy caused by the absence of the Holy Spirit that once so wonderfully calmed our troubled breast. Sometimes we cherish the memories of the soul-stirring experiences we once had and long for their return. We fall into many temptations and wonder if God has forgotten to be gracious. We get so cold and lifeless in our feelings that when we attend church, converse, and sing with the brethren we are convinced that our actions are mere formality and the very essence of hypocrisy! I am persuaded that each and

every one of God's little children many times experience this backsliding of heart when the brethren do not see anything amiss in their conduct. This backsliding in heart is the experiences within the child of God that affects his conscience and inner thinking that sometimes results in great turmoil within, that is not necessarily made manifest at all times in conduct. Inward backsliding results in great grief to the person experiencing it while backsliding in conduct affects others. We now want to consider backsliding in conduct.

When the walk and conversation of a child of God is contrary to that which is becoming to His saints, backsliding in conduct is experienced. Sometimes our conduct grieves the brethren and causes them to lose confidence in our sincerity and profession. Sometimes our conduct is so obviously ungraceful that it "gives occasion for the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme." Read the 11th and 12th chapters of 2 Samuel which give an account of David's disgraceful conduct, Nathan's conversation with David, and David's confession; and you note an outstanding example of backsliding in conduct. You will also see why this terrible sin haunted David all through his life even though he repented and was given the promise that he would not die. Read the 22nd chapter of St. Luke and you will find that Peter was delivered to Satan for a sifting and that Peter denied three times that he had any knowledge of Jesus even though Peter had affirmed that he would follow Jesus into prison and death. One of the writers said that he cursed and swore.

Peter fell from the remembrance of his oath to Jesus and what Jesus had told him he (Peter) would do. This outward unbecoming conduct of Peter proved to him his utter inability of himself to stand even though he had once been enabled to stand. Past grace does not suffice for the present or future. When God withholds His grace (unmerited divine favor) from us we are as certain to fall as Peter and David did. When we are shown that we are in this fallen state it causes us to do as Peter, "weep bitterly," and to greatly yearn and pray for the lifting up that only the unmerited divine favor of God can perform!

We stumble and fall so often that we are made to pray to God to give us grace, give us grace! Thanks be to God that "we have access by faith into this grace, wherein we stand and rejoice in hope of the glory of God." *"Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall" (1 Cor. 10:12).* Paul gave the experiences in the travel of the Israelites in the 10th chapter of 1st Corinthians to warn us that even though we be baptized into Jesus Christ and into His death; have eaten of the spiritual meat and have drunk of the spiritual drink; that we may murmur, commit fornication, tempt Christ, be an idolater: thus, not be well pleasing unto God" (1 Cor. 10:5). All this happened to Israel for examples or types and are written in the Scriptures for our admonition (1 Cor. 10:11).

Paul exhorted the brethren to flee from these ungodly things. John was ordered of the Lord to write to the seven churches of Asia pointing out to each church its characteristics -

some of which were not very becoming—exhorting them to repent or turn from their heretical departings from doctrine and practice. God-called, God-qualified, God-sent, and God-used ministers of this age exhort and admonish brethren and churches to turn from these unscriptural doctrines and practices which are of men and to implore God's grace to lift them by His power from the fallen state which they are in.

The spirit of jealousy prompts brethren and ministers to stir up strife and confusion and falsely accuse brethren. Self-conceit prompts some to stubbornly contend for their petty opinions to the extent of causing divisions. Ministers and members of the church seeking praise of men and self-exaltation design and scheme, using the corrupt tactics of politics, to set themselves on coveted high places to the destruction of the peace in the church and churches. Bars of fellowship are raised against brethren and churches to execute the spirit of vengeance under the false cloak of standing for "*right order and doctrine.*" These things ought not to be! May God fulfill His promise to heal our backsliding!

May God enable us to see our many faults, confess them to our brethren and repent. May we seek to unite instead of divide; acknowledge our wrongs instead of justifying ourselves for unbecoming actions; forgive our brethren instead of taking vengeance; esteem them instead of considering them less than we; do good unto them instead of evil; yet, love them instead of hating. It must be revealed unto us that we are at fault before we can desire to be rid of it. It must be

proved to us through sad experience that we cannot rid ourselves from these ungodly actions before we can sincerely pray to God for deliverance. If we are caused by revelation and experience to earnestly and fervently pray to God for this deliverance, He hears our cry and will fulfill his promise by healing our backsliding.

His promise to hear our backsliding is positive and sure. He says, "*I will [not, I may or I can] heal their backsliding.*" It is God that does it and His people are made to know it by revelation and experience. It is because of God's great love for us and that freely (without merit) given that we are lifted up by His grace from these backslidden positions.

We do not deserve it, but He raises us up and sets us on high. We deserve to be cast down to never rise again but because of His great love, God extends His mercy toward us, lifting us up many times so that we do not fall finally away. Have your thoughts been so sinful and your actions so ungodly that you felt it would be unjust for God to forgive you? Notwithstanding this just banishment you deserved, God's anger was turned from you and you again experienced God's mercy and grace. Why? "*For mine anger is turned away from him.*"

God's anger was appeased. His anger was not withdrawn without due punishment. This punishment was turned from God's people upon His only begotten Son, Christ Jesus. He bore the punishment for our sins, past, present and future, that we might enjoy His mercy. If Christ was punished on account of our many sins is it a great thing that

we should be scourged, chastened, and rebuked by Him in order that we be corrected, brought into the right path, and learn obedience by the things we suffer? His promise is to do an effectual work of it. It is because of God's love for us that we are chastened by the rod of correction. It is because of His wonderful love that we are forgiven for our many sins. If God forgave us so much is it a great thing for us to forgive those who trespass against us? Our sins are so great that when we are enabled to behold our true position regarding holiness, the little offenses of our brethren sink into insignificance and unimportance. We are then in the position to forgive our brethren. We can pray from the heart, *"Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us."* When it has been revealed unto us that God is so merciful to us, then we are merciful unto those with whom we come to contact. When the love of God dwells in our hearts it causes us to have love one for the other and to manifest it in our actions and conversation. These graceful experiences quoted above show that He fulfills His promise to heal our backsliding.

Time will not permit us dwelling longer upon this subject in our written meditations, and it is needless to say that volumes of our thoughts while writing, are unexpressed because of the infirmity of not being able to write as fast as thoughts came into the mind. We trust, however, that God will bless you to glean some edification and comfort from the words that are written. May He enable us to see our

own faults instead of the petty faults of our brethren that we may be meek, humble, and lovely, in our walk and conversation. May He heal our backsliding that we may be raised up closer unto Him and to each other. May we be enabled to repent - individuals and churches - that there might be uniting instead of dividing.

Elder E.J. Lambert

MEETINGS

MINUTES OF THE PRESBYTERY

Pursuant to the request of Bell Spur Primitive Baptist Church, Carroll County, Virginia. A presbytery met May 20, 1995 at 10 o'clock A.M. for the examination of Brethren Mark Terry and Tony Horton and if found qualified in accordance with the written word of God at the satisfaction and discretion of their judgement ordain the above mentioned to the full work of the office of Deacon.

The solemnity was begun with prayer by Elder Raymond Goad. All Elders of our faith and order present constituted the presbytery. Those present: Elders Hale Terry, Carl Terry, Leonard Brammer, Junior Conner, W.T. Conner, Lane Carter, Larry Hollands-worth, Willard Cox, Clarence Stone, and Raymond Goad.

All Deacons were asked to sit together. 27 present.

The presbytery was organized by electing Elder Hale Terry as modera-

tor and Deacon W.G. Parsons as clerk. Elders Lane Carter and Junior Conner were chosen to lead in the examination of the candidates. Deacon Alan Terry having been duly appointed by Bell Spur Church delivered the candidates to the presbytery.

Examination was made by Elders Lane Carter, Junior Conner and others using scriptural reference 1st Timothy, Chap. 3, v 1-13.

The presbytery being satisfied with the examination and the answers given by the candidates administered the laying on of hands with the ordination prayer being delivered by Elder Leonard Brammer. The charge was delivered to candidate Mark Terry by Elders Carl Terry and Raymond Goad, and to candidate Tony Horton by Elders Larry Hollandsworth and Hale Terry using scriptural reference the written word of God.

The moderator asked Bell Spur Church if they were satisfied with the work of the presbytery which was answered in the affirmative.

A certificate of ordination was presented to Brethren Mark Terry and Tony Horton, and the right hand of fellowship and brotherhood given. The Brethren were delivered back to the Church, ordained Deacons of the Old School Primitive Baptist Church at Bell Spur. The minutes consisting the work of the presbytery were read and adopted. The presbytery was dismissed with prayer by Elder Clarence Stone.

Wm. Hale Terry, Moderator
W.G. Parsons, Clerk

STAUNTON RIVER ASSOCIATION



The Staunton River Association will convene, The Lord willing, with Canaan Church but the meeting location will be at Weatherford Church located at the intersection of highways 760 and 763 about 5 miles from Gretna, Va. The time will be Saturday July 8th and Sunday July 9th. We invite our correspondents and visitors to this meeting.

Burnell B. Williams
Association Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR APRIL 1995

Whitney Mobley, NC	\$10.00
David N. Bailey, WV	2.00
Eld. Jim Poole, MD	2.00
Eld. T.J. McMarrain, GA	2.00
Harold T. Clayton, NC	2.00
Mrs. Charles P. Hayes, AL	5.00
Mrs. J.D. Neely, AR	2.00
Mrs. Willie M. Ratliff, VA	5.00
John F. Simpson, FL	7.00
Ercy Redman, AL	8.00
Mrs. Marjorie Cook, TN	
In memory Mrs. Mamie Cook	7.00
Mrs. Gayle Phillips, AL	20.00
Norman Jenkins, NC	2.00
Mrs. Ora Adam, VA	2.00
Mrs. Clara Jones, VA	1.00
Mrs. Zelma DeLancey, NC	2.00
Eld. J.D. Hamrick, TX	2.00

OBITUARIES

RALPH LUCAS

In obedience to the request of the Valley View Church members, I shall, God willing, attempt to write an obituary in memory of our precious, beloved Brother Ralph Lucas. Be in resolved that We, the Valley View Primitive Baptist Church at Riner, Virginia wish to bow in humble submission to the will of our Heavenly Father, who on July 20, 1994 called from our midst our beloved and devoted member - Brother Ralph Lucas.

Brother Ralph was born on December 27, 1908, the second son to Mr. Mont J. Lucas and wife Vergie Lester Lucas, making his stay on earth 83 years 7 months. He was a life long farmer of Montgomery County.

Brother Ralph joined Valley View Church together with his dear, loving and devoted wife of 62 years, Sister Fannie Sue Lucas. They were baptized the third Sunday in September, 1960 by Elder Odell Thompson in the Little River.

Brother Ralph was a loyal, faithful member, always ready and willing to give his service to the needy and to the upkeep of the Church property.

His funeral was conducted by our pastor, Elder Raymond Goad and Elder Willard Cox, with a host of relatives and friends to mourn his passing.

Our prayers, sympathy and love we extend to Sister Fannie Sue. May she be given to look to the Lord for comfort and guidance.

May God reconcile us to His Holy and Righteous will and to realize our heartfelt loss is his eternal gain.

Humbly submitted by his sister,
Irene L. Thompson

DANIEL 2 : 19-20.

Then was the secret revealed unto Daniel in a night vision. Then Daniel blessed the God of heaven.

Daniel answered and said, Blessed be the name of God for ever and ever: for wisdom and might are his:

KATHLEEN GRAHAM MARTIN

It is with a sad heart I will try with God's help to write the obituary of our precious Sister Kathleen Graham Martin. She was born on August 22, 1910 and departed this life on December 18, 1994, the daughter of William M. Graham (a deacon at Valley View) and Maude Akers Graham. She was married to Samuel W. Martin in 1927 who died in 1956.

She united with Valley View Church in September 1941 and served faithfully as their clerk for over 26 years. She was truly a mother in Israel and a virtuous woman. She loved her Church and as long as she was able she loved to have the Brothers and Sisters in her

home as well as visit other churches. Her face would light up when they came to see her up until the very end.

She was blessed with a fine family that were always seeing to her every need, encouraging her with her art and taking her on trips. They made it possible for her to stay at home and did everything that human hands could do.

She is survived by two daughters and a son-in-law: Betty Hanberry, Christianburg and Barbara and Mark Lloyd, Christianburg; a son and daughter-in-law: Phillip and Rhonda Martin, Florida; six grandchildren, four great-grandchildren; one sister: Ruth Heavener, Blacksburg; and one brother: William (Junior) Graham, Christiansburg. May the Lord bless her loved ones to feel their loss is her eternal gain.

Her funeral was conducted by her Pastor Elder Raymond Goad. She was laid to rest in Sunset Cemetery.

Written by request of Valley View Church by one who loved and misses her.

Lena Duncan, Clerk
Elder Raymond Goad, Moderator

BENJAMIN P. STANALAND

Brother Benjamin P. Stanaland was born November 15, 1900 near Fellowship Church. He spent his life near where he was born. He was carried to fellowship church as an infant and grew to manhood with a love and respect for the church. He

joined fellowship church in his early years and was ordained a Deacon more than fifty years ago. His passing from this life on December 31, 1994 leaves the Mt. Enon Association without a deacon.

In life he was a successful farmer and citrus grower. A friend and neighbor to his community. While a young man he married Juaneta Holland who preceded him in death, about 10 years ago.

He is survived by five daughters, Vila Clark, Dean Paterson and Jean Thomas of Lithia, Fl. Adelle Hagadorn and Johnie Ash of Riverview, Fl. Two Sons; Stuart of U.S.A.F. and Ben of Lehigh Acres, Fl. Two Brothers; Tommy of Wimauma, Fl. Worth of Thonotosassa, Fl. Three Sisters; Magdalene Holland of Ft. Meade, Fl. Viola Kennard of Denham Springs, La., and Daphne Curlee of Larkspur Co. 25 grandchildren; 33 great grandchildren; and 4 great-great grandchildren.

He was laid to rest under a beautiful floral offering in fellowship cemetery after services by Elder J.Y. McCormick. Elder Fred B. Neikirk on January 4, 1995.

Many times after preaching, with a smile on his face, he would say (well done). We can conclude that his life was well done, yet with a severe loss. We feel our loss is his eternal gain. Done by order of Fellowship Church with a copy to be sent to the Signs of the Times.

J.Y. McCormick

Signs of the Times

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SONG

*With joy we meditate the grace
Of our High Priest above;
His heart is made of tenderness;
His bowels melt with love.*

*Touched with a sympathy within,
He knows our feeble frame;
He knows what sore temptations
mean,
For he has felt the same.*

*But spotless, innocent, and pure,
The great Redeemer stood,
While Satan's fiery darts he bore,
And did resist to blood.*

*He, in the days of feeble flesh,
Poured out his cries and tears,
And, in his measure, feels afresh
What every member bears.*

*He'll never quench the smoking
flax,
But raise it to a flame;
The bruised reed he never breaks,
Nor scorns the meanest name.*

*Then let our humble faith address
His mercy and his power;
We shall obtain delivering grace,
In the distressing hour.*

Watts

CONTENTS

EDITORIAL	170
Elder C.C. Wilbanks	
VOICES OF THE PAST	175
Elder Gilbert Beebe	
Elder Lewis Edwards	
Elder E.J. Lambert	
Elder W.D. Griffin	
MEETINGS	188
CONTRIBUTIONS	190
OBITUARIES	190
Sister Bessie Denny Curry	
Sister Elsie B. Houchins	
Brother Joseph Morton	
Forest L. Shortt	

 EDITORIAL

RESURRECTION



ELDER C.C. WILBANKS

I have never spoken from the pulpit nor written upon the resurrection as a text, and I hesitate to do so now, for I am aware there is much controversy concerning it; yet it has been upon my mind for some time to express my views concerning it for the consideration of all who may read them. At this moment I do not know what I may write, but whatever I may write is not intended for controversy,

I have never spoken from the pulpit nor written upon the resurrection as a text, and I hesitate to do so now, for I am aware there is

but only to set forth what I believe the Scriptures teach. I hope that what I believe has been taught of the Holy Spirit: if not, then I am not a son of God, for it is written in the prophets, ***"And they shall be all taught of God."*** (John 6:45). If I be a son of God, which is my hope, then am I led by the Spirit of God. (Rom.8:14).

Although a man may never use the resurrection as a text to preach, if he preaches the gospel of Jesus Christ he must of necessity preach the resurrection, for, ***"But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen: and if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain, and your faith is also vain."*** (1 Cor 15:13-14). I do not believe that any one who has been born again of the Holy Spirit will deny the resurrection of Christ, yet some have doubts about the resurrection of the bodies of his children, the ones who were chosen in him before the foundation of the world, and whom he came into the world to save. This is because of men like Hymenaeus and Philetus, ***"who concerning the truth have erred, saying that the resurrection is past already; and overthrow the faith of some."*** (2 Tim.2:18). In 1 Tim. 4:1 we read, ***"Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils."*** Are we not now in the latter times?

There are those who teach that it is not the body that is raised, but something within the body, as the soul or spirit. Is there something put into the

grave other than the body? In 1 Cor 15:42-44 we read, ***“So also is the resurrection of the dead. IT is sown in corruption; IT is raised in incorruption: IT is sown in dishonour; IT is raised in glory: IT is sown in weakness; IT is raised in power: IT is sown a NATURAL BODY; IT is raised a spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body.”*** The IT that is sown is the same IT that is raised. If we deny this, we deny what the Scriptures say. But IT must first be changed. In verses 51 thru 56 we read, ***“Behold, I shew you a mystery; we shall not all sleep (die) 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 all be changed. For this corruptible (those who are still alive as well as those who sleep in the grave) must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin: and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be unto God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ.”*** If our body does not come forth from the grave, then the victory would belong to the grave. A

grave does not necessarily mean a hole in the ground. Jesus was laid in a new tomb hewn out of a rock, and we know that many bodies are in the depths of the sea and many are incinerated and their ashes scattered in the winds. In Rev. 13 we read, ***“And the sea gave up the dead which were in it; and death and hell delivered up the dead which were in them.”*** God made man from the dust of the ground and he told Adam, “for dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return.” Does it seem incredible to any that the Lord who made us should gather us together again?

The resurrection is not of the Saints only, but of all men. Jesus said, ***“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.”*** I will not now show the difference between the “good” and the “evil” except to say that if one does good it is God that works in him to will and to do of his good pleasure. (Phil.2:13). Paul said, ***“For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not.”*** (Rom.7:18). Paul is here speaking of his fleshly body, and in the 21st verse he says, ***“I find then a law, that when I would do good, evil is present with me.”*** And in verses 24 & 25, ***“O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I***

thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin." This is a body of death (not a dead body) in which the children of God dwell when they have been born again of the Holy Spirit. John tells us, **"Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God."** (1 John 3:9). These are the only ones who shall ever do good. for, **"that which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again."** Paul speaks of this as a mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but is now made manifest to his saints: to whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. (Col.1:26-27). In Gal.2:28 he says, **"I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me."** Our natural body shall die, but if Christ dwelleth within us we have a life that shall never die. This is eternal life: life that was given us in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world. After Lazarus died Jesus came to the place where he was buried. Martha, Lazarus' sister, met Jesus and said, Lord, if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died. Jesus said, Thy brother shall rise again.

Martha said, I know that he shall rise again in the resurrection at the last day. Jesus said, **"I am the resurrection and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live: and whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die. Believeth thou this?"** Lazarus had been dead four days when Jesus raised him up again to natural life. If the resurrection is at the time of our corporeal death, as some believe and teach, then the body of Lazarus would not have been there. There are some who believe that when Jesus raised up Lazarus he was showing forth the resurrection of that final day when he shall return again without sin unto salvation. I do not understand this to be what Jesus is showing, for Lazarus was raised to natural life again, and he must again die a natural death. Lazarus was, as all men are, born dead in trespasses and sins; just as David described us, **"Behold I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me."** (Ps.51:5). I believe that Lazarus was at that time raised up out of that dead state in which he was born. When Jesus said, **"Lazarus, come forth,"** **"he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with graveclothes: and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, Loose him, and let him go."** (John 11:43-45). To me the graveclothes represents the old covenant laws from which he was released, and the napkin was removed that he might see the new covenant of grace. In John 5:24-25 we read, **"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my**

word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life. Verily, verily I say unto you. The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live." Lazarus heard the Son of God and came forth to live: he passed from death unto life. That life is eternal and shall never die, though our earthly body must die unless we are here when Jesus shall return again. That life is not made manifest unto the sons of God until they are born again of the Holy Spirit. For some this birth comes early and some at the last hour. To John the Baptist it came while he was yet in his mother's womb, but to the thief on the cross beside Jesus it was at the last hour.

There were others who were raised from the dead by Jesus while he was here on earth, and shows forth his power to quicken whom he will. In John 5:21-23 we read, **"For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom he will. For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son: that all men should honour the Son."** This quickening is in our earthly existence only, for who would need quickening to honour the Son if he were already in the realms of heaven above? If what Jesus said in verses 24 & 25 means the resurrection of our body to heaven and immortal glory there would have been no

need for verses 28-29,"for the hour is coming, in the which all that are in the graves shall hear his voice, and shall come forth****." Let us notice that he did not say, "and now is," for he had not yet been resurrected himself, and he is the first resurrection. We read Col.1:18, **"And he is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the first born from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence."** There must none be raised before him, for he must have the preeminence in all things. Consider the ones who lived and died before the death and resurrection of Jesus; were they then in heaven or are they asleep in Christ, waiting for the resurrection? Consider Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and all the old prophets. Consider David: Peter tells us that David is dead and buried, and that he is not ascended into the heavens. (See Acts 2:29-34). David himself said, **"As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake with thy likeness."** After the resurrection of Jesus, many graves were opened and many bodies of the saints came out and appeared in the holy city. I believe this was to show that our bodies will be raised. Those bodies had not been changed, as they shall be in the final resurrection, that they might be seen with natural eyes. This should strengthen our hope that we shall also be raised in that day. We read Matt. 27:52-53, **"And the graves were opened; and many of the bodies of the saints which slept arose, and came out of the graves after his**

resurrection, and went into the holy city and appeared unto many." Regardless of how long one must sleep in Christ awaiting the resurrection, it will be only as a moment, for one who sleeps, even in natural sleep, there is no awareness of the passage of time.

The Scriptures tell us that Christ is the head of the body, the church (Col.1:18), and that we, his children, are the body of Christ, and members in particular. (I Cor.12:27). When Christ the head died, did not his body also die? *"Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection."* (Rom.6:4-5). My understanding is, that being his body, we had a part in his death, burial and resurrection. Christ is the resurrection and the life, and if we have a part in him we are blessed and holy. *"Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power."* (Rev.20:6). This death is not the death of our mortal body, but the death of those whose names are not found written in the book of life. They will be cast into the lake of fire with death and hell. This is the second death. (Rev. chapter 20).

"As we have borne the image of the earthly, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly." Brethren, this is my hope and yours. I have only touched on a few of the many scriptures concerning the resurrection, but if God is in the matter it is enough for this time. I will close by quoting 1 Thes.4:15-18. *"For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this I say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent (go before) them which are asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Therefore comfort one another with these words."*

These words are very comforting to me. Are they comforting to you also? I surely hope so.

Eld. C.C. Wilbanks

CORINTHIANS 3: 1-2.

And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ.

I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able.

VOICES OF THE PAST

MATTHEW 8:11, 12.

“And I say unto you, That many shall come from the east, and west, and shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of heaven; but the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”



greeable to the request of our correspondent, William Dine, of Ohio, we present to our readers such views as we have on the passage proposed above. After our Lord had delivered to his disciples what is commonly called his sermon on the mount, and had come down from the mountain, great multitudes followed him. The miracles which wrought had produced much excitement among the people, insomuch that he had taken occasion to retire from the crowd and to instruct his disciples alone in the discourse, the record of which occupies the fifth, sixth, and seventh chapters of this evangelist. But the eager multitudes were ready to crowd around him again as soon as he returned from his retirement. The multitudes appear to have been composed of a variety of classes of the community, and among them the comparatively small band of his disciples, others desiring to be healed of their infirmities and some undoubtedly to gratify their curiosity. Some of the vast assemblage were Jews, some Samaritans and some Gentiles,

Scribes, and Pharisees, publicans, and sinners. Among the rest a centurion, or commander of a small party of Roman soldiers, the captain of one hundred men; this man seemed deeply impressed with a sense of his own unworthiness to receive so distinguished a guest under his roof, besought him on behalf of his servant who was grievously tormented with palsy, that he would speak the word only and he was perfectly confident that his servant would be healed. At this display of unexampled faith and that, too, in an officer in the Roman army, a poor Gentile sinner, our Lord said that he had not found such faith; no, not in Israel. And then he added the words which are placed at the head of this article.

“And I say unto you.” The sayings which he uttered were of the very highest authority; their truth and power were inferrable from the fact that they proceeded from his unerring lips. They were addressed to the great multitudes which followed him, and were full of comfortable instruction to the poor Gentiles who had hitherto been unaccustomed to receive such intimations that God had a people among them which should be called by his grace and made meet to be partakers with the children of light. This instance of a Gentile sinner having faith in Christ should not stand solitary and alone upon the future records of the grace of God abounding to the chief of sinners. “And I say unto you, that many shall come from the east and west.” This declaration though new to the astonished multi-

tudes was well known to him, when as yet there were no depths, and before the worlds were made. It was embraced in the settlements of eternity not only that many should come from the east and the west, but also that the "north should give up, and the south should not keep back His sons should come from far, and his daughters from the ends of the earth; even every one that is called by his name; for I have created him; for my glory I have formed him. Yea, I have made him, saith the Lord." Isa. xliii. 5-7. Again, chapter xl. 3, "And the Gentiles shall come to thy light, and kings to the brightness of thy rising." Again in Isa. xli. 9, "And their seed shall be known among the Gentiles, and their offspring among the people; all that see them shall acknowledge them, that they are the seed which the Lord hath blessed." Compare these predictions of Isaiah with the words of Christ in John vi. 37. "All that the Father giveth me shall come unto me, and he that cometh to me, I will in no wise cast out." And also John x. 16, "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." Our text assures us that many shall come, and John who saw them in his vision says that no man can number them, and this assurance is sufficient for the faith of God's elect, the promise embraces, "every one that is called by my name." Every such one God has created for his glory, and Christ has promised that he will raise them up at the last day. The promise is therefore to all

that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call .

"And shall sit down with Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, in the kingdom of heaven." The kingdom of heaven, though prepared for the heirs of glory as an inheritance before the foundation of the world, was not seen descending from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride for her husband, until in the order of time Christ had redeemed the subjects of it from under the law, and freely justified them through the redemption which is in him. When he had done and suffered all the demands of law and justice on their behalf, and had risen from the dead for their justification, he ascended up on high, and in that exhalation he told his disciples that he went to receive the kingdom. His Father had appointed him a kingdom, and he had appointed unto them in like manner; and it was the Father's good pleasure to give the kingdom to his little flock. This is the kingdom which David said the God of heaven should set up, that should never be destroyed, and it is frequently in the New Testament called the kingdom of heaven. Christ says that it is not of this world; John says it came from God out of heaven, and Jesus says it was prepared for them who are on his right hand from the foundation of the world. A more particular description in agreement with our text is given in Hebrews xii. 18-29. In this the inspired writer says to those who have come and still are coming to sit down in it, "For ye are not come to the mount that might be touched, and

that burned with fire, unto blackness, and darkness, and tempest, and the sound of a trumpet, and the voice of words; which voice they that heard entreated that the word should not be spoken to them any more," etc. showing that the kingdom of Heaven, the gospel church, is not set up under the Levitical priesthood, nor under the Sinai covenant, for under that dispensation all was toil and labor, no rest, no sitting down. but in the setting up of the gospel kingdom Moses the servant is dead, Jordan is passed, and Canaan is entered. Sinai's thunders are hushed, the voice of words which terrified the carnal Israelites are no more spoken, but these who have "come from the east and the west are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the first born, which are written in heaven, and to God the judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect." etc. This mount Sion, this heavenly Jerusalem, this city of the living God, is the kingdom of heaven, and the kingdom into which all the redeemed of the Lord out of every nation, kindred, language, and tongue are brought, when translated from the power of darkness into the kingdom of God's dear Son. And hither they are brought not to terrors and toils of the law, but to the rest and liberty of the gospel of Christ; and here they sit down in the kingdom of heaven, though they were strangers and foreigners, they are made nigh by the blood of Christ. They are born of

the spirit, and by that birth qualified for spiritual enjoyments. Except a man be born again he cannot see this kingdom; except he be born of the water and of the spirit he cannot enter into it. Christ is himself the door, by him they enter, and he gives to them eternal life, and they shall never perish; the kingdom into which they have come is an everlasting kingdom, and a dominion that can never end. They are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints and of the household of faith. Their fellow-citizens and associates in this heavenly Jerusalem are an innumerable company of angels, in general assembly convened, including all the church of the First Born which are written in heaven, the spirits of just men made perfect are included in this general assembly, consequently Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob are there, and with them are poor Gentile sinners, redeemed from sin and wrath, by the blood of Christ and called by grace, renewed by the spirit, and taught of God, sit down. The patriarchs and prophets and all the Old Testament saints are equally with those of the present dispensation, interested savingly in Jesus the Mediator of the New Testament, and in the blood of sprinkling which speaketh better things than the blood of Abel. Hence they all sit down together in this kingdom of Heaven, as the spiritual and loyal subjects of the king whom God has set upon his holy hill Zion. Here they receive a kingdom which cannot be moved, in which:

"The saints on earth, and all the dead

**But one communion make;
All join in Christ, their living Head,
And of his grace partake."**

Christ as the Mediator has but one kingdom they are informed of, and that kingdom embraces all which are written in heaven. The spirits of many of the justified family of God are now above, some of them are still upon these low grounds of sorrow and affliction; and some, we hope, are yet to come from the east and west until every one that is called by his name, and created for his glory take their seats with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. Nor can these seats be deranged. The sons of Zebedee could not be accommodated according to the desire of their fond mother; for the seats were already appropriated, and shall be given to those for whom they were prepared by the Father. So perfect and complete are the provisions of grace and mercy, in the preparation of the kingdom and destination of its subjects that no change can improve it. No other disposition of the seats will ever be made, for God who had designated the occupant of each is of one mind, and changeth not. His plans cannot be improved, for they are established in infinite wisdom and goodness.

But in the consummation of all this gracious purpose, "the children of the kingdom shall be cast out into outer darkness." By the children of the kingdom which shall be cast out we understand the fleshly descendants of these holy patriarchs, the Old covenant was to give place to the new. The Old Jerusalem was to be

destroyed and her subjects scattered abroad in outer darkness, their temple prostrated, their rites and peculiar institutions abolished, and the handwriting thereof blotted out. This had long been predicted, and the execution of the predictions was near at hand when Jesus made the declaration in our text. Their organization as a kingdom or commonwealth was but a limited one, and by its original limitation was to continue only until the Shiloh should come, and at his advent the gatherings of his people should be unto him. He should gather his sheep from all the regions of Judea, and them also which were not of that fold, he also must gather, and the carnal Israelites should be driven into outer of heathenish darkness utterly dispossessed of all their former privileges, in darkness and blindness, to remain until the fullness of the Gentiles shall be gathered in.

"There shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." In the execution of the judgments of God upon them, they would weep; but not with that penitential grief which results from godly sorrow for their sins, but that sorrow which is of the world, which worketh death, and which is connected with gnashing with their teeth. While smarting in keen anguish under the mighty hand of their avenging God, they would resent his righteous judgments and blaspheme his holy name. This has been clearly exemplified in their rejection and crucifixion of Christ, and in their bitter persecution against the apostles and early saints; and their

settled opposition to the cause of christianity down to the present day.

Perhaps we have written enough to express to our friend, Dine, and to our readers in general, what are our views of the text. If our views were better, more lucid, and clear, he and they should be just as welcome to them. They are such, however, as we have, and we only ask that they may be read carefully and prayerfully, tried by the unerring standard, and received only so far as we have been enabled to present them in harmony with the word and spirit of truth and righteousness.

Middletown, N.Y., May 1, 1854

Elder Gilbert Beebe

VOICES OF THE PAST

LIFE AND EXPERIENCE OF ELDER LEWIS EDWARDS

of the Primitive Baptist Church
of Sand Lick, Dickenson Co., Va.

August 1st, 1893

Dear Brothers and Sisters of the Old Baptist:



faith and Order: I have been impressed in mind for a long time to leave for you and my dear children a short history of my life, and the many sins I have passed through since I have been a pilgrim through this unfriendly world, from the year 1812 to 1893. I, Lewis Edwards, was born in Franklin County, Va., March 10, 1812. My parents were Brice and

Jane Edwards. I was raised by pious parents, they taught me to be strictly honest and never to use profane language, and I can say now I never swore an oath in my life. My father moved to Patrick County in my 15th year, and though I was called a pious youth, I was a sinner, and sin was sweet to the flesh. I loved the company of young people and their sinful ways until I was about 16 or 17 years old, when my mind began to be troubled about my condition. I saw I was a sinner and not ready to die and the Bible said the wicked should be turned into hell. I became uneasy, for I knew I was a sinner. I became so uneasy and could see no rest; I thought I must try to pray; I did not want anyone to know that I was trying to pray. At last I went off in a lonesome dark hollow where I thought no one would see me. There the devil tried to shame me out of it; he said I was too young to begin now; I would be slighted by all my comrades; I might have yet a great deal of pleasure with them, and then there'll be time enough when I was much older. But I can say bless the Lord, He is above the devil.

I did not know how soon I might be called to die, and then I would be forever gone to that awful place, forever there to dwell. At last I ventured to get on my knees; I didn't know what to say, I could only say, Lord have mercy on me, a poor wretched sinner, I still went to myself and tried to pray, and I never got entirely shut of my troubles until the Lord set me free, though it sometimes wore off and I did

wrong. I would make promises to try to do better, and sometimes I would fail, then I would feel dreadful. I went on in that way trying to do something good in the sight of God and failing until I lost all confidence in myself. The Lord spared me until I was 20 years old, and in my 21st year I was married to Nancy Howell, in Floyd County, Va., daughter of Benjamin Howell. After I was married I think it was the blessed will of the Lord to make my condition plain to me in a dream, it was so great I never can forget it.

I dreamed I was going to school with all of my playmates, we were all assembled at the school house, and I saw our teacher, he was an uncommonly large black man. It seemed I was badly dissatisfied with the teacher, and some of the scholars told the teacher I was going to run away and leave him. I thought he said if I did he would bring me back and burn me in hell fire. I started to run with all my power, for I expected he would follow me, and I awoke running. When I awoke none but the Lord can tell my feelings, the dream was made so plain to me. My playmates and myself had been going to school to the devil; he was our teacher. My brethren, I then saw my condition, but feared I had seen it too late. I intended to pray as long as the Lord would spare me, I felt like there was no chance for me. I wandered from place to place in secret places, feeling lost and undone forever until at last I dreamed another dream with a circumstance in connection with the other dream.

I dreamed I was standing at the door of torment and the keeper was standing at the door, one said to the keeper, "let us see the souls of some that's gone to torment," he opened the door wide and brought out three set them on the ground, and they burned continually with a blue blaze like brimstone. I thought he said they must go back; I thought the poor creatures crawled back in a place which looked melting hot, and they held up their heads blowing; it looked like their condition was dreadful indeed, beyond expression.

I then turned and walked away; I seemed to have a load on my back, and in very bad clothing; I was going straight up to a fine house where sat Col. Jacob Helem at an upper door of his house. I thought I looked mighty low going up to such a fine gentleman, but I thought it was made known to me that he would, in a short time, have to die and go to that dreadful place I had just passed. In a short time, when working in my field, a man passed by me and said, "Col. Helem is dead." My dear brethren, it was dreadful to me, I never will be able to tell my feelings. I then had no hope, my trouble, it seemed, was more than I could bear. I wandered through the wild woods with my Bible in my hands crying, Lord have mercy on me, a poor sinner, and save me ere I am gone. I had tried all my good works and all had done no good; I saw I was gone unless blessed Jesus was pleased to help me. I thought I was in a strange way that no man ever was in before; I did not think the Lord ever would have

mercy on such a wretch as I was. I cried, Lord, if I must go to torment, let me go a beggar. In that dreadful condition I went to meeting to see my sister Sarah Arrington baptized. We met at the place and after preaching the church was called together, they began to sing, and their song I never can forget, I was sitting off like a poor criminal, their song was:

“What a mercy is this, what a heaven of bliss,

How unspeakably favored am I,

Gathered into the fold with believers enrolled,

With believers to live and to die.”

My feelings I never can tell, it did seem my very soul hungered within me. I would have given all the world if it had been mine, to have had a seat with the true church. I saw my sister baptized, we then started home, it looked like my sister and I were parted; it was a dreadful day with me; we went to my father's and stayed all night, in the morning we started home. We had to go along a spur of the Blue Ridge, called Witt's spur, just before we got to the top, my mind was off of my condition; when I got to the top my mind returned to my condition and was entirely easy, the next thought was, what is the cause? It seemed like something answered in feelings; “your sins are forgiven.” My mind answered it can't be possible, such a wretch as I am can have such good news to tell. In a moment my soul was running over with joy; I felt like all my trouble was gone and I had awoke, in a new world, everything looked new; the trees and the mountains looked

new; and I felt new. It was the best day I had ever seen. I had been so lost, and had thought there was no mercy for me, then to be filled with the love of God. Oh, my brethren, I want you to help me praise the Lord for what he has done for me. I want to praise him while I live. I thought I was free from trouble, free from pain of all kind. I could not see what could trouble me, but alas was badly mistaken. I have found it a world of trouble. I now wanted to go home to my father's house and tell them what great things the Lord had done for me. I went to Jack's Creek church, was received; there was an arm of Jack's Creek church given off, called Green Hill, in Patrick County, Va., and there I was baptized by old brother John Conner, there was a great revival at Green Hill, and from three to twenty persons were baptized in one day. I was one of the deacons chosen when the church was fully organized. I was delighted with the church and had a great feeling for mourners. I felt like I ought to tell them what a Saviour I had found, and exhort them to look to God for he is all in all. After awhile I began to think seriously about what I was doing, and the greatness of the cause, and whether I was called or not of the Lord. I did not think the Lord would call a man that could not preach, and I had but little learning and hardly common sense, and I began to be badly alarmed, I thought I had dishonored the good cause of my blessed Lord, and I did not think I ever could live in that country where I had so dishonored the cause of my Lord. So I thought I would

leave my native country and go among strangers and it should never be known that I had ever tried to speak in public, but when I got to Russell county, the weight of preaching was worse than in my own country. Often in my mind I was preaching, then I would shake my head and say in mind, "I never will try any more, I have once done wrong and left my old country to get shut of the great reproach, and I never will try it again." My troubles got worse and I would leave home and wander in Clinch mountain alone, trying to pray to the Lord to show me what was the matter. At last one of my children, about three years old, having clear blue eyes, was suddenly blind. It greatly alarmed me, I thought my child was entirely ruined. I did not know what to do, it came to my mind to go and pray to the Lord, and if He had anything for me to do, He would make it known by restoring my child's eyes. In a very short time it was all right, though yet I could not believe such a being as I, would be called. I went in trouble day after day. At last my life of religion seemed to be taken away and I was left in a miserable condition. I felt like my peace on earth was gone. In that condition I promised the Lord if He was pleased to set me free once more, I would try, let the case be as it may. So I went to meeting and went home with brother Shadrick Williams, and my trouble was so great I could not stay with him in the house. I wandered from place to place by myself. At last on Sunday morning, suddenly, as I walked alone, these words came on my mind with such

power it nearly took the use of my limbs. The words were: "The day is coming and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and those that hear shall live." Now the request is granted, what will you do? Now came my trial. Will you do what you promised, or lie to God? Lord have mercy on me. Lord, I am willing if I knew I was called, but I can't believe; I fear I shall dishonor thy cause. My troubles were so bad I told a brother my feelings. He says: "Appoint a meeting at my house next Sunday." I did so, and that same passage of Scripture was my text, it was with power all the week. On the next Saturday I started to my meeting. Dear brethren, that was one of the times I never can forget. My trouble, none but God knew, I was greatly afraid I was going to bring a reproach on the good cause of my blessed Lord. I tried to pray to the Lord if I was not called of God, I might be dumb, not able to speak the next day, so I could go home in peace and then I would know I was not called, if the Lord was pleased to answer my prayer in that way. But it was not to be. My tongue seemed to be soon in a different way to what it ever was in life. It was, I hope, God's will to show me on that day I had to go. I was made willing to try on that day. I promised the Lord if he would be with me I would try as long as the Lord let me live. So I have been trying in my awkward manner ever since. But my beloved brethren I often think if I have a gift from God I am one of the least and not hardly worthy of the name of a preacher.

Then in a short time I bought land in Dickenson County, Va., it was then Russell County. In a short time moved to my land near the Sand Lick Church. The church was without a pastor, and the church called no one to be their moderator, so I could not refuse and in a short time they sent for a Presbytery to ordain me and brother Morgan F. Lipps and brother Shadrick Williams ordained me, so by the request of the church I took the care of the Sand Lick Church. In a short time the Union Church in Buchanan County, called on me and I took the care of the Union Church and then the Mount Pleasant Church was constituted and I was chosen their first pastor. Then Johnson's Bottom Church was constituted and I was chosen their moderator. Then the Cedar Grove Church in Pike County, Kentucky, called on me and I took the care of the Cedar Grove Church. Part of my time there was a considerable number of members received and baptized at all the five churches named.

Then the Union Association was constituted and I was chosen their first moderator. Brethren I never could tell why it was that I was chosen either by the churches or the Associations, when it did look to me that I was the last and the least of all. It did seem to me nearly any of my brother preachers had a better gift than I, though I tried to always conduct the business of the churches and Associations strictly by my Master's rule laid down in His word, though with tenderness and brotherly kindness. All my

churches have generally treated me with more respect, it seemed to me, than I deserved. My Association never would give me up until I got so old and deaf I could not do the business. Brethren, if I have ever been any benefit in the cause of my Master the Lord is to be praised, for I am nothing to myself. Brethren, I have traveled over the high and rugged mountains, often alone, wandering and thinking could it be possible if the Lord had sent such a being as I am I am to do such important work as it appeared to me to be. Brethren, if I am saved I am saved by grace alone, if I ever have preached, God is to be praised; if I have ever done any good in the churches or Associations, the Lord is to be praised, for I am nothing of myself, if I ever had any true hope in the Lord, it was the last day of December, fifty-six years ago. About fifty-five or nearly that time, since I first began to speak in public. Brethren, the Lord has spared me a long time in this poor world of trouble. I often think it won't be long before the summons will come, then, brethren, it will be well with all the children of God, we then will no more sigh and mourn for fear we are deceived but then all the children of God will get home to their father's house, not made with hands, eternal in the heavens, where they will see their blessed Lord, who bled and died to set them free. Dear brethren of the Old Baptist faith, I love you all you are my people. I want to live with you, I want to die with you, I want to go home with you, there to part no more.

My beloved brethren, Paul says, "eye hath not seen nor ear hath heard the good things that is laid up for them that love the Lord." Brethren, I have went through many hard trials in this poor world. I lost my first wife the 20th of January, 1860; I have lost three daughters and one son, all nearly grown; I have raised twelve children. I have always been a poor man, sometimes in great trouble, sometimes it seems, for a short time, all my troubles are gone when it is God's will to speak peace to my weary soul. My dear brethren I am now about to wind up my little book, many of you I shall never see in this world, but when you read these lines, remember me, and that Jesus Christ died to set the mourning free, and you, my dear children, when you read my little book perhaps years after I am gone to my long eternal home and you are left here in a world of dangers, sorrows and troubles, I want you all to have my little book, and to take good care of it; and think you once heard the old white head preach and tell that Christ died to save the true mourners, I want every one to take care of my little book.

I am now in my 82nd year, and will shortly have to bid you all farewell, but I hope I shall meet you beyond this vale of tears, where partings is no more. I hope to meet my old father and mother, I hope to see my children. I now say to all my friends when you hear that I am gone, weep not for me but rejoice that I am gone from the evil to come. Farewell.

Elder Lewis Edwards

**From Elder Lambert's Book,
"Tried In The Furnace."**

HOW CAN WE KNOW THE WAY?



ELDER E.J. LAMBERT

Sitting alone this Sunday morning, sensing my infirmities so greatly, I can sympathize with Thomas when he asked Jesus, "How can we know the way?" I am convinced by sad experience as the prophet of old when he prayed, "Oh Lord, I know the way of man is not in himself; it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps. "Just about the time I am convinced that God has granted me strength to walk in paths of righteousness, I fall by the wayside and great is the feeling of grief and condemnation when my feet slip from the way of righteous walking. It does my poor grieved heart good with so great comforting and consoling thoughts to meditate upon the answer Jesus gave Thomas. When Jesus said, "I am the way," it forever banishes sinners' hopes of saving themselves by their own goodness.

Paul was possessed with a thorn in the flesh to buffet him lest he be exalted above measure. He prayed thrice for the removal of this thorn, but each time the Lord answered, "My grace is sufficient for thee." This thorn made Paul to cry out, "Oh wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from this body of death?" He thanked God through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Paul was possessed with a thorn in the flesh to buffet him lest he be exalted above measure. He prayed thrice for the removal of this thorn, but each time the Lord answered, "My grace is sufficient for thee." This thorn made Paul to cry out, "Oh wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from this body of death" He thanked God through Jesus Christ, our Lord.

David's sin was ever before him and caused him to utter many expressions that only those who are grieved because of their sins understand. The sins of David kept him constantly at God's foot stool, praying to Him for mercy. The presence of a wicked heart and a wrong spirit was the stimuli that caused David to pray, "Create in me, O God, a clean heart; renew a right spirit within me." God's people are sinners but none of them are satisfied about it.

Peter, no doubt, thought he was treading the way fairly well and thought he knew the way when he told Jesus that he would go with Him all the way even unto death. Peter found by sad experience that he was mistaken when he denied Jesus, cursed and swore. Jesus had told Peter prior to this, "When thou art converted, strengthen the brethren." Peter had to be converted to the fact that he had not been strengthened sufficiently to know the way. When Peter told this sad experience to brethren, proving to them he was a sinful man as they were, it was strengthening to them. It is strengthening to me, a sinner, to hear brethren whom I esteem so highly, confessing their sins.

It was strengthening to me to hear a deacon of one of our churches, whom I had deemed to be perfect in walk and conversation, confess to the brethren in church conference of having erred greatly. It was grievous to think of his experience, yet strengthening to learn that he was imperfect as well as I, and that he too, must depend upon the merits of Jesus and the mercies of God for salvation in both time and eternity.

Elder E.J. Lambert

SOLOMON'S SONG II. 9.

"He standeth behind our wall."



DEAR HOUSEHOLD OF FAITH: - It is unto you that these glorious promises are left on record. It is for thee that He stands behind our wall. No other can ever realize the sweetness of having the glorious manifestation of his royal presence brought to us. The world, with all its ingenuity, can never pierce the ways of the King Jehovah and find out the dealings that he had with those who are bought with so great a price. From the teaching of God's word there must be more than one sense that God stands behind our wall, because we do not understand that he has left the wicked to their own devices. We believe that he is ever overruling all the schemes of wicked men and devils for the final triumphant deliverance of his chosen people into the glorious city beyond these things of time. Not only is that the belief of the Baptists in this part of Alabama, but we contend, and

desire, if the Lord will be our stay and guide, to defend, that the Lord's people have always taught, that God overruled all things for the good of his people. But just now our mind is not concerned so much with the sovereignty of God, but will say that we do not believe that God is in any way the author of sin. We are perfectly willing to take the Bible for our guide. We find that Joseph told his brethren that God sent him to preserve much people alive, and that though they meant it for evil, God meant it for good. (Gen. xiv. 5; I. 20.) God did, in some wonderful way, bring this about without coercion. Men, and good brethren at that, are very much concerned over the way God works all things and still not be the author of sin. I used to spend much time in speculation on the same idea, but long since I have, as I hope, been shown the glorious beauties of his magnificent power, and it does not bother me so much any more. If God is so wonderful in power and wisdom that he can bring a blaspheming Saul to the earth crying. "Who art thou, Lord?? that he is coming again to earth to gather from the grave all his little children, and raise them to immortality without the stains of sin; that, if not deceived, he found the poor unworthy writer among the thorns of infidelity and self-righteousness and planted in his sinful heart a little ray of hope that all is well with my soul, then may he not work all things after the counsel of his own will? But let us not be content there. Paul tells us that God gave them (the wicked) up to uncleanness through the lusts of

their own hearts. (Rom. i. 26.) James tells us that God is not tempted, neither tempteth he any man, but man is tempted when he is drawn away of his own lusts. (James i. 13, 14.) It is only as the sovereign Ruler of all things that he stands at the wall of the wicked. But, to the poor storm-tossed child of God, there is a more precious way that he stands behind our wall. According to my understanding, The wall is our flesh. Just as long as the poor little pilgrims sojourn in this time state we shall be looking through a glass darkly. Paul tells us that the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh, and these are contrary one to the other, so that ye cannot do the things ye would. (Gal. v. 17.) All of God's dear children who have been called out and given to know the truth know that this is true. When the Sun of Righteousness subdues the flesh and melts down the wall, it is then that we are exalted upon the mountains of his love, and are then obeying and keeping his commandments. We hear the Savior say, "Without me ye can do nothing." Oh! to be left down in the land of Lodebar, to our own sinful selves. Indeed, we must wait on the Lord for a visitation of his healing power.

If a man is in the flesh is he partly so, or is he completely under the influence of evil? It is not part Spirit and part flesh that prompts evil, nor is it both that prompts righteousness. It is sin that dwells in us that leads us in forbidden paths. It is the Spirit of Peace that leads us to do righteousness. Now Paul says that they that are in the

flesh cannot please God. Peter thought that he never would deny the Lord, but as soon as the Lord withdrew from him he did deny him. He continued to do so until the Lord turned and looked on him. Just so it is with us. When the Savior melts the barrier down, and steps from behind our wall, we are like Peter, we are made to weep bitterly.

I have heard dear old soldiers speak of their ups and downs in this life, and say their downs were many more than their ups. But nay, not so. Our downs are so much longer. We only get a glimpse now and then of his beaming countenance. With the poor writer the glass is very, very dark. If I have ever been under the smiling rays of his shining wings it has been very fleeting. He only shows himself at the lattice. It is here a little and there a little. Sometimes it seems that I can never again grope in darkness, and then I am made to again be as "a pelican of the wilderness," as "an owl of the desert." But blessed thought indeed that he knows our way! Even when the influence of his healing wings is not being felt he is watching over and caring for us. He will never leave nor forsake us, and is mindful of us when we are not mindful of ourselves. He will watch over and keep us in this world, and will watch our sleeping dust until he bids it arise. Then we shall be where he is and be like him, and this old wall, the flesh, shall be done away with and all will be heaven and eternal. This will be enough for a poor sinner like me.

May the Lord continue to enable the publishers and editors to print a paper that contends for the doctrine that has identified the church for ages.

Yours in hope of continued mercy,
Elder W.D. Griffin

ADDRESS CHANGE

All letters for The Signs of the Times containing subscriptions and remittances, should be mailed to Elder J.R. Williams, at the new address herewith!

Signs of the Times, Inc.
1012 Bennett Circle
Keeling, Va. 24566

All letters and articles for publication, all notices of meetings and all obituaries should be mailed as before to:

Elder Kenneth R. Key
721 Willard St.
Greensboro, N.C. 27405

CHAPTER 4: 1-3.

NOW the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils;

Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron;

Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth.

NOTICE**An Expression of Thankfulness**

The members and friends of Rehobeth Primitive Baptist Church at El Dorado, Arkansas wish to express sincere thanks to all who helped in the project of rebuilding our meeting house. After the fire, which destroyed the old building, floods of contributions came in from many individuals and sister churches who knew of our loss. After the appeal for help appeared in the Signs of the Times and The Remnant, many more contributions were sent from friends from afar. Through the grace and providence of Almighty God, we were blessed to rebuild on the site of the old building and enter the new building debt free.

Thanks to the editors of the Signs of the Times and The Remnant, for publishing the notice of our loss. Thanks to all who contributed money, labor and encouragement to Rehobeth Church. Especially, thanks be unto Almighty God for His gracious undertaking for us in all things. The new building was sufficiently complete for us to meet in it on the second Sunday in April--two months and two weeks after the fire. This is an incredible miracle of providence, for which we hope we are truly thankful.

Your little sister,
Rehobeth Church

MEETINGS**UNION MEETING
UPPER COUNTY LINE**

The Upper County Line Union Meeting will be held at Greensboro Church on Sunday, July 30, 1995 at 10 o'clock.

All lovers of the truth, especially Elders, are invited to meet with us.

Elder Kenneth R. Key, Mod.
Wayne Edwards, Clerk

MINUTES OF THE PRESBYTERY

Pursuant to the request of Paynes Creek Primitive Baptist Church, Floyd County, Virginia, a presbytery met Dec. 5, 1992 for the examination of brother Wilton Supthin, and if found qualified in accordance with the written word of God, at the satisfaction and discretion of their judgement, ordain the above mentioned to the full work of the office of deacon.

The solemnity was begun with prayer by Elder Junior Conner. All Elders of our faith and order present constituted the presbytery. Those present were as follows: Elders Junior Conner, W.T. Conner, Carl Terry, Willard Cox, Clarence Stone and Hale Terry.

The presbytery was organized by electing Elder Hale Terry as moderator and Deacon W.G. Parsons as clerk. Elder Willard Cox and W.T. Conner were chosen to perform the examination of the candidate Elder Hale Terry having been duly appointed by Paynes Creek Church in conference Oct. 31, 1992 spokesman for the church delivered brother Supthin to the presbytery. Examination was made by Elders Willard Cox and W.T. Conner using scriptural reference 1 Timothy ch. 3 v. 8-13. The presbytery being satisfied with the examination and answers given by the candidate, administered the laying on of hands. The ordination prayer was delivered by Elder Clarence Stone. Elder Junior Conner and Carl Terry delivered the charge to the candidate, using scriptural reference Holy word of God.

The moderator asked Paynes Creek Church if they approved the work of the presbytery which was answered in the affirmative.

A certificate of ordination was presented to brother Supthin, and the right hand of fellowship and brotherhood given. The ordained brother was delivered back to the church as an ordained deacon of the Old School Primitive Baptist Church at Paynes Creek Floyd County, Virginia.

The minutes of the work of the presbytery were read and adopted. The presbytery was dismissed with prayer by Elder Carl Terry.

Elder Wm. Hale Terry, Mod.
Dea. W.G. Parsons, Clerk

PIGG RIVER ASSOCIATION



The Pigg River Association will be held, the Lord willing the first Sunday in August; Friday and Saturday before, August 4, 5, & 6, 1995.

Thompson Grove Church is the host for the setting of this Association. The meeting place will be Rocky Mount High School, Rocky Mount, Virginia.

Come into Rocky Mount on highway 220 and exit on highway 40, going west. Take second street to left to the high school.

We invite all lovers of the truth to come and be with us.

Elder Lane Carter, Moderator
Jamie E. Cooper, Clerk

SMITH RIVER ASSOCIATION



The Smith River Association will convene, the Lord willing, with Salem Church located on State highway #221 between Copper Hill and Check, Virginia. The time will be Friday, Saturday, and Sunday, September 1st, 2nd, and 3rd, 1995. We invite our correspondents and visitors to meet with us at this meeting.

Wilford G. Parsons
Association Clerk

SOUTH OUACHITA ASSOCIATION

The South Ouachita Association will be held, the Lord willing, on Saturday and Sunday, September 23 & 24, 1995.

Union Church, located about five miles Southeast of Marion, Louisiana, will host the association. All lovers of the truth are invited to come and be with us.

Ned Barron
Association Clerk
318-778-4217

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR MAY 1995

- Mrs. Rachel A. Smith, NC 2.00
- Mrs. Helen L. Pittman, TX..... 2.00
- Mrs. Nova L. Coleman, VA 2.00
- Mrs. Mary Hawkins, NC
- In memory Sis. Emma Somers 32.00
- Mrs. Beulah Nichols, VA..... 2.00
- Wade M. Poff, VA 2.00
- Andrew C. Agee, VA..... 2.00
- A.J. Griffin, AL 10.00
- Mrs. Muriel M. Strader, NC 2.00
- Eld. J.Y. McCormick, FL 7.00
- Mrs. Connie Page, NC 5.00
- W.D. Godwin, LA..... 2.00
- Mrs. Julia R. Garner, NC 5.00
- Mrs. Mary W. Janney, VA..... 2.00
- Walter F. Griffith, NC 2.00
- Richard Lawless, WV 2.00
- G.R. Slate, NC 2.00

OBITUARIES

SISTER BESSIE DENNY CURRY

Sister Bessie Denny Curry daughter of the late Thomas Jefferson Denny and Indiana Gaulden Gorden Denny was born April 18, 1903 and passed from this life December 22, 1994 at her home in Eden, North Carolina.

She was married on December 25, 1919 to the late Brother James Ernest Curry. A son, Walter Thomas Curry preceded her in death. She is survived by one daughter, Thelma C. Pullium of Greensboro, NC and a son Ernest Madison (Bill) Curry of Wilmington, NC. She is also survived by eight grandchildren and three great grandchildren.

Sister Curry joined Dan River Primitive Baptist Church on July 22, 1934 and was baptized by her Pastor, the late Elder David Spangler.

Her funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder Kenneth Key after which she was laid to rest in the church cemetery beside her husband: there to rest until the day of resurrection when her hope will become reality.

Sister Curry was a quiet person who loved her church and her family. She was in declining health for two years prior to her death. A faithful member, she was blessed to attend her church up until the last and always in her favorite seat.

May the Lord bless her family in their great loss, and give each of them peace, comfort and consolation, that none but the Lord can give.

We feel our loss is her eternal gain and may we all be reconciled to the will of our

Heavenly Father, who does all things well and never makes a mistake.

Written by the request of Dan River Primitive Baptist Church while in conference.

Juanita Law
Amanda Saunders
Elder Kenneth Key, Pastor
Bob R. Collie, Clerk

SISTER ELSIE B. HOUCHINS

Sister Elsie B. Houchins born March 18th, 1906. Died Feb. 3rd, 1995. Elsie is a 1st cousin. She joined County Line Primitive Baptist Church June 6th, 1933. We were not together too many times before we joined, but soon found we loved to be together.

As my mother's home place was near County Line, we often walked back there to visit my Aunt Lucinda Mary Shortt after meeting. My aunt would say, "I declare, you are just like father coming back from meeting, "talk, then walk a few steps, and stop and talk." My grandfather Elder Asa D. Shortt while he was able had company to bring home for dinner, and they would talk on the way home. My aunt did not want dinner to get cold.

Sister Elsie always expressed herself with few words, and always to the point, well understood. Dependable, and a strength to me.

Her funeral was Sunday Feb. 5, 1995 at Wood Funeral Home in Floyd Virginia and buried beside her father and mother in County Line Church cem-

etry. Elder Noel F. Conner preached the funeral.

Survived by one brother: Tyler T. Houchins, three sisters: Linda H. West, Anise B. Houchins, and Irene Houchins; also several nieces and nephews.

Catherine A. Houchins

BROTHER JOSEPH MORTON

In special memory; I'll try to write: asking God for great strength, guidance and knowledge. To Honor and respect our "Beloved Brother" and friend to all who knew him.

Brother Joe was born in Onslow County Dec. 12, 1916. His parents were Edward Ward and Alice Gertrude Morton. He was raised in a large "Family Circle". A total of thirteen brothers and sisters.

In the thirties he was married to Effie Mae Humphry. The Lord blessed them with three sons. They were taught to work from "Early Childhood;" As he himself had been all his life.

Brother Joe asked a home with the church May 16, 1954. Was a faithful member for forty years.

Ordained as deacon. Served in that capacity until his death.

He was devoted and supported his church in every way; financially, also in the time and labor he gave so freely. "Great love and hope was shown in his everyday life.

Brother Joe passed away November 17, 1994. His survivors are his wife Sister Effie Morton; two sons of the home: Shirleen and Jimmy Morton,

five grandsons and five great grandchildren. Three sisters: Sister Blanche Collins of Jacksonville, Eula Lovitt and Ada Newman of Texas. He was preceded in death by a son Bobby Morton.

Our departed Brother was a good husband and a very devoted Father. To the family I say!! You have suffered a great loss, but I feel your loss is "Heaven's Gain." I pray God will reconcile each one of you, and fill that empty spot with "Love."

Try to realize God chose a "Precious Jewel" Brother Joe and just keep that in mind. Press onward to the Mark of the High Calling which is in our Lord Jesus Christ.

Funeral conducted by Elder J.T. Prescott and burial in Onslow Memorial Park, laid beneath a mound of flowers.

Written by and for the order of North East Church in conference third Saturday in May 1995.

Written by a Sister in Christ I hope,
Mary Lillie Hall
1597 Halltown Rd.
Jacksonville, N.C. 28546

FOREST L. SHORTT



Forest L. Shortt born Oct. 17, 1899 died May 11, 1995.

Forest, a second cousin to me, and lived at one time near our home in Floyd County, more like a brother to me, as I have known him as long as I can remember anyone.

His mother was a member at County Line Church also an older sister was a member too. We felt if "Cousin Mary Elize" was in our home in sickness everything would be well soon. She and Forest was much alike in their kindness toward sick ones.

Forest never joined the church, but came Saturday and Sunday every month as long as he was able. He was loved and respected by all. Helped in any of our need at County Line Church. He, while he was able, built a fire in the stoves, swept the floor, dusted. He so liked to help. Money, he often gave. Helped on the mowing of yard and cemetery. Took company home with him from meetings, bringing water for the pitcher and etc. Little things, but so needed. Elder and Mrs. Noel F. Conner visited him, in hospital and nursing home. I went twice. Last time, as I came near his bed, he faintly called my name, "Catherine". He seemed to care so much for Elder and Mrs. Conner. He called them "Noel and Nellie".

Funeral at County Line Church Sunday 1 p.m. May 14, 1995. Funeral conducted by Elder Noel Conner. Burial in Church Cemetery.

Survived by his wife: Lala Pendleton Shortt; two sons: McCrey Shortt, Marshall Shortt; grandsons: Calvin Shortt, Timothy Shortt, Mark Shortt, and Michael Shortt, and granddaughters: Vera Thompson, Cathy Bratton, and Vicky Wade; also twelve great-grandchildren.

Catherine A. Houchins

Signs of the Times

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"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
1012 Bennett Circle, Keeling, Virginia 24566

SONG

**MY God, my life, my love,
To thee, to thee I call;
I cannot live if thou remove,
For thou art all in all.**

**The smilings of thy face,
How amiable they are!
'Tis heaven to rest in thine
embrace
And nowhere else but there.**

**Not all the harps above
Can make a heavenly place
If God his residence remove,
Or but conceal his face.**

**Nor earth, nor all the sky
Can one delight afford;
No, not a drop of real joy
Without thy presence, Lord.**

**Thou art the sea of love,
Where all my pleasures roll;
The circle where my passions
move,
And centre of my soul.**

**To thee my spirits fly,
With infinite desire;
And yet how far from thee I lie!
Dear Jesus, raise me higher.**

CONTENTS

EDITORIAL 194
 Elder R.H. Campbell

ARTICLES 199
 Troy G. Shepard

VOICES OF THE PAST 203
 Elder Gilbert Beebe
 Elder J.C. Philpot
 Elder E.J. Lambert

MEETINGS 213

CONTRIBUTIONS 214

OBITUARIES 215
 Nemhy Albritton Everett
 Deacon John E. Smith
 Ruby Barron

EDITORIAL

THEIR ROCK NOT OUR ROCK



ELDER R.H. CAMPBELL

“For their rock is not as our Rock, even our enemies themselves being judges.” (Deut. 32:31)

This scripture is thousands of years old, and yet it is still just as applicable today as it was when first written. This is true of all Scripture however, because the truth and the wisdom of the inspired Word of God is ageless. God is unchangeable

and so is his word, it is the same today, yesterday and forever. Man is also the same as he was after the fall of Adam: he is corrupt, and if there is any good in man it is by the grace of God that there is. It is because God has shown mercy upon him, and has placed something within him that not all men possess,— and that is the Holy Spirit.

The above scripture is recorded in the song that the Lord told Moses to write unto the children of Israel just before Moses was to go up onto the mountain and die. God is referring in the song to Jeshurun and ones who forsook God who made them, and lightly esteemed the Rock of their salvation. Then still referring to these individuals, he states the text, *“For their rock is not as our Rock, even our enemies themselves being judges.”*

Can this same scripture not be quoted today regarding the religions of the world around us? Their rock is not our Rock, and they will be the first to acknowledge it to be the truth. According to their own testimony, they walk without any fear at all, and by the lighthearted, carefree manner of their worship services, it is evident that their rock is not as our Rock, They believe that their God has done all he can do, or is willing to do, to save the inhabitants of the world; and now the decision, the power, and the final results of the whole work is in their hands: they can accept it and live eternally in heaven or they can reject it and dwell forever in the fiery pits of hell.

In reality, what is the difference in this doctrine and the belief in the god those people in Moses' day? They made a replica of four footed beasts, creeping things, and birds of the air, and fell down and worshipped them. They cut down a tree, used it to cook their food, warm themselves, and then of the ashes they made a graven image, and fell down and worshipped it, praying, Deliver us for thou art our god." (see Isaiah 44th chapter) It is sheer nonsense, and yet it seems that the same thing is happening all over the world today among people who are considered intelligent individuals. The people of olden times worshipped images which had eyes but could not see, and feet but could not walk -- they had to be carried wherever they went. The image itself had no power at all, and the point is that the people could determine among themselves the power, wisdom and characteristics the image was supposed to possess, according to what the people wanted. If things went well, it was their god's pleasure in their actions, if not, it was punishment for something they did wrong, or something they failed to do.

The masses today believe in a God that is just as subservant to their wishes as the inanimate objects of stone, ash, or what have you, that their fathers worshipped. Man has not really changed with all the technical and cultural advances made by the human race since the foundation of the world. They will tell you that they believe in the biblical account of the creation, the theory of an omnipotent

being who is all wise, and then tell you that the supreme being cannot save a single individual unless that person will let him. I have difficulty understanding how intelligent (wisdom of the world) people can honestly believe this, but they are constantly affirming it on the radios, from the pulpits, and whenever given an opportunity and someone will listen. Therefore, their own judgment is that their rock is not as our Rock.

Many times I get low in spirit, and I am made to wonder if the things that I hope to believe, are really the truth of the God of heaven and earth, or am I just building on the sand something that will not stand the test of time. With all of the testimony that I hear constantly from the world, is it possible that I could be deceived in the matter, and the religions of the world are actually the truth? They have the majority, they have the evidence if it is actually observed by the natural eye, and their doctrine is appealing to the natural mind. It causes me deep concern sometimes, and I believe that but for the grace of God I would be overwhelmed by it all.

Thanks be unto God these seasons pass, and we again believe in the true and living God, who has promised that he will never leave nor forsake his children. If indeed one has the Holy Spirit dwelling within him, then all things are for their sake and work together for their good. This is a very contrasting relationship to the one between the gods of this world and their worshippers. The one is sure and steadfast and under the complete

control of a sovereign Creator, who works all things after the counsel of his own will, and if we are what we hope to be, He is our Rock. The gods of this world are powerless, lifeless, and in reality, are only the extension of the vain conceit of those who worship them.

The song in which this scripture is found, begins with, *"Give ear, O ye heavens and I will speak: and hear, O earth, the words of my mouth."* This is a God of power who speaks and it is done, commands and it stands fast. This is the one that is designated as Our Rock. He is considered, feared and revered as such today by those He has saved and called with a holy calling. If he calls and the heavens stand up, will not puny man do the same? Will they not give ear and hear if spoken to by such a God? I believe that they will, and I do not believe that they will ever be found contending that they are in any way responsible for being called into or kept in the way that they are traveling.

"My doctrine shall drop as the rain my speech shall distill as the dew. As the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the shower upon the grass." This is a most beautiful text to one as he is made to remember the sovereign work of grace in God's making known unto him the beauties of his doctrine. As the earth is dry and cold with no moisture, so was his heart. As the earth has no power of its own to bring down the rain, or to cause the dew to form upon it, so is the natural man. But suddenly, mysteriously there is the moisture, or

spirit in the case of the natural man, and suddenly he is alive. Just as the rain causes the earth to bring forth bud, green leaves and fruit, so does the Spirit cause man to come alive unto Godly things, and yield fruit in the form of praise unto God their Heavenly Father.

"Because I will publish the name of the Lord: Ascribe ye greatness unto our God." This is now the heartfelt song of the new heaven born soul. Now their whole desire is to publish the news of this miracle in their life, and ascribe greatness unto the God of their salvation. There is such sweetness and freedom in their soul, and they feel that surely others can see and feel it too. They learn though that this is just for them. Others can only receive it in the same way they did--by the sovereign grace of Almighty God. They are made to know that they are not acting, but rather being acted upon by a power other than their own, and one that is independent of any efforts on their part.

This seems to have been the experience of Moses, in that he was called at a time and place that we have no record that he was concerned with God and godly things. He knew the way of those around him in the same way that we observe those around us today. And, although we cannot know that we are children of God, we can say that their rock is not our Rock, they themselves being judges.

"He is the Rock, his way is perfect: for all his ways are judgment: A God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he." Is not this the Rock that

we worship today? If I have any understanding of what I believe, and what the Primitive Baptists contend for today, that is exactly the same Rock that Moses was writing about. It is the only foundation upon which a hope is based of heaven and immortal glory, because of the frailty of the man of flesh, and the changeableness of his nature.

Down through the ages of time God in his own infinite wisdom and power, according to my understanding of the scriptures, has in his own time revealed himself unto his own, and called them from nature's darkness into His marvelous light. Also I know of no case on record where he ever let one stray back into that state of darkness and complete lack of understanding of Him, as he was in before He appeared unto them. This is because, "He is the Rock and all his ways are judgment." And He never changes his mind or reverses that judgment. Man can change his prior judgment upon receiving additional evidence concerning the thing upon which he passed judgment. God had infinite wisdom, and changes not because all of that knowledge is behind every judgment that He makes, and He is too wise to err.

It seems to me that were it otherwise there could be no peace or comfort, and none could have the blessed assurance of a heavenly abode, if things could change because of some future unknown development--something that was not anticipated by the great I AM. I see him as a supreme being incapable of making a mistake. "*De-*

claring 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." In this Isaiah expressed the same sentiment as Moses did when he said, "*He is the Rock, his work is perfect, for all His ways are judgment.*" They are both stating that all things are brought to pass according to God's own will and purpose, and because of judgment of the whole situation respecting those events. They are not just random coincidences but a perfectly planned sequence of events.

The world says that their rock desires that they send the gospel into all the world and save as many as they can. This requires seminaries, boards, money, volunteers, and a good sound promotional program to accomplish, and they acknowledge that they are falling far short of the goal. When God commands his servants to go, he goes. On one occasion the Angel of the Lord opened the prison doors and brought his servants out, and told them, "*Go, stand and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life.*" Where the word of a king is, there is power. And this is just as true today as it has ever been. Christ told Peter after his resurrection, "*When thou wast young thou girdest thyself, and walkest whither thou wouldest, but when thou shall be old, thou shall be stretch forth thy hands and another shall gird thee and carry thee whither thou wouldest not.*" This is saying that they will go, not because everything is made easy, but rather in spite

of all the obstacles that may be in their way. If there is one of God's little ones that is to receive His word, such as Cornelius, the commandment will go forth, and a way will be made for it to be accomplished, and all the praise and honor will be unto God. This will be true in the heart of the newly manifested child and in the heart and soul Of the servant. It will be as the servant Of Abraham who was sent to seek a wife for Isaac. It will all be the sovereign work of God, and will accomplish the desired results, because, *"His work is perfect."*

Many times as we behold the world around us, we are made to wonder why we are so different from the majority of the people that we come in contact with. Why is it that what is so sweet and precious to us, should be so hated by the world? Then as we read the scriptures, we find that it has ever been so. In John 6:66, Christ told his disciples, *"Verily, verily I say unto you, Ye seek me, not because ye saw the miracles but because ye did eat of the loaves and are filled."* The same is true today: the world in general follows after the various religions because they are appealing to the natural senses of man, and fulfill their vain conceited sense of self-importance, and need to belong. Later Christ told them, *"It is the Spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you they are spirit, and they are life. But there are some of you that believe not. Therefore I said unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father."* It

says from that time many of his disciples went back and walked no more with him. The truth has ever been the thing that separates the Children of God from the children of the world, whether we like it or not. It was true in Christ's days upon the earth; and it is true today. Only those who have been born of the Spirit of God can witness to the truth of God. The others cannot because they do not know anything about it: as the Apostle Paul wrote, *"No man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost."* And, *"No man speaking by the Spirit calleth Jesus accursed."*

God told Moses, *"Now write this song for you, and teach it to the Children of Israel: put it in their mouth that this song may be a witness for me against the children of Israel."* This is, therefore, the witness that God placed on record for all future generations of the children of Israel, as a remembrance of the Rock of their salvation. It does not leave them to guess as to the attributes of the Rock of Moses, and it also spells out the fallacy of the new gods that are newly come up. We have the same evidence among us today, for God has not left himself without a witness, and when blessed with the wisdom of the Spirit of God, as we hope to have been a few times in our life, we have felt that we would say, *"For their rock is not our Rock."* It is a grand and glorious feeling to be so lifted up that, for the moment, it seems that you can say, *"I know that my Redeemer liveth,"* not just that there is a God, but that he is *my God, my Rock, my Strength, my For-*

tress, and my Deliverer. At such times as this, it seems that it would be sin not to confess this in view of the strong impression. At other times you fear to claim these precious truths as yours.

May God bless the above to the comfort and edification of his children. May He grant you the wisdom to recognize, understand, and rejoice in the Truth, and the compassion to overlook the error, and forgive the writer. If not deceived, my prayer is that all has been done in love for the truth, and for those who love and believe the truth. Just as surely as the truth separates the children of God from the world, it binds their hearts and souls together with a force stronger than any of the ties of nature. The love that they have for these things, is the sweetest of God's gifts to the children of men. It is greater than the faith and hope that accompany it.

In bonds of love,
Elder Richard H. Campbell

ARTICLES

MY GRACE IS SUFFICIENT FOR THEE 2 Cor. 12:9.

Dear Child of your Father God, when He speaks those precious comforting words to you, His little chosen ones; it is with such power, that it penetrates the very depth of the mind, heart, soul and being; those precious words, removes all fear, one may have ever had; of

what all mankind or devils might do to him or her; they then feel something like unto this, - Oh they might be let to destroy this body of flesh of mine; but, never can they destroy, or even touch my soul; nor can they effect or remove this love I feel, for my Lord and Saviour, and His little children. Oh dear Child of God's grace and mercy; the importance of this time world, compared with, our sweet and precious hope of that world to come, is as nothing: That great and awful suffering, dying and arising, of your (and I hope my) Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, was, that very sufficient grace, applied, on His little children's behalf; it completely cleared and opened that way, God's way, for you (and I hope me), to reach our heavenly Father, in heaven and immortal glory. Oh, it is just too great, for me to find sufficient words, to say or write.

It is far beyond the comprehension of our poor weak minds, to fully comprehend the reality, of, never again to feel pain, in mind, body or soul; to never again, feel sickness, or concern for health, of self or others; to never again, have a thought, concerning this cruel world of sin and sorrow; to never again, shed tears of sorrow; but instead, experience Holy and Righteous peace, and complete and perfect satisfaction, to everlastingly, sing praise, honor and glory, unto our heavenly Father, forever after. For while we live in this time world, we can only experience a little taste of those heavenly feelings, sometime, as the Precious Lord be pleased to give unto us. And to be given to realize, of a truth; that

we of our fleshly self, have NEVER turned a hand, or done even ONE single thing, to merit or earn, even ONE of the multitude of blessings He has bestowed upon us, all the days of our lives; that they each and everyone, were freely given unto us; simply, and only by reason, it was His good pleasure so to do. And so, if we are given to feel and realize those truths, we then know full well, self boasting, is completely and wholly out of the whole picture all together; and that His name, is the ONE and only name, could ever be worthy, of any praise, honor and glory, both now and forever more.

When the afore chosen children of God, are carried on the wings of His everlasting love, to heaven and immortal glory; they will be of one mind, and have but one interest; and that will be, to praise the great and Holy name of their (and I hope my) heavenly Father, forever without ceasing; without ever another thought, of this time world; for it will have passed away, into the sea of forgetfulness. No one there, will ever again, know hunger or thirst, hot or cold, sickness or pain, or any discontentment; for all will be perfectly satisfied, forever and ever more, in the presence of the Lord God, wherein perfect peace and happiness dwelleth forever.

How can one glory in, and take pleasure in, infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses, for Christ's sake?, this is made possible with one, ONLY; when it pleases the Lord God, to show him or her, that His grace is sufficient for

them. Without God's grace being applied to one, he cannot even think a good thought, much less, perform a good act, that is good in His sight. Every second, of every minute, of every hour, of every day, of every month, of every year; mankind is boldly demonstrating, his total disregard, for "God," having anything whatsoever to do with, the operation of His government; of which does include, the entire fulfillment, of every moment of time, He allotted, for this world to stand; that does involve, everything to ever be or do or take place, in all time and eternally, in both heaven and earth. Now that is, to some degree, a measurement, of the untruth, of mankind's self boasting, of his and her greatness and or self goodness.

There are many of mankind, who have not been given to see, just what they are, in their own self's selfish fleshly nature; who read the 31st verse, of the 1st chapter of Genesis; who evidently accept those words VERY GOOD; as applying to themselves as their own fleshly nature's selves. Of which I feel, is as far away from the truth, as is hell, far separated from heaven. But instead, does mean that good and very good, of God's work, in His Own creation and making of all things, for the perfect fulfillment, of His every purpose in and for having created it all. For an evidence of this, when looking down upon mankind, God said, I find none good, no not one. And so therefore, any and all good ever performed through any one of mankind, was and is, only, that what God did work in him, both the

will and to do of it; that leaves man without, any right for self boasting, in any way shape or form. And so, all praise or honor, always and always belongeth to God, but never, to man.

There were many who did see the body form of Christ, while He walked upon this earth, who were only aware, that He was just another man; not having the least idea of who He really were; for they saw Him only with the natural eye; while there were some, who recognized Him as the very Christ. Now, what was it, that made that difference, when both did see Him, with their natural eyes? them who saw Him only as just another man, had not been given an inner eye of faith, therefore, they could only see the natural; while the others were given that inner eye of faith, which is able to see, even that which is Spiritual; or, in other words, Christ had revealed Himself to them. Which is clear evidence that, - without that revelation unto one, from on High; it is entirely impossible for one to see, that what be Holy and good, as be good in the sight of God; For the three-in-One God, is the very One, and only One, who is the Creator, and distributor, of any and all that is good in His sight. For man of himself, to do such good, is just as impossible, as it is impossible, for him, to remove God from His Throne in heaven, and replace Him, with himself. Man is so boastful, of man's own self's greatness as to even say of some; now he is a self made man; while, either not knowing, or ignoring, the true fact of the matter is, - even though man walketh, yet, he is NOT the director of

his steps; his believing that he is; does not alter of change that fact of truth, (that he is not), even one iota; he is just denying the truth, and believing a lie; just as the worldly religionist believe, preach and teach, now. The fleshly nature of mankind is such, that he gives little or no thought, to the reality, of his total and complete self helplessness; not only to the Spiritual, but also, even the natural; his fleshly self's selfcenteredness, tells him that falsehood; that he is independent, not that very Holy truth; that, without God's furnishings, he could neither BE anything, much less, do anything; not even think a thought, perform an act; not even breathe a breath or have a being; except, God furnish all that makes it all possible. And may we be thankful unto God; there never was, and never can be; any, self made man.

Almighty "God," was and is, the one and only One, who did Create all things; (outside Himself). He made all things that were made, and without Him, there was no thing that were made, but what He made.

God is Self existent; He has always and eternally been God, and will always and eternally be, the same unchanging God. He has no beginning, and no ending. He ever was, is, and ever will be, the same yesterday, today, and forevermore. He holds and controls all power, both in heaven and earth; and His power, of which, He is the holder and controller of it; is that one and only source, from which, every ounce of any and all strength to ever exist, is derived; therein is proof

positive; without Him, we can do no thing or nothing. And that very same does apply, to satan or the devil, and all his angels. And though, God said - I create evil; all things together, does, in no way, shape or form, even remotely, furnish any foundation, upon which, "God" could ever rightly be accused or charged, with being the author of sin, or any unrighteousness.

The sins, mankind commits, derives from those devilish intents, that is in both his mind and heart, while he thinks and or acts. If a man has a desire, in his mind and heart, to murder someone; even though, he does not go through with that physical action; and yet still, in his heart, he has committed murder. Like as Christ said, of a man, who looks upon a woman with lust; he has committed adultery, in his heart. And so, mans weakened intent, is a sin, equal to, whatever be his intent. Yes, dear child of God's grace and mercy; with "God," all is fixed, weighed and measured, from before the foundation of the world.

SIN, is a transgression of God's Holy Law. Without the law, there is no sin; for there could be no transgression. Up to the time of Adam receiving the commandment of God, concerning the law; that said - thou shalt not eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, there was no sin in the world. But, when Adam did eat of that forbidden fruit, of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil; thereby, 'sin' entered the world, by man; through and by his transgression, of the Law of God.

Now, God being ALL WISE: He assuredly did know full well, and to exactness, what Adam would do, in his transgression of that very law, or commandment, which He gave Adam; just as He has always known; of every transgression, of every one, who followed after Adam into this world. For, it to be otherwise, He could not be the all wise God; and in fact, no God at all. For to be, the true and living God, as He is; there can be absolutely NO guess work, or just happened sos, or ensured, of anything, to ever be or do or take place, in all time and eternity; before, this time world, during this time world, and after this time world is no more; in both heaven and earth, and also in hell. And it is within that very exact framework; all provisions were provided; all times, were set and established, for each and everything to ever be, within that total time He did allot, for this world to stand. And not even one minute alteration, can there ever exist. And that, simply by reason, He is God, and He changeth NOT. And, there was and is, a certain and exact number of people or souls, whom He did choose for Himself, from before the foundation of the world, who He calls the vessels of His mercy; shall be carried on the wings of His love, to forever be with Him, in heaven and immortal glory. While there are, another, certain exact number of people or souls, who He calls the vessels of His wrath; shall be cast into the bottomless pit of the ever burning hell. And the souls of neither group, shall ever die. The first mentioned group, shall forever be happy; while the sec-

ond mentioned group; shall forever be in tormented misery. Now, if it so be, that what I have written here, is in accord with that truth, as is in the Lord Jesus Christ; let it be understood here and now; the Lord God did everything, what made it possible, certain and sure. And so, may His name be praised for it all.

In hope, I could be your brother in Christ,

Troy G. Shepard
103 East Tateway Rd.
Kitty Hawk, N.C. 27949

VOICES OF THE PAST

VITAL GODLINESS

That there is much speculative religion in the world there can be no doubt, and that there may be some that is not genuine among those who stand connected with the church of Christ is greatly to be feared. Every true and legitimate son and daughter of Zion, while in this earthly house of their pilgrimage, experience seasons when it is with them a matter of the greatest importance to know whether they are not of that character. It is not probable that hypocrites and mere nominal professors of christianity are troubled on the same ground, for he who designs to deceive cannot feel that suspense and conflict which doubting christians always feel when the light and comfort of the divine presence are withdrawn from their

view. Much is said about vital godliness, and in order that we may know whether we are in possession of it, it is important that we understand what is meant by the terms. Vitality is life, and the word godliness in the scriptures signifies that action which spiritual life in the children of God is calculated to produce. Hence the terms are only properly applicable to those who are born of God, and led by the Spirit to walk in the way of holiness, in whom is developed the fruits of the spirit, which are love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance; and all these being fruits of the Spirit are only found where spiritual life has been given. And as they are produced by the Spirit they invariably give evidence of vital union to Christ, who is the life of his people. As the branch of a vine cannot bear fruit of itself except it abide in the vine, so neither can the people of God bring forth fruits which are unto holiness, the end of which is eternal life, except they abide in Christ, who is the true Vine, and of which the Father is the Husbandman. For without him we can do nothing.

The apostle suggests to us that persons may have a form of Godliness while they deny the power thereof; but we conclude that where the power of Godliness is possessed, there will certainly be at least some of the form of Godliness manifested.

If what we have found to be the fruits of the spirit developed constitutes the form or any part of that form, does it not appear that men may possess a kind of love, joy, peace, and

even faith that does not proceed from the spirit as the result of spiritual life implanted? Much that will pass currently for christian love in the religious world is denounced by the apostles as being spurious. He admonished his brethren that such loved not the Lord Jesus, but were enemies of the cross of Christ. They may affect a deceptive counterfeit, and may use soft words and fair speeches while they only flatter to beguile and allure to entrap. In evidence of their love they may show astonishing zeal and what the world calls benevolence; they may give their goods to feed the poor, their money to support missionaries, and their bodies to be burnt, and still be destitute of anything but the mere form of love. They may also cry, "Peace," when God has not spoken peace, and they may possess that complacency which the strange woman boasted of when she had paid her vows, (See Prov. vii.) and yet only a form. Their joy and faith and all the imitations of Godliness that can possibly grow out of an unregenerated heart are lifeless and formal and, as far as we can trace such characters by the light of revelation, they invariably deny the power of vital godliness and this they do in a variety of ways. The principle way, however, is by denying that the love, joy, peace, long-sufferings, goodness, gentleness, faith, etc., are truly the fruits of the Spirit, the gift of God, but claiming that they are produced by human power by the will and works of men. Their position is like this, "If the branch will bear fruit of itself as a condition, it may then be

admitted into the Vine." But all who know experimentally the power of Godliness will acknowledge that the excellency of its power is of God, and not of the creature. The power is in the vine and not in the branch, only as the branch abides in and receives vigour and faithfulness from the living Vine. But there are times in which the branches which really abide in the vine seem to be barren, the branches are not always clothed with verdure, and abounding with clusters, but branches vitally abiding in the true and living Vine shall assuredly bring forth fruit in its appropriate season. The tree of life which John saw yielding its fruit every month, and all they who receive life and vigour from Christ will, in due time, present the fruits of the spirit.

Godliness, in the life and conversation of the children of the kingdom, derives all its vitality from Him who is the Head of life and spirituality to His body, the church. All is dry, formal and vain in our deportment that springs not from this union to him. He only hath immortality dwelling in the light, and therefore from him alone can we receive it only as we abide in him as the fruitful branch abideth in the true vine, for the saints are members of him, as the branches are members of the vine. And from the head, all the members of the body, the church, have nourishment ministered and knit together, increaseth with the increase of God. The apostle assures us that all are called in one hope of our calling - one Lord, one faith, and one baptism,

one God and Father of all who is above all, and through all, and in you all.

But our design was not only to define the terms, but to offer some remarks upon the subject of its development in the faith and general deportment of those who know and acknowledge its power. The grace of God which bringeth salvation hath appeared unto all men, teaching us that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world. A life of godliness is necessarily a life of self-denial. No man can live godly in Christ Jesus without suffering persecution, nor can we deport ourselves as becometh godliness without denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, for these are the opposites of all that adorn the christian character. But whatever of opposition, persecution, or self-denial may oppose the life and course of godliness, there is a power and virtue in it that will out-live all opposition, and bear its humble possessors above the din of warring elements and safely lodge them ultimately in that happy state where the wicked cease from troubling, and where the weary shall enjoy uninterrupted rest. If we, through grace abounding, possess the vital principle, and possess those things which pertain to life and godliness with contentment is great gain, having the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come. Then may our enemies exhaust all their stores of wrath upon us.

"We shall perceive their noise no more,

Than we can hear a shaking leaf,

When rattling thunders round us roar."

May the God of all comfort, who has called us by his grace and given us everlasting consolation through grace, enable us to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world, and at last take us up out of all our afflictions and tribulations and cause us to bask in the fullness of the eternal fountain of life and godliness in the world that is without end.

"O glorious hour! O bless'd abode!

There to be near, and like my God,

And flesh and sin no more control,

The rising pleasures of my soul."

Elder Gilbert Beebe
Middletown, N.Y., May 15, 1854

HEBREWS 12: 5-7.

And ye have forgotten the exhortation which speaketh unto you as unto children, My son, despise not thou the chastening of the Lord, nor faint when thou art rebuked of him:

For whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth.

If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?

"Blessed is the man whom thou chastenest, O Lord, and teachest him out of thy law. —PSALM xciv. 12.

We may observe in the words before us, that the Lord puts chastening before *teaching*. Is there not something remarkable in this? Why should chastening precede teaching? For this reason. We have no ear to hear except so far as we are chastened. It was so with the prodigal. Until he was brought to his right mind by strokes of hunger, he did not think of his father's house; he had no heart to return; but a mighty famine sent him home. So it is with God's children; as long as they are allowed to wander in their back-slidings, they have no heart to return. But let the rod come; let them be driven home by stripes; then they have an ear to listen, while God teaches them to profit, instructs them by his blessed Spirit, and speaks into their heart those lessons which are for their eternal good.

"And teachest him out of thy law." "The law" in the Scriptures has a very wide signification; it means, in the original, *instruction*. The word is *Torah*, which signifies "teaching," or "direction." Thus the word "law" is not confined to the law of Moses given in thunder and lightning upon Mount Sinai; but it includes also the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ—"the perfect law of liberty;" "the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus;" that law which was in the heart of the Redeemer,

when he said, "I come to do thy will, O God; yea, thy law is within my heart."

Now, as the Lord teaches his children "out of the law," strictly so called, so he teaches them "out of" the gospel; and to my mind, there is something exceedingly sweet and expressive in the words "out of the law." It seems to convey, not only that the law is a treasure-house of wrath, but that the gospel also is a treasure-house of mercy. And as those who know most of the law are only taught "out of the law," and not the whole of the law, only a few drops, as it were, out of the inexhaustible wrath of God; so out of the heavenly treasure-house of the gospel, "the perfect law of liberty," it is but a little of grace and mercy that in this life can be known. As Christ said to his disciples in promising the Spirit: "He shall take of mine, and shall shew it unto you." He cannot take "all," and shew it unto them; for none could live under the sight. The Spirit, therefore, takes of the things of Christ, and shews here a little, and there a little; some little blessedness here, and some little blessedness there; a suitable promise, a gracious testimony, a comforting text, an encouraging word, a sight of atoning blood, a smile of his countenance, a view of his Person, a discovery of his righteousness, or a glimpse of his love. This is taking of the things of Christ, and revealing them to the soul. And thus, the man whom the Lord takes in hand, he teaches "out of" the gospel by making Christ experimentally known, and revealing his dying

love. And thus he teaches each and all "out of his law"-- both the law from Sinai, and the law from Zion.

J.C. Philpot

"By his knowledge the depths are broken up, and the clouds drop down the dew."—PROVERBS iii. 20.

WHEN the Lord said, "Let there be light," instantly there was light. So when the Lord says, "Let the earth open," the heart immediately opens, the conscience is made tender, and the soul hears and receives what God speaks. And what follows this opening? The heart receives the dews and showers of God's grace that fall into it; and these dews and showers of God's grace communicate to it softness, fertility, and productiveness. O how we have to learn this by painful experience! Is not our heart as hard sometimes as the nether millstone; and to our feelings, utterly destitute of light, life and power, without one grain of brokenness, contrition, godly sorrow, spiritual desire, or fervent breathing after the Lord? This painful experience the Lord's people have to pass through perpetually, that they may know that "in them, that is, in their flesh dwelleth no good thing," and that "power belongeth unto God." Could I make my own heart soft, should I want the Lord to do it for me? Could I communicate fertility to my own soul, should I ever

pant after the dews and showers of the Holy Ghost? Could I bring pardon and peace into my own conscience, should I need the Lord himself to speak with power? Could I believe, hope, rejoice, and have at my own command every gracious and blessed feeling that I desire to experience, there would be no pleading the Lord's own promises, no wrestling in importunate prayer, no taking the kingdom of God by violence, no longing and panting for the Lord to appear in our souls. The Lord therefore sees fit that we should walk in these paths, that we may know, "*it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy.*"

J.C. Philpot

From Elder Lambert's Book,
"Tried In The Furnace."

"WHAT IS YOUR LIFE?"

James 4:14

APRIL, 1954



ELDER E.J. LAMBERT



OUR NATURAL life is

"a vapour that appeareth for a little time and then vanisheth away."

You cannot say with assurance that you will be living tomorrow. As vapour only appears within certain circumstances and conditions upon which the vapour has no control, so is your life. When these circumstances and

conditions are changed your life vanishes as the vapour. The flowing of the blood, the functioning of the mind, and the movement of the muscles are evidences of natural life. This life is given upon the volition of the will of God and it is taken at His appointed time. When the mind ceases to function, the muscles to move, and the blood to flow; a person is pronounced naturally dead. This natural life is timely. It has its beginning and it has its ending.

It is a true Biblical saying that "*Life is in the blood.*" The expression in Leviticus 17:11 says, "*the life of the flesh is in the blood.*" The flow of the blood stimulates the muscles and mind. When there is a change in the flow of the blood there is a change in the functioning of the mind and movement of the muscles. Heart stimulants affect mind and muscle. When one is under the influence of alcohol, which stimulates the flow of blood, it is often truly said, "*He is not himself.*" His actions and conversation are changed.

The Lord willing, we desire to meditate upon the functioning of the natural mind before comparing and contrasting natural and spiritual life. We want to say to the reader who is wondering what our object is in this treatise that we desire to prove a true and experienced state of life that exists in the regenerated child of God; why that regeneration is necessary; how that Jesus is our life; and, devine eternal life.

The nature of the natural mind is to function within a natural realm. This nature would have to be changed be-

fore it could act within the spiritual realm. We reason according to our understanding. When we have only natural understanding our reasoning is according to natural wisdom. Our affections by nature are carnal, earthly, and sensual--bent on gratifying self. The approval or disapproval of the natural mind is based on a natural conscience which is forever changing with the changes of social customs and ideas. The will of the natural mind chooses that which is evil, indulges in the lusts of the flesh, and chooses to please self. This is the mind of natural life.

What is your life? Have you been elevated above that which is natural to such an extent that you are never bothered with this old nature, conscience, will, understanding, or affections? Have you been wrought upon in such a way that you are living a pure, holy, spiritual life, void of fleshly inclinations? Is your life so holy that you never have a doubt concerning your future abode? I must answer, "no" to all these questions. My experience proves that I possess a darkened understanding, an unregenerated will, and earthly affections. That which is born of the flesh is flesh and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. There is a natural life and there is a spiritual life. I maintain that God's children who have been born again and are yet living in this natural world are characters who possess dual lives. This conforms to the expression of the prophet Isaiah, 38:20, "*All the days of our life.*" "Our life" is an expression that is inconsistent with

the proper usage of language unless it could mean two characters in one person. There is the Spirit of God and there is the spirit of man. As long as we live in this natural

tabernacle we will be beset at times with this old depraved nature, hardened conscience, darkened understanding, *unregenerated will*, and earthly affections.

God infuses eternal life into one of His children by His Spirit in enacting the new birth. When this is done the one being born again is given a new nature, an enlightened understanding, a new conscience, a renewed will, and heavenly affections. This act of God does not do away with his natural birth nor his natural life. To the regenerated, born again, child of God may I ask, "What is your life?"

May I answer as God will direct God has *added* His life to your life. You are not only born of the flesh but of the Spirit. Yes, you are given a new nature by which you are enabled to see the depravity of your old nature. Your understanding is enlightened that you may realize the darkness of your natural understanding. You are given a will toward God and godliness that proves to you that your natural will is to choose evil rather than good. These heavenly affections that God has implanted in you shows how selfish and earthly are your natural affections. Has your life been changed Yes, as a person. You do not esteem yourself as highly as you once did. This experience has humbled you and caused you to realize your dependence. You find that where as you were in peace

with yourself there is now a warfare. The flesh is lusting against the Spirit and the Spirit against the flesh. These are contrary one to the other so that you *cannot do the things you would*. Neither time nor space would permit treating upon the extent of the change. May I ask another question !

Has your flesh been purified, renovated, refined, or made better to know. Your experience is as Paul wrote to the Romans concerning himself, even though he had been graced by this new life being added to him. He expresses in *Romans 7:19*, "*For the good that I would, I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I do.*" If you read his experience you will find that when he would do good evil was present with him. You will find that sin was mixed with all he did. He realized that he served the law of sin with his flesh. He considered himself as chief of sinners, less than the least of saints, and a wretched man who needed and prayed for deliverance. He possessed the thorn of the flesh which was a messenger of Satan to buffet him about lest he be exalted above measure. He rejoiced in physical pains and personal persecutions but the indwelling workings of sin in his carnal mind, the opposition of his depraved nature to the grace of God, caused him to cry out concerning his wretched condition. You will find that Peter possessed his old nature after being so wonderfully blessed with such special divine gifts. His regenerated will was to follow Jesus to the extent of death but there was another characteristic abiding with him that resulted in his deny-

ing any knowledge of Christ, not just once but three times, confirming with an oath, cursing and swearing. Job abhorred himself. An old prophet considered himself as being a man of unclean lips. Many wonderfully gifted characters, whose experience is recorded in the Book of books, were affected with the same evil tendencies as you are. May I ask again, "*What is your life?*"

Your life is a mixture of joys and sorrows. Sometimes you are on the mountain top rejoicing in the grace and love of God but so much of the time you are in the valley of woe. Sometimes your hope of eternal abode in heaven is so little that you wonder, "Do I have a hope?" And sometimes it is an anchor to the soul both sure and steadfast that entereth within the veil. Sometimes you doubt you have grace; at other times you are convinced of His gracious care for you. Probably much of the time the Bible is a sealed book to you; but, sometimes it is as God speaking to you. Sometimes you want to talk of God's love for His people; but, much of the time you are shut up and have no desire to meet one who believes in God. Sometimes the minister preaches directly to you with comfort and edification; but much of the time, though you try to listen, you are cold and lifeless. Why am I thus tossed and have this cross?

You would depend upon the goodness of your own life were it not for this tossing to and fro that you experience. You must be given to know the vileness of your life, the weakness of

your understanding, the deceit of your heart, the evil of your will, and the carnality of your affections before you can obey the command of Jesus to *deny yourself*. You must possess this cross of flesh against the Spirit before you can obey the command of Jesus, "Take up your cross." You must realize the vileness of your own life before you can be made submissive to Jesus' command, "Follow me." You must realize these infirmities through the remaining part of your life, else you would not pray for salvation from sin, look to God for grace, depend upon Jesus for your merits, or hope to be finally delivered from evil into the glorious liberty of the children of God. What is your life?

Your natural life is in evidence when the flow of the blood stimulates the activity of the natural mind and the movement of the muscles. Your spiritual life is in evidence when the flow of the Spirit of God stimulates the spiritual mind (or heart) resulting in a godly walk and conversation. When the blood flows and the mind functions there is action of the muscles. When the Spirit flows, and the godly mind functions, there is action consisting of good works. These good works are done only by the stimulation of the Spirit of God. Thus it is by the grace of God that we are what we are.

What is your life? "*For ye are dead and your life is hid with Christ in God; when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory*" (Col. 3:3,4). We have a foretaste of Christ appearing here in time which is glori-

ous. These experiences last only for fleeting moments; but, the glory of them encourages us to press on with renewed hope and a strengthened faith. Christ is our life because we have been made to depend upon His righteousness. Christ is our life because He suffered the penalty of death, blotting out our sins by dying, that we might live. He is the Author of our spiritual life; the Fountain from whence flows the water of life; the Root of our godly life; and, He is our Head which stimulates a godly walk and conversation. ***"Your life is hid with Christ in God."***

Yes, your life is hid from the world. You cannot make known to the world the precious things of this life. You cannot cause the wise and the prudent to see it. It is hid from them. Jesus thanked God that He had hid these things from the wise and the prudent and revealed them unto babes. Your life is hid from the law in Christ. The law can have no dominion over you. Your sins are hid from God by the blood of Christ for it is impossible for Him to see your sins through the blood of His Son. Those who would destroy your hope and faith cannot because your life is hid with Christ. Is it not true that your eternal life is hid from you much of the time? Two of the three things that abides *now*, according to Paul's letter to the Church at Corinth, proves that your eternal life is hid from you. ***"Now abideth faith, hope, and charity" (1 Cor. 13:13). "Faith is the substance of things hoped for; the evidence of things not seen."*** If a thing is not seen it is hid. Paul said,

"We are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it" (Rom. 8:24,25). If we see not that which is hoped for it is *hid*. If then, we are saved by hope, surely our life is hid with Christ. Take courage, brethren, and may God comfort you with the thought that now we see ***"through a glass, darkly; but then face to face."*** (1 Cor. 13:12). Sometimes His smiles are hidden from us. We grope about in darkness. Our minds are taken up with the vain things of this world so that we are made to realize,

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

What is your life? You are a stranger to yourself. Your life is so hid that you are fearful that you are not born again. When He ***"shall appear, then shall ye also appear with Him in glory."*** These foretastes of His appearing here in time renews our hopes and strengthens our faith. We wonder so much of the time, is He coming again? Our faith and hope is that when He appears we shall appear with Him in glory. We look forward to that grand appearing when He shall take us into that glorious home where we shall live and abide with Him eternally. What is *eternal life*?

The word *eternal* indicates that this life under consideration is endless. It

shall never cease but persevere without a break into an endless eternity. Those who possess this life shall never perish. They shall live forever without any danger of dying. No power is able to destroy it for this life is in Christ. ***"He that hath the Son hath life; and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life" (1 John 5:12).*** This eternal life is interlinked in the golden chain of eternal life and includes therein all of God's chosen people for we read, ***"I in them, and Thou in Me, that they may be made perfect in one" (John 17:23).*** The Father is in His Son, His Son is in His chosen. His chosen is in the Son and His Son is in the Father. This interlinking is why Jesus could say, ***"And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my father's hand" (St. John 10:28,29).*** The children of God are so interlinked in the Father and Son that it would be just as possible for God to be dethroned as for one of them to perish or lose that life ! It would be denying the power of God and blaspheming His Son to proclaim that any who have this eternal life shall ever be severed from it so that the second or eternal death shall have power over them! What is eternal life? ***"And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ, whom thou hast sent" (John 17 :3).***

If you know God and know His Son, you have eternal life. If He has seen fit to reveal Himself to you, then you know Him. Peter had eternal life as was manifested in his answer to Jesus, recorded in *Matt. 16:16*, ***"Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God."*** This answer of Peter was given, not because he had learned it from flesh and blood, but because he had been divinely favored by a direct revelation from God as you shall see in reading the statement of Jesus following this answer. It takes the life of God imputed to an individual by the direct operation of the Holy Spirit to enable one to know God or Jesus Christ ***"He that heareth my word, and believeth on Him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life" (John 5:24).*** The revelation of God unto His people causes them to cease to believe in themselves, placing their trust in Him. This life of God imputed to you makes you lose confidence in yourself. This eternal life has saved the soul in regeneration and we are confident that the same spirit will save the body in the resurrection. The work of salvation that has been begun in us experimentally will surely be performed and perfected unto the deliverance of our bodies from sin and death. As this life immortalized the soul in regeneration, this life will immortalize the body in the resurrection. As we now have the first-fruits, being a foretaste, we shall come into full fruition in heaven. We shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption

into the glorious liberties of the children of God. What will be your life then?

Your life will then be free from imperfections, warfares, tribulations, doubts, fears, persecutions, thirst, hunger and confusions. You shall have uninterrupted joy, peace and happiness forevermore. There will be no dying as experienced daily in this life, but you shall live, live! live! What a wonderful and glorious life is *eternal life!*

Elder E. J. Lambert

MEETINGS

MINUTES OF THE PRESBYTERY

Pursuant to the request of Chapel Primitive Baptist Church, a Presbytery met at Chapel Church on April 15, 1995 for the examination of Brother Gene Potter if found qualified in accordance with the written word of God, at the satisfaction and discretion of the judgment, ordain the above mentioned to the full work of the office of deacon.

The solemnity was begun with prayer by Elder Raymond Goad. All Elders of our faith and order present constituted the Presbytery. Those present were: Raymond Goad, Marvin Brumfield, Julian Williams, W.T. Conner, Clarence Stone, Larry Hollandsworth, and Thomas Soloman.

Deacons present were as follows: F.W. Murphy, Larry Poindexter, Clyde Johnson, Wilton Sutphin, Alan Terry, A.W. Akers, Irvin Holley, Richard Stegall, D.S. Houston, T.K. Lovell, C.T. Abshire, Jack Walker, James Holley,

Silas Payne, Clay Brown, Burnell Williams, and Jesse Tyrell.

The Presbytery was organized by electing Elder Thoma Soloman as moderato; B.R. Williams as Clerk; Elders Larry Hollandsworth and Clarence Stone was chosen to lead in the examination of the candidate, Brother Clay Brown having been duly appointed by Chapel Church, delivered Brother Gene Potter to the presbytery. Examination was made by Elders Larry Hollandsworth & Clarence Stone and all present Elders invited to participate using Scripture reference 3rd Chapter, Timothy 1-13 verses, Elder Stone Acts a chapter.

The presbytery being satisfied by examination and answers given by the candidate, administered the laying on of hands, with the Ordination prayer being delivered by Elder Marvin Brumfield. The charge was delivered to the candidate by Elder J.R. Williams.

The Moderator asked the Presbytery if they were satisfied with the work of the Presbytery which was answered in the affirmative.

A certificate of ordination was presented to Brother Gene Potter, and the right hand of fellowship was given. The ordained Brother was delivered back to the church as an ordained Deacon of the Old School Primitive Church at Chapel Church.

The minutes consisting of the work of the presbytery were read and approved. The Presbytery was dismissed with prayer by Elder W.T. Conner

Elder Tom Soloman, Moderator
Burnell R. Williams, Clerk

EASTERN KEHUKEE ASSOCIATION

God willing, the next session of the Eastern Kehukee Association will be held with North Creek Church starting on Saturday September 30th and continuing through Sunday October 1st. Services will begin at 11 o'clock on Saturday and 10:30 on Sunday. The church is located near Belhaven, North Carolina on Route 99. Take route 264 to Belhaven then route 99 south to the church. It is about 12 miles on the right hand side. All those who love the doctrine of salvation by grace are invited.

M.W. Lupton,
Association Clerk

**ORIGINAL SOUTH ARKANSAS
PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION**

Cne Hundred Fifty Fourth Session to be held with Pilgrim Rest Church, Dallas County, Arkansas. The next session convenes with Pilgrim Rest Church off Highway 167 north of Fordcyce, Arkansas. Take 273 about 1/2 mile to church. Session begins on Saturday before the third Sunday on September 16-17, 1995. Beginning at 10:00 a.m. We invite our correspondents and visitors to this meeting.

Frances Townley, Church Clerk
301 Troutt St.
Benton, Arkansas, 72015
Telephone 776-2726

**CONTENTNEA PRIMITIVE
BAPTIST ASSOCIATION**

The Lord willing, Hancocks Primitive Baptist Church, Ayden, North Carolina will host the next session of the Contentnea Primitive Baptist Association on October 7-8, 1995. All who believe and love the doctrine of salvation by grace are invited.

The Church is located in Pitt County. From the Greenville area, take NC 11 South to Ayden, turn left on NC 102, go through town and about three miles turn left on Country Club Road. The Church is a short distance on the left.

Gene Lupton
Association Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS**FOR JUNE 1995**

Mrs. David A. Phelps, WV	\$2.00
John M. McCullar, TX	50.00
Mrs. Grace Manly, FL	5.00
Eld. James Young, GA	2.00
Ms. Amy Cruise, Va	7.00
Marvin Curnutt, TX	2.00
E.R. Graves, AL	5.00
Edward B. Hodnett, VA	2.00
Mrs. Louise Stanley, NC	2.00
Mrs. Margaret Smothers, NC	2.00
Mrs. Minnie L. Barrett, AL	2.00
Joe L. Hamrick, Jr., TX	12.00
Mrs. Nannie W. Wiggins, NC	2.00
Ms. Reidy Pickral, VA	25.00
J.C. Carroll, NC	7.00
Nolan Lanier, NC	7.00

OBITUARIES

**SISTER NEMHY
ALBRITTON EVERETT**

Nemhy Albritton Everett age 90 of Sparkman, died April 5, 1995. She was the widow of Richard Albert Everett, who died in 1986. She was a member of Chapel Hill Primitive Baptist Church She joined in April, 1951. And was faithful to her Church as long as she was able to go. But due to health, didn't get to attend much the last 2 or 3 years. She was deep on the Bible and enjoyed her visits with the Brethren and Sisters. Survivors include a daughter and son-in-law, Lorene and Dewey Derrick of North Little Rock, Arkansas, two grand daughters, Mary Alice Martin of Mayflower, Arkansas, Melinda Mitford of Richardson, Texas, and one great grandson. Two sisters, Susie Stone of Altheimer, Arkansas and Zylpha Berlier of Hayward, California. Several nieces and nephews. Funeral services was held at 2 p.m. Friday April 7, 1995 in Chapel Hill Primitive Baptist Church near Sparkman. Burial was in Chapel Hill Cemetery by Benton Funeral Home. Her funeral was conducted by Elder Gradon Smith. We fell our loss is her eternal gain. She will be missed by all that knew her. Done by the order of Pilgrim Rest Church, with a copy to be sent to the Signs of the Times and one to the family.

Frances Townley
Church Clerk

DEACON JOHN E. SMITH

It is with sad hearts that we attempt to write this obituary of our beloved brother, John Eliga Smith, but yet we believe that our God who knows all things well has called him to a much better home in heaven, and we would not wish for him to return to this world of sin and sorrow.

Brother Smith was a faithful member and deacon of Union Primitive Baptist Church at Linville, La. for many years, and his wife, Mary, was also a faithful member until her death Oct. 1, 1994. Brother John always contended for the faith of the doctrine believed and taught by Old School Baptists, and he often expressed his hope that he was one who had been chosen in Jesus Christ before the foundation of the world.

At the age of 86 years Brother Smith passed away on Saturday, June 17, 1995 at Homer Memorial Hospital at Homer, La. following a brief illness.

Survivors are his daughter and son-in-law Irene and Franklin Williams of Magnolia, Ar.; 4 sons and daughters-in-law: William Franklin and Doris Smith of Ohatchee, Al., John Thomas and Betty Smith of Alexandria, Al., Fred Weyland and Mary Smith of Homer, La., & Alton Clyde and Faye Smith of Marion, La., plus thirteen Grandchildren and twenty-one Great-Grandchildren.

Funeral services were held at Kilpatrick Funeral Home at Farmerville, La. before a large audience of friends and relatives, and was conducted by his Co-pastors Elders Theron Jones and Clifford Wilbanks. His body was laid to rest in the church cemetery to await the return of his blessed Saviour Jesus Christ.

Elder Theron Jones
Elder C.C. Wilbanks

OBITUARY FOR RUBY BARRON

It is with a great sense of unworthiness that I attempt to write an obituary for a true friend and precious member of New Hope Primitive Baptist Church.

Our hearts were saddened by the passing of our dear friend and sister, Ruby Barron. Sister Barron was a dear and precious "Mother in Israel." She loved the doctrine of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. She loved the church. She delighted in hearing the preaching of the gospel and entertaining visitors from all over the country who came in the name of Jesus Christ. Our gracious Lord blessed her to be able to attend meetings and entertain company unto the end of her days on earth. She was present through the 1994 session of the South Ouachita Association, rejoicing in the truth. She had a house full of company. Her home was a delightful place for visitors.

Ruby Smith was born on September 7, 1907 at Spearsville, Louisiana. She was the first child of Tom and Edna Smith. Her grandfather was Elder W. K. Smith. She was married to Cisco Barron on January 27, 1929. Sister Barron asked for a home with New Hope Primitive Baptist Church on the Saturday before first Sunday in August of 1933. She was baptized by Elder R. W. Rhodes on the following Sunday.

Over the years, Brother Cisco and Sister Ruby Barron entertained elders from all across the United States and beyond. She made you feel at home.

One of her greatest joys was to sit down in the living room with her guests and have a good scripture discussion. She always had spiritual, penetrating questions. She also was given much spiritual insight to weigh the things she heard in the balance of scripture. We are convinced that sister Barron was a deeply exercised child of God with a rich experience of grace. Sister Barron was blessed to write many articles for the Signs of the Times over the years. Many Old Order Predestinarian Baptists rejoiced in the doctrine and experience set forth in her articles.

Ruby Barron passed from this world on Friday, October 28, 1994. She was 87 years old. She is survived by two sons: Ned Barron and wife, Mary of Spearsville, Louisiana; Bruce Barron and wife, Betty of Haughton, Louisiana; one brother: Elder Graydon Smith of Spearsville; one sister: Dale Haynes of Spearsville; four grandchildren: Tim Barron and wife, Della of Plano, Texas; Pam Tolhurst and husband, Willie of Atlanta, Georgia; Clint Barron and Kelli Barron of Haughton, Louisiana; one great grandchild: Justin Tolhurst of Atlanta, Georgia.

Funeral services were held on Sunday, October 30, 1994 at the New Hope Primitive Baptist Church at Spearsville, Louisiana. The meeting house was filled to overflowing as friends and family gathered to honor their loved one.

Submitted in love
by Shannon Vaughn

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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SONG

JESUS' NAME THE SWEETEST SOUND.

***HOW sweet the name of Jesus sounds
In a believer's ear!***

***It soothes his sorrows, heals his
wounds,
And drives away his fear.***

***It makes the wounded spirit whole,
And calms the troubled breast;
'tis manna to the hungry soul,
And to the weary, rest.***

***Dear name, the rock on which I build—
My shield and hiding-place—
My never failing treasury, filled
With boundless stores of grace.***

***Jesus, my shepherd, husband, friend,
My prophet, priest, and king,
My Lord, my life, my way, my end,
Accept the praise I bring.***

***Weak is the effort of my heart,
And cold my warmest thought;
But when I see thee as thou art,
I'll praise thee as I ought.***

***Till then I would thy love proclaim
With every fleeting breath;
And may the music of thy name
Refresh my soul in death.***

CONTENTS

EDITORIAL 218
 Elder C.C. Wilbanks

CORRESPONDENCE 222

ARTICLES 223
 Troy G. Shepard

VOICES OF THE PAST 225
 S.F. Paul
 Elder E.J. Lambert

CONTRIBUTIONS 235

OBITUARIES 236
 Burch Blaylock
 Grenna Flint Keaton
 Odessa Miers Marze
 Ollie W. Parks
 Susan Emeline (Ema) Rice

EDITORIAL

THE KINGDOM OF GOD



ELDER C.C. WILBANKS

It is my desire, and I pray that God will direct my every thought, to rightly divide the word of truth. Of myself I cannot accom-

plish this. I am aware there are conflicting opinions concerning this particular doctrine, even among Old Baptists believers. I do not seek controversy in any matter concerning the Scriptures, but desire to set forth my own beliefs and views for the prayer-

ful consideration of all who may read. It is my hope,(and hope is all I have,) that I have been taught of God. Compare the things that I may write with the Holy Scriptures, and if you find them to be not in complete accord then cast them aside.

In the Scriptures the kingdom of God and the kingdom of heaven are apparently the same. In Matt.19:23-24 Jesus spake of the kingdom of heaven and the kingdom of God, saying, "*That a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdom of heaven. And again I say unto you, It is easier for a camel to go through the eye of a needle, than for a rich man to enter the kingdom of God.*" Considering this, can any say that these are different kingdoms?

Where there is a kingdom there must be a king, and the king must have subjects or servants to rule over; and "*where the word of a king is, there is power.*" (Eccles 8:4). "*For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God.*" (Rom 13:1). Jesus is declared to be the Lord of lords and the King of kings. (1 Tim 6:15, Rev 17:14).

The servants of the King of kings are the ones chosen in him before the foundation of the world by God the Father, and they were predestinated unto adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will. (Eph 1:4-5). These same children are partakers of flesh and blood, and all of them fell in our federal head Adam when he ate of the forbidden fruit. Under the law of sin and death they became lawful

captives, for, ***“the soul that sinneth, it shall die.”*** (Ezek 18:4,20.) They had nothing with which they could redeem themselves, therefore Jesus Christ their King must pay the ransom demanded by God’s holy justice. He was the only one who could pay the ransom for they were his. That ransom was his pure and holy blood; but in his Godhead he could not die, therefore he must become incarnate. This he did when he was born of the virgin Mary. ***“But when the fullness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons.”*** (Gal 4:4-5) ***“Forasmuch then as the children were partakers of flesh and blood, he also took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them, who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.*** (Heb 2:14-15). Because of his everlasting love for his elect children, which are also called his bride and his church, he shed his blood and lay down his life on the cross of calvary, and, ***“by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.”*** (Heb 10:14) Therefore let us ***“look unto Jesus, 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.”*** (Heb 12:2).

This should be sufficient proof. if proof is needed, that Jesus is the King. and his elect children are his subjects or servants.

There are some, even among the Old Baptists, who say we do too much spiritualizing of the Scriptures. Spiritualizing cannot be done by natural man, for ***“he 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.”*** Any spiritualizing must be done by the Holy Spirit, and he gives the children of God’s kingdom wisdom and hearts to understand what he says. In his natural wisdom the apostle Paul did not understand the meaning of the scriptures until the Holy Spirit quickened him into life and converted him, then he was made to speak as the Spirit gave him understanding. Thereby he was able to say in truth, ***“The letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life.”*** Paul tells us what the kingdom is not, and in the same verse he tell us what it is. ***“For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink: but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.”*** Natural man must have food and drink and other natural things to sustain life, and the spiritual man must have spiritual food and drink. Jesus said unto the Jews, ***“I am the bread of life.***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***

give is my flesh, which I will give for the world." The Jews asked how he could give his flesh, and Jesus answered, "*Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you. Whoso eateth my flesh and drinketh my blood, hath eternal life: and I will raise him up at the last day.*" Jesus was speaking spiritual words which they could not understand, for they were yet in the flesh: they had not yet been born again of the Spirit of God. Jesus said unto Nicodemus, "*Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God,*" and "*Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. That which is born of the flesh, is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.*" (See the 3rd and 6th chapters of John.) Paul tells us that the kingdom of God is "righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost." The natural and carnal man has nothing but selfrighteousness, and all of our righteousness is as filthy rags before our God. (Isa 64:6). Jesus said, "*That except your righteousness exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of God.*" If we have any pure righteousness it is imputed unto us by faith, which is the gift of God, as it was unto faithful Abraham, who against hope believed in hope, and it was imputed to him for righteousness. And it shall be imputed unto us also if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead. (See Rom 5:18-24.)

Peace! O how marvelous it is to feel peace in our soul when it is given. Jesus said, "*Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.*" How can we be troubled or afraid when Jesus commands peace? This is peace the world knows not. And joy in the Holy Ghost! Does not your heart rejoice when the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, appears and brings to your remembrance the words and promises of Christ? Peter tells us, "*That the trial of your faith being much more precious than gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ: whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory: receiving the end of your faith, even the salvation of your souls.*" Can there be any greater joy for us in this world? Only the fulfillment of our hope that we are his when he shall appear again without sin unto salvation will give us any greater joy, which shall never end.

The kingdom of God is in this world, but it is not of this world. When Jesus stood before Pilate he answered him and said, "*My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of the world, then would my servants fight.*" Pilate therefore asked, "*Art thou a king then?*" Jesus answered, "*Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world.*" After Jesus was born there came wise men from the east seeking

him, saying, "Where is he that is born king of the Jews?" Although he was born a King, when the people would take him by force, to make him an earthly king, he departed from them, (John 6:15), for his kingdom is not of material things or the things of earthly nature. His kingdom is strictly spiritual, and when the Pharisees demanded of him when the kingdom of God should come, he answered, "*The kingdom of God cometh not with observation.*" (Luke 17:20). The eyes of natural man cannot see his kingdom, for it can only be seen by the eye of faith, for, "*The kingdom of God is within you.*" God dwells within his saints and makes himself manifest unto them. Jesus was asked how he would make himself manifest unto us, and not unto the world. Jesus answered, "*If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.*" (John 14:23) How do we love him, and keep his words? "*We love him, because he first loved us.*" (1 John 3:22). And, "*For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure.*" (Phil 2:13). There are many more scriptures that might be used to verify that God's kingdom in this world is spiritual only, but these should be sufficient. Jesus has finished the work that the Father gave him to do here on earth, which was to save his people from their sins, and he is now in heaven on the right hand of God: angels and authorities and powers being made

subject unto him. (1 Pet 3:22) Just before Jesus ascended to the Father he told his apostles, "*All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.*" Our King is now in his kingdom on high, and reigning over all things with his great power. He is not just waiting for that final day when time and timely things shall be no more. He is coming again at that day, not to set up another kingdom on or in the earth, for this earth is God's footstool (Isa.66:1), and, "*Behold, the nations are as a drop of a bucket, and are counted as the small dust of the balance*" The heavens and the earth shall be burned up. "*But the day of the Lord will come as a thief in the night; in the which the heavens shall pass away with a great noise, and the elements shall melt with fervent heat, and the earth and the works therein shall be burned up*" (2 Pet 3:10). Jesus is coming again as he hath promised, but it is only to receive his saints, his bride, unto himself. In John 14:2,3 we read, "*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.*" Jesus went to the cross of Calvary to prepare that place, for it cost him his precious blood to make that preparation for us. The kingdom itself is already prepared, and in that day he shall say, "*Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.*"

Paul writes in Phil 3:20,21, "*For our conversation (citizenship) is in heaven: from whence also we look*

for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ: who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself." And in 1 Thes, 4:16.17, *"For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we which are alive shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words."* David said in Ps.17:15, *"As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness."* And John wrote, *"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."* (1 John 3:2).

Brethren beloved, if we be the sons of God when our Saviour shall appear again, which is our blessed hope, then it will be of no concern to us where the kingdom is, for we will be with him.

Praise God for all his mercy and grace unto such vile sinners as we be. May he continue to bless us is my prayer for Christ's sake.

(Elder) C.C. Wilbanks

CORRESPONDENCE

August 15, 1995

Dear Elder Williams:

I see that my subscription to the Signs is due. Enclosed please find my renewal. Every time I go to the mailbox and see the Signs I think of Elder Spangler and how he started sending me the Signs around 35 years ago. I had an uncle, Charlie Helms, who took the Signs for as long as I could remember, and I would see the Signs when we went to visit. Being a young boy I was embarrassed to let the older people know that I was interested in the Signs. After my Aunt and Uncle had read the Signs, they put them in a stack in a pack house. So when we went to visit, I would go to the pack house and read through the old issues. I thought the older people thought I was outside playing. I have passed many a Sunday evening reading old issues of the Signs in that pack house. Back then the Signs contained many experiences, as well as expositions on scriptures, sent in by people. I especially enjoyed reading the experiences and how people would tell of how they had been led from law to gospel and how they had been shown what they were by nature and what they had to be by grace.

Somehow Uncle Charlie knew I was reading his old Signs. One day we visited and Elder Spangler was there. Uncle Charlie told Elder Spangler

about me reading his old Signs and Elder Spangler starting sending me the paper. I have been taking the Signs ever since.

We went to North Fork Church yesterday (2nd in August) and surely the Lord was with Elder Goad. I know that what fell from his lips yesterday came from the Lord and not man.

We often think of you, Elder Brumfield, Elder Goad and Elder Davis and our other friends in the Staunton River Association. Every time we go among you people we are met with kindness and friendship. We count you people among our dearest friends. I daily thank God that we live close enough that we can go among you.

Judy and I both send our love.

Bill Poindexter
1726 Meadowview Lane
Martinsville, VA 24112

ARTICLES

Whenever I write; what I feel and hope, is touching upon those truths, as they be in the Lord Jesus Christ; it is because of what are my feelings, at the time of my writing. Feeling to know full well; if it be done of my fleshly self; then, it will be no more than filthy rags, and less than nothing, in the sight of the Lord and God. But, certain things come into my mind and feelings, from time to time; of which, seem so impressed upon my feelings; I feel I must lay aside everything else; and try writing down

words, that might say, to some degree, of what my feelings are; hoping upon hope; it could be, by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit; leading, guiding and directing me, in His truths. For I feel, that His way, is that one and only way, of pure and Holy truths. For His truths will firmly stand; when this world is on fire; and forever after this earth has melted with fervent heat, and all earthly worldly things, are never again remembered.

It is my hope, I could be, one among His chosen vessels; whom are carried upon the wings of His everlasting love, to heaven and immortal glory; where every thought and desire, will be centered upon the heavenly Father; where all will be filled with unspeakable, never ceasing adornment for Him; who chose us out of the world, and delivered us safely, out of this low-ground of sin and sorrow; and where pure and everlasting Holy love for each other; will be our only theme; and, where praising and honoring, of His great and Holy name, will be our only song. I know not, how it will be with this poor worm; I now, can only hope, for a better place, after my unprofitable life here is spent; but, be that as it may be; nonetheless, I do feel so wonderfully blessed, to have been able to feel this hope; as I sojourn here in this cruel world; For from time to time, this hope I feel, is far more sweet and precious meaning to me; than all my eighty two years here upon this earth. The Lord God knoweth for sure; I am just limited too, and within the bounds of my hope. It seems to be, that much of the time, I go along in fear and trembling;

wondering, if my hope could be a lively hope; that hope, spoken of in the Scripture, where it is said that, His children live by, while in this world. But thus far, I am still let to hope; and, oh what a blessing that is.

In the feeling, I were given to know, of the weakness and weakedness, in and of man, in his carnal fleshly ways; and in the knowledge that I am right there in their midst; I sometimes fear that I may be deceived in my own mind and heart; and that I may have (so to speak), just dreamed up this method of mine; in an attempt to deceive, you Old School Baptists, into believing, I could be one of you; and so therefore; maybe I should stop writing and sending to the Signs, or expressing what I feel, amongst you. But then, (I hope), by the grace of the merciful God; I begin to feel this way about you; who have been taught of His truths, - that, surely you could not be so deceived, over these years; that surely you would have detected such deception by now; and brought me before the Church, for dismissal; for I have, from time to time, over many years; expressed my feelings and belief, among you Old Baptists; whom, I feel to have a love for you, and those things, you have been enabled to profess and express, in your walk and talk. I feel and hope, I have no confidence in the flesh; but that I do have every confidence, in He who did teach you Old Baptists; that pure and true doctrine of, Jesus Christ the Lord; that same doctrine, John the Baptist were taught. When at the throne of grace, (if you can), please remember this poor worm. I believe it

is a truth, - God will furnish His little children, their every need; and I also believe that their every true and pure prayer is, a direct part or portion, of that need; For I believe that each and every one of those prayers that be uttered or groaned, must and do come into being, only; after God has indicted that prayer, into ones heart. For I feel that, He is the Preparer of all, that He receives unto Himself. By reason of sin, the flesh of man is unclean, for sin has contaminated it; therefore, whatever man doeth, in and of his flesh; be it thought or act or speech; it all, is unclean; and in that, God is too pure and Holy, to look upon an unclean thing; and so, as the Scripture sayeth He seeth His people, washed white as snow; would seem to point to it as a true fact that; God does look upon His chosen children; through the pure shed blood, of His only begotten Son Christ Jesus the Lord; but not, their unclean flesh.

The Holy Spirit, maketh alive; while the flesh profiteth nothing. The flesh is flesh, and remaineth an unclean thing, in its very nature, so long as it liveth; while, the Spirit is Spirit and is Holy, and also, remaineth the same; so long as it liveth; of which be, forever and eternally, without beginning or ending. Being born again, is the working, within ones heart, of the Holy Spirit; that is, the removing from the heart, that which is stony and hard; and replacing that hard and stony, with soft and tender disposition; what Scripture call, - a heart of flesh; of which is the implantation with ones heart; an humble and contrite spirit;

which is susceptible, or prepared; to receive a visitation, from the Holy Spirit; which bringeth that implantation, unto active and humble life; wherefrom, comes an ability, to love with purity; both, God and His Church; which is His Chosen Children, and His Son; who is, the Head of His Church, who are Christ's body; them whom Christ suffered, bled, died and arose for; to pay all their debts owed, for their sins; and for their justification, as the sons of God. And Christ the Lord now, is at right hand of His Father God, making intercessions for them, whom His Father gave Him; awaiting the morning of the resurrection; to come back and gather them every one; and carry them, upon the wings of His everlasting love, back to His and their Father in heaven and immortal glory. Then will all be consummated; as to that purpose God had, in and for His Creation of all things; His power will have been made known; His Holiness and Righteousness will have been shown, unto His vessels of His mercy and grace, and all will then be accomplished; whereby His great and Holy name, shall hence forth and forever, be praised, honored and glorified, without ceasing.

May His name (the only name ever named, could ever be worthy) be praised and honored both now, and forevermore. AMEN.

This day (according to mans devised calendar), is Saturday, July 29th, 1995. I sit here hoping and wondering, if I may be enabled to go, and meet with the Brethren, at our Union meeting tomorrow; I feel to know, that all is

in His hands; and so, if it's His will, that I be there; then, neither man, nor all the devils on earth or in hell, can be of any hindrance at all, to my arrival, at that meeting place; and that exact principal, will apply; if it not be His will, for me to arrive there. For I feel that, His will, shall surely be fulfilled, to every jot and tittle. For what could be more beautiful, and sometimes comforting; than these words He spake, I will be unto you a God, and you shall be unto me a people. I feel to dearly love, His WILLS and SHALLS from time to time; for there is no uncertainty there.

Troy G. Shepard

VOICES OF THE PAST

EARLY PARTICULAR BAPTISTS



he falling away of the early churches from the doctrine and practice of the Apostles, culminating in the rise of popery, obliterated for several centuries the divinely-given ordinance of baptism of professed believers by immersion, and placed in its room the sprinkling of infants. England in common with other countries walked in this darkness of human tradition, and it is not until the times of the Protestant Reformation that a definite and organized return to the Apostolic practice is to be observed. Those who advocated baptism upon a profession of faith, both on the Continent and in this country, were at first reproachfully termed Anabaptists, or "baptizers again",

because they could not allow infant sprinkling to be a baptism according to Scripture. Some of these early Anabaptists were entangled in error and held extravagant views, which added to the stigma of the title; but it is believed there were some who not only advocated Scriptural baptism, but were also sound in doctrine and practice, and Baptists of this kind are to be found amongst those who suffered persecution during the reigns of the English Tudor Queens, both Mary who enforced popery, and Elizabeth who insisted on conformity to the English Prayer-book. These persecutions caused many to make their escape to the Continent, where churches were formed on the Independent system. Some of these refugees who held Baptist principles returned to this country in the times of the Stuart Kings James I and Charles I, and became the founders of the Baptist churches in England. The Arminian section of these returning exiles gave rise to the General Baptists, while those who held the doctrine of particular redemption constituted the Particular Baptists. Later on, the name Strict Baptists was introduced to denominate those who adhered to the church order of strict communion, as opposed to the open communion which was being advocated by Robert Hall and others about 1816.

The Arminian Baptists may be said to have their rise under John Smyth, who had taken refuge in Amsterdam and joined a church there under the pastorate of Francis Johnson. In course of time, a breach arose owing

to the Arminian tendencies of Smyth, as well as his belief in the baptism of professed believers by immersion. A Baptist Church was formed with Smyth as pastor, who, however, died a few years later in 1612. He was succeeded by Thomas Helwys, who came to England shortly afterwards with John Morton, and these two may be regarded as the pioneers of the General Baptists in this country.

The Particular Baptists had their rise from an English church in Middleburg under the pastorate of Henry Jacob, who with some of his members returned to England and started an Independent Church in London in 1616, when he with "each of the rest made some confession or profession of their faith and repentance... Then they covenanted together to walk in all God's ways, as He had revealed or should make known to them." Later, Jacob went to Virginia, and another pastor, John Lathorp, was appointed over them, "a man of tender heart and a humble and meek spirit, serving the Lord in the ministry about nine years to their great comfort" (Jessey Records, as quoted in *Early English Dissenters*, by Champlin Burrage). Owing to persecution, the church had to move its place of assembly from house to house, until eventually Lathorp and several of his members were taken and imprisoned. After about two years, the members were released; but Lathorp could get no liberty, until at length he obtained permission to go to America about 1634, which he then did. He was succeeded in the pastorate by Henry

Jessey, the author of the above-quoted MS. Records.

The question as to the right mode of administering baptism, and who were the right subjects for the ordinance, had been for some time exercising the minds of many gracious people in England, a fact to which reference is thus made by an author of those times, Edward Hutchinson, in *A Treatise concerning the Covenant and Baptism*. He says: "Divers pious and very gracious people, having sought the Lord by fasting and prayer that He would show them the pattern of His house... resolved by the grace of God not to receive or practise any piece of positive worship which had not precept nor example from the Word of God. Infant baptism coming of course under consideration, after long search and many debates, it was found to have no footing in the Scriptures ... but on the contrary a mere innovation, yea the profanation of an ordinance of God. And though it was purposed to be laid aside, yet what fears, tremblings, and temptations did attend them, lest they should be mistaken, considering how many learned and godly men were of an opposite persuasion! How gladly would they have had the rest of their brethren to go along with them! But when there was no hope, they concluded that a christian's faith must not stand in the wisdom of men... and so resolved to practice according to their light. The great objection was the want of an Administrator, which as I have heard was removed by sending certain messengers to Holland, whence they were

supplied" (Quoted in Ivimey's *History of the English Baptists*, Vol. I, p. 142).

It will be perceived from this account that the question of baptism was causing separation amongst the churches of those times, and it appears that several members of Lathorp's Church obtained dismissal upon these grounds, and a Baptist Church was commenced at Wapping under the pastorate of John Spilsbury in 1633. Also when Henry Jessey was pastor of the Independent Church, others left for the same reason to unite with Spilsbury's church, amongst whom was William Kiffin; and later on, Jessey himself was baptized by immersion. The incident of sending to Holland is confirmed by some MSS, written by Kiffin, in which he says that several of the godly "being convinced of baptism, that also it ought to be by dipping the body into water, resembling burial and rising again ... after prayer and conference about their so enjoying it, none having then so practiced in England to professed believers, and hearing that some in the Netherlands had so practised, they agreed and sent over Richard Blunt (who understood Dutch) with letters of commendation, who was kindly accepted there, and returned with letters from them... Mr. Blunt baptized Mr. Blacklock, that was a teacher amongst them, and Mr. Blunt being baptized, he and Mr. Blacklock baptized the rest of their friends that were so minded, and many being added to them, they increased much." In a few years, the Baptists had so increased as to "become seven churches in

London" (Kiffin MSS, as quoted by Burrage).

William Kiffin has been termed the "Father of the Particular Baptists"; and indeed he was a notable figure amongst them, being a man, not only of some substance and influence, but also blessed with grace and with a call to the ministry, becoming eventually the pastor of the P.B. Church in Devonshire Square, London, which position he maintained for sixty-one years until his death in 1701. Convinced when fifteen years of age, under a sermon by Mr. Norton in London, that he could have no true peace with God without an interest in Christ, he every day saw himself more and more vile and sinful. "Pray I could not", he says; "and believe in Christ I could not. I thought myself shut up in unbelief." After a time, hearing Mr. Davenport at Coleman Street in London, he found many of the objections of his unbelief answered, and felt his heart "greatly to close with the riches and freeness of grace which God held forth to sinners in Jesus Christ." His fears vanished, and his heart "was filled with love to Jesus Christ", and with and abhorrence of sin. Then, again hearing Mr. Norton, his "faith was exceedingly strengthened in the fulness of that satisfaction which Jesus Christ had given to the Father for poor sinners, and was enabled to believe his interest therein" (Ivimey, Vol. II, pp. 299, etc.) He was a great advocate for strict communion, and wrote a work on the subject, entitled, *A Sober Discourse of Right Church Communion*.

Another of the early Baptist Churches in London was that under the pastorate of Mr. Hanserd Knollys. He resigned his living in the Church of England, and opened a meeting in Great St. Helen's in London, where he was ordained pastor in 1645, and often had as many as a thousand hearers. Through persecution he was forced to leave this church, and indeed was often compelled to move from place to place, proceeding at one time to America, and again to the Continent. In a retrospect of these afflictions, he says: "My wilderness, sea, city, and prison mercies afforded me very many and strong consolations. The spiritual and providential presence of my Lord Jesus Christ, and the joys and comforts of the Holy and eternal Spirit communicated to my soul, together with suitable and seasonable Scriptures of truth, have so often and so powerfully revived, refreshed, and strengthened my heart... that the sense, yea the life and sweetness thereof, abides still upon my heart, and hath engaged my soul to live by faith, to walk humbly, and to desire and endeavour to excel in holiness, to God's glory and the example of others. Though I confess many of the Lord's ministers, and some of the Lord's people, have excelled and outshined me" (Ivimey, Vol. II, p. 356).

Another of the first Baptist Churches in London met in Coleman Street, and had for its first pastor Thomas Lamb, who frequently suffered imprisonment for his nonconformity. Indeed, he "was in almost all the gaols in and about London, as he always used to return

to his work of preaching as soon as he got free from confinement. He was a zealous and popular preacher, and a man of great courage; he used to say that a man was not fit to preach who would not preach for Christ's sake though he was sure to die for it as soon as he had done. It was very common for the Baptists at this time to use Old Ford River, near Bromley in Middlesex, as a baptistery. This place was much frequented for that purpose. Mr. Lamb being employed in baptizing a woman here, her husband, a bitter enemy to the Baptists, brought a great stone under his coat with and intention, as he afterwards confessed, to have thrown it at Mr. Lamb while he stood in the river. But he was so affected with the prayer before the administration of the ordinance that he dropped the stone, fell into tears, and was himself the next person baptized" (Ivimey, Vol. I, pp. 171, 172).

P.B. Churches were formed also in other parts of the country, notably one at Bristol, the very interesting account of which is given by one of their elders in The Broadmead Records, and another in Bedford, over which John Bunyan was later the pastor. The Broadmead church in Bristol had its rise from a number of godly people who separated from the National Church about the year 1640, through the preaching of a Welsh minister named Wroth, called in these Records, the Apostle of Wales. In a few years time, some of the members wished to be baptized in the Scriptural mode by immersion, and they were allowed by the church so to walk in that ordi-

nance, one of them being baptized by Henry Jessey in London, whither he had occasion to go, and others in a river. Later on, the pastor and the ruling elder also went to London and were baptized by Jessey.

The Bedford Church was formed in 1650 under the pastorate of John Gifford, who had been an officer in the army of Charles I during the Civil Wars, and coming later to Bedford, lived in much wickedness there, until he was arrested by sovereign grace and "brought into a great sense of sin, wherein he continued for the space of a month or above. But at last God did so plentifully discover to him by His Word the forgiveness of his sins for the sake of Christ, that (as he hath by several of his brethren been heard to say) all his life after, which was about the space of five years, he lost not the light of God's countenance, no not for an hour, save only about two days before he died." There were several godly people in the town with whom Gifford felt a union, and "when it pleased God... to show this mercy to this people, He placed Mr. J. Gifford among them for their minister in Christ Jesus, and to be their pastor and bishop, and the steward of God to communicate to them the knowledge of His will in the holy mysteries of the Gospel." Their manner of forming a church is thus described: "After much prayer and waiting upon God, and consulting one with another by the Word, they upon the day appointed for this solemn work, being met, after prayer and seeking God as before, with one consent jointly first gave

themselves to the Lord, and one to another by the will of God." Mr. Gifford, although a Baptist, did not insist on strict communion, in which he seems to have followed Henry Jessey of London, and the Bedford Church continued in this practice also under John Bunyan (Ivimey, Vol. II, pp. 18-22). Gifford lived only a few years after the church was formed, as did also his successor, John Burton, for whose recovery the church held frequent prayer meetings. "But neither their prayers nor tears availed", and he passed away in 1660 (p. 30). Later, in 1671, John Bunyan was called to be their pastor, having joined the church under Mr. Gifford's ministry.

With a view to removing charges of holding Arminian and other errors, the P.B. ministers of the seven London churches published in 1643 a Confession of Faith embodied in fifty-two articles. In concluding this Confession they say: "We desire to live quietly and peaceably, as becomes saints, endeavoring in all things to keep a good conscience... Also we confess that we know but in part, and that we are ignorant of many things that we desire and seek to know, and if any shall do us that friendly part, to show us from the Word of God that which we see not, we shall have cause to be thankful to God and them. But if any man shall impose upon us anything that we see not to be commanded by our Lord Jesus Christ, we should, in His strength, rather embrace all reproaches and tortures of men, to be stripped of all our outward comforts, and if it were possible to die a thou-

sand deaths, rather than do anything against the truth of God, or against the light of our own consciences" (Neal's History of the Puritans, Vol. III, P. 161).

By this time, Parliament had set aside the bishops, and had appointed the Westminster Assembly of Divines to examine the whole question of the kind of church order, and the doctrinal basis, to be observed in future in the National Church. On the point of baptism, however, the Assembly, being largely Presbyterian, advised the continuance of baptism of infants, although the Baptist objection to this course was ably set before them by a Baptist minister, Mr. John Tombes of Bewdley. The P.B. Confession of Faith, however, came into the hands of many Members of Parliament, and was a means of convincing them of the orthodoxy of the doctrines held by the Particular Baptists, and consequently of ameliorating the persecution to which they had been subjected.

Under the Commonwealth, when Oliver Cromwell was made Lord Protector in 1653, the churches throughout the country were supplied with pastors by a Board of "Triers", on which were representatives of the Baptists, as well as of Episcopalians, Presbyterians, and Independents, so much was Cromwell in favour of religious toleration. The Baptist members were John Tombes, Henry Jessey, and Daniel Dyke, and their inclusion resulted in several of the National churches being provided with ministers of the Baptist persuasion. The three just named, in particular, were appointed to livings, namely, Tombes

to Leominster in Hereford, Dyke to Great Hadham in Hertfordshire, and Jessey to St. George's in Southwark, London. Jessey also continued his own Baptist Church in London, preaching to them on Lord's day afternoons, and at St. George's in the mornings.

After the death of Oliver Cromwell, and the short succession of his son Richard, this toleration came to an end, and the monarchy was re-established in the person of Charles II in 1660. The bishops were also reinstated, and soon the infamous Act of Uniformity followed in 1662, when over two thousand ministers left their Church of England livings rather than submit themselves to a conformity which was against these noble Nonconformists were some twenty-six or more Baptists, including the three ministers already mentioned. Attempts by these Nonconformists to hold services were visited with violent persecution, the dragoons being used to break up their meetings in various parts of the country. At a meeting in Buckinghamshire where Benjamin Keach, a notable Baptist minister, was preaching, "they came with great rage and violence upon the assembly, and swore they would kill the preacher.

Accordingly he was seized, and four of the troopers declared their determination to trample him to death with their horses. Having bound him, they laid him on the ground for this purpose, and had actually prepared themselves to accomplish this horrid design. but the officer, discovering their intention, rode up to them just as they

were going to spur their horses to ride over him, and interposing his authority prevented them. He (Keach) was then taken up and tied behind one of the troopers across his horse, and carried to gaol, where he lay some time and suffered great hardships" (Ivimey, Vol. I, pp. 338, 339).

Several times Keach was imprisoned for his nonconformity, and in 1664 was made to "stand upon the pillory at Aylesbury in the open market from 11 o'clock, and again in the following week "to stand in the same manner and for the same time in the market at Winslow", for publishing a book called *The Child's Instructor*, in which baptism by immersion was advocated (Ivimey, Vol. I, p. 351). Kiffin, Knollys, Bunyan, and other Baptists also suffered imprisonment under these persecutions, increased zeal being afforded their oppressors by the passing of the Conventicle Act in 1664, which stipulated that, "if any person above the age of sixteen...shall be present at any meeting, under colour or pretense of any exercise of religion, in other manner than is allowed by the liturgy or practice of the Church of England, where shall be five or more persons than the household, shall for the first offense suffer three months' imprisonment... or pay a sum not exceeding L5; for the second offence six months' imprisonment, or L10; and for the third offence the offender to be banished to some of the American plantations for seven years, or pay L100." Informers were encouraged to spy and disclose these meetings, for which they were paid from

the fines imposed, and many evil-disposed people made money by these means (Neal's History of the Puritans, Vol. IV, p. 394). Added to this, there came the Five Mile Act in 1665, which prohibited nonconforming ministers from coming within that distance of a city or corporation, or of any place where they had been in the custom of preaching.

But the persecuted Baptists, as others who suffered for the truth's sake, found often that these were times of spiritual favour in their own souls. Bunyan, who was kept in prison twelve years altogether, says of his imprisonment: "I never had in all my life so great an inlet into the Word of God as now. Those Scriptures that I saw nothing in before were made in this place and state to shine upon me. Jesus Christ also was never more real and apparent than now. Here I have seen and felt Him indeed... I never knew what it was for God to stand by me at all turns, and at every offer of Satan to afflict me, as I have found him since I came in hither... But notwithstanding these helps, I found myself a man encompassed with infirmities. The parting with my wife and poor children hath often been to me in this place as the pulling the flesh from the bones... especially my poor blind child, who lay nearer my heart than all beside... But that which helped me in this temptation were divers considerations, of which ... I will name these two Scriptures: 'Leave thy fatherless children, I will preserve them alive, and let thy widows trust in Me'; and again, 'The Lord said, Verily it shall go

well with thy remnant'" (Grace Abounding).

In 1675, when a somewhat easier atmosphere prevailed, owing to the desire of the King to grant more religious toleration, but chiefly for the advancement of popery, the London Baptist Ministers "addressed a circular letter to the churches both in England and Wales, inviting their brethren of the Baptist persuasion to meet the following May in the metropolis, with a view to forming a plan for providing an orderly standing ministry in the church, who might give themselves to reading and study, and so become able ministers of the New Testament. This was signed by Kiffin, Dyke, and William Collins and other London pastors" (Ivimey, Vol. I, p. 416). Probably arising from this letter, an assembly of pastors and elders met in 1677, who amongst other things issued again the Confession of Faith of the Particular Baptists, which they conclude with their "earnest prayer that the God of all grace will pour out those measures of His Holy Spirit upon us, that the profession of truth may be accompanied with the sound belief and diligent practice of it by us, that His name may in all things be glorified, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen" (Ivimey, Vol. I, pp. 425, 426).

Benjamin Keach, whose sufferings for the cause of Christ have already been mentioned, was baptized in his fifteenth year among the General Baptists in Buckinghamshire, and was sent out by them to preach in his eighteenth year. Later, when in London, he was brought to receive the

truth as held by the Particular Baptists, and continued with that body until his death. He was ordained over a church in London when twenty-eight years of age, which had to assemble in private houses owing to persecution; and it was not until the indulgence granted by Charles II for a short period in 1672 that a meeting-house was built for him at Horsely Down in London. The reign of the popish King James II, who succeeded Charles III and Mary, who peacefully entered England from the Continent, and being zealous Protestants, granted a general religious toleration in 1689. Writing of these privileges, Keach says: "We do believe that their present Majesties are raised up to be glorious instruments in the hand of God... I am sure we cannot sufficiently adore the Divine goodness for that salvation wrought by His own right hand. Let us strive to be thankful to God, and labour to live in love one with another, and improve the present providence" (Preface to *Distressed Zion Relieved*).

With these objects in view, and desiring to strengthen and unite the P. B. Churches, Keach, together with Kiffin and Knollys, called a General Assembly in London, to which over a hundred churches sent their ministers or other messengers. The first Assembly met in 1689, and continued for eight or nine days in fasting and prayer, and in conference on the state of their churches, and what should be done for their mutual good. While disclaiming "all manner of superiority and superintendency over the churches", they sought "to be helpers together of

one another by way of counsel and advice", resolving that whatever should be determined by them in any case should "not be binding on any one church till the consent of that church be first had". They also established a central fund for the assistance of poorer churches and the ministry, and recommended "churches that live near together and consist of small numbers... to join together for the better and more comfortable support of their ministry, and better edification one of another" (Ivimey, Vol. I, pp. 478-502). Year by year, the General Assembly met in London to seek to promote the welfare of the churches, and later on similar meetings were held at Bristol and other places in the West.

Keach was instrumental in introducing congregational singing among the Baptists. In his own church it was decided at first to sing only at the conclusion of the Lord's Supper, and then at public thanksgiving. Later on, they agreed to sing on Lord's days after the concluding prayer, so that those who objected could leave. Eventually these objectors withdrew, and commenced another Baptist cause at Maze Pond, two of the chief pastors of which were, Edward Wallin and his son Benjamin. Keach was succeeded at Horsely Down by his son-in-law, Benjamin Stinton, in 1704. After his death, which occurred suddenly in 1718, when he was only forty-three, the church became divided, one part settling under the pastorate of John Gill, and eventually meeting in Carter Lane.

Dr. Gill was brought into soul concern under a sermon by William Wallis of Kettering, preached from the piercing question to Adam after the fall: "Where art thou?" This became also a solemn question in Gill's conscience. "He considered himself as summoned before the Judge of all to answer for his conduct... Now he began more clearly to see the depravity of his nature, the exceeding sinfulness of sin, his need of the Saviour and of a better righteousness than his own, even the righteousness of Christ, to be received by faith. Shortly after, he was favoured with a comfortable persuasion of interest in Him, through the application of several exceedingly great and precious promises to his heart by the blessed Spirit of God" (Dr. Rippon's Life of John Gill, pp. 6, 7). He was soon called to preach at Kettering and the neighbourhood, until his invitation to the London church.

One of the fruits of Gill's ministry was John Brine, who was brought to a knowledge of the truth and called to the ministry at Kettering, and later came to London as pastor of the church at Currier's Hall, which is believed to be that commenced by Hanserd Knollys. Brine was chosen pastor in 1730, a move which was the more acceptable to him, as it brought him again in contact with his former friend and pastor, Dr. Gill. During his thirty-five years in London, Brine took a principal part in all the public transactions amongst the Baptists, and was much respected by his brethren. His dying words express what he was, under the teaching of the Spirit: "I

think I am of sinners the chief, of saints the least; I know that I am nothing. But by the grace of God I am what I am" (Wilson's Dissenting Churches, Vol. II, p. 576).

S.F. Paul

From Elder Lambert's Book,
"Tried In The Furnace."

LETTER TO ONE BAPTIZED

Dear Sister Irene,



ELDER E.J. LAMBERT

W o r d s
s o u n d
empty and inadequate in attempting to express to you our appreciation for your good letter and re-

membrances on my birthday. Unless there is such a thing as "Spiritual Telepathy" you will never know how deeply impressed both of us have been concerning you.

Since I had the high privilege of taking your hands in mine and leading you into the river "Jordan." The spiritual glow on your face startled me as I looked upon you before beginning the Baptismal Ceremony. It has arrested my thoughts many times since then and has made deep impressions that I shall not soon forget. Dessie Mae took two pictures of this scene, one while the ceremony was being said; another, while you were beneath the water's surface. When we get some extras made we will send you one each.

You know there is a love that is so far superior to natural love that the same terms will not suffice. You plainly stated this in your letter. I heartily agree with you. Let us distinguish the two by calling one natural love and the other, godly or spiritual love. One is selfish and the other unselfish; one is liable to be turned into hate; the other, lasting; one is sensual and the other is pure. One may possess natural love for someone and be disappointed because it is not reciprocated--godly love is always reciprocated. We love Him because He first loved us. We love each other because He has indelibly written that commandment in our hearts. What wondrous love is this !

Some of God's people are especially endowed with characteristics and providentially led through circumstances so that they experience the extreme of both joy and sorrow. I am persuaded you are one of that special group. Peter, James and John witnessed the greatest sorrow in the garden of Gethsemane and the greatest joy on the mountain when Jesus was transfigured. None of the others witnessed these scenes. We cannot really enjoy the joys God blesses us with unless we have been through the sorrows Satan is permitted to put upon us. Satan can do no more than what my Father pleases. The only reason Satan is in existence is because God has a purpose in him. God is sovereign; Satan is under His direct control! Satan realizes God has control over him. He had to get permission from God to afflict Job. These afflictions Job had were blessings in dis-

guise. Satan meant it for harm but God meant it unto good. This is expressed verbatim in regard to the treatment of Joseph by his brethren. See Genesis 50:20. I am persuaded that *"All things work together for good to them who love God, to them who are called according to His purpose."* See Romans 8:28. God uses darkness to make light glorious; the furnace of afflictions to make the deliverance marvelous; in fact, it is good that all things have their opposite in order to prove to the children of promise that which is good and acceptable to God. We cannot understand it now, but we shall some day.

Elder E.J. Lambert

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR JULY 1995

Mrs. James Meador, VA.....	\$2.00
A.W. King, NC.....	2.00
Eld. Jack Cox, VA.....	7.00
Eld. Hale Terry, VA.....	2.00
Kenneth Thompson,VA.....	2.00
Mrs. Joel Alexander, AL.....	7.00
Charlie Fox, AR.....	2.00
Mrs. Alice Gibson, VA.....	2.00
Mrs. Frank Searce, VA.....	2.00
W.C. Lake, FI.....	2.00
Ted G. McDaniel, VA.....	7.00
A Friend, NC.....	25.00
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Mrs. Lessie Tilley, NC.....	5.00
Mrs. Pattie KreWatch, DE.....	20.00
L.C. Ashworth, WV.....	2.00
Alvin Agee, VA.....	2.00

OBITUARIES

A TRIBUTE TO BURCH BLAYLOCK

In remembrance of my husband of twenty-eight years, John Burch Blaylock, I would like to pay tribute to the most special person in my life. Others have spoken words of praise and written eulogies that would have humbled him immensely. Though honored, he would have reminded them that if there was anything good about him, it was by the mercy of the Lord Jesus Christ, giving his Lord and Saviour all the credit.

Burch was of the Primitive Baptist faith. Though he was never brought to ask for a church home he had a great love and high regard for the Church and supported it. I fully believe he felt the free and unmerrited gift of God's grace in his trials of this world and had a ray of hope in his breast that all was well with his soul. I feel he was given a sweet hope in Christ many years ago. He felt a brotherhood to the Lord's people that the Apostle Peter describes in I Peter 2:9 and I quote "Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light". He strongly felt that God is all powerful and none can help and that He is always present, believing as the scriptures describe as being an Omipotent and Omnipresent God.

Burch enjoyed hearing the scriptures expounded. While able to do so, he recorded many sermons on tape

and enjoyed listening to a number of them again later at home, especially after becoming disabled to attend church. In years past when we were both in better health, it was a joy to have the brethren and sisters and especially the ministerial brethen to visit in our home and to listen to them discuss the scriptures and at times for a minister to expound a particular text or subject. To see Burch on such occasions was like watching a thirsty man drinking water.

Burch was born June 6, 1909 in Caswell County near Prospect Hill, N. C., to the late William David and Sarah Delilah Stadler Blalock and slipped quietly from this world April 2, 1995. He was the youngest of five children, all having predeceased him. They were in sequence, Robert P. Blalock and Willie J. Blalock of Prospect Hill, N. C., Mary Blaylock Couch of Bridgeton, N. J. and Lester A. Blaylock of Prospect Hill, N. C. In 1941, Burch first married Isla Mae Coward of Wake County. After a lengthy illness, she died in 1963 and is buried in the Dean-Coward Family Cemetery in Raleigh, N. C. They had no children.

In the fall of 1917, when Burch was only eight years old, he had an infection in both legs that required amputation, having to remove all of the left leg, requiring two or more surgeries and the right leg to just below the knee. This caused him to have to spend most of that winter in the hospital and to miss a year's schooling. In time, when he was able to wear a prothesis on the right leg and with the use of crutches, he led a near normal life. I

never heard him complain once about his condition, but have heard him say many times he thanked the Lord for leaving him a way to walk. He was ever grateful to family, other relatives and friends for all their help and support during what had to be a trying time.

After finishing high school and a year of business schooling at Elon College, he ran for the office of Register of Deeds in Caswell County in 1934 and won the election. He remained Registrar of the county for forty-two years, never having any opposition at the polls. For many years he worked long hours and without any help. He enjoyed his work and the people appreciated him and his work.

Burch had many interests in life. For several years he was active in the Kiwanis and Rotary Clubs. At one time, he had a small woodworking shop at his home. His specialty was making picture frames. He also framed pictures. In time, he began to pursue his interest of family genealogy. Realizing there were others that had the same interest, he started collecting items of genealogical and historical value. At the time of his death, there was over seventy thousand index cards for his collection.

Mr. Houston G. Jones, who once worked as State Archivist, was acquainted with Burch's interest in preserving the county's old records, plus his personal collection. He wrote in eulogy that he recognized Burch as the most history conscious of our state's county officials. Also that Burch's life should be an inspiration to young people. In spite of his handi-

cap, Burch lived a full life for most of his near eighty-six years and accomplished much. I feel he stood tall in many ways. To me his integrity, his patience, an appreciative heart and the respect for his fellow man, framed his daily life.

Burch retired in 1976 at the age of sixty-seven years. After a heart attack on Labor Day in 1983, his heart was so weak it required a pacemaker for the rest of his life. In recent years with more health problems, he began to fail steadily, eventually confining him mostly to the house and much of his last year to the bed. He was a good patient, so appreciative of every helping hand, often saying "thank you again" to the one helping him.

Burch's funeral was held at the Hooper Funeral Home Chapel in Yanceyville, N. C., conducted by Elders Kenneth R. Key and C. B. Davis, Jr. By Burch's request, hymn No. 559 in the Hymn and Tune Book was read - "A child of Jehovah, a subject of grace, I'm of the seed royal, a dignified race". The words of this hymn described what he felt and believed and it meant much to him. Another favorite, "Amazing Grace", was sung. Also "Jesus before Thy face I fall, my Lord, my life, my hope, my all". His body was laid to rest in the Blalock Family Cemetery, not far from where he was born and reared, to await that glorious resurrection day.

With precious memories, I wait,
Mary Gordon Blaylock

GLENNA FLINT KEATON

God in his infinite wisdom has seen fit to call from our midst another dear member, Sister Glenna Flint Keaton.

Sister Glenna was born January 15, 1918 in Roanoke, Virginia. She was the daughter of the late Calvin Flint and Maude Brindle Flint.

She married James Reid Keaton and they were blessed with four sons. Her husband and two sons, Danny Garth Keaton, and Jerry Reid Keaton and her sister, Sister Clara Cumbo predeceased her.

Sister Glenna was a firm believer in Salvation by Grace. She received a precious hope and asked for a home at Dan River Church on Sunday, August 27, 1967, and was baptised by her pastor, the late Elder David V. Spangler. Sister Glenna attended church every opportunity she had. Since she didn't drive, Sister Glenna was dependent on someone to bring her to church. She enjoyed the fellowship of the brethren which was manifested by the sweet smile she always had.

Sister Glenna departed this life on January 24, 1995. She is survived by two sons, Michael Wayne Keaton and Roger Lee Keaton, a sister, Juanita Grubbs, eight grandchildren and ten great grandchildren.

Graveside services were held January 26, 1995 at 2:00 P.M. in Danville Memorial Gardens, Danville, Virginia by her pastor, Elder Kenneth Key and Mr. Ralph McCormack.

May all who mourn her death be reconciled to the will of our Heavenly Father who never makes a mistake. The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away...bless his Holy name.

Written by request of Dan River Church while in conference.

Phyllis Snyder
Elder Kenneth R. Key, Moderator

ODESSA MIERS MARZE

God has called from our midst a precious sister in Christ, loving mother, and believer in the doctrine of Christ and of God, Odessa Marze, age 93 of Merryville, La. She died Thursday, July 13, 1995, at home.

She was a member of Bethlehem Primitive Baptist Church near Merryville having united with the Primitive Baptists in September, 1940, and was a faithful and fruitful member for nearly 55 years.

Sister Dessie was the mother of 13 children, 12 of whom have survived her departure. Her husband and a daughter and sister in the church, Verb Mae, preceded her in that restful sleep from which we believe they will awaken on that glorious dawn when they will arise forevermore.

Survivors include three sons, Everett L. Marze of Call, Texas, Archie Lee Marze of Humbk, Texas, and Alvin B. Marze of Cleveland, Texas; nine daughters, Armedia Taylor of Anacoco, Roxie Miller of Moorefield, W. Va., Eula Marie Chaney of Denver, Colo., Sadie Bowman of Westlake, Ama

Erwin of DeRidder, Josie Harper of Fierson, Carol Ann Bowman of Lake Charles, Isabelle Eaves of Merryville and Ceilestia Terrell of Merryville; two brothers, Jerome Mers and Ben E. Miers, both of Anacoco; 47 grandchildren, 101 great-grandchildren and 41 great-great grandchildren.

Written by request of her family by
Elder Lynnwood Jacobs.

OLLIE W. PARKS

With much sadness I attempt to write about the death of a good friend and I trust, Brother in the Spirit.

Brother Ollie W. Parks was born May 13, 1910, and passed from this life July 28, 1995.

He was a firm believer that our Savior is The Way, The Truth and The Life. He dearly loved to sing the old songs of Zion, and when singing was going on in the Church, Brother Ollie was always with them singing bass.

He and his wife, O. C. and many times, daughter, Patsy and husband, Bodie Lankford, were with him going to church. When the week-end came, if there were Church Services anywhere in driving distance, he was always there if possible.

He loved company and scriptural discussions, and when visitors were in his part of the country they were always welcome in his home. Many Old Baptists have been entertained there.

He was loved wherever he went and will be sadly missed by those of like precious faith with whom he shared that precious love and sweet fellowship. He traveled wherever our doctrine of salvation by grace was preached.

He left to remember, his loving wife of 63 years, O.C. Parks; one daughter, Patsy Lankford and husband, Bodie; one brother, W. S. Parks and wife, Hazel; four grandchildren, Sam Lankford and wife, Mary; Ron Lankford and wife, Mary; Don Lankford and wife, Brenda; Catherine Gainey and husband, Dan; and nine great grandchildren.

Funeral services were conducted by Elder Graydon Smith July 31, 1995, at Union Primitive Baptist Church with a host of friends and relatives in attendance.

Written by one who loved him.
Elder Graydon Smith

SUSAN EMELINE (EMA) RICE

With much sadness in my heart, I will try to write a few words in memory of one whom I have loved all of my life.

Susan Emeline (Ema) Rice was born Nov. 16, 1899, in Pittsylvania County, Va., the daughter of Albert Edgar Rice, Sr. and Maniza Page Rice. She is survived by a sister, Mary Elizabeth Rice of Danville. She was preceded in death by two brothers and one sister.

When she was five years old her father died, leaving her mother with five small children. In the years that followed, she became a strong, hardworking person who seemed to know just what to do.

She was the main and the family members depended on her. When she was old enough she quit school and went to work to help support the family. During those years she made a lot of friends whom she loved and often invited them to her home for a meal, always giving of herself - She was witty and loved to play little pranks on us, always jolly and fun to be around. When I was growing up I was invited to go along on vacation trips. She had all of the responsibility, did all of the driving, and always eager to please those of us who went along. Those trips were so enjoyable and it pleased her to see that we were having a good time, but she knew that it was the will of our Almighty God that blessed her to get us safely back home.

At age sixty two she retired from Johnson's Dept. Store. She was blessed with good health most of her life until she contracted arthritis. As this affliction grew progressively worse she bore the pain and suffered in silence and never complained. For many years she looked after her family and felt blessed by God to be able to do so.

She joined the Danville Primitive Baptist Church Aug. 11, 1979, and was baptized by Elder Julian Williams. Ema had attended this church all of her life. She enjoyed going to all of the meetings and showed love for all of the brethren. She attended regularly as long as she was able. To every meeting she took as many as she could of those who had no way to go. Always thinking of others. She enjoyed going to other churches and to the associations, loved having the pastor and the brothers and sisters in her home after Sunday services. She loved the

Doctrine of Election and Salvation by Grace. She was steadfast in her belief.

When she broke her hip she realized she would never be able to resume her responsibilities. It grieved her to think she had to leave the home she loved, where she had lived all of her life. On July 23, 1991, she entered a nursing facility. Over the next three and one half years her condition continued to deteriorate. Through all of her pain and suffering she never complained. She was always thinking of others. The last few months of her life, she prayed that the Lord would take her, but she knew she had to finish her course here, and she awaited patiently. She fought a good fight.

Her last words to me before she lapsed into a coma was her concern for me and my health. She was called home on April 4, 1995 to await the second coming of our Lord and Savior.

Her funeral was conducted by her beloved pastor, Elder C.B. Davis who so eloquently spoke from her favorite scripture, the Twenty Third Psalm. His words brought much comfort to all who grieved. The beautiful song that was sung Father He'll Rest In Thy Love, made me to feel that she is resting in His Love, where she'll feel no more pain and sorrow. May God reconcile us to our loss. She will be missed and we mourn her absence. She was laid to rest April 7, 1995 in Highland Burial Park.

I feel that my life was blessed by God to have had her love and kinship. Written by a cousin who dearly loved her.

Virginia McKinney

Signs of the Times

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"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

1012 Bennett Circle, Keeling, Virginia 24566

CHRIST MY STRENGTH.

*I know I'm weak and sinful,
My very nature's vile,
But Jesus Christ will guide me,
And lead me as a child.*

*His special care engages
To be my strength and shield
Against the wiles of Satan,
In all the doubtful field.*

*My strength is often banished,
And I'm left alone to mourn,
But then I'm made to witness
The strength of God alone.*

*His strength is only perfect
When all my own is gone,
And I am less than nothing,
Bewildered and forlorn.*

*My sins will not allow me
To merit one kind word;
They make me know my weakness,
And rob me of all good.*

*I must rely on Jesus
For all things here below,
And all my hope of heaven
His goodness must bestow.*

*I stretch my arms to Jesus,
And crave supplying grace
To lead, uphold, support me
Till I have run my race.*

J.G. Eubanks

CONTENTS

EDITORIAL 242
 Elder C.C. Wilbanks

ARTICLES 247
 Bruce Atkisson

VOICES OF THE PAST 250
 S.F. Paul
 Elder A.P. Mewborn
 Silas H. Durand
 Elder E. J. Lambert
 J.C. Philpot

MEETINGS 262

CONTRIBUTIONS 262

OBITUARIES 263
 Henry Buford Cooper
 Elder Thomas Hilton Mercer
 Dewitt Ray

EDITORIAL

GOD'S WRATH



ELDER C.C. WILBANKS



ur God is love. He said, *“Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with loving-kindness have I*

drawn thee.” He is also the God of mercy, compassion, and grace. He is our Saviour, our redeemer, our comforter, and our hope. The world will agree to most, if not all, of this. However, many of them will disagree strongly when we declare that he is a God of great wrath also. Yet 'wrath' is

in the Scriptures nearly two hundred times, and most refer to the wrath of God. God's 'great wrath' is written four times. (2 Kings 23:26, Jer. 21:5 & 32:37, and Zech. 7:12.) We quote Jer.21:5: *“And I myself will fight against you with an outstretched hand and with a strong arm, even in anger, and in fury, and in great wrath.”* These are God's words unto Jeremiah concerning the king of Judah and his servants and the people of Judah. This surely came to pass when he delivered them into the hands of Nebuchadrezzar: and these were the people of God under the old covenant.

God's wrath fell upon king Pharaoh and all of Egypt when he sent many pestilences because of Pharaoh's refusal to let his people go as God had commanded. Then he sent the death angel to slay all of the firstborn of man and beast in that land. After this he drowned Pharaoh and all of his army in the Red Sea.

Let me now say that the wrath of God is certainly not the same as the wrath of man. Man's wrath is always for an evil purpose, because of hatred, jealousy, pride, revenge, etc., but God's wrath is as holy and just as all of his other attributes. His wrath is against sin which he hates, and when we transgress his laws we sin: for sin is the transgression of the law. God's wrath is for the benefit of his people and for his own glory. Even the wrath of man shall praise him, and the rest he shall restrain. *“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."

God's wrath was upon his people many times as recorded in the old testament, and this record is for our profit, for, *"All scripture is given by the inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works."*

The Israelites saw all the things God did unto Pharaoh for their sake and they sang this song unto the Lord, saying, *"I will sing unto the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously: the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea. The Lord is my strength and song, and he is become my salvation: he is my God, and I will prepare him an habitation; my father's God, and I will exalt him."* The entire song is too long to copy here: read it for yourself in Exodus 15th chapter. In the 12th verse we read, *"Thou in thy mercy hast led forth the people which thou hast redeemed: thou hast guided them in thy strength unto thy holy habitation."*

All of these things the Israelites no longer remembered when they became hungry as they came into the wilderness of Sin. And they complained unto Moses and Aaron, saying, *"Would to God we had died by the hand of the Lord in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the flesh pots, and when we did eat bread to the full."* At that time they would have gladly returned into Egypt, (which represents

this sinful world.) Do we not in this time do the same? Yes, we do, unless we are restrained by the hand of God; but, *"It is not in man that walketh to direct his own steps."* *"A man's heart deviseth his way: but the Lord directeth his steps."* God gave his people the only perfect food ever eaten by man. They called it manna, because they knew not what it was. Against the commandment of God many of them gathered up more than enough for each day, and overnight it bred worms and stank. In the gospel dispensation God feeds his people daily exactly what they need, and they cannot store it even for one day, except by God's grace, which he bestowed upon Israel for the sabbath day. This was a holy day when no work was to be done. Although the people ate this perfect and savory food they grew tired of it and complained, saying, *"Who shall give us flesh to eat?"* They wanted to go back into Egypt and fulfill the desires of the flesh, and were not thankful for the food from God. They attempted to change this manna by grinding it in mills, beating it with a mortar, baking it in pans, and making cakes of it: and the taste of it was as the taste of fresh oil. The world today has done the same. They have changed the Holy scriptures of truth into words that suit their own carnal nature and taste and belief, and are leading all who will follow them with their false doctrines. These are the false prophets Jesus spake of, saying, *"For there shall arise false Christs, and false prophets, and shall shew great signs and won-*

ders; insomuch that, if it were possible, they shall deceive the very elect". Jesus would not have used this language if it were possible for his elect children to be deceived. All who have been born again and taught of God will know the truth, and false doctrines will be very unsavory to their taste. God must be the teacher, not man. **"And all thy children shall be taught of the Lord: and great shall be the peace if thy children."** Even God's elect children cannot correctly interpret the prophecy of the Scriptures, for they must be revealed by the Holy Spirit. **"Knowing this first, that no prophecy of the scripture is of any private interpretation. For the prophecy came not in old time by the will of man: but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost."**

When the Israelites desired meat instead of manna God gave it to them, but he told them they would eat it **"until it come out at your nostrils, and it be loathsome unto you: because that ye have despised the Lord which is among you."** Brethren, let us not despise the blessings of our Lord, and let us beg daily for his grace and mercy to lead us in the path of righteousness. God gave the Israelites their request, and by a great wind delivered unto them all the quails they could gather, **"And while the flesh was yet between their teeth, ere it was chewed, the wrath of the Lord was kindled against the people, and the Lord smote the people with a very great plague."** Let us remember this and ask that he

give to us only that which is good in his own sight, be it pleasant unto us or afflictions. We are appointed unto afflictions (1 Thes.3:3) and should praise him in these as well as the pleasant things, for, **"We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."**

God had raised up Moses to lead his people out of Egypt and through the wilderness, but Korah, Dathan and Abiran rose up against Moses, saying that he had made himself a prince. They gathered together two hundred and fifty princes of the assembly and went unto Moses and Aaron, saying, **"Ye take too much upon you, seeing all the congregation is holy, every one of them, and the Lord is among them: wherefore then lift ye up yourselves above the congregation?"** As soon as Moses heard it he said, **"Even to morrow the Lord will shew who are his, and who is holy: and will cause him to come near unto him: even him whom he hath chosen will he cause to come near unto him."** Does this not set forth clearly that God has a chosen people, children that he chose in his Son before the foundation of the world? Does he not call them and cause them to come near unto him? **"-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).

The men that rose up against Moses and the Lord had been separated by

the Lord, to bring them near to him and do the service of the tabernacle, and to stand before the congregation to minister unto them. But these same men thought this was a small thing to do, and they sought the priesthood. (See the 16th chapter of Numbers.) They followed the instruction of Moses however, and on the morrow they stood before the tabernacle with their censers, with fire and incense, two hundred and fifty of them: and all the congregation was gathered together before them: and the glory of the Lord appeared unto all the congregation, We note that only unto the congregation, not unto those wicked men, did the glory of the Lord appear. God then told Moses and Aaron to separate themselves from the congregation, that he might consume them in a moment. I believe that Moses was a type or figure of Christ, and he interceded for the people then as Christ intercedes for his people now. God told Moses to tell the congregation to get up from the tabernacle of Korah, Dathan and Abiran. This Moses did, saying, *"Depart I pray you, from the tents of these wicked men, and touch nothing of theirs, lest ye be consumed in all their sins."* And in Rev. 18:w we read, *"And I heard another voice from heaven saying, Come out of her, my people, that ye be not partakers of her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues."* This was written of Babylon, that great city (the world) that is the habitation of devils, and the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird. (See

Rev.18:2). This is not an invitation to the elect people of God, but an holy calling of God and must be obeyed. His people will do it willingly, for he has said, *"Thy people shall be a willing people in the day of thy power."* The congregation obeyed Moses and fled, but these three wicked men stood in the door of their tents with their wives, sons, and little children. God caused the earth to open her mouth and swallow them up, and their houses, and all the men that appertained unto Korah, and all their goods. They went into the pit and perished with all they had, and all Israel that were there fled. *"And there came out a fire from the Lord, and consumed the two hundred and fifty men that offered incense."*

In another place Israel sinned when they spake against God, and against Moses, saying, *"there is no bread, neither is there any water; and our soul loatheth this light bread."* The Lord therefore sent fiery serpents among the people, and they bit the people; and many of the people of Israel died. The people therefore came to Moses admitting that they had sinned against the Lord and asked that he pray the Lord to take away the fiery serpents; and Moses prayed for the people. And the Lord said unto Moses, *"Make thee a fiery serpent, and set it on a pole: and it shall come to pass, that when every one that is bitten, when he looketh upon it, shall live. And Moses made a serpent of brass, and put it upon a pole, and it came to pass, that if a serpent had bitten a man, when*

he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived." It was because of sins by the people that they were bitten of the fiery serpents. They did not bite all the people, but those bitten were made aware of their sins and they knew they would die if God did not deliver them. Therefore they had good cause to call upon him for mercy. Those who looked upon the brass serpent lived. Those who were not bitten had no cause to call for mercy. This was a natural figure to show forth the spiritual. Those who are given to feel the fiery bite of sin in their soul and look to Jesus for mercy and redemption shall also live. Those who are never bitten because of their sins do not truly know that they are sinners and therefore they feel no need for a Saviour. The brass serpent was surely a figure of Christ, for Jesus said, *"And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life."* Only those who look upon him and believe in him have eternal life. That eternal life was in Christ before the foundation of the world, but is made manifest in time to each individual elect child of God. And when that life is made manifest by the Holy Spirit after the new birth he is given grace to believe in Christ. *"For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake."* Our sufferings now are not worthy of even being compared with the sufferings of Christ. *"Surely he hath borne our griefs, and carried our sor-*

rows: yet we did esteem him smitten of God, and afflicted. But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed." *"--and the LORD hath laid on him the iniquity of us all."* *"Yet it pleased the LORD to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin."*

All of God's wrath is because of sin, and by nature his elect children were the children of wrath even as others, for in times past they fulfilled the lusts of the flesh and of the mind. But Jesus stood as a Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, and at the appointed time he came into the world to redeem his elect people from the curse of the law, for, *"Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree."* Jesus suffered the curse that was ours when God the Father laid upon him the iniquity of us all. *"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?"* *God hath said, "If they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments: then will I visit their transgression with the rod and their iniquity with stripes. Nevertheless my lovingkindness will I not utterly take away from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail."* O what a wonderful and gracious promise this is to his elect children! to those who have been shown that they are sinners, lost and undone and helpless. Jesus Christ bore the wrath of

God in the garden of Gethsemane, and upon the cross of Calvary when he offered himself a sacrifice without spot to the Father, and *"by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified."*

Beloved brethren, if we be among those sanctified by the sacrifice of Jesus Christ the Saviour he will return at that final day and receive us unto himself where there shall be no more sin, sorrow, suffering nor wrath. All will be perfect peace, and we shall worship at his feet as we should. Praise God that he hath given us such a blessed hope in Christ.

Brethren I realize fully that I have only hinted at this wonderful text. Charge all errors unto me. Praise God for any comfort or edification you may receive from it.

In hope of eternal life,
(Elder) C.C. Wilbanks

you and all the staff for your labors, may God continue to lead and guide you in your work.

Enclosed you will find an article of my impressions on Isaiah 57:15. I am currently the pastor of Sardis Primitive Baptist Church in Talladega, AL. Our little Church is independent from any associations as we are in an area where there are no predestinarian churches.

If not deceived, my dependence is upon Jehovah God, and I endeavor to preach only the Doctrines of Grace held by the Old School Baptist ie: Absolute Predestination, Eternal election, Particular atonement, Eternal Security, etc.....

Please read the article, if you would, and if you find it worthy of publication, please do so, however, if found unworthy I certainly will understand if you do not. Either way, I am yours in the bonds of Christ,

Bruce Atkisson

ARTICLES

Bruce Atkisson
606 Rebecca Lane
Munford, Al. 36268
August 14, 1995

Isaiah 57:15.

"For thus saith the high and lofty One that inhabiteth eternity, whose name is Holy; etc...."

Dear Elder Key,

I have been blessed to receive the "Signs" in the past, the subscription was a gift from a dear brother in Christ.

I was not able to keep up my subscription due to personal finances at this time. I enjoyed the publication very much indeed, and want to thank



to read this portion of scripture is to be brought low into the dust, to feel oneself to be no more than a dust worm of the earth beneath the felt presence of his Majesty. Upon reflection on the first part of this verse, we are made to feel how sublime this statement appears to us, how true this is to us. To contemplate

the attributes of the great Jehovah, is likened unto ones digging at Mt. Everest with a pick and shovel in order to bring down its heights to eye level. The finite mind of man cannot begin to explore the depths of the wisdom and knowledge of the great I am. Ever existent, totally sufficient, from everlasting to everlasting he is God. He sits upon his throne, shrouded in the mist of eternity, the folly of man cannot penetrate them.

The world, in vain, attempts to bring the Almighty down to its level, and to altogether make him over, like his creature man. They would seek to limit His power and authority only to what they deem as "Fair" to them. They would make Him slave to His own creation. Even when some would concede of his sovereign power, they would still limit to only those good and righteous things, but still would usurp the will of God by placing it conditionally upon the will of man. They say that the evil acts of men and devils are far from his control, admitting, only after some reservations, that he has only permitted these things to be, but he must quickly get, contingently, to preserve his glory.

How absurd this seems, but were not many of us, at one time, in this same frame of mind, until God in his great mercy toward us, was pleased to reveal to us the great mysteries of his sovereign will. We too, came to see in due season, that he works all things after the counsel of his own will, even according to the good pleasure of his will. Oh what humility we experienced when we were made to

see his almighty, universal government over all creation, both visible and invisible. Now we see the further portion of our text revealed to us, experimentally, "*with him also that is of a contrite and humble spirit,*" has he not made us humble in his own way and in his own time? As long as there was somewhat for us to glory in, that we felt that our obedience to his will was in our own hands, that our will was free and independent from his, there remained room for boasting; but now we are made to see the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ. By grace are we saved, through faith: and that not of yourselves it is the gift of God. Not of our works, lest we should boast. It was necessary that we have all of our creature helps stripped away from us, that it should be revealed to us the pride and vanity of our own corrupt hearts. When pride cometh, then cometh shame: what shame we felt when first we realized that we had sought to limit God to our conditions, to extract from him temporal rewards, and to make him a debtor to our so called good works. With deceptive pretention, we made our attempts to keep the law, and even, at times, felt quite secure and confident that we were doing well. Woe unto them that are at ease in Zion, then the commandment came, sin revived, and we died. How utterly futile were our works then, claiming to have put on the imputed righteousness of Christ, but in reality, only being robed in our own filthy rags. "*But with the lowly is wisdom.*"

Words cannot express the feelings of our heart when brought to this horrifying position, thinking that we were wise, we were made to realize that we knew absolutely nothing as we ought. Now the last part of our text can be applied to our condition, "*to revive the spirit of the humble, and to revive the heart of the contrite ones.*" Lest, dear reader, you think we have been speaking of events that took place during regeneration and the process of the new birth from above, please do not be deceived. We speak of things that have occurred since that time, if not deceived. The ever progressive work, here in time, that God the Holy Spirit is performing in every little child of grace, only to be perfected in the eternal realm of heaven. Yes, we were reared on the doctrines of grace, and were blessed to find a home among those dear ones known as the Old School of Christ or Primitive Baptists, however there was a serious error that had crept in among them, like the leaven of the pharisees of old, it had begun its work called "*time salvation or two salvations*", and having been exposed to this more or less all of our lives, we knew no other way. Thanks be to God that he was pleased, in his own good time and way, we hope, to reveal to us the truth of the matter. The Thrice - Holy- God raised us up from the miry pit of self righteous works and established our goings, a new song did he place in our mouths, even praises unto his great and holy name. All our sufficiency is of Christ. In him we live, move, and have our very being. We eat, sleep,

and breathe only according to Divine Providence, whether it be in nature or grace. His eternal predestination has established all our ways, governing even our sins in his eternal decree or purpose, having chosen us in our Head, Christ, from all eternity, not from the lump of fallen humanity in Adam, but from the great lump of clay, the eternal Potter formed us as his own vessels of mercy, that he might make known the riches of his glory. As his vessels, we are to be used by him, filled up with his mercy and grace, for he works in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure to shew forth his glory. Other vessels he has formed also, from all eternity, vessels fitted for destruction, that he has endured with much long suffering; but soon he will display his wrath toward sin and all unrighteousness toward them. Behold the goodness and the severity of God.

The vessels of mercy he presented to his only begotten son, the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. In the everlasting covenant of grace, the son agreed to go forth in the body prepared for him, to redeem them from sin, hell, and the grave, to present them without spot or blemish, to his Father, and now the Holy Ghost dwells with his children, leading and guiding them into all truth (their experience). What a Comforter he is indeed, to his poor, afflicted people. He has not left them nor forsaken them, but holds us within the palm of his hand, which no one is able to pluck them from. The body is secure with its Head, the bride is wedded to the husband, the twain

are now one; having been so from eternity, but now made manifest, no danger, no hazard now.

Holy, holy, holy Lord God Almighty which was, and is, and is to come...

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.

I pray the Lord we are not deceived concerning our feelings.

May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen!

Bruce Atkisson

VOICES OF THE PAST

FOUNDERS OF THE GOSPEL STANDARD BAPTISTS

The new prosperity which the Dissenting churches enjoyed under the Toleration Act led in the course of time to a gradual decline and decay, and both among themselves and in the National Church a form of godliness replaced in a great measure the power that had characterized more troublous times; while a general religious apathy pervaded the people. This continued until about 1740, when it pleased the Lord to grant a reviving, largely through the itinerant preaching of such evangelists as Whitefield, Cennick, Grimshaw, Berridge, and others whose labours were owned and blessed of the Spirit to the conversion of many. The fruit of their labours, however, though extensive, was somewhat lacking in depth; and the mercy

of the Lord is to be observed in the gift of a further line of ministers, deeply taught in their own souls, and fitted to take forth the precious from the vile (Jer. 15. 19) by a powerful and separating ministry, with which they were remarkably endued by the Holy Spirit. Amongst the Independents, William Huntington stands out most prominently; while among the Particular Baptists were William Gadsby, John Warburton, and John Kershaw, whom we may regard as the founders of the Gospel Standard Baptists. These men were raised up from the depths of poverty and consequent illiteracy, and made mighty in the ministry by the power and teaching of the Holy Spirit within them.

William Gadsby was born in 1773 at the village of Attleborough, near Nuneaton, where he grew up a lively and frolicsome youth, a ringleader amongst his companions. But God met with him when he was seventeen years of age, and by inward conviction of sin and implantation of grace brought him effectually from his evil ways and companions. Instead now, he felt an attachment to the good old people who worshipped at the Independent Chapel at Bedworth, and while attending there was favoured with a blessed deliverance. "Oh, God's peculiar love!" he says, "that was shed abroad in my heart by His blessed Spirit, and which brought me to feel the love and blood of Christ.... I was then solemnly and blessedly led to believe in God's free mercy and pardon, and could look up and say. *'He loved me, and gave Himself for*

me' (Memoir, by John Gadsby, p.10). Later on he was led to join the Particular Baptists at Cow Lane in Coventry, and three years afterwards was transferred to the P.B. Church at Hinckley.

There the work of the ministry was laid on his mind, which was a great trial and exercise to him, as he realized his insufficiency. "Do not let me preach, Lord," he said; "send by whom Thou wilt send, but not by me." But the Lord graciously removed his opposition with this word, "God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise," etc. "Well, Lord," he replied, "if this is the way Thou workest, Thou never hadst a better opportunity, for Thou never hadst a bigger fool to deal with" (Memoir, p. 19). Expounding of the Word at prayer-meetings was followed by his first sermon preached in a room at Bedworth in 1798, and from that time he continued to preach at Hinckley and Desford and other places round. Early in 1800 a Baptist Chapel was built for him at Desford, and he was "ordained" there at the opening by three ministers, namely, Mr. Aston of Chester, Mr. Vorley of Northampton, and Mr. Hall of Irthlingborough (Memoir, p. 21).

At Hinckley his preaching commenced in an old barn. "*Truly*", he says, "we had many precious visits from the Lord, which made the old barn a consecrated place to our souls, notwithstanding the thatch was off in so many places of the roof that we could see the sky through the numerous holes, so that when it rained the people had to remove from one part to

another, during preaching, to prevent *getting wet through*" (Memoir, p. 23). In a few years, however, a chapel was built there also, where he continued to labour until, in 1805, he removed to Manchester, becoming pastor of the Backhouse Baptists Chapel in St. George's (now Rochdale) Road. He was "greatly affected at leaving the dear people at Desford, to whom his very soul was united; but he watched the hand of the Lord, saw the cloud move, and followed it; and the Lord was with him to bless him" (p. 43).

Once a year he went to London to preach, and to beg for assistance in the removal of the debt on the Manchester Chapel. Of one of these visits, about the time of Huntington's death, he says: "I went and preached three times a day at the little chapel in Red Cross Street. At first, you may expect, I did not get on so well; but in a few weeks there was a congregation at the doors when the morning service ended, ready to go in for the afternoon; and at the end of the afternoon's service, there was another ready for the evening. I can assure you that I had a good deal of difficulty to get in myself to preach; for I had to clamber over the seats to reach the pulpit, the aisles all being closely packed" (p. 31). He returned home with nearly L400, and in the course of time the debt on his chapel was settled, and enlargements made.

After Huntington's death, some of the people separated from Providence Chapel and commenced a meeting in Conway Street, London, and Gadsby was one of the ministers who sup-

plied there. The numbers so increased that it became necessary to build a larger chapel in Gower Street in 1820, which was opened by Mr. Gadsby, who continued to pay them an annual visit. He also came annually to Zoar Chapel, London, and was the means of nearly forty chapels being opened in Lancashire, Yorkshire, Derbyshire, and Cheshire (pp. 65 and 66).

“In his first years at Manchester he found all the ministers banded against him, for he drew away their hearers. But it was not long before he established his position. In the course of nearly forty years of his pastorate there, he is said to have travelled some sixty thousand miles in his preaching tours, and to have delivered between ten and twelve thousand sermons” (The Seceders, by Dr. J.H. Philpot, Vol. II, p. 26). For this reason Mr. Philpot used to refer to him as “the great Apostle of the North” (p. 19); and writing after his death, says: “We believe we are but speaking in full unison with the feelings and sentiments of the living family of God in this country when we say that, taking him all in all, we have lost in Mr. Gadsby the greatest minister that God has raised up since the days of Huntington... The Lord had appointed Mr. Gadsby to be a leader, and to stand for half a century in the front rank of His spiritual army. He therefore bestowed upon him a mind not to be daunted with difficulties and dangers, but to rise with, and to be ready for, every new emergency” (G.S., 1844, pp. 150, 151).

The next to be mentioned in this line of Baptist ministers is John Warburton.

He was born five miles out of Manchester in 1776, where he grew up in very poor circumstances, and was taught by his godly mother to read and write. He lived in wickedness, until the time came when he was arrested and convicted under a sermon preached in a church at Bolton by a Mr. Jones, from the text: *“Be not deceived; God is not mocked; for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap.”* He continued in distress for some months, until he went to hear, as he thought for the last time, at Mosley Street Chapel; and indeed he came out from the service more despairing than ever. But wandering about the streets, he came to the chapel where Mr. Roby preached, and going in, he was blessed with a wonderful deliverance. As the good man preached, love, peace, and joy broke into poor John’s heart. “I looked for my sins”, he says, “for my burden, for the wrath and misery I had so long carried in my poor distracted soul, and could find neither guilt nor sins, wrath nor bondage; for the Saviour of my soul had taken them all away” (Mercies of a Covenant God, p. 18).

At first he joined the Independent Church in Mosley Street, Manchester; but being directed to hear William Gadsby, he became united there and was baptized, and to his astonishment Mr. Gadsby concluded the baptizing service by asking the Lord to raise him up as an instrument for His own glory, and the cause of truth. But it was only after much exercise and prayer that Warburton could think the Lord would send such a poor creature

as he felt himself to be. At length one of the deacons asked him if he was not exercised about preaching, and he could hide it no longer. "The more we make it a matter of prayer to God", said the deacon, "the more liberty and freedom we find, and we verily believe that He has designed you for the work of the ministry" (Mercies, p. 56). So he had to venture forth, speaking at first in a room at Bury and in various causes round, until he became settled at length over a people who had separated from Mr. Littlewood's church at Rochdale in order to hear Mr. Gadsby. This issued in the building of Hope Chapel, Rochdale, where Warburton continued pastor for a few years, until he received a call from the P.B. Church at Trowbridge. On his way thither to take up the pastorate, he heard Mr. Gadsby preach at Manchester from the words: "Drink waters out of thine own cistern," etc. (Prov. 5. 15-17). "I have indeed reason," he says, "to believe that God designed that sermon for me; and I must confess I never heard a sermon in all the days of my life that was for such a length of time made so great a blessing, for it never failed me when I was brought to despair that I should be able to preach again" (Mercies, p. 99). At Trowbridge he continued to labour, first in a room and then in Zion Chapel, built for him in 1815, until he died in a good old age of fourscore years.

Writing afterwards, Mr. Philpot says of him: "It was not his gifts of eloquence, or powers or thought and expression; it was not the beauty of his language, or the force of his argu-

ments (for in these eternal things he did not shine), that drew such crowds to hear him in London and the country, but the peculiar savour and sweetness that dropped from his lips. He was truly and peculiarly an experimental minister of God's truth... No minister in these last fifty years, except Mr. Huntington and Mr. Gadsby, his been so blessed to the church of God, or had so many seals to his ministry" (G.S., 1857, pp. 190-195).

Now follows John Kershaw, who was inseparably connected with Hope Chapel, Rochdale, and with Warburton and Gadsby. Mr. Kershaw himself, speaking of these links, says: "We have often been spoken of as three links in a chain - Mr. Gadsby the first link; Mr. Warburton the second, being the first-fruits of Mr. Gadsby's labours at Manchester, and sent out by that church to preach the Gospel; myself the third link, being a member of the church at Rochdale under the care of Mr. Warburton, and sent out and encouraged by them to preach the Gospel" (Autobiography of John Kershaw, p. 240).

Like his two contemporaries, Kershaw was arrested by the power of the Spirit in his youth, whilst in the pursuit of vanity: "I felt the powerful hand of God had laid fast hold of my poor soul. Death, the day of judgment, and the realities of a vast and awful eternity oppressed my thoughts and harrowed my feelings in a manner I can never describe." (Autobiography, p. 12). Under the fear and perplexity occasioned by this exercise, he went at length to Bacup to hear Mr. Hurst, and

under a sermon preached from the words, "Look unto Me, and be ye saved," etc., he was sweetly persuaded of the ability of Christ to save him, and "went home rejoicing that there was a new and living way whereby God could be just and save poor guilty sinners" (p. 33).

Leaving the Independent Chapel where his father attended, John went to the P.B. Cause at Rochdale under Mr. Littlewood, and later on joined those who separated and formed the church at Hope Chapel under John Warburton. Despairing of attaining the full persuasion of Christ's willingness to save him in particular, he was concluding that he had better endeavour to be comfortable without it, when the words sounded in his heart as though with an audible voice: "*Oh wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?*" This led him to read the 7th of Romans, and when he reached the first words of the 8th chapter, "their blessed contents", he says, "were brought into my soul with power and glory. I saw and felt that I was in Christ Jesus, saved with an everlasting salvation. The burden of sin was removed, my conscience cleansed by an application of the precious blood of Jesus Christ. I felt the sealing testimony of the Holy Spirit of God that I stood complete and accepted in the Beloved" (p. 59).

The little church at Hope Chapel was formed by William Gadsby, the members being baptized in a stream in the open field. "When the day came, nearly two thousand people were as-

sembled. Professor and profane were gathered together to witness the ordinance of baptism by immersion. Mr. Gadsby stood on the bank of a reservoir, which served as a kind of gallery where many sat, the great body of the people being before him in the field. He preached from John 5. 39: 'Search the Scriptures,' etc. At this time he was about thirty-six years of age, and such was the power of his voice that the sound of it was heard nearly a mile off, but not to distinguish the words" (p. 64).

Concern about the solemn work of the ministry was awakened in John Kershaw through the power of the Spirit upon him, and although he received testimonies that this was the Lord's will, he kept silence. At length John Warburton, being persuaded of the matter in his own mind, could no longer forbear, and said that he had come to the determination that Kershaw must speak amongst them, naming a time. There was no drawing back, and the first attempt to speak was made, the Lord abundantly helping His servant. Eventually Warburton was removed to Trowbridge, and the Rochdale church gave Kershaw a call to the pastorate in which he continued for over fifty years. His labours round about were very many, extending through Yorkshire, Lancashire, Derbyshire, and Cheshire, with occasional visits to London.

These three gracious ministers may then be regarded as the founders, under the blessing of the Lord, of the Gospel Standard Baptists, and it is now necessary to consider how that

name arose, and became applied to the churches which their ministry was instrumental in forming and establishing. It was in the year 1835 that William Gadsby's son John, a vigorous and enterprising young man in the printing trade, prevailed upon his father to assist him in starting a monthly magazine to be called *The Gospel Standard, or Feeble Christian's Support*. Writing later of this, John Gadsby says: "There was at that time no periodical to advocate the sentiments which had been for years dear to my father, and which were becoming increasingly dear to me... I therefore proposed to my father that he should assist me in the publishing of a magazine specially devoted to the supporting and advocating of those sentiments" (G.S., 1871, p. 166). Another magazine, called *The Gospel Herald*, had been commenced two years previously, advocating the erroneous views then being broached by Mr. John Stevens, as to a supposed pre-existence of the human soul of Christ before the incarnation; and it is likely that one of Gadsby's aims in launching *The Gospel Standard* was to counteract this error. This view is confirmed by a MS. note written on a copy of a tract published in July, 1835, by W.H. Colyer of Farningham, against the error of Stevens, and entitled "*Five Questions to the Five Country Ministers who signed The Friendly Address to Mr. John Stevens, of London, which appeared in The Gospel Herald for June last.*" This note says: "The heresy of Stevens caused John Gadsby to start *The Gospel Standard.*"

Shortly after Gadsby had commenced his magazine, John M'Kenzie, and later Joseph Charles Philpot, were asked to give their assistance in the work of editing, and, by 1840, they had become the sole Joint Editors. In early life M'Kenzie, of Scottish origin, was occupied as a commercial traveller in the North of England, and coming under conviction of sin, he sought to attain a righteousness by his own works. Now, while on his travels about the country, he would be seen "under the hedge and in the ditches, praying", so that people called him "the mad Scotsman". But his eyes were enlightened to see the way of salvation of grace. "The scales of ignorance and his bondage under the law fell from his eyes; the Bible became a new book... his old things passed away, and a clearer view of the plan of salvation was opened to his spiritual view" (*The Seceders*, Vol. II, p.40). He had joined the Independents in Preston in 1833, but his new views could not be received by them, and they cast him out. He then became united to a few Particular Baptists who met in a room in Preston. The reading of Mr. Philpot's sermon entitled *Winter afore Harvest* occasioned in him a deep concern for a clearer manifestation of Christ and witnessing of the Spirit as to his sonship, which issued in the remarkable blessing related in his *Sealing of the Spirit*. "I felt as persuaded", he says, "as I did of my own existence, that it was the blessed Comforter that was shining into my heart, and revealing Jesus so gloriously, and making the truth of

God so sweet; the change in my feelings was so clear and sovereign, and the delight, pleasure, and gladness I felt so precious and supernatural-like" (g.S., 1838, pp. 185-9). M'Kenzie had begun to speak among the Particular Baptists, who at length chose him as their pastor, and he laboured amongst them in Vauxhall Road Chapel, Preston, and in many places round, as also at Eden Street, London. Later on he accepted a pastorate in Liverpool, but died soon afterwards in 1840.

The death of M'Kenzie, left Mr. Philpot as sole Editor of *The Gospel Standard*, which he continued until his death. He had been educated at Oxford University, and appointed to a curacy in the Church of England at Stadhampton. The work of grace had been begun while he was shut away in Ireland as tutor to a gentleman's sons, and this now becoming deepened in his soul, his ministry was made more and more separating, and he became increasingly uneasy in the Church of England. This feeling was shared by a neighbouring clergyman, William Tiptaft, to whom Philpot found a growing attachment; and eventually they both had to resign their cures and come away from the erroneous teaching and formalism of the National Church. Mr Philpot published his reasons for seceding in a *Letter to the Provost of Worcester College*, which had a wide circulation. He had become acquainted with the Particular Baptists, hearing John Warburton and others at Tiptaft's Chapel in Abingdon, and his ministry amongst them commenced in Wiltshire through the influ-

ence of a farmer named Joseph Parry of Allington, near Devizes. "When first he came amongst us", says Parry, "he was very close and searching in his preaching, and it was enough to make a living man tremble... He was made a great blessing to many souls around us, though at first some could hardly understand his line of things, and thought him too cutting... There was life indeed amongst us at that time as a people, and the neighbourhood all round used to flock to Allington from nearly all the different parts of the country, many walking twelve and fifteen miles to hear the word of life" (*The Seceders*, Vol. I, p. 102).

John Warburton baptized him in September, 1835, "with the greatest solemnity, unction, and affection" (*Memoir of J.C. Philpot*, p. 55). However, his lot was not to be at Allington stately, although he continued to visit them. A greater sphere of labour opened for him at Oakham and Stamford, where he became the pastor. "The opening for truth at Oakham and Stamford", he writes, "is very great, and persons come from distances which put you to the blush. Twenty miles is not thought much of a distance in this country" (*Memoir*, p. 62). He laboured also amongst other causes, including Manchester, and Gower Street and Zoar in London, until his failing health made it necessary for him to give up this pastorate, and remove to Croydon, where he continued his editorial work, with occasional preaching, until his death in 1869.

John Gadsby then undertook the work of editing until 1878, when he

handed the magazine over to the Committee of *The Gospel Standard Aid and Poor Relief Societies*.

This is just a brief sketch of the principal founders of *The Gospel Standard*, and of those churches whose views and activities may be said to be in accordance with that magazine, and for that reason may be correctly denominated, "The Gospel Standard Baptists".

S.F. Paul

EXCERPT FROM ELDER A.P. MEWBORN'S EXPERIENCE

After speaking the first time in Farmville Church in February, I did not attend meeting third weekend at all, on fourth Sunday I spoke at the Meadow, and on the same Sunday the Church liberated me. They licensed me to preach where ever I felt to be called. Lord knows I thought I was in trouble enough before, but I did not even know what trouble was. Now I could not go to Church without being called on. Where ever you think to be called includes just about every place you have any desire to go. I was not thrilled by this liberation (so called) at all, but my burden was heavier than it had ever been, and I was convinced it was more than I could bear.

I tried not to go to Church, but always went, tried to preach when called upon, but never felt I was successful, had to preach, tried to preach, and knew I could not preach. For the first

time in my life I could understand Job when he wished he was a worm and not a man.

Some of the brethren, trying to console me told me that this condition would improve, and I would get so I did not dread to go before the Lord's people so much, but this did not happen for me. Now I knew I was a failure, felt convinced that I had deceived the Church; I was so afraid of the wrath of God, that I felt I must find some way to appease His awful wrath. I so much wanted again to go to Church and not be called upon to preach. How I coveted the others who could go to the meetings and enjoy the sermons, the fellowship and the love that exist in the Church of the living God and not be afraid they would be called upon to try to preach. I was so afraid I could not ever expound the scriptures or prove my experience by them. I was afraid then and even now after thirty-three years I am still not convinced that I have ever preached the gospel of the Son of God, our Lord Jesus Christ. But to get back to the predicament I was in, felt I would die if I did not go to Church, knew if I went I would be called on to preach, and I knew I could not preach, and unlike some of the young preachers of that day, and extending on until the present, I had no desire to preach. I felt that if the word was never mentioned to me again, I would be most happy. I felt I could honestly say with Saul as he spoke to David, "Behold, I have played the fool and have erred exceedingly." I could not remember that Paul had written First Corinthians 4-10, "We are fools

for Christ's sake." About this time of panic I remembered reading in the Kehukee minutes about a Church in Norfolk, Virginia. I did not know anything about it, or know the pastor, or anyone there, so I felt this would be the proper place to go, if they did not know me they would not know that I had been "liberated" and they would not call on me to speak. I saw the address, but that did not help me in the least to locate the Church. My wife had a sister that lived on 19th Street and I knew how to get there. So we went to visit Doll and her husband, and this is the purpose I gave my family as my reason for going. But alas, before this, at this time and ever since then, every time I lied about the Church or anything pertaining to the Church, I have had to suffer indescribable agony. When we got to Norfolk and I asked the people there about a Primitive Baptist Church, they had never heard of one. But on Sunday morning, I knew I had to try to find it. I told my precious wife that I would go in the direction the address indicated, and I would ask people on the street how to find it. I felt I would not have any problems finding the Church, because I truly felt that God had ordered me to go, and I knew He could locate the Church for me. However, for me it has never been easy, and it was not easy that day, I could get only three people to talk to me at all and they had never heard of a Primitive Baptist Church on that street. I was hurt, disappointed, and cried out loud that this is evidence I had no calling to the ministry, that my brethren were deceived,

and I even was convinced that I had no hope. Then I began to look for a place to turn around and go back, and if you could only know of all the times I have tried to turn around and go back, it would amaze you, but just before I came to a street to turn on I saw the "CHURCH" and it will always be more than just a building to me. I saw people outside the Church and I knew I was at the right place. I knew these were the Lord's people, and now all my fears were gone, my faith had returned and I felt that I must shout aloud for all the earth to hear. "See what my Lord has done, He did not turn me around He turned me about and I saw Him." How wonderful it would be if this feeling would last, but alas, as I turned and approached the building, the first and only person I recognized was the pastor, Elder R.B. Denson, who lived about thirty miles from my home, and was pastor of a Church in the Contentnea Association. I knew I could not escape being called on now. After trying to preach, I felt relieved.

My being lifted up did not last long, even before I reached my home I was made to ask, "What now, where does this leave you?" If there was one lesson He taught me on this trip, it was and is, that you can't run away from God or His Church, for the times we feel we are the furthest away, we are the closest to Him. He creates problems for us, then He solves these problems for us, and we can only stand in awe and utter, "The Lord be Praised."

Elder A.P. Mewborn

It is now the seventh day of December, 1906. Forty-two years ago a council met at my former home in Herrick, Bradford Co., Pa., in accordance with the request of the Middletown and Wallkill Church, in Orange Co., N.Y., to consider the question of ordaining me to the gospel ministry. On account of the inability of my father and mother to travel a distance, the meeting was appointed at our home, about two hundred miles from the church of which I was a member. Of the six ministers who constituted the presbytery only one is now living. Elder Gilbert Beebe was the moderator. The examination and a sermon occupied the first day. The ordination services were on the 8th. The weather was pleasant, and there was a very large congregation both days. What my feelings were at the time, a mingling of hopes, doubts, fears, zealous desires, I would like to tell, but cannot. As I look back how short the time seems, which would have appeared so long to look forward to at that time. How little I thought I should live forty-two years. Though the time seems so short to look back to, yet how few of those who were present then are living now; of those who were the council I do not remember of but two now living. Of my father's family and the families of two brothers living near, there were eleven who were members of the church at Vaughan Hill in 1865; only two of these are still on earth: my sister Bessie and myself. What questionings were mine at the time as to whether the Lord had called me to preach, and what questionings

many times since. I was Baptized on the second Sunday in June, 1864, by Elder Beebe, in Middletown, N. Y., and from that time I had but one subject to talk about, and that was salvation by grace. But it was near the last of August that I was told by the Spirit that I must preach. I had listened to a sermon in which there was no gospel, but error from beginning to end. My desire was to get up in that congregation and tell the people that this that they had heard was not the truth; that if they knew what the text meant it would comfort them. I had been a member there, and would have felt no hesitation in speaking, but the Spirit suffered me not; but in an instant it was made known to me that I must preach. My one desire was (and has been ever since) to go and tell to all the ends of the earth that salvation is of the Lord. I wrote Elder Beebe, and asked him what such feelings meant. He replied that the church had thought I had a call to preach, and was waiting till the Lord should let me know it. Well, sometimes I feel that my work has been of the poorest kind, not worthy to be called preaching, and Sometimes it seems to me that it has been a glorious work, and that all the praise belongs to Jesus, the dear Savior, who has at times filled my heart with love to him, and has filled my soul with laughter and my tongue with singing. But O, the dark nights, the terrible afflictions, the awful desolations of soul that have been mine to experience; they cannot be told. During these years I have traveled much, and spoken often, and met many kinds of

people, and experienced many wonderful things. There are many of these experiences and incidents that would be of interest, I know, to the brethren, and I have sometimes thought I would try to tell some of them, and recount some of the circumstances of my travels, and tell of the ministers I have intimately known. I know of only one now who has been ordained a longer time than I. How poor appears my work, and myself. Truly I can say I feel to be the least of all saints, if I am one. But how sweet is the fellowship of the saints to me. If I ever write of these things I hope it will surely be by the direction of the Lord, so that I may write nothing that will hurt the cause of truth or any of the Lord's people.

Silas H. Durand

EXCERPT OF A LETTER
TO AN INQUIRER

Dear Sister Irene,



ELDER E.J. LAMBERT

Did you know that a true analysis of the mind has to be made by a supermind beyond the one that is being psycho-analyzed?

You are your own psychiatrist only when blessed with the super-mind which must come directly from God referred to in the scriptures as the Spirit of God. When God adds His mind to yours you are given a new mind. As is said in the scriptures, "I

will write my laws in their mind and I will put them in their heart." When this is done you are in possession of two minds. Two wills, two hearts (seats of affection), two principles, and two consciences. Thus you possess a dual personality which works inter-changeably causing you to be a peculiar person. These two spirits (Spirit of God and spirit of man) making manifest two characteristics, one natural and the other spiritual, makes you cry out, "I am a stranger here below, and what I am 'tis hard to know." It is the Holy Ghost conscience that causes you to brand your natural conscience as inferior and changeable. It is the new heart that censures your natural heart as being selfish. It is the will of Christ imputed to you that causes you to see your unregenerate will so unable to choose the things that are right. It is the enlightened understanding that causes you to see how dark your natural understanding is. It is this supermind shining that points out the inferiority of yourself. I am persuaded to believe that all God's people who have been born again are somewhat perturbed by what might be classed as "inferiority complexes." . . .

With Christian love
and communion,
Elder E.J. Lambert

PSALM lxi. 8.

"Trust in him at all times; ye people, pour out your heart before him."

"Praise waiteth for thee, O God, in Sion; and unto thee shall the vow be performed."—PSALM IXV. 1.

WHAT a sweet thing it is to bless and praise God! There is no feeling upon earth equal to it. But how often are we in that state when we can neither pray nor praise, when sullenness, frowardness, and peevishness seem to take such complete possession, that, so far from praising God, there is no power even to seek his face; and so far from blessing him, there are even dreadful things working up in the heart against him, which awfully manifest the enmity of the carnal mind. Those who are painfully exercised with such feelings are certain, therefore, that it is God's work to enable them to praise and bless his holy name. And does not the heaven-taught soul come sometimes into this spot, "O that the Lord would give me something to praise him for, would bring me out of this trial, break this wretched snare, remove this awful temptation, lift me out of this providential difficulty, bless and water my soul, comfort my heart, strengthen my spirit, give me some sweet testimony of his covenant love!" "O," says the soul, "how I would then bless and praise him! I would spend all my breath in exalting his holy name." But when the Lord withholds from the soul the blessings it so eagerly covets, it can only look at them at a great distance, view them wishfully, and long to experience them. But it says, "Until they come with power, until they are brought in with sweetness, until they

are sealed upon my very heart, so as to take full possession of my breast, I cannot, I dare not, bless and praise God's holy name." O what a dependent creature a heaven-taught soul is! How it hangs upon the Spirit of God to work in it that which is well-pleasing in his sight; how convinced it is that it cannot feel sin nor confess it, that it cannot breathe forth prayer nor praise unless the "God of all grace" creates by his own powerful hand these blessed fruits of the lips (Isaiah lvii. 19). Are you so helpless in your feelings as this? Are you such complete dependents upon sovereign grace? Then you are spiritually taught of God; for it is God's teaching in the soul which brings a man to an experimental knowledge of his own complete helplessness before him.

J.C. Philpot

"Better is the end of a thing than the beginning thereof."—Ecclesiastes vii. 8.

THUS saith the wise man, and it is often true in natural things, but invariably so in divine. Rarely at first can we foresee what will be the issue of any matter which we take in hand. We may begin it with much hope, and find in the end those hopes sadly disappointed. We may begin it with much fear, and find from the event those fears utterly groundless. Whatever we take in hand it is very rare that our expectations are fully carried out, for we have again and again to learn that "man's heart deviseth his way, but the Lord directeth his steps," and that there are many

devices in a man's heart, nevertheless the counsel of the Lord, that and that only, shall stand. But so far as we are amongst the family of God, and as such are under especial guidance and divine teaching and leading, whether our first expectations are accomplished or not, the end stamps wisdom and goodness upon all the dealings of God with us both in providence and in grace. However chequered his path has been; however, as Job speaks, his purposes have been broken off, even the thoughts of his heart; however when he looked for good, then evil came unto him, and when he waited for light there came darkness; whatever bitter things God seemed to write against him when he made him to possess the sins of his youth, yet sooner or later every child of God will be able to say, *'O how great is thy goodness which thou hast laid up for them that fear thee I'* and this will embolden him to add, *'Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me, as they have already followed me, all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord for ever.'*

J.C. Philpot

ADDRESS CHANGE:

All letters for "The Signs of the Times" containing subscriptions and remittances, should be mailed to Elder J.R. Williams, at the new address herewith!

Signs of the Times, Inc.
 1012 Bennett Circle
 Keeling, Va. 24566

All letters and articles for publication, all notices of meetings and all obituaries should be mailed as before to:

Elder Kenneth R. Key
 721 Willard St.
 Greensboro, N.C. 27405

MEETINGS

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION

West Country Line Union meeting will be held with Moon's Creek Primitive Baptist Church the 5th Sunday in October.

The Church is located off of Hwy. 86 between Danville, VA. and Yanceyville, N.C. From Danville turn left at the Parks Spring Crossing go one-half mile and Church is on the left. From Yanceyville turn right off of Hwy. 86 and go about one-half mile, Church is on the left.

All lovers of the truth are invited and especially ministers of our faith and order.

Elder Kenneth R. Key, Moderator
 Sister Sue Edwards, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR AUGUST 1995

- Paul Chilton, KY \$2.00
- Mrs. Vivian Underwood, VA 2.00
- Mrs. Hazel A. Garland, MD 25.00
- William Vick, TN 5.00
- Mrs. Novaline Steward, NC 7.00
- Mrs. William A. Ramsey, AL 2.00
- Mrs. Ella C. Simpkins, Va 50.00
- Mrs. Doris O. Rivard, TX 2.00
- James O. Whaling, OH 2.00
- Alpha Ramsey, VA 2.00
- Mrs. Larrie Bowler, VA 2.00
- William Midkiff, VA 2.00
- Ms. Sylvia W. Conner, VA 2.00
- Bill & Judy Poindexter, VA 5.00
- James W. Brown, TN 2.00
- W.H. Norman, NC 7.00
- Mr. & Mrs. J.M. Marshall, VA 5.00

OBITUARIES

**OBITUARY OF
HENRY BUFORD COOPER**

Henry B. Cooper was born on Feb. 4th, 1919, passed away on Feb. 5th, 1995. He was born in Callaway, Virginia. His parents were the late William Jackson Cooper, and Pearlie Martin Cooper. Henry united with RIVERVIEW PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH on September 23, 1989. He was baptised the next day at Philpot Lake by his pastor Elder Carl Terry. Henry loved his Church and the Brothers and Sisters. He is greatly missed by his loving wife, Irene C. Cooper. One son, Brady W. Cooper, two daughters, Elizabeth C. Shires, of Wilmington, N.C. and Gloria C. Dillion of Axton, Va. One step-son William Loyd Turner of Martinsville, Va. One step-daughter, Judy Lane of Richmond, Va., five grandchildren and 2 step-grandchildren. He was a kind gentle man, a good husband and father. He was laid to rest in Cooper Cemetery in Callaway, Virginia, among a mound of flowers. Our loss is Heavens gain. We are hoping to be blessed to meet him again in that sweet Happy Home with Jesus.

Elder Carl E. Terry, Moderator
Irene C. Cooper, Clerk

ELDER THOMAS HILTON MERCER

We at Oakgrove Primitive Baptist Church bow our heads in humble submission to our gracious Lord, who has seen fit to take from our midst our dearly beloved Elder Hilton Mercer.

Elder Mercer spent much of his time comforting the flock, not only our church but others as well. We suffer our loss greatly but we are thankful God has made us to see that it is gain for Elder Mercer and glory for our God.

Elder Mercer was 80 years old and was united with Oakgrove church August 4, 1956 and was ordained to preach along with another Elder David Godwin who said they were like twins, where one was preaching the other was there also. Both were ordained Oct. 17, 1959.

Elder Mercer was faithful to the end. He came when he was needed and was always there for services even when he wasn't able to come. He suffered much affliction, trials and had many wars to fight and we believe he won them all or as he would say his Lord won them for him.

Elder Mercer had a good wife who was always there for him. She took care of him and made sure he got to his place of worship after he was unable to drive himself.

Elder Mercer died June 3, 1995 at Lincoln General Hospital in Ruston, La. after a lengthy illness. He was a native of Jackson Parish where he lived all his life. He attended school at Weston High.

Survivors include his wife Nova Lee Neal Mercer of Jonesboro, La. One

Son Prentice Neal Mercer of Zachary, La. Three daughters, Gloria Sexton of Clearwater, Fl. Silvia Archer and Becky Talton both of Minden, La. A brother-in-law Richard Bryie of Beaumont, Tx. Thirteen Grandchildren and sixteen great grandchildren.

Pallbearers were Kenny Irvin, Turett Irvin, Butch Johnson, David, Horton, Elwood Johnson and Ralph Brown.

Services for Elder Mercer was held at 2:00 p.m. Sunday 4,1995 in Edmonds Funeral Home Chapel in Jonesboro, La. with Elder Henry Camp, Elder David Godwin and Rev. Tommy Long officiating.

Burial was in Springhill Cemetery in Jonesboro, La. under the direction of Edmonds Funeral Home. He was laid to rest under a mound of beautiful flowers to await the second coming of our Lord.

Church Moderator,
Elder David Godwin
Church Clerk,
Kate Mathews

DEWITT RAY

God, who does all things well, called Home our dearly beloved Dad, Dewitt Dorris Ray, Sr. of Steens, MS. from our presence on March 26, 1995, at the age of 80. He was born July 3, 1914, to the late Robert and Sister Ida Dorris Ray. He was married to Sister Amy Lee McNees Ray who preceded him in death in 1962. To that union 9 children were born. Dad and Mother were both bap-

tized by the late Elder W.D. Griffin into Bethel Primitive Baptist Church, on Nov. 15, 1952. How well we remember that day.

He is survived by his dear devoted wife, Helen D. McCool Ray, whom he married in 1963. She has been a faithful and loving wife. One infant daughter, Paula, preceded him in his death in 1952. He is survived by his 8 children, 3 sons, Robert D. Ray, Dewitt D. Ray Jr., Ronnie B. Ray; 5 daughters: Shelby Ray Stratton, Glenda Ray Hamilton, Sister Amy Doris Ray Heppler, Jimmie Ray Cook, Deborah Ray Hall, and 2 step-daughters, Valeria M. Crosby and Betty M. Smith, 3 brothers, 5 sisters, 25 grandchildren, and 15 great grandchildren.

He was a firm believer in Salvation by Grace and Predestination of All Things. He was ordained on April 12, 1953, a Deacon of Bethel Primitive Baptist Church, a faithful member always ready and willing to do anything he could for the church. He always enjoyed attending church and did as long as health permitted.

Funeral services were conducted by Elder H. R. Toney, his Pastor, at Bethel Primitive Baptist Church, Millport, Al. and laid to rest beside our beloved mother.

Written by his loving children
and Elder H. R. Toney.

PSALM 18:32.

It is God that girdeth me with strength, and maketh my way perfect.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

1012 Bennett Circle, Keeling, Virginia 24566

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

*When I experience call to mind,
My understanding is so blind,
All feeling sense seems to be gone,
Which makes me think that I am wrong.*

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

*'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 far from God I seem to lie,
Which makes me often weep and cry,
I fear at last that I shall fall;
For if a saint, the least of all.*

*I seldom find a heart to pray,
So many things step in my way;
Thus filled with doubts, I ask to know-
Come, tell me, is it thus with you?*

*So by experience I do know
There's nothing good that I can do;
I cannot satisfy the law,
Nor hope, nor comfort from it draw.*

*My nature is so prone to sin,
Which makes my duty so unclean,
That when I count up all the cost,
If not free grace, then I am lost.*

(#380 Lloyds song book)

Sent in by Troy G. Shepard

CONTENTS

EDITORIAL	266
Elder J.R. Williams	
VOICES OF THE PAST	268
John E. Hazelton	
Joseph Ford	
Elder A.P. Mewborn	
Henry Fowler	
CONTRIBUTIONS	288
OBITUARIES	288
Floyd Knighton Morgan	

EDITORIAL



ELDER J.R. WILLIAMS

We shall try again as we've been asked, to write some of our thoughts on a following scripture, not by our knowledge but by

faith some thought will be to some one's comfort.

First may we list a scripture found in Matt. 10: 18-20 *"And ye shall be brought before governors and kings for my sake, for a testimony against them and the Gentiles, But when they deliver you up, take no thought how or what ye shall speak: for it shall be given*

you in that same hour what ye shall speak. For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you."

This very attempt to write seems to me to trust not in the ability of the creature, but try our faith in God. Do we lack faith as we go speaking? Do we prepare a sermon? I, at least go most of my time in fear, what have I to present, and we know before hand nothing. I've been amazed to speak thoughts I never had until that time while standing and again having different thoughts after sitting down. Maybe this isn't the way of one called of God. I've never been sure of this, but this one thing I think I know, my path leads me in a way I knew not before. While I could beg for a smoother path, I can't ask for it to change, can you?

Such has the Lord's people gone in every generation I believe, wanting to know what's ahead. We ministers, if indeed, I am in that number, go seeking and searching as we stand before a God fearing people, afraid many times to go, feeling to have nothing, yet fearful not to attempt when asked we never know the mind of God. He has declared that His thoughts and His ways are as far above our thoughts and our way, as the heavens are above the earth. Isn't this, if the above text was given in a natural sense, also in a spiritual way to all that fear His name, you are only a mouth piece for God. Men in their speaking as well as writing would like to know what's ahead, what man might say about it, think about it longer, research etc., that is

man's way. If the thoughts or words or writing is directed of God, can it be wrong? *"For it is not ye that speak, but the Spirit of your Father which speaketh in you."*

Some elder once asked me to write some. I answered I couldn't, He said, don't say no if you've never tried, you don't know. We may take notes or memorize a long sermon or article and still be of no value to those that are searching for that God instilled truth. Those apostles had to be inspired, what food they carried for the sheep was from God, and so it still is today. The minister or under-shepherd is only the carrier. Let us all be blessed not to try to add natural food to spiritual manna, it won't mix, if so it would spoil that of the spirit by pollution. He said we'll be hated of the world if we be His. Are we drawing closer to the world in our manner, or closer to the commandment of God. "Think not what ye shall speak." May His grace abide.

Elder J. R. Williams

ST. JOHN 3: 5-6.

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.

That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.

ADDRESS CHANGE

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PSALM 23

A Psalm of David.

THE LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want.

He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters.

He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake.

Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.

Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies: thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over.

Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life: and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever.

VOICES OF THE PAST

THE ONE STONE

*Sermon preached by
John E. Hazelton (1853-1924)*

TEXT: *"For behold the Stone that I have laid before Joshua: upon one Stone shall be seven eyes: behold, I will engrave the graving thereof, saith the Lord of hosts, and I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day (Zech. 3.9).*

God's servant and prophet Zechariah has been well called the prophet of glory. In his prophecy, in common with the unfulfilled prophecies of all the host of Old Testament prophets, there is much which to us is still dark and mysterious, but which will become plainer as the time draws nigh for the fulfillment of the events predicted herein. But in this prophecy in an especial manner we have beautiful and glorious truth displayed concerning the kingdom and the glory, the Person and the office, and the high priestly work of the Son of God. Here in this prophecy we have the price given for which our blessed Lord was to be betrayed. Here we have the prediction of the effusion of the Spirit on the Day of Pentecost, the calling of the Gentiles, the spiritual privileges of the church of God, and the final victory which our most blessed Redeemer will have over all the foes of Himself and of His people.

Zechariah's name takes us at once to covenant realities and covenant

truth: "The Lord remembers." We have a very blessed instance of this in the first chapter, where the Lord is described as speaking to the angel concerning His people, "good words and comfortable words." There was inwrought in the soul of God's servant Zechariah, amidst much that was distressing to him, the blessed and glorious truth that Jehovah remembers, that He "hateth putting away," that, whilst a woman may forget her child, our God will not forget one poor sinner whose hope is a precious Christ, and who is looking to the Lord alone for mercy and salvation.

The whole prophecy is full of grace. I dislike more than I can tell you what I sometimes read in works upon the prophets, that "the style of this book is very noble," and that the style of the other is "broken and disconnected.: It is nothing of the kind. That is simply the utterance of carnal men. Every book in God's Word is in perfect order, and whilst to the untutored eye the heavens may appear without plan, each orb has its own place.

And so we have in the prophecy of Zechariah, from beginning to end, our precious, glorious Christ as the substance and the light of the book. We have set forth here those truths which, applied by the Spirit, confirm the soul, satisfy the hunger and longing of the human heart, and give to us meat to eat which the world knoweth not of.

The older I grow, the more I feel that the Bible is practically the only book worth the attention of men and women. Not that I wish you to suppose that I neglect the reading of other books,

but I trust I can say this Book appears to grow more wonderful and precious. Dear John Newton in one of his letters says, "I have many books that I cannot sit down to read: books that are sound, but books that are like halfpence, and there go a great many halfpence to represent a small amount.

Then there are silver books, and a few golden books, but I have one that outweighs them all, and that is the Bible, the charter of my hopes and the declaration of my God to me."

Now we see here in Zechariah, Haggai, Joshua and Zerubbabel, four men who the Lord says are "men wondered at." Those around could not understand them; they listened to them urging the people to go on in the erection of the second temple, and they could not understand it. And so down all the ages, the church of the living God, the children of God scattered here and there, have been, and are, men and women that are wondered at. A friend of mine was talking to me the other day. He is a gracious man, but at home he has no sympathy whatever; his wife and children look upon him as an eccentric person, and only that day they had said, "We wonder that a man of your education and ability can go to such insignificant places, and believe in such strange things." "Men wondered at," but how great the mercy to be taught and blessed of our Lord.

In this prophecy we have everything pointing for its great and glorious fulfillment to the manifestation of Christ the Branch; from beginning to end we have here the manifestation of

a precious Christ. I love that word that Stephen Marshall, the author of *The Gospel Mystery of Sanctification*, spoke when he was upon a bed of sickness which proved to be the bed of death. Someone came to see him and began to speak about a well-spent life, and that therefore it would be all right with him in Jordan. And Stephen Marshall replied, "I cannot say as you do, that I have so lived that I should not be afraid to die, but this I can say, that I have so learned Christ that I am not afraid to die." There is the secret of it all, dear friends - not a well-spent life, not usefulness, and so on; but O what a mercy so to know Christ under the teaching of the blessed Spirit, and through the manifestation of His grace and glory to the heart, as not to be afraid to die!

"My hope is built on nothing less
Than Jesus' blood and righteousness.

*I dare not trust the sweetest frame,
But wholly lean on Jesus' name.
On Christ, the solid Rock, I stand,
All other ground is sinking sand."*

Now let us, in looking at our text this morning, speak first of the **STONE**; secondly, of the **EYES**; and thirdly, of the **GRAVING**. The Stone, the eyes, and the graving.

It is the Head Stone, the Christ Stone, the Stone - the word "one" means the particular and special Stone, to which all others stones in type and prophecy pointed - the Stone, the "one Stone."

Jacob is dying, and he says to his son Joseph in the blessing which he

pronounces upon him, ***"The Shepherd, the Stone of Israel, has been my blessing!"*** The stability of Jacob's faith amidst deepest trial rested upon Him who is the Stone of Israel. We see the Stone again that Samuel set up - Ebenezer - ***"Hitherto hast the Lord helped us,"*** the Stone of Israel and the Stone of help. We see the Stone again in the prophecy of Daniel. The Stone cut out of mountain without hands completely overthrows the fourth empire, and after that it fills the whole world with peace and blessing. We see the Stone again in Matthew 16. Turning to poor inconstant Peter, the Lord said, ***"Thou art Petros, but upon this Stone (Petra) - thy confession of Me as the Christ, the Son of the living God - I will build My church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."***

We see the Stone in Isaiah 28, where God says He will lay in Zion a precious Corner Stone, a tried Stone for the help and succour of His people. We find the Stone mentioned again in 1 Peter 2, where Peter, moved by the Holy Ghost, speaks of this blessed and precious Corner Stone. Again we have it in Ephesians 2, where we see the living Stone and the lively stones being built up upon Him, growing into a holy temple in the Lord. The Stone, a precious and glorious Christ, who alone can sustain the weight of my soul, the weight of myself with all my troubles, the Stone that is laid in Zion, the Stone that is precious in God's sight, the Stone of a precious, living, glorious Christ, to whom the Stone of Bethel, the Stone of Israel, and all the

other stones to which I have referred very blessedly point.

Now we must remember in connection with this Stone the peculiar position in which Joshua stood. He was the high priest of the Jewish people at the time of the rebuilding of the temple (the second). The Stone which in this figure was laid before Joshua partakes of a twofold character. Zerubbabel had laid the foundation of the temple. The foundation stone is then here referred to. The hands of Zerubbabel laid the foundation, and he was also to complete it. But as Joshua stood before the Lord, his mind must have been filled with visions of those wonderful stones which glittered in the breastplate of the high priests of old, and of the onyx stones upon the shoulders.

Now we cannot rightly understand the reference here without first looking at Joshua as the ecclestical head, the high priest of Israel: and then as representing all poor sinners, stripped of self-righteousness and brought to trust in a great and glorious and blessed Redeemer.

Joshua is there, but where are the garments of glory and beauty that Aaron and his successors were clothed with? The second temple has been completed, and when the old men who had seen the glory of the first temple beheld the second, they wept and mourned because it was such a mean building in comparison with that which was "exceeding magnificent." There stood Joshua, a dejected high priest, called to minister in a temple which was, as it were,

but a shadow in greatness and glory to that which Solomon built and opened. Then when Joshua looked at his raiment, it is described as "filthy:" the garments of glory and beauty were missing, and Satan stood at this right hand to resist him. He said in effect, "You are a fine high priest; this is a poor, wretched place that you call your temple, and where are the garments of glory and of beauty, and the anointing oil? You are deficient." And so Joshua felt a dejected and broken man, and Satan was in this respect furnished with a pretext to resist the exercise of his high priestly office by Joshua.

There were five things missing in the second temple which had a place in the first. In the second temple there was no ark, no holy fire, no Shekinah cloud, no Spirit of prophecy on the priest, no Urim and Thummim by which oracles of God, the mind and will of God, were made known. There was a priest without an ephod, without a breastplate, without the shoulder pieces which upheld the breastplate. Well might Joshua be dejected! The word might be read: "Behold the Stone which I have set before Joshua." Joshua, be not discouraged as to thy garments! The word went forth, "Take away the filthy garments from him. And unto him He said, Behold, I have caused thine iniquity to pass from thee, and I will clothe thee with change of raiment." Joshua, not that the garments of glory and of beauty, which thy predecessors before the captivity wore, have vanished; mourn not that the ark of the covenant and the mercy-

seat have disappeared. Here is the reality. The Lord had set before Joshua a Stone, and upon that Stone there were seven eyes.

Now for the gospel of all this. We stand before the Lord in our filthiness. A thousand things there are within and without to deject us. We ask ourselves, Where is the glory of the past days? We feel ourselves to be mean and weak and worn indeed. We can understand some of the exercises of the heart of Joshua, but there was "set," to be removed no more for ever, there was "set," not as a shadow but as a reality, the Stone that was laid before Joshua. What did the Lord say to Joshua? What in effect our beautiful hymn expresses, for it contains the very marrow and fatness of the gospel:

"O! my soul, what means this sadness?"

Wherefore art thou thus cast down?

*Let thy grief be turned to gladness,
Bid thy restless fears begone.*

Look to Jesus,

And rejoice in His dear name."

He is the Stone, the Foundation Stone, on which there are the seven eyes: that precious Corner Stone upon which no poor sinner has ever trusted and has perished, or been cast out at the last. "Set" before Joshua, "set" before the dejected and tried of His servants, "set" before the poor sinner feeling that his own righteousness is but as filthy rags. The Stone set there to be removed no more for ever.

"Now I have found the ground wherein,

*Sure my soul's anchor may remain;
The wounds of Jesus for my sin,
Before the world's foundation slain."*

Here, then, is the reality. In the first place, the person of Joshua is accepted; in the second place, his person being accepted, his sacrifice and service are well pleasing unto God.

"A debtor to mercy alone,
Of covenant mercy sing,
Nor fear, with Thy righteousness
on,

*My person and offering to bring.
The terrors of law and of God
with me can have nothing to do;
My Saviour's obedience and blood,
Hide all my transgressions from
view."*

Here is the Stone, the precious Stone, the tried Stone Here is the Foundation upon which a poor sinner is brought to rest. Here is the "*foundation opened for sin and for uncleanness.*" Here is the "*righteousness which is unto all and upon all them that believe.*" Joshua here does not say a word. He stands before the Lord a dumb man, but he has an Advocate. There is One who stands before Joshua; the Lord rebukes Satan. And we have "an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous" - one Stone with a glory that excelleth; one Stone laid before Joshua - one Stone, the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ in His mediatorial character and work. This one Stone is ever there, for "if the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?" But the Foundation can never, never be destroyed. "Other founda-

tion can no man lay than that is laid" - the Stone laid before Joshua, even Jesus Christ our Lord.

In the 3rd chapter of the First Epistle to the Corinthians the apostle says, "*I have laid the Foundation, and another buildeth thereon.*" What does that mean? Ministerially and declaratively he had laid the Foundation. All the prophets of Old Testament and the apostles of the New alike testified to the Stone, the one Stone, the precious Corner Stone. O what a mercy it is to be shut up to Christ, to be cut off and cut out of all hope of everybody and everything but the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ!

We are to understand in Zechariah the head Stone to be not chiefly the top Stone, but the chief, the principal Stone. We are told the word rendered "head" in Hebrew means the "indispensable" Stone, the Stone without which all would fall into confusion. And Christ our Lord is the first Stone; first in the dignity of His Person; first in choice, for He is God's Elect in whom His soul delighteth. He is first in suffering, first in resurrection and in power. "*Behold,*" says the Lord to Joshua, "*behold the Stone that I have laid before Joshua.*"

The "law made nothing perfect," and Joshua had found that out. The "law made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did." The poor sinner in filthy garments stands before the Lord, and he looks up and sees nothing but the justice of a holy God. He looks at the law, and sees nothing but wrath and bondage and misery and condemnation. He looks

into his own heart and sees a mass of unbelief, a sink of corruption of one kind or another, and he is dumb. "Behold, Joshua, I have laid the Stone that exactly meets thy case; I have set the one Stone that exactly meets and satisfies thy necessities. Justice and the law condemn thee; thine one heart can yield no spring of peace or satisfaction, but the Stone that I have laid before thee is the Stone that has satisfied justice, fulfilled the law, and yields that wondrous medicine and balm and supply which entering into the heart, like the branch that was cut down and cast into Marah's waters, turns their bitterness into sweetness."

A precious Stone, a glorious Lord, was laid before Joshua, and as Joshua heard those words and was favoured with a sight of a precious and glorious Christ, his faith was drawn forth, his doubts and fears vanished, and he stood before the Lord a reconciled child, cleansed from his filthiness, and clothed with the robe of a Saviour's imputed righteousness.

Secondly, the eyes. "*Behold the Stone that I have laid before Joshua; upon one Stone shall be seven eyes.*" Now you will remember that the Urim and Thummim was something in the breastplate of the high priest of Israel which no one exactly understands. By means of them the high priest, under the blessing of God, was enabled to know God's mind and will. The words mean "light" and "perfection" respectively. Seven eyes are upon this Stone. No figure in and of itself can completely set forth the glories and the grace of our Lord Jesus

Christ. Think for a moment or two of the human eye. What is the human eye? It is the expression of the soul. The human eye is the window out of which the soul looks, so that when a soul is in sorrow the eye bears witness to it; when glad, the eye sparkles; when you have had bad news your eyes tell the story, and when you have had that news which gladdens your heart your eyes show it, so that we know a little of the language of the beaming eye. Intelligence looks out of the eye. Love looks out of the eye. Watchfulness looks out of the eye, and power looks out of the eye. Those who have noticed some of the world's great men have noticed the wonderful power in their eyes. I have not seen many of them, but one or two especially I remember; there was no mistaking the power of the man with that penetrating eye. It is, as it were, the oracle of life.

Now on this Stone there is the perfection of vision represented by the seven eyes. This is a Stone which in its fulness and glory says, "I will instruct thee and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go; I will guide thee with Mine eye." A Saviour who is the Foundation Stone bears my spirit up; a living Saviour, a Saviour whose eyes of love, grace and compassion rest upon every Joshua of His; upon every tried, seeking sinner, upon all His tried and exercised people.

"*Upon one Stone shall be seven eyes.*" Does not this speak to you about the vision in the Apocalypse - the Lamb with the seven eyes? What does that mean? It means that Christ

our saviour, as the Lamb of God slain from the foundation of the world in God's purpose, raising to die no more, in the heavens of eternal bliss is the Lamb with the seven eyes, the perfection of vision, and that His eyes rest upon every poor, trembling child of God here below. His eyes look upon the unnumbered myriads in the glory. His eyes rests upon every poor sinner who is saying, "God be merciful to me a sinner"; upon you who say, "Can ever God or good dwell here?" His eyes rest upon you, dejected in service, and cast down by this and that around and within you; upon you who are exercised in your family or in your business. In other words, the Saviour upon whom your soul has sunk, the Saviour whose everlasting arms are underneath you, is the Saviour with the seven-fold vision, and the Saviour of perfection of intelligence, compassion and watchfulness, and of power.

Our blessed Saviour, Christ, the eternal Son of the Father, manifest in human nature as the Mediator, as the incarnate Son, has the fulness of the Spirit. O what a mercy that everything pertaining to our salvation has the fulness of the Godhead in it! In Christ Jesus there is the fulness of the Father. In Christ Jesus there is His own fulness as the eternal Son of the Father. In Christ Jesus there is the fulness of the Spirit. We have this sevenfold anointing of the Spirit, the sevenfold vision of the Mediator through the power of the Spirit resting upon Him, set forth in Isaiah 11. There we have it in connection with

the Branch, and there is a remarkable parallelism between this 11th chapter of Isaiah and that which we have before us: "will bring forth My Servant the Branch."

Now what are the seven eyes but the sevenfold anointing of the Spirit? I will just enumerate the seven described in Isaiah 11: "*I will give unto Him the Spirit of wisdom, the Spirit of understanding, the Spirit of counsel, the Spirit of might, the Spirit of knowledge, the Spirit of fear of the Lord, the Spirit of quick understanding.*" The Man Christ Jesus in His divine nature, the Son Eternal, the Man Christ Jesus bone of your bone and flesh of your flesh, anointed by the Holy Spirit, filled by the Holy Spirit with wisdom, understanding, counsel, might, knowledge, the fear of the Lord and of quick understanding. The very Saviour I want, the Saviour of quick understanding. We say concerning one another, "I did not quite understand what you meant," and there we often make sad blunders, and wound where we mean to heal, because we are so stupid and slow, because we cannot put ourselves in the place of someone else. But here our blessed One is of Quick understanding in the fear of the Lord, knowing the desire of my heart before it is expressed, knowing me altogether. Joshua, behold the Stone, the one Stone upon which are seven eyes. He thus contains every qualification as Redeemer. One word from Him makes darkness light. The eye of His love and sympathy is a blessing indeed to us.

*"One look from that dear Lord,
Whose brow compassion wears,
Will much of heavenly bliss afford,
E'en in this vale of tears."*

Lastly, *"Behold, I will engrave the graving thereof, saith the Lord of hosts, and I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day"* - the affirmation of Jehovah of hosts, That is very beautiful - the affirmation of Him who cannot lie, the affirmation of Jehovah of hosts! Poor Joshua must have felt awfully lonely as he stood there. The enemies were all about him jeering, sneering; there he was with his companions, "men wondered at, "but Jehovah of hosts, who does as He pleases "in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of earth," has affirmed that the Stone shall never be removed, that He has graven upon that living Stone with the graving thereof that which shall cheer and bless and draw and direct poor sinners. The graving, an inscription on a foundation stone.

Yes, the graving of an inscription upon a precious stone. Take the two together. You see right through the whole of this chapter the stones in the breastplate of the high priest, considered here as the one Stone, representing the heart of love of our dear Lord. Behold, I will engrave the graving thereof in the Lamb's book of life and upon the heart of love. Look at the lapidary. All his attention is given to his work. The work as it proceeds appears marred, but when it is finished there is complete beauty and value. Now look at the Stone, the tried

Stone that has been graven with the graving thereof. *"It pleased the Lord to bruise Him; He hath put Him to grief."* I will engrave the graving thereof." *"Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by? Behold and see if there be any sorrow like unto My sorrow."* *"I will engrave the graving thereof."* Graven in Gethsemane's Garden; graven at Calvary's cross: graven with those deep lines - all tell us of a law honoured and fulfilled. Graven with the inscription that declares that God's justice has been satisfied, sinners have been pardoned and righteously saved. *"Behold, I have set, I have laid, this Stone which My own hands have graven,"* says Jehovah of hosts, Jehovah the Father. Behold the whole church of God, before every seeking sinner, before every one here today who has a hope or a desire in his soul for the mercy of God in Christ. *"In all our afflictions He was afflicted."* *"I have graven the graving thereof."*

Apply this to Scripture. Think of our dear Lord who said, *"Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."* *"I have engraven the graving thereof."* *"All the promises are yea and amen in Him."* Jehovah of hosts hath affirmed this, and as dear George Doudney somewhere sings:

*"Come, troubled child, with fears
oppressed,*

*By sin defiled, by guilt distressed:
The fountain open stands for thee,
Of priceless power both full and
free."*

And as the poor sinner draws near, and is favoured with a sight of a precious Christ, he is enabled from time to time to say, "He loved me,

and gave Himself for me." The apostle to the Galatians says, "When it pleased God to reveal His Son in me." Then he goes on to speak of the blessedness that sprang up in his heart: "He loved me, and gave Himself for me." Here is the tried believer's strength and power. Here is our peace. Christ our Lord removed the iniquity of His church in one day. Whatever reference this has to the future of the Jews, it will be gloriously fulfilled; but I have sought to set before you the glory and the grace and beauty of the everlasting gospel, which sometimes fills our souls with music now, and which shall "bear our spirits up" in the hour and the article of death.

John E. Hazelton

ROMANS 15: 29-33.

And I am sure that, when I come unto you, I shall come in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of Christ.

Now I beseech you, brethren, for the Lord Jesus Christ's sake, and for the love of the Spirit, that ye strive together with me in your prayers to God for me;

That I may be delivered from them that do not believe in Judaea; and that my service which I have for Jerusalem may be accepted of the saints;

That I may come unto you with joy by the will of God, and may with you be refreshed.

Now the God of peace be with you all. Amen.

"MARK THEM WHICH CAUSE DIVISIONS."

"Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences, contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple." - Rom. xvi. 17, 18.

I realize the subject is one of great importance, I fear too great for such as myself, yet, dear brethren, in much weakness I attempt to discuss this subject, I hope trusting in him who alone can guide to our profit.

One peculiar thing to observe regarding divisions is, that the different factions among the Baptists use this passage of Scripture to justify themselves in causing divisions. Now as "God is not the author of confusion, but of peace," we must, it seems, know that some one has perverted this Scripture. It cannot mean that God's people are justified in raising bars indiscriminately against each other. This Scripture evidently condemns just such actions. Now if to live as though Christ is divided is condemned by the Scripture, then any Scripture used to justify God's people in living as though Christ is divided, must be perverted. This I feel sure all will admit. In this text we observe two classes are referred to, one is the deceiver, the other the deceived. Now the question is, Shall God's people

treat the deceiver and those deceived all alike? Of course the deceiver will say yes, treat them all alike; but what do you say, dear children of God, you who love peace? Notice the text says, *"Mark them which cause divisions and offences, contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them."* Paul has not said to avoid those deceived, but to avoid the deceivers. Let us think on these things, think how cruel on our part to treat the one who by good words and fair speeches is deceived, the same as the one who practices this deception in order to deceive. I ask, Is it in harmony with the teaching of Paul to treat the guilty and the innocent alike? Let us think on these things, then let us answer this question, If we treat all alike, are we not ourselves transgressors against Christ? I think, evidently, this must be true. Read Acts xx. 26-31. Paul begins by saying, *"Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men."* Now let us think about the wilful perverters, whose object is to draw away disciples after them. Can it be said of them they are pure from the blood of all men? Paul said, "Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears." It was because of the wolves that Paul knew would enter in among them, not sparing the flock, and also of their own selves men would arise speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after them, that caused this great concern on the part of Paul as to warn for the space of three years with

tears. O what a contrast between Paul and those perverters of the truth. Now the question for us to consider is, Shall we treat these wolves and the perverters of the truth, and those who are deceived, the same? Let us think on these things. If we treat the innocent lambs of God, who have fallen a prey to the wolves, perverse teachers, the same as we treat the perverse teachers, I ask, are we not equally guilty? Can we say we are pure from the blood of all men, and at the same time help the cunning wolf kill the sheep? Dear brethren, I fear we have thoughtlessly been the tool to accomplish for the wolf and perverse teacher that which they could not have done otherwise, only by the aid of the unsuspecting. This is accomplished by good words and fair speeches. I believe after giving this subject candid thought, that we who lament the sorrowful condition of Zion to-day, can but admit that all are more or less to blame for the sad condition that now exists: we are not to blame for the wolves and perverse teachers, except in that we help them to carry out their designing plans; for the work of the wolf is to kill and scatter the sheep, the object of perverse teachers is to draw away disciples after them. By this we see the result is the same, either means the destruction of the sheep.

I think it safe to say the wolf's principal plea will be, he is a great stickler for sound doctrine and good order, as he calls it. John said, *"Beloved, believe not every spirit, but try the*

spirits whether they are of God."

This trying of the spirits is for the church to do, because there are many false prophets gone out into the world. Here again the same question arises, Shall we treat the false prophets and those deceived by them the same? To do so would most certainly help to carry out the end designed by the false prophets. Now let us make an illustration. The wolf and the perverse teacher are working hand in hand, as far as destruction is concerned; we will suppose they succeed in getting a following by their good words and fair speeches; divisions are brought about, or these perverse teachers may carry churches, or many churches, after them; much depends upon their ability in good words and fair speeches. Suppose there are those who can see this state of affairs has been brought by the cunning wolf and perverse teacher, then suppose those who know these things raise bars and declare nonfellowship for all led away by these perverse teachers. Do we not see at once that this is the very thing desired by the wolf and perverse teachers? By our actions we say, Go, wolf, with all the sheep you can catch, we have no use for sheep which can be caught by your cunning trickery. We also say to the perverse teacher, You have accomplished your ends by good words and fair speeches, we will just declare nonfellowship for those you have deceived, and let you have them; in fact, we will raise bars so high that if any not deceived go among those sheep that have been deceived we will cut them off from our fellowship.

Now could we do anything more disastrous? Is this not the very way these perverse teachers want those whom they have deceived to be treated? It is purely selfish ambition that causes these perverse teachers to do these things. Paul says, They "serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly," (that is, their carnal cravings.) Now these are the people that Paul commanded to mark and avoid.

As before stated, these perverse teachers apply this Scripture to justify themselves in making divisions; this we would expect. O how careful we should be least we be ensnared by their, good words and fair speeches. If this is only of trival consequence, Paul certainly would not have said, "Therefore watch, and remember, not to warn every one night and day with tears." O did Paul see these cruel days when men are lovers of self, rather than lovers of God? Paul had been forewarned of these wolves and perverse teachers, hence his warning with tears because of these things. Let us keep this constantly before us; that is, Paul's great interest in the welfare of the church, also his words, "I am pure from the blood of men. For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God." Let us notice that the reason assigned by Paul for being pure from the blood of all men was because of the fact that he had not shunned to declare the whole counsel of God. Paul's argument is evidently like this: that if he had shunned to declare any portion of the counsel of God, he could not have

said, *"I am pure from the blood of all men."* God spake the same to his prophet Ezekiel. Read the thirty-third chapter. The sixth verse reads thus: *"But if the watchman see the sword come, and blow not the trumpet, and the people be not warned; if the sword come, and take any person from among them, he is taken away in his iniquity; but his blood will require at the watchman's hand."*

Paul was blowing the trumpet, he in faithfulness gave warning; this he did in this instance day and night with tears for the space of three years, therefore he could say, *"I am pure from the blood of all men."* We see perverse teachers dividing the church of Christ; and let me ask you, dear brethren, you who love to see peace, Are we free from the blood of all men if we behold these things, yet we do not faithfull do our part to warn and do as commanded? The faithful ministers are to warn, the faithful hearers are to do as commanded by our Lord and his inspired prophets and apostles. God has seen fit to make all his people accountable to him; there is no place given to the idler and unconcerned.

I believe all Primitive Baptists profess to believe that Christ's body is one body, that the church is the body of Christ, represented as the bride, the Lamb's wife, and that Christ is the head of that one body, and the husband of the bride, which is the church. Now let me ask, If I profess to believe these things, and at the same time I am going over the country trying to

get believers to follow me, and get them to raise bars against those who differ from me in regard to some belief I may entertain, and at the same time I know they are God-fearing brethren, who do not believe as I do, I ask, if I am engaged in making or causing divisions, have I the right to expect to be treated as a faithful servant of Christ? Paul says, *"They that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the simple."* Now if I had the ability of those who by good words and fair speeches do deceive the hearts of the simple, and my ambition was to have a following, it does seem nothing would be more in line with carnal desires than to have my followers raise bars and declare nonfellowship for all those who are not carnally minded. This is where the sad part comes in, that the carnal leaders deceive the innocent and get them to do the cruel work against those of their own brethren. The leader is harmless in and of himself if he does not get followers, therefore of such Paul said, Mark and avoid them. Now we see that it is not by their words and speeches that we can detect them, for their words are good and their speeches are fair, but it is what they cause: divisions which they cannot cover up. With sorrow I think we must all confess that some are engaged in causing divisions, and meeting with comparatively little opposition in the headway they are making. The great and essential question is, Is any church guiltless that will receive these

division-makers into their house? Are they not by so doing bidding them Godspeed, which is forbidden? Read 2 John x. 11. This is a reasonable duty enjoined upon God's people, that they should live in honor to their profession. Therefore if there be any who are so carnally minded as to cause divisions, the duty of the spiritually minded is to restore rather than to sanction the carnally minded, by receiving them with open arms, and at the same time knowing that death and destruction mark their pathway. As before stated, these Scriptures are referred to by all factions to justify themselves in causing divisions and offenses. God's people should keep in mind that it is the one who is causing divisions that Paul is warning against, instead of those who are deceived by good words and fair speeches; it is the guilty party who is condemned. You will observe those division-makers make no distinction or difference as to whether they bar out God-fearing brethren or not; any one who may chance to differ with them is barred out, regardless of his walk. This of itself would seem conclusive evidence that such ones have no love for the kingdom of Christ, therefore serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but are serving a selfish ambition, are carnally minded; they are feeding fleshly desires. Another thing to be observed about those division-makers is, to hear them tell it, that they are greatly persecuted, and the sad part of it is they by good words and fair

speeches have so completely deceived many of God's humble poor that they give these perverse teachers words of consolation and sympathy. O how cunning! This is all accomplished by good words and fair speeches. Dear brethren, do you not know, have you not observed, that these division-makers will turn upon their best friends if they chance to cross their views? They have no use for any one they cannot use to advantage to carry out their ends, which are to divide God's people. Many of you know these things to your sorrow, yet these leaders claim to be suffering great persecutions from their supposed enemies, the children of God. The question is, Are they persecuted for righteousness' sake? Do we read of one instance where a righteous man ever labored to divide God's people, and to cause offenses? Jesus said, "*Blessed are the peacemakers.*" He also said, "*Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness' sake: for their's is the kingdom of heaven.*" If wars, fightings and divisions are righteous things, then it might be proper for those who by good words and fair speeches do deceive the simple, to claim for so doing they are wonderfully persecuted. Remember Paul said, "*Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.*" What could be more perverse than to claim they were persecuted for righteousness' sake, and at the same time are engaged in trying to divide the body of

Christ? "Such," Paul says, "*serve not our Lord Jesus Christ.*" Then how careful we should be lest we bid such Godspeed.

Joseph Ford.

EXCERPT FROM ELDER
A.P. MEWBORN'S EXPERIENCE

Before we go any further with this, we look back at the poor beginning, and will try to give some background of my being here. You see, I had a long hard road to travel, heartaches to suffer, sickness and sorrows to endure, love to share, lessons to learn, school to attend and a family to share before the beginning of trying to preach publicly. In school I managed to get along with my classmates, get good grades and get along with those who were in authority. Still I was shy and retiring in some ways, I would not speak before class or render my lessons orally, I stuttered and felt so insignificant that I would forfeit a grade rather than speak before the class or the teacher.

I was born of good parents, some would say "Godly", but they were earthly too, and I loved them dearly, and respected and obeyed them both with all the ability God gave me until He took them away on that trip that is required of "all the earth". Both were given a good hope in the Lord Jesus Christ, and loved and cared for the Church in a beautiful way. I believe this way was given them by their saviour. They lived to see two sons baptized into the fellowship of the saints, and to see one of them ordained a

deacon to serve the Church with his daddy, and the other to try to serve the Church as pastor. They were faithful messengers of the Meadow Church and were known and loved by the brethren in all the surrounding Churches and Associations. They lived long and useful lives in the Church and fully believed that they could serve God, only as they could serve their brethren, their children and their neighbor. I am glad they were mine and I could live with them and hopefully serve with them. As I remember the beautiful life we shared, I can only describe it as a "Joy unspeakable and full of Glory, and the Lord Praised."

As a boy I was different from the rest of the boys in the neighborhood and the mothers would often say, "Ap is a good boy, he isn't into everything and not as mean as the other boys." Lord knows I loved to hear this, I didn't believe it, but I loved to hear it. You see the real truth was, I was sick and not able to be actively disobedient, as the others were. I tried to hide this fact and soon my egotism had grown so much that I truly felt I was just as good as anybody and a little better than most. I believed in God, but it was not the same God I hope to believe in now. I believed in a God that was endeavoring to save the whole world, all the people, and I knew that as good as I believed I was, that any time I chose I could bring about the "blessed assurance" that I heard so often about. There was a faint feeling in me, my soul?, my heart?, my spirit?, I still don't know which that salvation did not come as the neighborhood reli-

gious fathers said it did, this faint and still small voice kept saying, "God is not poor, He doesn't need your money, He doesn't need your works, He doesn't need anything you have but will supply your every need. This gnawing voice caused me, and still does a great deal of concern, you see I wanted to listen to the people of the neighborhood, who spoke so highly of me, and they taught that God would do anything you wanted Him to do, if you would just let Him. As I look back I wonder why they didn't do better. I was told by the Arminians that this gnawing voice that was beginning to give me so much trouble would cease and go away, that it was sent to me from God to cause me to make up my mind, and if I would just join the Church, and really apply myself to the work and support that was necessary then all my troubles would vanish and be no more. This gnawing, still small voice did not let up, it was continually there, always accusing me of the sinful deeds of my flesh, and the evil thoughts that possessed me, until I was so much in despair, that I was willing to try anything; I set about to do better. I was not going to do anything wrong, or have sinful or evil thoughts anymore, and I was going to join the Arminian Church that promised so much to poor sinners, but still I had not seen these promises fulfilled, still this was the only hope I had; the only hope I had been given, and with all the doubts that possessed me, I had to try. About this time my best friend came to see me and he wanted to discuss salvation. He felt to

be condemned to death, and was told that he must attend revival, "so called", being held next week and obey the voice of the preacher, and that he must ask me to attend with him, so we both could be saved and begin to feel good again about our lives. Well I agreed to go, first for my friend's sake, so he could feel he had done his duty, and also because I was so miserable, I thought perhaps this might help. I still had not approached my Father and Mother about my condition, because I was so mortally afraid that they would agree with that still small voice that had not let up at all, but was still gnawing at me. I went to the revival hoping that at last I could feel some relief and get rid of the sinful condition that I had lived with so long. But alas, this "noted" Evangelist preached only to those who were saved, and his sermon did not offer the local heathens, or the unregenerate, or the unsaved any hope of salvation at all. His text was the 40th Psalm, first verse, and for the life of me, then, and even now, I cannot see that this would do much for those who knew no troubles as I felt one who was saved would be. When the invitation was issued my friend and I, who were sitting side by side, arose to go up and be saved, but when we reached the aisle, and he went to meet the minister, I weeping bitterly went out the door. The tremendous crowd, which were present, were my neighbors, my friends and my people, but when they filed out of the meeting house, and saw me leaning against a tree weeping out loud, they all went by except

one real old man, a friend of my Grandfather and family, he came and embraced me and said, "Son, another time, another place," and God only knows how much that beautiful message has comforted me time after time when I have been made to return to that old tree. But my troubles were still present, no relief at all had been given me, so I concluded there was no more any need for me to attend Church services, for to me the hymns has lost their melody and message and the sermons only reiterated the sinful condition and terrible plight I was in.

It was summer time and instead of going to the meetings with my Mother and Daddy, I went swimming. There was a hurt look in their faces when they asked if I were going to Church, but they never told me I ought to go. Peter went fishing and I went swimming. I felt that with the boys I would not hear praying, or preaching, or anything to remind me of what a wretched, and hell deserving sinner I was and am. But even this would not work for me. One Sunday morning one of the boys, who was accustomed to attending Sunday School and Church, said he felt condemned, that he should be in Sunday School and Church. My older brother, Joe, was present and promptly told him, that while he did not believe in Sunday School, we could have singing and prayer at the swimming place. He then began to sing Amazing Grace, and nearly all the others joined in. Upon the conclusion of the hymn, Joe asked me to lead them in prayer, and I could not refuse, I tried to pray, to pray for

sinners, and to pray that God would continue to supply the needs of His people, and show them the way.

On the next Sunday, when Joe asked me to pray, he asked me to also speak, if I would of the things that were troubling me and the others of the Lord's people. I was afraid to try to speak, but more afraid of not trying to, and I felt that if I failed no one would know about it but just the boys who were present. I began to try to speak, I don't know what I said, but this should not be strange, because I don't know what I said last Sunday, but I do know that when I had tried to dismiss the group, I felt some relief for the first time in many months. This was a regular appointment for us for the remainder of the summer and extended into the next when the weather permitted. We went swimming and had our meeting. Word of our attempted worship service soon spread in the neighborhood, but I did not know it, and my Father, being so much against mockery or anything sacrilegious, and was so afraid that this was what was going on at the swimming hole, until he stayed home from Church one Sunday morning, and carefully hid himself that he might see and hear the worship services he had heard about, unobserved. I knew nothing about this until many years later when my Mother told me about it. She said, "Your Pa came from the swamp weeping, and told me that whatever was said and done that morning was what he hoped to believe, and that it edified him and did praise to the name of our Heavenly Father, and Jesus who He has sent."

He never went back to my knowledge, and never mentioned his going at all to brother Joe or me.

Oh, that I could return to this time of my youth, when I was blessed to worship our Lord, and not know of any trouble that could mar it's beauty. I know this trouble must come, see John 16, 33. "These things I have spoken unto you, that in me you might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world."

But alas, we cannot recapture, or even capture, anything, and cannot even remember the beautiful things except our Lord recalls them for us. Even now he recalls for me the fact that I have written seven pages in the book and have not even identified myself. Even today as I think of the sweet promises of God to his children, I am just a child and my prayer is that He will ever keep me as a child.

I, Albert Parrott Mewborn, was born in Greene County, Carrs Township, May 26, 1919. My father is Levi Andrew Mewborn and my mother Nancy Jane (Mewborn) Mewborn. They have both "gone the way of all the earth, 'but I cannot say' they were", they are my Father and Mother today. My Grandfather's Dad was Elder Parrott Mewborn, my Father's Grandfather and my Mother's Great Grandfather. He was a Primitive Baptist Minister, and had three sons in the ministry. The best known of the sons in the ministry was my Grandfather, Elder D.A. Mewborn. This is becoming most confusing to me, I am definitely not a genealogist, but the best conclusion I

can come to is that I am my own third cousin.

Elder A.P. Mewborn

THE BELIEVER'S DEATH AND HIDDEN LIFE

By Henry Fowler (1774-1838)

"For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God"(Col. 3.3).

Not dead in sin, which they had been, as also all others quickened souls, till God, who commands the light to shine out of darkness, shines into their hearts, but dead unto the law by the body of Christ (Rom.7.4). Paul exorts the called in Christ Jesus to recon themselves-"dead indeed unto sin; but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord" (Rom. 6. 11). This death to the law and to sin is by the body of Christ, or the complete obedience of Christ, both active and passive: by virtue of which all the elect are delivered from the pit wherein is no water, no spiritual refreshment, no hope, no comfort. "You hath He quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins' (Eph.2.1). What an awful state do all men stand in by nature! They were conceived in sin, shapen in iniquity, and brought forth, not in purity, as some teach, but "children of wrath; and they go forth speaking lies as soon as they are able to articulate.

Reader, has no change taken place in thy heart since thou wast born? Then, be assured, thou art dead in sin, but not dead to sin, as were the Colossians; and living and dying in

thy present state, where Christ is thou wilt never go, for, for *"except a man be born again, he cannot: see the kingdom of God"* (John 3.3). But if the Lord hath quickened thy poor soul, and thou feelest thyself a poor tempest-tossed, ship-wrecked sinner, having lost thy all, and brought to complete destitution and spiritual beggary, I have good news to tell thee, namely, thou art dead, and "thy life is hid with Christ in God: Thy carnal reason, thy powerful unbelief and thy slavish fears may prevail over thee at present, so that thou mayest not be able to enjoy the comforts of thy free and complete justification; but still these mountains (and terrible mountains they are) shall come down before thy great and almighty Captain of salvation, Jesus Christ. "Is any thing too hard for the Lord?"

It may be profitable to enquire how we become dead unto sin, and dead to the law; the right and proper apprehension of which momentous subject, which is only by the Spirits teaching, will assuredly constrain the sinner to glorify God in heart and with the tongue, as upon an instrument of ten strings. In Isa. 53.6 the prophet says, *"The Lord hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all"*; that is, God our Father hath imputed our iniquities to Christ; and they were so made His own sins by this strange act that they cannot be considered ours again in strict justice. So the Holy Ghost testifies by His servant Paul: *"For He hath made Him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in*

Him" (2 cor. 5. 21). It was an act of the Father to lay our sins upon Christ, and to make Him to be. sin for us; by which He shewed His boundless Love and compassion, "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." (John 3. 1:6).

Those were matters transacted between the eternal Father and His eternal and only begotten Son, independent of man. In some sense this might be figured out in Abraham and his son Isaac: "And they went both of them together" (Gen. 22. 6). The Father to offer him up, and the Son to be offered up, without a murmur, a sacrifice. So the antitype: "He is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so He opened not His mouth" (Isa. 53. 7).

This most astonishing mystery confounds all our carnal wisdom. There is nothing that man's fleshly wisdom stumbles at more than this branch of gospel truth, and the prince of darkness helps him on. To hinder the poor sinner from rightly receiving this precious gospel truth is satan's constant aim; or if the sinner hath rightly received it, satan tries all manner of schemes to make it of no value to receiver, either by working upon his fleshly and vile lusts to make him live wantonly, and so to abuse his Christian liberty, or by drawing him into some dark and legal notion, disposing him to add something of his own to the finished work of Christ. But between these two extremes, wild libertinism and dark legality, the child

of God must steer his vessel; and difficult indeed he would find it, as he may be variously exercised, to avoid the rocks on the right hand and on the left. He has need to be daily on the look out, and watch unto prayer; for nothing preserves the child of God from the dangerous extremes alluded to like a constant cry to the Lord for help, wisdom and strength. This the flesh hates, and makes a determined stand against and would sooner sink into any dangerous vortex than be thus drilled from day to day.

Ah! believer, thy salvation is sure and certain; but thy possessions must be fought for all the way to glory. However, as Israel got not the land in possession by their own sword, neither did their own arm save them; so it is, and so it will be with thee. God will make thee know that thou must fight the good fight of faith, but it is He that giveth thee the victory. To accomplish our redemption, Jesus "trode the wine-press alone, and of the people there was none with Him." In that glorious warfare of His, He spoiled principalities and powers, and made a shew of them openly" demonstrating by His resurrection that He had abolished and destroyed that monster's power, a blessing He had long promised to the church: "O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction"(Hos. 13, 14.)

"Death is no more the king, of dread.

*Since our Immanuel rose:
He took the tyrant's sting away,
And nailed it to His cross."*

Death is no more a penal evil to the heirs of promise; therefore, death is in the inventory of the saint's property: "For all things are yours; whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death"(1Cor. 3.21.22). Paul reconed it. gain to die, saying, "For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain"(Phil.1,21). If a sinner be dead in sin, and not dead to sin, he gains nothing by dying, but suffers an irreparable loss: he is "driven away in his wickedness; but the righteous hath hope in his death" (Prov. 14. 32). Sin, the only revealed cause of condemnation, being removed by the grand obedience and blood-shedding of our Immanuel, and the virtue of it being applied to our conscience by the most Holy Spirit, which is received by faith, a blessed hope, full of immortality, springs up in the believer; and he rejoices that he is dead to the law by the body of Christ, and delivered from the curse and from all liability to eternal death by the blessed Daysman, his kinsman; Redeemer, "*in whom we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins.*" (Col.1.14). This knowlege of God, and of Jesus Christ in His saving benefits, is eternal life; and though the believer must die the death common to man, yet shall he live and reign with Christ, and there shall be no more death, nor sickness, nor pain. *"Blessed is he that hath part in the first resurrection; on such the second death hath no power."*

But though the believer is dead to the law, dead to sin, and dead to the world, being crucified with Christ (Gal.

2.20); yet he has a hidden life which he can never lose: *"Your life is hid with Christ in God"* Here is abiding interest, permanent security. Christ is in heaven; and He said to His disciples before He left them to return to His and our Father, *"Because I live, ye shall live also"* (John 14.19). While the Head lives above, the feeblest member of His body cannot perish, being in union with Him. The heel of Christ, His church, is often bruised by Satan, sin and the world; *"but not a (mystical) bone of Him shall be broken"*; for *"He holdeth our soul in life, so that our feet cannot be moved"* (Psa. 34.20; John 19.36; Psa. 66. 9). This is a blessed foundation for encouragement to the poor, tried, tempted soul, who sometimes seems driven to desperation, and is ready to cry out with Job in his agonies, *"Wilt thou pursue the dry stubble?" Satan is hunting after thy "precious life,"* but he cannot find it; for it is hid with Christ in God. Cheer up, therefore, ye weary pilgrims; you shall be made to set your foot upon the neck of these your terrible enemies, who now mock and triumph over you. *"The God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly"* (Rom. 16. 20).

Art thou risen with Christ, and dead to the law by the body of Christ? Hath thou the promise of the life that now is, as well as the life to come? Then set thy affections on things above, and show to the church and to the world that thou belongest to and art looking after another kingdom. Shape thy sayings and thy doings by the rules laid

down in the Word of God, and put off the old man with his deeds. *"If ye through the Spirit do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live"* (Rom, 8. 15).

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DECEMBER 1992

"For thou, O God, hast proved us; thou hast tried us, as silver is tried"—PSALM lxxvi. 10.

The Lord's dealings with his people in the wilderness are very much to this purpose and to this end--to prove them, and to know what is in their hearts. Has the Lord implanted life in your soul? Has he touched your conscience with his finger? Has he begun a work of grace upon your heart? If so, in your travels through this wilderness there will be things from time to time to prove the reality of this work upon your soul. You will have temptations; now, when temptation comes, it will prove whether you have the fear of God in your soul to stand against the temptation, or whether you fall under the temptation; or, if you fall under the temptation, whether you are ever recovered out of it. And if you are a living soul, the Lord will keep bringing circumstance upon circumstance, event upon event, one thing after another; and all these things, as they come upon you, shall be made to prove whether the fear of God be in our soul or not. Now, if the fear of God be not in

a man's heart, he must decline, he must fall away. Satan will be more than a match for every one except God's own family; sin will overcome and destroy every one but those whose sins are pardoned through atoning blood and dying love; and the world, sooner or later, will overcome every one who has not the faith of God's elect whereby alone the world is overcome. Thus the Lord, in his mysterious dealings (and how mysterious his dealings are!) proves the reality of the work of grace in every heart where that work is begun, and proves the hypocrisy of all who have but a name to live while their soul is dead before God.

J.C. Philpot

ISAIAH 26:12.

Lord, thou wilt ordain peace for us: for thou also hast wrought all our works in us.

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR SEPTEMBER 1995

Howard Peters, VA.....	\$2.00
W.G. Parsons, VA	2.00
Ms. Rachel Green, WV	2.00
A Friend in Ca., CA	38.00
Mrs. O.P. Murphy, TX.....	30.00
Gray Hall, AL	2.00
R. Allen Carroll, NC.....	2.00
Mrs. C.V. Ferris, VA	2.00
Floyd Oakley, AR	2.00
Mrs. Clarice C. Moore, NC	2.00
Mrs. Donald Arne, S.D.	65.00

OBITUARIES

FLOYD KNIGHTON MORGAN

It is in great sadness that I write this obituary of our beloved brother, Floyd Knighton Morgan, whom God hath in his love and tender mercy called home from this world of sin, sorrow, and pain on the 18th. of August, 1995. He was 83 years old.

Brother Morgan had believed the gospel doctrine of salvation by the grace of God, and had attended Concord church and others faithfully for many years before he was blessed of God to be received into full fellowship with Concord Church only last year. He was blessed to attend services only a few times before he was stricken with illness and could no longer attend.

He leaves behind his wife, Katy Jo Morgan, Crossett, AR: one son, Kenneth Morgan, Ashdown, AR: one daughter, Martha Holland, Ashdown, AR: one brother Lem Newton Morgan, Crossett, AR: 7 Grandchildren: 8 Great Grandchildren and a great host of friends.

Funeral services were conducted at Jones Funeral Home, Crossett, AR by this writer, and interment was in the family cemetery.

Elder Clifford Wilbanks