

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 143

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NO. 1

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 1/75
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

REMINISCENCES OF MARY PARKER

(continued)

One bright morning toward the last of May, when the air was balmy and pure, when came into my sick room the fragrance of sweet-scented honeysuckle and bright blooming roses, and there flitted past my window every now and then a tiny, gold-crested humming-bird, my brother came to the door and said that in the parlor below was an old friend who wished very much to see me. I did not recognize him as he entered my room, but my brother introduced him as Colonel O. L. Jackson, of New Castle, Pennsylvania. How very surprised and pleased I was. In early youth, in the golden days, at the dear old home, this young man had been a frequent and welcome visitor. When the war broke out he got up a company in Logan, and as captain of the company entered the war. He was wounded in the head, and lay hovering between life and death for a long time, but finally rallying (though he will never cease to suffer from the wound), he resumed his station and office, which was then that of Colonel of his regiment. From the time he entered the army until this bright morning in May we had not met, as he had, at the close of the war, become a suc-

cessful lawyer in his native town of New Castle, Pa. He was now on a short visit to Logan, amid the familiar scenes and places, to renew old acquaintances, and to recreate after long and steady application to his profession. Every day during his stay he came around from his hotel and spent a little while in my sick room, and very pleasant were the moments, and quickly did time pass as we talked over the old days and associations. Then the leave-taking came, and I watched this handsome, intellectual friend go out from my presence and my life, most probably forever. Thus do the paths of human friends in this social life, cross and recross each other. Sincere and pleasant friendships are formed to continue for awhile, then some day, somewhere the golden chain is broken, and we see their faces no more. Yet to me there is something very enjoyable, beautiful and ennobling about true, unselfish friendship. When thinking of it, there is always brought to my mind the friendship that existed between David, the "sweet singer of Israel," and Jonathan, the son of David's bitter enemy, King Saul. How sincerely and deeply did David mourn the death of Jonathan; and it was then that he declared the love of his brother Jonathan was "wonderful, passing the love of women."

Five miles west of Logan is the plain Baptist meetinghouse, near which flow the clear waters of the creek where the sacred ordinance of baptism is administered. In this plain structure, with its uncarpeted aisles and uncushioned seats, for thirty-seven years my dear departed father fearlessly and boldly, "declared the whole counsel of God," and proclaimed the glorious news of the gospel,

which is "good tidings of great joy," and, indeed, "good news to the poor." But here Time has also placed his destructive hand, as he has everywhere in the past, as he will in all future ages. The form that now fills that pulpit and stands as a watchman upon Zion's walls, is not that of my beloved father; my mother's seat is filled by another; all, all is changed, save the blessed gospel. That, oh, thanks be unto our God! cannot, will never change; and we are sweetly assured that life, nor death, nor principalities, nor powers, nor any other creature shall separate us from the love of our living, glorious Redeemer; and that nothing, not even the powers of Satan, shall pluck one of the least of his little ones out of his hand. Oh! the security, the restfulness to be found by those who, like the gentle, humble Moabitish maiden, Ruth, have come to trust, and to rest under the wings of the Almighty.

During the month of July, when the scorching rays of the mid-summer sun beat pitilessly upon us, making my pretty little room, with its sides facing the east and west, seem almost like a heated furnace, my youngest brother and wife and little daughter, with whom I now find a permanent home, paid me an unexpected visit. How it cheered and gladdened me, and how fervently did my heart go out in love to them. They were only going to remain over one day and night, and I thought if I could only go back to New Holland with them I would get well. I urged them to carry me down stairs to see if I could not then feel able to undertake the journey. I was now so thin in flesh, that one person could carry me without fatigue. With an arm round each of my brothers, they attempted to carry me down stairs, but before we reached the stairway, I became so faint and ill that they were obliged to take me back to my tiresome couch. Sad indeed was my heart as I saw those loved ones from my window enter the coach to be driven to the depot. When the hot days began to give place to pleasanter weather, and there came at last the breezy

days of September, I began to slowly improve, and as my strength came back my anxiety to return to New Holland increased. Slowly, day after day, I got my belongings together, little by little, and packed in my trunk. While I lay in bed the dropsical swelling all left my body, but now that I began to move about, it returned again. One gloomy looking morning, about the middle of September, I was ready for my contemplated journey.

A few neighbors gathered in to say, "good-bye." My brother drove me to the depot in an easy carriage. My dear young niece, Cora, accompanied me, from whom I was very loath to part. How this dear, winsome child did twine herself about my heart, and she seemed to return my affection with all the warmth of her fresh young life. When we reached the depot we found it one living mass of moving humanity. So many persons entered the train for Columbus, where the state fair was being held, that it was with difficulty my brother found me a seat beside a lady of our acquaintance. My physician was on the train going to Columbus, and when we reached Lancaster, he assisted me to the ladies' parlor, told the agent to see me on the Cincinnati train, and engaged for me a lunch before he again boarded his own train. I now found myself weak, ill and alone. But from the agent and the person who kept the refreshment stand, I received every kind attention; and when my train came up, they placed me under the conductor's care, who seated me and arranged my shawls and pillows. Very sad were my reflections as the train sped onward, moving me away from my childhood friends and scenes, I felt assured, for ever, back to the only place I could call home, yet which alas! was not home. Like poor Rosey, the feeble, friendless and forlorn creature whose plaintive cry so went to all hearts in St. Francis Hospital, I longed, I hoped, yes, and I tried to pray, too, that I might die; and the most soothing hope and thought that came to me on that dreary, weary jour-

ney was that I might soon die and be laid to rest. But oh! how mysterious and incomprehensible are the dealings of Divine Providence. Not yet was it His will to call me. Little by little in the furnace of affliction did He see fit to let the dross slowly burn off and to try me, as I trust, that I might come forth as gold, purified and fit for the Master's use. Oh! if I could but think and believe that notwithstanding all my sinfulness, my utter insignificance before Him, He is preparing me for His glorious Kingdom above, and that in that great day when He comes to make up His jewels, I shall be found among them; if I, like poor afflicted Job, could say at all times in the midst of *my* great trial, "When thou hast tried me I shall come forth as gold," and with assurance say and feel, "I know that my Redeemer liveth;" then could I indeed "be still, and know that He is God," and bowing submissively to His will in all things, say "Thy will, dearest Lord, not mine, be done." What a victory I would then have, and how patiently could I "wait all the days of my appointed time, till my change came."

I reached New Holland the same day on which I left Logan, weary and ill indeed, but glad to be back, and so glad to see the dear familiar faces of my youngest brother and wife, and my little pet niece, whose animated, childish chatter and smiles of welcome made glad my weary, homesick heart. After resting here a few days, accompanied by one of my cousins, I again took the train to go to Washington, thence to Good Hope, where the Indian Creek Association was held. This proved to be the last time I was (as it now appears) ever to meet with the people of my faith and order, in a public assembly and a church capacity. In the railway coach, in which we rode as far as Washington, there were very few travelers, but when we took the south-bound train for Good Hope, the coaches all seemed to be crowded. There was much animated conversation going on, and as I caught now and then portions of it, I knew I was in company

with my own spiritual kindred, though I saw no faces that I knew. Just across the aisle, sat two sweet-faced ladies, towards whom I felt singularly drawn. Try as I would, I could not wholly withdraw my gaze from at least one face, which to me seemed quite charming. Reader, do you believe in personal magnetism? I do. When I left the train and entered the large, commodious carriage sent by my cousin, Robert Yeoman, to meet friends going to his house, I was greatly pleased to see the lady of whom I spoke become one of the party also. During the ride I had no opportunity to address or approach her, but when we reached Cousin Robert's she was introduced to me as Sister Jennie Shambaugh, of Xenia, Ohio. How my heart bounded with pleasurable emotions. She was one of my loved and valued correspondents. When I told her that I quite fell in love with her in the train, not dreaming who she was, she told me she had experienced the same pleasurable emotions regarding myself. I was here joined by Mattie Derr, a dear sister whose acquaintance I had formed when at Logan.

Only six months had elapsed since I, with other sorrowing friends, had followed the funeral bier of my dear father out from this beautiful home, twelve miles across the beautiful stretch of country to its final resting place in the lovely burial grounds at New Holland. My uncle, Albert Parker, was one of the number then, but now he too was sleeping the sleep "from which none ever wake to weep." Only a year previous to this, another brother, the late Elder Joseph Parker, died in this same place. Thus in quick succession did my father and his brothers pass away, for before the coming of another year still another brother, the last of the family save one, was carried to the grave. Notwithstanding the sad associations connected with the place, and the sorrow I felt when I entered the room which had been the place of my father's death-bed scene, I became exceedingly happy. Here I met for the first and last time

our late dear Elder Danks, of Cincinnati; Elder Harvey Wright, of Indiana, and Elder R. M. Thomas, of Missouri. Especially did I enjoy the preaching and conversation of Elder Danks. The one sermon which I heard him preach was from the text, "And this God is our God forever; He will be our guide *even* unto death." It was particularly edifying and comforting to me, and many have been the delicious morsels that I have partaken of as I have gone back, from time to time, and gathered up baskets full of fragments. At this association I met some of the sweetest, dearest sisters whose minds seemed lifted above the petty vanities of this life, and who were as truly refined and cultured as any that it has ever been my privilege to meet. It seemed a heaven below, and I felt that it certainly was a foretaste of joys of that sinless clime, "Where congregations ne'er break up." This delightful, heavenly assembly, however, must break up, sad farewells must be said, partings must take place. But in yonder blessed abode, no parting ever comes, no tears are shed, the song of praise is not hushed and love flows on and on from heart to heart and from the great Fountain Source in an unbroken stream of unending joy and unalloyed bliss. "Behold," says the Psalmist, "how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." Sweetly, oh, very sweetly, do we realize the truth of this beautiful Psalm, when we meet with those who "know the joyful sound," who speak the language of one's soul, who "have no confidence in the flesh," but who give all the glory to our King. One of the evidences that we have passed from death unto life saith the Apostle, is that "we love the brethren." Surely each heaven-born, awakened soul, no matter how feeble his hope, can, when mingling with those who give evidence of having been with Jesus and learned of him, lay hold of this evidence, and thereby experience a revival of the hope which to us seems so small, but which is "an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast."

On Sunday evening when the glorious sun was sinking in the west, and all nature seemed to feel that rare hush and serene peacefulness we sometimes experience after a Sabbath day of worship, and of unclouded brightness, with heartfelt sorrow I took leave of my dear kindred in Christ; and accompanied by my cousin, Charles Parker, and Sister Mattie Derr, went over to the village of Good Hope, a mile distant, to spend the night. When in the quiet of my sleeping-room that night, all my bereavements and my loneliness came afresh to mind, and the sorrow pent up in my heart burst forth, and the exalted tension of my over-strained nerves also gave way, leaving me ill, weak and almost strengthless. I thought of each dear happy-looking face from which I had parted, and wondered if among all those smiling, seemingly happy beings, there was one whose heart was so sad, so bereaved, so homesick as mine. All seemed to be ready with eager happy feet to turn homeward. I had no home to which to go; and again the cry arose from the great gulf of my sorrow that I might die, for I felt at least the earth would not murmur or receive me grudgingly. Yet to no one, at least into no human ear did I pour my grief; and I had not yet learned to go boldly to the throne of grace with the trustfulness of a little child, as I believe I have since learned to do; neither had I yet felt in all its sweet fulness, that the dear Lord does, indeed, take us up into his everlasting arms, and comfort us, "as one whom his mother comforteth." I was so prostrated the next day that I had to be carried to the train. I had no dropsical symptoms then, but looked ill and emaciated, and my presence in the coach created quite a commotion among the passengers, so that the conductor had to enquire into the nature of my ailment, in order to restore quiet, as it seemed some one started the story that I was a yellow fever victim from the South. When we reached Washington, we found we were half an hour late, and our train was gone. We entered a carriage and

were driven to a hotel, and here my condition excited quite as much alarm as it did on the cars. The occupants all left the parlor, and the landlord called my cousin out to inquire the cause of my sickness, for here, too, the idea had gone over the building that a yellow fever patient had come from New Orleans. This was during the terrible epidemic reign of that fatal fever in the South. The landlord very politely apologized afterwards, but I began to conclude if I was becoming such an object of fear to my fellow beings, I should certainly keep in the background from henceforth. When we reached New Holland it was quite late in the night; the air was balmy, the sky clear, the full moon shed its radiance upon us, whilst myriads of stars studded the blue vault of heaven. My dear, good brother was at the depot waiting; and when he told me he had been disturbed because of my non-appearance at an earlier hour, and said that he no longer felt satisfied when I was absent, my heart was filled with a great, deep thankfulness. Oh, what a soothing balm to me were his kind words and deeds. Kind words! what a depth of meaning they express! What delicious fragrance often flows into the dark recesses of the soul at the utterance of just *one* kind word!

“Only listen—they are speaking, spirit voices
sweet and low,
Sweet as perfumed breath of summer, gentle
as the streamlet’s flow;
When an unkind look is given, when an
angry word is said,
Hark! they whisper, patience, pardon, bend
the knee and bow the head.”

How wide is the difference between unkind words and kind ones. Whilst “a soft answer turneth away wrath,” and a kind look and word falls like a soothing balm into a stricken heart, soothing its sorrows, healing its wounds, one angry look and word carries into the hearts, often, the poison of reptiles, and rankles there to show itself in every evil passion. It is only when the love of Christ is *in* the heart, when “Charity which forgiveth all things,” controls us, that such evil seed sown does not bring forth the same evil fruit. But even

Christians, though they do forgive, cannot forget; and often the keen anguish that is felt when one has received some unkind word or thrust, will be brought back by memory’s undying efforts, and again and again be felt long after its has been spoken. Kind words cost us nothing, and very often prove to be “bread cast upon the waters,” to return to us after many days. I would that we could all more carefully cultivate and use them. “Life at best is but a vapor that soon vanisheth away,” and how much better we would all feel if we could go down to the grave with the consciousness that the heart of no fellow being has been wounded or made to ache by any unkind word spoken by us. Let us, then, strive to utter:

“Little words of kindness,
Little deeds of love;
’Twill make our home an Eden
Like to that above.”

(Concluded next month)

GENESIS 9:13

For quite some time the hymn #87 in the Durand Hymn and Tune Book has been on my mind. It not only has been a comfort but has from time to time stirred up my mind to look into scripture. The other evening I sat down to write to see if I might be given to put into writing some of the thoughts that were on my mind and too, out of curiosity, to see what was there. The first verse:

(1) “When in the cloud, with colors fair,
I see the ancient bow appear,
Its beauteous form and lovely rays,
Awake my soul to love and praise.”

On thinking on the ancient bow, it comes to mind that the Almighty God is spoken of in Daniel 7:13 as “the Ancient of days.” Also Colossians 1:17 says “he is before all things, and by him all things consist” and Colossians 2:9 says “for in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily.” And John 1:1 says “In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God, and the word was God.” In Proverbs

8:22 we find the same truth as we read, "the Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old," and "then I was by him . . . and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him; rejoicing in the habitable part of his earth; and my delights were with the sons of men." (Prov. 8:31-32) So we see the Trinity — God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Ghost. These three are one and, "for whom he did foreknow he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his son, that he might be the first born among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called, and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified." (Rom. 8:29-30)

The late Elder Bellows, in my early days in the church, on one occasion was the visiting minister at the Lobo quarterly meeting at Popular Hill. He spoke on the rainbow from Genesis 9:13, "I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth." I remember how he spoke of the colors: — the gold as righteousness. Jesus is spoken of as the Lord our righteousness. The red as the blood of the everlasting covenant. The blue as the heavenly blue and he referred to the priests when under the law were to wear garments of blue.

The bow in the cloud brings to mind, the cloud spoken of in Exodus 14:19-20 that went before the Israelites and then removed and went behind them or between the Israelites and the Egyptians but it gave light to the Israelites and separated them all night.

It also brings to mind a time on the way home from Ekfid June quarterly meeting. It was toward night and a terrible storm came up with high winds. As I crossed the river and came up to the top of the hill where the road takes a slight turn, a rainbow burst forth in front of me — the end being on the road in front of me. I remember it was very bright in all its glorious colors. All had been so black and dark before. The hymn by Cowper came to mind:

"Ye fearful saints, fresh courage take,
The clouds ye so much dread
Are big with mercy, and shall break
In blessings on your head."

I attempted to drive the car into the light but it stayed ahead of me for two or three miles — then kept fading. I had my two young nephews with me. The thought came to me that man cannot attain unto this covenant, he had nothing to do with it. But by God's grace it embraces his chosen people, chosen in him from before the foundation of the world or time began. Each time I see the bow in the cloud I feel it does "Awake my soul to love and praise."

(2) "It tells me now how firm the base,
The oath, the promise, and the grace,
Which God of old, ere time begun,
To Zion swear, in Christ his Son."

Genesis 22:17-18 speaks of the oath and the promise confirmed unto Abraham and his seed spoken of as the "two immutable things" that "we might have a strong consolation; who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us; which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil." (Hebrews 6:18-19)

(3) "Dejected saint, dismiss thy fears,
Still round the throne the bow appears,
Portending peace and mercy free,
And full salvation now to thee."

This brings to mind Paraphrase 42 (John 14:1-7) in our Psalm book:

Let not your heart with anxious thoughts
be troubled or dismayed;
But trust in Providence divine,
and trust my gracious aid.

I to my Father's house return;
there num'rous mansions stand,
And glory manifold abounds
through all the happy land.

I go your entrance to secure,
and your abode prepare;
Regions unknown are safe to you,
When I, your friend, am there.

Then shall I come, when ages close,
to take you home with me;
There we shall meet to part no more,
and shall together be.

I am the way, the truth, the life:
no son of human race,
But such as I conduct and guide,
shall see my Father's face.

In Revelation 4:3 John saw "a rainbow round about the throne, in sight like unto an emerald." And before the throne a sea of glass. I remember asking Elder Ruston one time what the sea of glass represented. If I remember it reflected the walk or past. This brings to mind Revelation 1:8 "I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty." The sea of glass is spoken of in the temple worship.

(4) "It points thy soul to Jesus now;
Vindictive wrath once smote his brow,
That on thy guilty soul and mine,
No storms should beat of wrath divine.

(5) Sweet sign, that God remembers now
To guilty man his ancient vow;
But sweeter far by faith to see
A covenant God, all love to thee."

It seems here to show or speak of the two covenants, the old under the law whereby if one failed in one of the commandments, he was guilty of all. The soul that sinneth it shall die. And the new covenant as spoken of in Hebrews 8:10 — "I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts; and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people;" and in Hebrews 8:12 "I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more."

(6) "Here when thy fears begin to rise,
And hope in disappointment dies,
This covenant bow thy fears shall quell.
'Twas made for thee, in all things well."

Elder Bellows once said of the bow in the cloud, that the arrow had been taken away. Can I say, "O death, where is thy sting? O grave where is thy victory?" (1st Cor. 15:55)

I feel to fellowship the words of Newton;

"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."

Humbly,

Eldon Gilbert
RR 7
St. Thomas, Ontario
Canada

PSALM ONE

Boones Mills, Va. 24065

Dear Brethren:

The rules of our living which are contained in the law of the Lord, are the precepts of the gospel.

The children of God are such sinful beings that the very nature of all of them is vile. Yet these same sinners delight in the law of the Lord. (See first Psalm)

Then it will be asked how it is that people who cannot cease from sin, do delight in the law of the Lord? To which we reply:

When a sinner is born again he becomes a new creature, and "all things become new." as grace turns every precept into a promise; and the Spirit of grace turns every promise into a prayer. Therefore our delight in the law of the Lord all spring from the fact that the Friend of sinners has fulfilled it, and through His perfect obedience and the channel of His precious blood, free Salvation comes hand in hand with justice and mercy: The just acts of God our Saviour are the mercy of His people. What Jesus does is just, and what Jesus did in behalf of His people is their mercy. As what He did is done forever, then mercy cannot cease.

The mercy of God is so large and free that the Lord says, "If any man thirst, let him come unto me and drink." God says, "Let him take of the water of life freely." "Freely" means, no duties, no works performed, no conditions to be met, nothing at all of ours can deserve it, or procure it. It is all

free and is without price.

It is the business of those who sit in the seat of the scornful, to scorn and oppose these things.

In bonds,
J. L. Bocock

409 Sandra Street,
Conroe, Texas 77301

Dear Editors of the Signs:

Please renew my subscription to the *Signs of the Times*, as it will soon be out and I do not want to miss one copy.

I thank God for you brethren who do a lot of work to send out the *Signs* each month. To read the wonderful writings, often gives me courage to press on forward. It seems that so much of my time here is spent in doubts, fears and tremblings.

In bonds of love,
Mrs. James E. Shover

ROMANS 12:1

"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service." (Rom. 12:1)

This is one of the sweetest scriptures that is to be found in the Bible, because it is a deep and moving expression of the love that the apostle Paul had for the brethren at Rome. I believe that it is typical of the love every heaven born soul has for a brother after he has been quickened by the Holy Spirit, and experienced the kinship that flows out of the heart when they meet. It seems that the Apostle is remembering the way in which the child of the flesh is changed from darkness into light; and knowing the weakness of the flesh, he is admonishing them to continue in those things whereunto they have been called. He is beseeching them to lay aside the pleasures of the world and consecrate themselves unto God, which is the only reasonable course, seeing that they have

been set apart by the mercy of God, and called with a holy calling.

The religion of the world would take this text and begin to threaten, conjoin, plead, and suggest that the Apostle is instructing them what they must do in order to keep themselves in the grace of God. They would say that God has done his part, and this is what they must do in order to entitle them to a dwelling place in heaven. In view of the experience of the Apostle Paul, and all the writings that he left on record as inspired by the Spirit, there is no such doctrine to be found in the Bible. In fact, the doctrines of the world, the arminian or works doctrine, are not to be found in the Bible. They are just the vain imaginations in the minds of people who read the Bible.

There are also those who feel that this is a dangerous text, because it could be interpreted as leading to works as a means to an end. Evidently the Apostle Paul was not afraid of this, as much of his writings are in the form of admonitions unto the brethren of the early churches. The Apostle knew that but for the grace of God through the revelation of the Holy Ghost, all would misunderstand, but he trusted that as surely as God had sent him, the same would cause his way to prosper. The above scripture is just as true and just as much the inspiration of God through the Apostle as when he was given to write it. "But by the grace of God I am what I am." Each is to the glory of the God of heaven and earth, and each is for the edification of the church. They are given for the comfort of the poor and afflicted lambs of God as they sojourn in this vail of tears. It takes various texts to comfort and feed them as they experience the dealing of the Lord with them in times of trials and sorrow, as well as times of peace and harmony.

"All scripture is given by the inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: that the man of God may be perfect, thoroughly fur-

nished unto all good works." This seems to say that just as God pronounced all the works in the creation to be good and very good, all the scriptures are inspired, and all of them are good. None are to be omitted or slighted because they seem to teach something that is contrary to, or not in harmony with the teachings that are in the rest of them. They are all alike profitable to the children of God, and are for their comfort, for the stirring up of their pure minds, and, yes, for their instruction in righteousness. This is what the Apostle Paul wrote unto Timothy whom he referred to as, "My own son in the faith." Surely the apostle would not write anything to him that would not be profitable. If the apostle did not refrain from so teaching and instructing Timothy, why should it not be as boldly declared today. We believe, as much as in us is, that it takes the same grace and mercy for one to rightly divide the word of truth today as it did then; but at the same time, the children of God in this day and age have the same authority to declare those things as the Apostle did. The only authority for dividing of the word of truth, is the spirit of inspiration which God gives to his own in all ages.

I realize that in the past there have been those who would take the scriptures out of context and wreck havoc in the churches. These are spoken of by Jude, and they have ever been and probably will continue. It seems that as a result of this being done, the tendency is to leave those texts alone and refrain from expounding them. Because they have caused trouble when used out of context, does not mean that the scripture is controversial, or in any way disruptive to the orderly, peaceful and harmonious worship of God by the saints when gathered in the spirit of love for the truth and for one another. If a text is not used because it can be misunderstood by those who have not the Spirit, then none could be used, because, "The natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God: for

they are foolishness to him; neither can he know them because they are spiritually discerned."

The whole theme of the above text, as declared by the Apostle, is the humble, unassuming love that he had for the children of God at Rome, and his concern for their well being. He is not telling them from superior wisdom which he possesses, that they do not have, but rather humbly beseeching them by the mercies of God, that they present their bodies a living sacrifice, holy acceptable unto God. To my understanding he is sincerely, soberly and fearfully beseeching them that as they have been saved and called with a holy calling, their lives are no longer their own: they have been bought with a price, and they belong to the church of the living God. They belong to it mind, soul and body, and all else should come after the household of faith in their heart. It should be first, not by commandment, but because of the love that they have for the truth, and all else is not to be compared to the glories of this kingdom. He tells them that this is their reasonable service, which, to me, means that just as Christ laid down his life for the church literally, so should they lay down their's figuratively, and forsaking all else, be subject unto the church. This is not done very much today, but that does not lessen the need for it being done. It seems that too many attend church very irregularly, and have no feeling of neglect. It is not for God's sake; to add glory unto His kingdom, or for the world's sake that they should take notice. It is for the tried and fainting children of God as they travel this pilgrimage of tears. It is to lift up the hands that hang down, and the feeble knees, to encourage the faint hearted, and comfort the weary soul that is cast down. They can get so low that just to behold the brethren pressing toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus, is beautiful to behold, and strengthening to the lonely traveller.

Admonitions are never given in strife,

or in a proud and boastful manner as one exercising authority over another. Admonition is true love in action, and is the humblest and sweetest display of love and concern that one can show to another. It is not saying, Now I know what you should be doing, because I have tried it, and it works. Rather, it is saying, Brother, I know the weakness of the flesh and the temptations to which the flesh is so susceptible, and the way in which the natural mind wars against the spirit. I know the struggles that ensue, but, our hope is that we have been called from nature's darkness into the marvelous light of the Son of God, and I beseech you, therefore, brethren, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God. Knowing the imperfections of the flesh, let us strive, by the mercy of God, to show forth that calling in our walk and conversation. Can any who have experienced the quickening of the Spirit desire any less for themselves and their brethren.

I believe that the same applies to all the admonitions and exhortations contained in the scriptures. They were inspired by the Holy Ghost, and are in love, and are for the comfort, correction, reproof and doctrine of the children of God. I am afraid that many times when one is given to speak on these points of doctrine, some will forget everything else that the speaker has believed and contended for all his life, and judge him weak. This is sad because he is being criticized for a love for the church, and his concern for her welfare. Some will say that one is weak in the faith to be concerned for the welfare of Zion, as though he did not believe that God could take care of it. The cause of concern is that he cannot be at ease with things as they are, and there is something within that won't let him fail to pour out his heartfelt desire, for what he feels to be for the good of all the household of faith.

All will do anything that they can to prevent the suffering of a child or a loved one. They will put forth every

effort to provide for those they love, and to give them as much as they can of the comforts of this life. They will do everything that they can to avoid suffering, unpleasantness, or to warn one of unexpected dangers in this life. All of these things are good, and are all done because of love for the individuals involved. Should not the children of God have the same love and be even more concerned for the welfare of Zion. Some will pray for the welfare of their family and loved ones, and then say it is in indication of a lack of faith to be concerned with the welfare of the church. James 3:16 says, "Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessings and cursings. My brethren, these things ought not to be so." It seems that this scripture expresses the sentiment of some. The same one will strive unceasingly to take care of his families' needs, but say, "Sit back, God will take care of the church." Brethren, God will and does take care of both situations, regardless of what man may do or not do, but the evidence is that the Apostle Paul was very much concerned because of his love for the church, and desire for them to show their faith by their actions. James was of the same opinion.

Solomon writes in Eccl. 11:5, "As thou knowest not what is the way of the spirit, nor how the bones do grow in the womb of her that is with child: even so thou knowest not the works of God who maketh all." Solomon who was given wisdom above any of the kings of Israel, is stating that the natural man knows not the works of God, which are far above the knowledge of the finite mind of man: and are reserved unto God. They will accomplish His will and purpose, and man never understand them. He continues in the 6th verse, "In the morning sow thy seed and in the evening withhold not thine hand: for thou knowest not whether shall prosper, either this or that, or whether they both shall be alike good." Man cannot know the work that God doeth, and cannot know the end of something from the beginning as God does.

Man only walks by faith and do that which he believes to be the best, and trust that it is of God working in him the will and the do to His honor and glory. The point is Solomon says, sow thy seed and withhold not thy hand, knowing not the results; but as God has dealt to every saint the gift, let them use it to the glory of God, and to the comfort and edification of the church. The Lord said unto David, "Whereas it was in thine heart to build an house unto my name, thou didst well that it was in thine heart. Nevertheless thou shalt not build the house." The fact that the desire was in the heart of David did not get the house built, but the desire was the fruit of the love that was there, which was God's gift unto David in the first place; and it was well in the sight of God. Not that works develop faith, but rather are the fruits of faith. As James said, "Yea a man may say thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works and I will shew thee my faith by my works." They will both be present, or neither. The one is the visible display of the other.

It seems that the writers of the early church had a positive attitude regarding the faith of the elect of God and its outward manifestation in their walk and conversation. They were not hesitant to admonish or exhort the brethren, or to encourage those who gave evidence of an inward work of grace in the heart. If they did not avoid doing this, then where did the precedent to refrain from doing as the apostle did originate. Is it a back lash from the time when the church was divided over the issue of man's free will, and the fact that those who believed this claimed they could do as they determined and be rewarded or damned as a consequence. I cannot see that the subject under consideration is in any way or manner involved in this issue, but it seems that some feel that they are. The world claims they are independent of the power of God, and can choose to submit to Him or resist as they please.

The subject under consideration is to and concerning only those who have been chosen, quickened, called and born into the kingdom of God, and who acknowledge that everything they are is by the grace of God. These are the only ones that the scriptures are to, and the fact that the children of the world quote them and preach another doctrine, as Paul says, "Let them be accursed;" but this does not cause the scriptures to be controversial in any sense.

The question is, if God is love and love is his gift to his children, which is the greater evidence of the true church? to encourage all who show forth evidence of the same work in their heart that we hope to have experienced in ours; or to sit in stony silence and see what happens. According to what the Apostle Paul and others wrote, what would have been their response to such evidence? Brethren if we are what we hope to be, and are indeed the children of God, we have the same God given reason to admonish, exhort and encourage as the Apostles did, which is the Spirit of God in the heart.

This is not written in the spirit of strife or as a confident source of information on the above subject, but rather as a fearful earnest questioning of the reasons for the seemingly extreme differences in the practices of the early churches and the church today. It is in the manner of the Apostle Paul's exhortation to the Corinthian brethren, "Examine yourselves: whether ye be in the faith: prove your own selves." Consider the things that are written in the scriptures of the walk, talk and order of the early church and compare it with the church today. It seems that they did not fear to speak their mind on these points. Paul wrote to Timothy, "For God hath not given us the spirit of fear: but of power and of love, and of a sound mind." God's gifts to his children in this day and age are the same as they have ever been: they are still given the spirit of power, love and a sound mind. God qualifies his children for the things whereunto he sends them,

and He leads them every step of the way. He does not leave them to fend for themselves or to see just what they will do. And it seems that, in view of this fact, it is better to be found doing everything that you can, trusting that God is in the matter, than to be found doing nothing for fear He is not.

I realize the weakness of the flesh, the pride that man is subject to, and the vain imaginations of the carnal mind. I realize the extremes to which a man will go in his quest for riches, fame and earthly pleasures, but brethren my prayer is that I am writing to a people who have been called away from such foolishness. The only hope that we have of heaven and immortal glory, is in what we believe Christ has done for us. All else is vanity and vexation of spirit, as recorded by Solomon. If Christ has saved us and called us with a holy calling He will also lead us in the path of righteousness for his name's sake, keep us from falling, and present us unto God in spotless splendor when time is no more. This is our hope as we travel in this low ground of sin and sorrow, looking for and awaiting that blessed event. If we have these common hopes and desires, and believe that they are the experiences of God's chosen people, how can one feel that anything but their love for the church would cause another to beseech them to walk worthy of this blessed calling, and to present their bodies a living sacrifice; being not conformed to this world, with all its pomp and show, but being transformed by the renewing of their minds. How can one who has been graciously blessed feel that these are anything but good, wholesome words of doctrine, and are for the comfort and edification of the church, which is the body of Christ while in this time world.

The Apostle Paul wrote regarding the gifts that Christ gave unto men when he ascended on high, saying they were for the perfecting of the saints, "Till we 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 fullness of Christ." Till then we have this treasure in earthen vessels which are weak and very imperfect at the best; but the desire is there by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, to see the manifestation of the work of grace in their brethren. This is good and profitable unto the church here in this world, because it strengthens the trembling lambs, and is, as Paul says, by the mercies of God, and is for their peace and comfort.

In bonds of love,
Richard H. Campbell,
Memphis, Tenn.

ELDER W. L. EVERETT IS RECOVERING

Elder W. L. Everett of 704 Oakland Avenue, Rocky Mount, N. C., who suffered a severe heart attack the latter part of October, is recovering and able to be at home. He desires to express his appreciation to the brethren and friends for the many cards and messages received from them.

We are all glad to learn of his recovering, and hope, the Lord willing, he will soon be able to be out again.

— EDITORS

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EDITORIAL

Again we are come to the beginning of a New Year, and a new volume of the *Signs of the Times* — the 143rd. We feel thankful to the Giver of every good and perfect gift, for our many blessings both natural and spiritual; and for the evidences of the grace of our God in using the *Signs* to the comfort and edification of His people in many places. Knowing from whence all these blessings come, we would praise God and lift up his name above every name, for His unspeakable gifts.

Did we not realize that the hand of the Lord has sustained the paper through all the years, we would be unmindful of the purpose of God in all things. And did we not have evidence that the Lord continues to manifest the truth to his elect, and comforts them in the doctrine of God our Saviour as they read the articles on scriptural subjects, and the experiences of the brethren, we should feel that the Lord's purpose in the *Signs* is about complete. So we are glad when we receive letters from our readers expressing their joy and comfort in receiving the paper. We can understand the joy of those who are isolated from the brethren, living too far away from their meetings to be able to attend them, or maybe too feeble to travel. Isn't it true that the Lord provides for his own according to his will and purpose.

There has never been a time in all the years the *Signs* has been published, that its writers have not contended earnestly for the sovereignty of God over all times, worlds, and events. They have affirmed that the Lord's people are those who were chosen in Christ before the world began, and that He sends his Spirit into their hearts manifesting that

they are his children, and that their salvation is secured to them by the redeeming and atoning blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, and that it is all of His Grace from beginning to end.

We publish again the following by Elder Gilbert Beebe taken from the Signs of January 1, 1859, to remind us of what the Scriptures teach:

"The same leading sentiments which we published, and to which we pledged our paper twenty-six years ago, are still nailed to our mast-head. We have found no occasion to either change or alter them. They are as follows:

The Signs of the Times—Devoted to the Old School Baptist cause — maintaining inviolably the following scriptural sentiments:

1. The Existence, Sovereignty, Immutability, Omnipotence and Eternal Perfections of the Great Jehovah,—the revelation which he has made of himself as Father, Son and Holy Ghost, that these Three are One.—1 John v. 8.

2. The Absolute Predestination of all things.

3. Eternal and Unconditional Election.

4. The Total Depravity and Just Condemnation of Fallen Man.

5. That the Atonement and Redemption of Jesus Christ are for the elect only.

6. The Sovereign, Irresistible, and, in all cases, effectual work of the Holy Ghost in Quickening and Regenerating the sons of God.

7. The Final Preservation and Eternal Happiness of all the sons of God by Grace.

8. The resurrection of the Dead, and Eternal Judgment.

9. The Church of Christ is composed exclusively of Baptized Believers—that to her is given able Ministers of the New Testament—that the Scriptures are the only infallible Rule of Faith and Practice to the Saints of God.

10. *The Signs of the Times* will be decidedly opposed to the Bible, Tract and Missionary Societies, Theological Seminaries, Sabbath School Unions, &c., &c., waging war with the Mother, Arminianism, and her entire brood of Institutions.

With this plain statement of our sentiments, we issued our first proposals for this paper in the fall of 1831; and if at any time or under any circumstances, we have swerved from these leading sentiments, we are not conscious of it. Certainly it has never been our intention to do so. We then believed that the first and sixth articles fully involved the doctrine of the Eternal Godhead of our Lord Jesus Christ, and implied his Mediatorial identity as the Head over all things to his Church, and the Eternal, vital union of Christ and his seed, which are a "Chosen Generation, a Royal

Priesthood, and a Peculiar People. A seed that shall serve him, and be counted to him for a Generation, and a people which he has carried and borne all the days of old."

Such are still our views; and to their defense we pledge such ability as the Lord may graciously bestow on us."

The brethren and friends are supporting the publication of the *Signs* by their subscriptions, their donations and their writings, and we hope they will continue. It makes our work lighter to have sufficient copy on hand as we need it.

In these troubled times, may we never forget that the Lord is yet reigning, and that his will and purpose is not disturbed. His church is built upon the Rock and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

"The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you."

J.D.W.

VOICES OF THE PAST
"He being dead yet speaketh"

BE PITIFUL; BE COURTEOUS.

These instructions are given to the saints in a preceptive form, as binding on them by the authority of our Lord Jesus Christ, for whatsoever the apostles have bound on earth is also bound in heaven; we cannot therefore disregard or disobey these injunctions, without transgressing the law of Christ. This admonition is applied to the saints in their social relation to each other, as fellow-members of the one body over which the Son of God presides as the Head. While here in the flesh we cannot fail to find in each other something to pity and deplore. But while pity and forbearance are felt for others, every saint will find in his own walk and conversation something also requiring sympathy, forbearance and pity from his fellow-sufferers.

Although some have held and contended that all the elements of our nature are killed, by the new birth, to the love of sin, and are converted to the love of holiness, the admonitions in the

word addressed to the saints, to be pitiful and courteous toward each other, and warning them against biting and devouring one another, seem clearly to imply that there are still in our fleshly natures elements which are yet unsubdued by the new birth, and which require a vigilant and constant watchfulness, that our affections, as well as lusts, should be denied and crucified. If our natures were really changed from a love of sin to a love of holiness, we would not be plagued with vain, foolish and wicked thoughts; we would have no covetous lusting or desire for things that do not belong to us; no pride, envy, hatred or malice to excite the pity and forbearance of our brethren. Our tongue would require no bridlebit to hold it in subjection; our passions of anger, and wrath, and resentment, and retaliation, would be quiet as lambs. But says one, I truly feel these corruptions in my fleshly nature, and often fear, because I find them unkilld in me, that I have not really experienced the new birth; but still there is a change, a wonderful change with me, for I do, notwithstanding all my carnal depravity, really love the things which I once hated, and hate and loathe many things which I once loved.

This is true in the experience of all who are born of God, but this is not so from any change in your earthly nature; it is a fruit that your carnal nature never did produce. It is the fruit of the spirit which you received in the new birth; and it wars against your flesh, and against all your fleshly elements and passions, striving to hold them down, and to keep them in subjection to the spirit of your mind. The love of God which is bestowed upon you, and shed abroad in your heart, is a fruit of the spirit that is born, not of the flesh, but born of God. If there were not two antagonistic natures within us, there could be no warfare. The word of God assures us that nothing that is born of God can commit sin; and that all that is born of the flesh is depraved and sinful, and therefore lusts

against the spirit which God has implanted within us. If we were only governed by the spirit which we received of God in the new birth, we would not need the sympathy and pity of our brethren. When like the apostle, who could find nothing good in his flesh, we are brought into captivity to the law of sin which is still alive in our members, like him, we groan, being burdened, and cry out, in his language, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" In the body of the flesh all is death; for if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin, but the spirit is life because of righteousness. So in every christian the warfare is between life in Christ, and death in the flesh; between corruption in their carnal nature, and incorruption in their spiritual life.

Involved in such a conflict between flesh and spirit, between the old man and the new man, how often are christians distressed with doubts and fears arising from the unslain infidelity of their carnal mind, which is enmity against God, not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.

In their straits they feel the need of the forbearance of their brethren; and the Lord, who knows well what are the feelings of their infirmities, has enjoined on them to "Be of one mind, having compassion one of another; [to] love as brethren, [to] be pitiful and courteous." The law of Christ, which God has written in their heart, commands the strong among them to bear the infirmities of the weak, and to bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.

Instructions are given by the apostle for the observance of the precepts, to be of one mind, compassionate, pitiful and courteous one to another in the house of God, and is highly important that the rules given should be strictly adhered to. Negatively, the apostle says, "Not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing." Alas for us! with such a resentful nature as every child of God has in his fleshly nature, how hard it

is for them to restrain the spirit of retaliation, when they feel that they have been injured by their brethren. David, the man of God, said if it had been an enemy, he could have borne it; and we, as Christians, find that the most painful wounds we feel are those which we receive in the house of our friends. And the law of carnal commandments calls for an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, a hand for a hand, and a foot for a foot; and our resentful nature is strongly inclined to exact all this as evenhanded justice from a brother that has offended us.

But although the law, which knew no mercy, demanded all this, how different are the rules given by our Lord to his disciples. "But I say unto you, That ye resist not evil: but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also."—Matt. 5:39. Obedience to this precept is very crossing to our fleshly passions; yet how vitally important. How can we follow him who once suffered for our sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us unto God, if we in violation of his special command render evil for evil? Had Christ our Lord dealt in that manner with us, what must have been our doom? We are commanded to put off the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and be renewed in the spirit of our mind; and put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. Wherefore, putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbor, for ye are members one of another. 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.—Eph. 4:22-25, 31, 32. "Not rendering evil for evil, or railing for railing; but contrariwise, blessing; knowing that ye are thereunto called, that ye should inherit a blessing."

How frequently do the children of God wonder why they cannot inherit,

or enjoy the inheritance of the blessings of comfort, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. Let them search if there be not hidden in their tent, or house of their earthly tabernacle, some "cursed thing," of gold, or silver, or Babylonish garment, (see Josh. 7:21); or if not, if there be not concealed in their heart something of resentment, railing, or of guile, malice, envy, hatred, and evil speaking. Yea, make a thorough, diligent search, for the natural heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; search then as with a lighted candle, if there be not in some hidden chamber or dark recess an unforgiving spirit, breathing slaughter and retaliation against a brother for whom Christ died. And remember the words of Jesus, "For if ye forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses."—Matthew 6:15. "And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have aught against any; that your Father also which is in heaven may forgive you your trespasses."—Mark 11:25, 26. "So likewise shall my heavenly Father do also unto you, *if ye from your hearts* forgive not every one his brother their trespasses." — Matt. 18:3.

The admonition of Peter, to attend to the things enjoined, is urged, that our prayers be not hindered (1 Peter 3:7); and we are told by our Lord in what manner they may be hindered. And if we would inherit and feast upon the blessing, let us remember that it cannot be enjoyed by the children of God while they cherish hardness against one another. "For he that will love life, and see good days." Who is there among the saints that does not desire to enjoy the life of the spirit, and who among them that does not long for good days, such as they enjoyed when the candle of the Lord shined in and around them? Well, if such be our desire, let us refrain from the things which hinder our prayers, disturb our peace, break our fellowship, and dishonor our profession. Our flesh is cor-

rupt, and must be denied; for if we sow to it, we shall from it reap corruption; but if we through the spirit mortify the deeds of the flesh, we shall enjoy life, and see good days; but in order to enjoy this, let the saint "refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile; let him eschew evil, and do good; let him seek peace, and ensue it. For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open to their prayers: but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil." As we are taught by the scriptures referred to above, even the prayers of the saints are hindered, if they do not forgive and love one another.

But, says one, while smarting under sharp reproach or injury received from a brother, my reputation is assailed, my good name is impugned, and I must have satisfaction, I must have redress. But what redress? Must it be an eye for an eye? Be careful, and render not evil for evil. "Who is he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good? But and if ye suffer for righteousness' sake, happy are ye." This is the pathway marked out by our glorious Leader. He never suffered for anything but righteousness, for there was no unrighteousness in him. He indeed suffered in his flesh, the just for the unjust, to bring us to God, and we are admonished to arm ourselves with the same mind. And, Finally, be ye all of one mind, having compassion, as he was compassionate. Love one another, as he has loved us, and given himself for us. Be pitiful, as he was pitiful to us. Be courteous, for he was courteous; and when he was reviled, he reviled not again."

Peter, in his epistles, as well as all the apostles of Christ, has dwelt largely on the sacred obligation of all who name the name of Jesus, and profess to be his disciples, to depart from all evil; and the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, (all classes of men,) teaching us, that denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously and

godly in this present world. Although it is true, that if any man will live godly in Christ Jesus, he shall suffer persecution; still, "If ye be reproached for the name of Christ, happy are ye: for the spirit of glory and of God resteth upon you: on their part (who reproach the saints) he is evil spoken of, but on your part he is glorified. But let none of you suffer as a murderer." John says, "Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer; and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him." — 1 John 3:15. And the same apostle also says, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." And again, "Beloved, let us love one another; for love is of God, and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. Therefore Peter says, "Let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief, or as an evil doer, or a busybody 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." "Wherefore, let them that suffer according to the will of God commit the keeping of their souls unto him, as unto a faithful Creator."

To suffer according to the will of God, as God has revealed his will concerning our sufferings, is to suffer patiently whatever of reproach or persecution may be heaped on us for righteousness' sake, without attempting to retaliate by returning evil for evil or railing for railing. Jesus has said to his disciples, "Blessed are ye when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake. Rejoice, and be exceeding glad; for great is your reward in heaven." — Matt. 5:11, 12. Truly, "The Lord knoweth how to deliver the godly out of temptation, and to reserve the unjust unto the day of judgment to be punished." Vengeance belongeth to God, not to us. We are taught to pray for them "which despitefully use and persecute us." As Jesus on the cross prayed, saying, "Father, forgive them, for they know not what

they do." And as Stephen, when suffering martyrdom, prayed for those who were stoning him to death; upon his knees he cried with a loud voice, "Lord, lay not this sin to their charge." These were his last words, for "when he had said this, he fell asleep." — Acts 7:60.

May it be our privilege to fall asleep with a like invocation for all who have done us wrong. And while we continue in the flesh may our adorning be the hidden man of the heart, in that which is not corruptible; even the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price. But the end of all things (terrestrial) is at hand; be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer. And above all things, (let Christians) have fervent charity among themselves, for charity shall cover the multitude of sins. "Be pitiful; be courteous."

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe, July 1, 1879)

ORDINATION OF DEACON

Pursuant to a request by the First Primitive Baptist Church of Memphis, Tennessee, a presbytery was organized for the purpose of examining Brother H. R. Toney, and upon finding him qualified, ordaining him to the office of deacon of the Memphis Church.

Presbytery was formed of the ministers and deacons present. Elder Paul Poyner was elected Moderator, and Elder R. H. Campbell Clerk of the Presbytery.

Elder G. W. Jones opened the service with song and prayer. Deacon J. W. Brown was appointed spokesman for the candidate, and presented Brother Toney to the Presbytery for examinations.

The Presbytery, being unanimously satisfied with the response to questions relative to doctrine and practice, proceeded to lay hands upon the candidate as prayer was offered by Elder W. G. Chapell. Elders H. R. Prince and C. S. Young participated in delivering the charge.

The Presbytery then gave the right hand of fellowship to the new deacon in love, and praying that God will lead and direct him in all of his way. Realizing the trials that he will face, may he be given the strength to endure, the patience and understanding to strive for the peace and harmony of the church as long as he lives.

Brother Toney was then returned to the

church as duly ordained deacon of our faith and order, and recommended to all churches which are in fellowship with the First Primitive Baptist Church of Memphis.

Elder Paul Poyner, Mod.
Elder R. H. Campbell, Clerk

CHURCH NOTICES

BETHLEHEM CHURCH, Malvern, Alabama, meets each second Sunday at 10:30 A. M.

HOPEFUL CHURCH, Ozark, Alabama, meets each fourth Sunday at 10:30 A. M.

J. J. WATSON, Pastor

NEW HOPE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Slocomb, Alabama, meets each first Sunday, 10:30 A. M.

V. C. HARTZOG, Pastor

RAMAH CHURCH, Cottonwood, Alabama, meets each third Sunday at 10:30 A. M.

A. B. CHUMNEY
D. W. COLLINS, Pastors

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

C. C. HAND, Pastor
5840 Court O C P
Birmingham, Ala.

The churches of which Elder E. E. McCool is pastor meet as follows:

MACEDONIA, Sulligent, Ala. meets 1st Sundays at 11 o'clock.

MT. ZION, 16 miles south of Fayette, Ala. on highway 159, meets 1st Sundays at 2 P.M.

SALEM, 6 miles south of Gordo, Ala. meets 2nd Sundays at 11 o'clock.

MT. CARMEL, 14 miles north of Reform, Ala. on highway 17, meets 2nd Sundays at 2 P.M.

ZION, 7 miles north of Gordo, Ala. on highway 159, meets 3rd Sundays at 11 o'clock.

BETHEL, 4 miles west of Fernbank, Ala. meets 3rd Sundays at 2 P. M.

PLEASANT RIDGE, Moores Bridge, Ala. meets 4th Sundays at 11 o'clock.

E. E. McCOOL, Pastor
Rt. 1, Box 279
Steens, Miss. 39766

MT. ZION PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH
meets each 4th Sunday at 11 A. M. about 10
miles N. W. of Birmingham just off of 78
Highway in Westwood, 2601 Forrestdale Blvd.

H. C. MOON
C. C. HAND, Pastors

**OLD UNION PRIMITIVE BAPTIST
CHURCH**, meets each first Sunday at 11 A. M.,
6 miles S. W. of Winfield, Ala.

C. C. HAND, Pastor

HARMONY CHURCH, meets each second
Sunday afternoon at 2 P. M., ten miles SW. of
Fayette, Alabama.

C. C. HAND, Pastor

ELAM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,
located two miles North of Goshen, Pike
County, Alabama, meets each second Sunday
at 10:30 o'clock.

J. P. MORGAN, Pastor
A. C. CARTER, Clerk
1335 Avalon Lane,
Montgomery 6, Ala.

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

C. C. HAND, Pastor

EPHESUS PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH,
Slocomb, Alabama, meets each third Sunday
and Saturday before at 10:30 A. M.

V. C. HARTZOG, Pastor

WRITES CREEK CHURCH, 5 miles south
of Slocomb, Ala., meets each fourth Sunday
and Saturday before.

E. B. HUGHES
B. A. ANDERSON
J. A. TEW, Moderators
J. T. COLLINS, Clerk
Slocomb, Ala.

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

W. A. WILLIAMS, Pastor

PILGRIM REST CHURCH, located six miles
north of Fordyce, Arkansas (leave Hy. 167
on Hy. 273—church is located about ¾ mile
from Hy. 167) meets each third Sunday at
10:30 and on Saturday before at 7:30 p.m.

W. W. HUDSON, JR., Pastor

NAOMI OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,
six miles south of McKenzie, Alabama, meets
the second Sundays in December, February,
April, etc.

ELDER W. C. STANLEY, Pastor
Duncanville, Ala., Rt. 1
E. C. WEAVER, Clerk
Rt. 5, Box 47, Andalusia, Ala.

SHILOH OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH,
seven miles Northeast of Andalusia, Alabama,
meets the second Sundays in July, September,
November, etc.

ELDER W. C. STANLEY, Pastor
Duncanville, Ala., Rt. 1
NORA LEE McLEOD, Clerk
Red Level, Ala., Rt. 3

MOUNTAIN FORK CHURCH, Madison
County, Ala., meets each first and third Sun-
days at 11:00 A. M.

R. C. SIMMONS
R. H. HALE, Pastors
JAMES COLBERT, Clerk

**NEW HOPE OLD SCHOOL PRIMITIVE
BAPTIST CHURCH**, near Patmos and about
ten miles South of Hope, Arkansas, meets
each first Sunday at 11 A. M.

W. W. HUDSON, JR., Pastor

**WHITE WATER OLD SCHOOL PRIMI-
TIVE BAPTIST CHURCH**, located about one
mile northwest of Tinsman, Arkansas, meets
on first Sunday mornings at 10:00 a.m. The
annual meeting meets at 10 a.m. on Saturday
before the first Sunday in August and con-
tinues through Sunday.

W. W. TAYLOR, Pastor
JOE REAVES, Clerk

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

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

JAMES POOLE, Pastor

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

C. C. HAND
W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastors
GLENN RAGSDALE, Clerk

The **SALEM PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH**, Benton, Ill. meets each 4th Sunday at 10:30 A. M. Communion time is the 4th Sunday in May.

All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

ELDER WAYMON CHAPELL, Mod.
WILLIAM VANTREASE, Clerk
JAMES CUNNINGHAM, Asst. Clerk
5921 W. Park Ave.
St. Louis, Mo. 63110

PLEASANT VALLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Kingman, Kansas. Meets with Mrs. Verda Machesney, 516 E. Avenue C. on each second Sunday.

W. A. WINFREY, Pastor

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

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

NEW HOPE CHURCH, Spearsville, La. meets first Sundays and Saturday afternoons before at 3:30.

J. L. SMITH, Pastor
C. C. BARRON, Clerk

CONCORD CHURCH about 12 miles north

of Bastrop, La. one-quarter mile west of the Bastrop, La. and Hamburg Road, meets each second Sunday at 10:30 A. M.

G. W. JONES, Pastor
GENEVA PETTIS, Clerk

GOOD HOPE CHURCH in Arkansas, about one mile north of Oakland, just across the State line, meets each second Sunday at 2:00 P. M.

G. W. JONES, Pastor
INA NEWSOM, Clerk

LIBERTY HILL CHURCH, located six miles northeast of Farmerville, La., $\frac{1}{4}$ mile east of Farmerville-Marion Highway, meets each fourth Sunday and Saturday before at 10:30. Services are also held on each second Sunday at 10:30.

W. W. HUDSON, JR., Pastor

UNION CHURCH, located near Linville, La., meets each third Sunday at 10:30 and on Saturday afternoon before at 2:30 P. M.

DAVID E. TURNER, Pastor

BETHEL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, located three miles N. E. of Steens, Miss. on Millport Road, meets third Sunday afternoons at 2 P. M.

H. C. MOON, Pastor
Hanceville, Ala.
EULIE McCOOL, Asst. Pastor
Steens, Miss.

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

JOHN D. WOOD, Pastor

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

JOHN D. WOOD, Pastor

OLIVE AND HURLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Shokan, N. Y., meets each 2nd Sunday at 2:00 P. M. March through and including November.

DEACON E. K. ADSIT, Clerk

THE WARWICK OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Warwick, Orange County, New York, holds monthly services on each fourth Sunday, from March to, and including, the fourth Sunday in November. The meetings are held at A. R. Vail's home, 55 Maple Ave., Warwick at 11 A. M.

THE MIDDLEBURG OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH meets at the home of Deacon Woodrow W. Bellinger, Duanesburg, N. Y. on fifth Sundays when the Lord so wills.

BEATRICE E. HOCKING, Clerk
419 Toll St., Scotia, N. Y.

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

D. B. STOKES, Pastor
PRESTON GAY, Clerk
P. O. Box 117, Black Creek, N. C.

FALLS OF TAR RIVER PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Rocky Mount, N. C., meets each second Sunday and Saturday before. Quarterly meetings March, June, September and December.

D. B. STOKES, Pastor
NINA PEARSON, Clerk

MOONS CREEK PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, located near Providence, N. C. off Route 86, on Park Springs Road, meets each third Sunday morning at 11 A. M.

KENNETH KEY, Pastor

LITTLE FLOCK OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Altus, Oklahoma, meets each fourth Sunday at 10:30 A. M. and Saturday afternoon before at 2:00 P. M.

C. M. HAYGOOD, Pastor
ANA STEWART, Clerk
Granite, Okla. 73547

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

ERNEST ATTEBERY, Pastor
SPENCER BURCH, Clerk

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

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

SIDELING HILL OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Fulton County, Pennsylvania, meets by appointment on 5th Sunday afternoons.

JOHN D. WOOD, Pastor

THE FIRST PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH of Memphis, Tenn., meets each Sunday at 10:30 A. M., except the first three weeks in October when we dismiss for associations in the area. The church is located on Andrews Road, one block north of Highway 70 in the Ellendale Community, 7 miles east of Memphis.

H. R. PRINCE, Co-Pastor
967 Maxey, Memphis
C. S. YOUNG, Co-Pastor
807 Pope St., Memphis
RICHARD H. CAMPBELL, Clerk

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

HUBERT PRINCE, Pastor
967 Maxey, Memphis, Tenn.
ELMER PRINCE, Clerk
Clinton, Ky.

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

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

R. L. VEAZEY, SR., Clerk

UNION PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Sharps Chapel, Tenn., meets at 11 A. M. each second Sunday. We are located about fifteen miles north of Maynardville, Tenn., on Big

Valley Road. There is a sign on the main highway showing where to turn.

N. E. LAY, Clerk

SHEPHERD FOLD CHURCH, 815 Little York Road, Houston, Texas, meets the first Sunday and Saturday before at 10:30 a.m. for its regular monthly meeting and business conference; and each Sunday at 10:30 a.m. for regular meetings.

ELDER C. M. HAYGOOD, Pastor
ELDER JERRY A. EVERS, Asst. Pastor
JIMMY LINDSEY, Clerk
SISTER ROBBIE HOLLOWAY, Asst. Clerk

MT. ZION CHURCH, Rt. 2, Box 23, Weslaco, Texas, meets each second Sunday at 10:30 A. M.; and each fourth Sunday at 10:30 A. M. seven miles West of Weslaco, on highway 83.

GERALD SHIPMAN, Pastor
E. B. AULT, Clerk

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

W. A. WINFREY, Pastor

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

C. U. LANDERS, Pastor

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

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

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

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

MACEDONIA CHURCH OF PREDESTI-

NARIAN BAPTISTS, Rising Star, Texas, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday before at 2 P. M.

C. Y. OSTEEN, Pastor

MT. OLIVE CHURCH OF PREDESTINARIAN BAPTISTS, Stockdale, Texas, meets on the second and fourth Sundays of each month at 10 A. M., in the meeting house at intersection of Highways 123 and 87. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

GERALD D. SHIPMAN, Pastor
LELA CULPEPPER, Clerk

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

MAGGIE ELMORE, Clerk

SAINTS REST PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Dallas, Texas, meets each Sunday at 10:30 A. M., at 2710 Engle Street.

C. C. MORRIS, Pastor
D. G. CONNELL, Clerk

HOPEWELL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, near Winnsboro, Texas, meets each second Sunday at 10:30 A. M. and Saturday before at 10:30 A. M.

W. W. TAYLOR, Pastor
E. M. REEVES, Clerk

The Churches of which Elder Lloyd Wall is Pastor meet as follows:

MT. ZION OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, meets each first Sunday at 11:00 a.m., and Saturday afternoon before at 2:30 p.m. Cash, Texas near Greenville, Texas.

GUY SISK, Clerk

FELLOWSHIP CHURCH, meets each second Sunday and Saturday before at 10:30 a. m. near East Mt. out of Gladwater, Texas.

C. E. CAMP, Clerk

PROSPECT CHURCH, meets each third Sunday and Saturday before at 10:30 a.m. Bro. Paul Daniel, Asst. Pastor. Located on Hwy. 67 West of Texarkana, Texas about 28 miles.

W. B. BURKHALTER, Clerk

PROVIDENCE CHURCH, meets third Sunday afternoons and Saturday afternoons before at 2:00 p.m.

PLEASANT HOPE CHURCH, meets on the fourth Sunday and Saturday morning before at 10:30 a.m. 8 miles So. of Atlanta, Texas off F. M. 251.

H. S. HILL, Clerk

The churches of which Elder E. J. Lambert is pastor meet as follows:

PHARON, meets first Sunday morning and Saturday night before, 5 miles NE Hawkins, Texas.

REHOBETH, meets second Sunday morning and Saturday morning before, 7 miles N Eldorado, Arkansas.

NEILA RYAN, Clerk
1601 N. Emmett
Eldorado, Arkansas

BETHEL, meets third Sunday morning and Saturday morning before, 7 miles NE Eldorado, Arkansas.

JEAN H. BURNES, Clerk
606 N. Parkway,
Eldorado, Arkansas

GOOD HOPE, meets fourth Sunday morning and Saturday morning before 7 miles NE Winnsboro, Texas.

GERTRUDE JONES, Clerk
905 Y Drive
Winnsboro, Texas

ANTIOCH CHURCH near Camden, Arkansas, meets each 2nd Sunday at 2 o'clock.

Everyone welcomed.

ELDER E. J. LAMBERT, Pastor
306 Richardson St.
Winnsboro, Texas 75494

The following churches compose the Original Powell's Valley Primitive Baptist Association:

UNION, Union County, Tenn. meets 11 A. M. on the Sunday following the second Friday each month.

ODRA DAVIS, Moderator

MOUNTAIN CREEK, Claiborne County, Tenn. meets 11 A. M. on the Sunday following the third Friday each month.

D. R. CABBAGE, Moderator

DODSON'S CREEK, (Formerly Powder Spring Gap) Union County, Tenn. meets 11 A. M. on Sunday following the first Friday each month.

ODRA DAVIS, Moderator

FRIENDSHIP, Jefferson County, Tenn. meets 11 A. M. on the Sunday following the fourth Friday each month.

D. R. CABBAGE, Moderator

The churches composing the Virginia Corresponding Meeting meet as follows:

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

ARTHUR L. CARTER, Clerk
Manassas, Va.

NEW VALLEY CHURCH meets each fifth Sunday at 11 A. M. The meeting house is near Lucketts, about eight miles north of Leesburg, Va.

MRS. ROBERT DUKE, Clerk
Charlestown, W. Va.

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

MRS. RAY HAWLING, Clerk
Leesburg, Va.

There are no meetings of our faith and order held at the present time in Washington, D. C. We are always glad to have brethren and friends who are visiting in Washington meet with us. For information phone Manassas 368-4857.

JOHN D. WOOD, Pastor

NORFOLK PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Norfolk, Virginia, meets each third Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday before at 8:00 P. M., Fairmont Park, 2023 Tidewater Drive.

WILLIAM L. EVERETT, Pastor

RICHMOND PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Qualla Road, Chesterfield County, Virginia, meets each first Sunday at 11 A. M. Following are directions to the meeting house: South from Richmond at McGuire Circle, take Rt. 360 nine miles to "Longest" Service Station; turn left and go one mile, and turn right on No. 363 one mile to church.

ELDER D. L. SIMPSON, Pastor
MRS. WM. LEE, Clerk
4407 Clairton Rd.
Richmond, Va. 23234

DANVILLE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, Danville, Virginia, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday night before, on State Road No. 1515 near Hughes Memorial School.

H. W. WRAY, Pastor
R. T. HOLLEY, Clerk

UNION PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH meets each first Sunday at 11:00 o'clock. This church is located seven miles west of Gretna, Virginia on 605 one-half mile from Route 40. All lovers of truth are invited.

LEONARD J. BRAMMER, Pastor
RUTH MATTOX, Clerk
Rt. 2,
Chatham, Va.

BELLVIEW PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, meets each third Sunday at 11:00 o'clock and Saturday night before at 7:30. This church is located near Cave Springs about four miles from Roanoke, Virginia, one mile from 221. All visitors are welcome.

LEONARD J. BRAMMER, Pastor
J. A. SOWDER, Clerk
Rt. 2,
Salem, Va.

SANDY LEVEL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH meets each third Sunday afternoon at 2:30. This church is located on Route 635 about 5 miles south from Hardy, Va. 10 miles from Vinton, Va. All lovers of truth are invited.

LEONARD J. BRAMMER, Pastor

UNION PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH meets each fourth Sunday at 11:00 o'clock and Saturday before at 2:00 o'clock. This church is located on highway 623 about two

miles from Fairystone Park. All visitors are welcome.

LEONARD J. BRAMMER, Pastor
CLAUDE R. HOPKINS, Clerk
908 Myrtle Rd.
Martinsville, Va.

BETHEL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, of Predestinarian Faith, of Mossyrock, Washington, meets each 3rd Sunday at 11:00 o'clock and Saturday before at 2:00 o'clock. For information write the Clerk.

E. J. ATTEBERY, Pastor
MRS. OPAL HUNTTING, Clerk
Silver Creek, Wash. 98585

PLEASANT GROVE CHURCH, Naches, Washington, meets at 11:00 A. M. each second Sunday at the home of one of the members living in Naches. Those interested will please contact the clerk.

BEN PRESTON, Pastor
The Dalles, Oregon
MILDRED A. SIMPSON, Clerk
Rt. 8, Box 506
Yakima, Wash. 98902

The churches of which Elder D. V. Spangler is pastor meet as follows:

MONTICELLO, on U. S. 29, between Greensboro and Reidsville, N. C. Services first Sundays at 11 o'clock.

REIDSVILLE CHURCH, Lindsay Street, Reidsville, N. C., meets each Second Sunday at 11:00 A. M.

DURHAM CHURCH, Durham, N. C. on Pacific Avenue, west side of town, just off of Highway 501 leading from Durham to Roxboro, N. C. Services every third Sunday at 11:00 A. M. and Saturday afternoon before at 2:00 P. M.

DAN RIVER, at Mayfield, N. C. on U. S. Highway 700 leading from Eden, N. C. to Danville, Va., about ten miles from Eden. Services each fourth Sunday at 11:00 A. M. and Saturday evening before at 7:30 P. M.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 143

DANVILLE, VA., FEBRUARY, 1975

NO. 2

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 2/75
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

REMINISCENCES
OF
MARY PARKER
(Concluded)

I now became permanently settled in the home of my youngest brother. I had used every available means to restore my health, only to fail.

I had striven in various ways to settle myself in business so that I might live and set up a home for myself independent of my relatives; for of all dreaded calamities the thought of being dependent for a home, a burden and in the way, was the most terrible. But I had failed in that as well as all else, and like Job, I could bitterly say, "That which I feared has come upon me." My disease now laid hold upon me with redoubled force, and with the most destructive results, undermining both strength of body and mind. I became afraid of myself, afraid that in some frenzied moment of temporary madness I might end it all, by taking my own life. Oh! those dark days of sorrow, when darkness and mid-night gloom settled down upon me, so that I dreaded the natural light of day. The sunlight mocked me; the songs of birds sank into my heart like death-knells; nature no longer held a charm for me; and no ray from the Sun of Righteousness seemed to penetrate the mid-night dark-

ness. Intense as was my bodily pain, far more unbearable was the mental anguish that bore down upon me with its crushing weight. Nor was this mental state without its causes. I was the victim of a deep and bitter wrong; and like the Psalmist David, "It was mine own familiar friend in whom I trusted, who did eat bread at my table, who turned the heel against me." It was not enough that I, who had been so tenderly nurtured in a home whose rule was the law of human kindness, should now be homeless; it was not enough that I had lost father and mother and health; I had yet to endure the bitterness of knowing that one, whom I had so dearly loved and trusted, had become false, was my enemy, whose bitter rage left no stone unturned whereby they might do me an injury. "But thanks be unto God who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." "Vengeance is mine; I will repay saith the Lord." I have lived to see my enemy's evil devices for the destruction of another thwarted, and returned upon themselves; and can sweetly say that, "many are the afflictions of the righteous, but out of them all the Lord delivereth them." Truly when my father and my mother did forsake me, then the blessed Lord took me up. "Behold, he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep." "The Lord is thy Keeper." "The Lord shall preserve thee from all evil." "The Lord shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in, from this time forth, and even forever more." What blessed promises, and how sure, coming from the God who changeth not, and who neither slumbers nor sleeps. Truly they who trust in Him "shall be as Mount Zion which cannot be removed, but

abideth forever." "As the mountains are round about Jerusalem, so the Lord is round about His people from henceforth even forever." Then what have those who are in Christ, who have put in Him all their trust, to fear? Not even Satan, with all his numerous host, hath power to injure one hair of our heads. "When I remember thee upon my bed, and meditate on thee in the *night* watches. Because thou hast been my help therefore in the shadow of thy wings will I rejoice." — Psalm lxxiii: 6, 7. Oh! how sweet, after the fierce, black storms that have swept over my soul, when I sank down, down amid the waves of the mighty deep, that out of the depths my cry went unto the Lord, that He heard my voice, and that now I can lift up mine eyes "unto the hills from whence cometh my help," and that under the shadow of His dear sheltering wings I am now made to rejoice, while peace flows like a river into my soul, filling every avenue with the pure crystal waters from the river of God's love. Oh! this wondrous, unfailing river, which flows from the throne of God and of the Lamb. No wave, not even a ripple of sorrow or woe, shall ever disturb its pure crystal surface, and none but the redeemed and purified shall walk upon its shining banks. But "they that have gone up through much tribulation, and have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb," shall drink forever from this pure, living stream.

Not very long after I became settled here the father of my brother's wife, who was a widower, living two miles in the country alone with his unmarried son, became very ill, and sister Lottie was called there to nurse him. My brother's business was then such that he was absent all of the time, and what to do I did not know. I engaged an elderly woman to stay with me who had nothing whatever to do but prepare her own meals, as days would elapse without my being able to take any nourishment but milk, yet her charges were so exorbitant and my funds now

becoming so low, I could not long retain her. The pastor of the M. E. Church, coming in with the doctor one morning, heard me relating my sad story, and kindly offered to send one of his daughters to stay with me at nights. And thus I dragged along my wretched existence until New Years, when death ended the suffering of my sister's father, and I had the comfort once more of her society. The dropsy had now become one of my permanent symptoms; and though I continued to go about most of the time and assist some about the work, my person and limbs were swollen out of all proportions. One year passed in much this way. Then about the middle of the second winter I took a hard chill followed by high fever, delirium and entire unconsciousness. For sometime, though they said my eyes were wide open and staring, I could see nothing at all, and would call sister Lottie when she was right by me. Soon my left limb became one continuous blister. The blister broke, and large quantities of water oozed out, leaving the flesh raw for month after month. The odor was so bad no one could stay near me. Finally the limbs healed so I could walk a little on crutches, but for about six months before I quit walking I would fall backward every time I tried to get up, and often when standing quite still I would suddenly lose my balance and fall heavily backwards to the floor. Sometimes I would be seized with hard cramps in the whole length of the limbs, until knots would form along the leaders. All the while I suffered more than tongue can tell. Well do I remember the last time I walked. I felt a chill coming on in the morning, and as it was warm weather, and there was no fire in any of the rooms but the kitchen, I determined to go there. Attempting to get up from my couch I fell backward. Calling the hired girl, I asked her to assist me to arise; she did so, kindly helping me to a seat near the fire. It was not long until I became unconscious, and I sat there in the kitchen all day long, conscious of nothing

save the awful burning and pains in my limbs. As night came on my sister and the girl came to help me back to my room. At every step it seemed as though sharp-pointed needles were piercing my feet and limbs, gradually, day by day, the flesh burst open, leaving great furrows. The flesh on the toes of the left foot fell off, leaving the foot a hideous mass. After a time the flesh again grew on the toes; but they were badly deformed, and soon again burst, and have ever since been a mass of ulcers. A greater part of all this while I labored under great darkness and depression of mind, longing for death above all things. The pain in my limbs and body was so great it were vain to attempt to describe it; I just sat on the bed or in the chair and cried most of the time. Gradually I grew worse, and day by day did my strength slip away, together with all hope of ever being any better in health. But as all my earthly hopes and reliances left me, one by one, and I watched the flight of earthly joys, experienced the spoiling of my earthly idols, there gradually stole over my broken spirits the calm, sweet influences of heavenly resignation. The promised blessing of the Holy Comforter came into the chambers of my soul, and grace, amazing soul-sustaining, *saving* grace, gave me something of the "oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness;" stripped of all earthly props, deprived of those earthly blessings which are so pleasant, and are so anxiously sought after, my dearest Lord and Saviour, threw round about me, even me, who am less than the least of all, His dear, everlasting arms. "He strengthened me upon my bed of languishing; He made all my bed in my sickness," and has truly, during all this wonderful pathway of almost unparalleled suffering and trial, caused "patience to have her perfect work." Patience has been a gift to me, just the same as has His wondrous grace. "Tribulation," says Paul, "worketh patience." Men and women come to see me from almost every-

where. They look with pity and wonder upon my indescribable suffering. They say they know not how I endure it. They give *me* credit for having great patience; all the while I know no great credit is due me. It is not through any power of mine that I sit here from day to day with a serene countenance, a greater part of the time "clothed and in my right mind," quietly and uncomplainingly enduring what no *human* being *could* endure *alone*. But it is all due to "Christ who dwelleth in me, the hope of glory," and because "I can do all things through Christ, who strengthens me."

It was not very long after the utter breaking down of my health until my financial horizon began to darken. Notwithstanding the large sums paid to physicians, and nurses and other heavy expenses, I had kept within the bounds of my income. But soon a gentleman to whom I had loaned money failed; I had no security, so I lost both interest and principal. In less than a year a relative by marriage petitioned in court for a partition of the real estate, the rents from which the other heirs had agreed should be mine during my life. Attorneys were employed, and the whole affair put beyond the help or protestation of the other heirs before I had any knowledge of it. This was a severe blow to me; for those who wished to thus deprive me of what was, by verbal agreement, my right, were neither sick nor destitute. But the same sustaining power held me up, and He who causeth the lilies to grow, who feedeth the ravens and careth for the sparrows, has sweetly verified His blessed promise to care for me; and forcibly indeed have I realized that He never leaves nor forsakes those who trust in Him, and who cast on Him their cares.

Oh, what a safe resting place, what a calm, sweet retreat, have I found beneath the shadow of His sheltering wing! Stripped of all hopes of earthly joys, deprived of almost every source of earthly help and trust, I have had no source to which to look save "unto

the hills from whence cometh my help;" and truly "my help comes from the Lord, who made heaven and earth." Daily, hourly, does He shed the golden sunshine of His love and care about me. He causes blessings to flow into my darkened life like distilling dew, refreshing my drooping, weary soul and filling my heart with thanksgiving and praise. In the gift of a fragrant flower, in the offering of some choice article of food, and above all, in the love and fellowship manifested to me by my dear spiritual kindred throughout the land, I am enabled to see the marks of His dear hand, and to return thanksgiving and honor and praise and adoration to his wondrous, matchless name. Then, too, the kindness of the dear little family under whose roof I am placed, through all these years of such intense pain, in having borne with me, and in sharing with me the comforts of their pretty little home, has aroused within me emotions of deepest gratitude and love, not only to them, but also to the Great Giver of all good. The kindness and attentions of the people of this village have also been very cheering to me. From the beginning of my journey of life until now the love and watchcare of my beloved Saviour has been thrown about me; and with assurance I feel to say, "The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want;" and whether I be low in the valley of humiliation, sinking under the weight of affliction and sorrow, or upon the mountain top, viewing with rapture the glories and beauties of the fair land of Promise, my times are in His hand; and it is always the same dear Friend, constant and true, who leadeth me. Oh! to be led by the hand of such a wise and loving Father; to be encircled by His wondrous love; to be saved by the gift and power of His grace; what more could I wish for?

I am now about to close the open volume from which I have allowed the reader to read some of the pages of my past. Some of its turned-down pages, sealed with a woman's tears, in which are youthful hopes, and dreams and as-

pirations, have been left undisturbed and untouched; for even myself, when I came to those places, have felt to move softly, like one walking over the graves of the sacred dead. It will not be long now until this life, to all who now tread the earth, will be ended, and the places that know us now will soon know us no more forever.

"Swift as a weaver's shuttle speed our years;"
Nor would I stop their flight;
"No, hasten and bear me to that golden shore,
Where eyes shall cease weeping and hearts
break no more."

How anxiously do I look forward to the coming of our Lord — to the blessed time when the very same dear, compassionate, loving Jesus, whom the disciples said, ascended into heaven, and who, the angels said, "would come again," and who himself said, "where I am there ye shall be also," will, with His own dear voice, call me home to the sinless land, to be with Him and all the redeemed family for evermore. Here we often yearn for the society of the saints, for the companionship of those we hold most dear, when our longing cannot be gratified, because an insurmountable space lies between and separates us; but on yonder shore there will be no intervening space, nor anything to interrupt or mar the sweet fellowship of kindred souls, Oh, may we all, by the power of His grace, by the indwelling and guidance of His Holy Spirit, be made meet to dwell with Him and all the Israel of God in glory. This truly is my prayer for Jesus' sake.

"Holy Spirit, guide and guard me,
Train me for the realms above;
There to share the endless glory,
Purchased by redeeming love.

Let not worldly joys ensnare us,
Empty, fleeting, false and vain;
Point me to that blissful region,
Where eternal blessings reign.

Where no more shall care or sorrow,
Prey upon my anxious breast,
Where's no light and no to-morrow,
But one changeless scene of rest.

Holy Spirit, hover near me,
Til this life of death is done;

Then in Christian triumph bear me
To the Almighty, Three in One."

MARY PARKER

New Holland, O., May 11, 1891

(Having followed Sister Parker to the end of her Reminiscences, we will give in the March issue the account of her last days as written by Elder Benton Jenkins.)

THE YEARS PASS SWIFTLY

11458 Hartley Road,
Houston, Texas 77106

Dear Editors:

Enclosed is a check for \$10.00 for two year's renewal — use balance as you see fit. It seems that the past two years have gone by as a little dream.

I noted in the last *Signs* that two brethren wrote on how short life is. Yes, it seems it is too short for us to be talking about. I refer myself to Job 14:2: "He cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down; he fleeth also as a shadow, and continueth not."

I can't do without the *Signs*, and look upon it as next to the Bible. I think that at times the Bible is the plainest book on earth for the ones it was written for, I often think of what Paul was preaching when he wrote to the Romans: "For they that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit, the things of the Spirit."

I know that God has not given me the wisdom to write wonderful letters as some of the brothers and sisters; but I will try to write on a scripture the way I believe it. Daniel 3:25: "He answered and said, Lo I see four men loose walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt; and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God." I believe these three men who were placed in the fiery furnace, had nothing to fear, for they knew their God was with them. I also believe there have been a number of God's people in fiery furnaces — such as narrow escapes in life, and they realize their God has been with them. I know from my own experi-

ence. I have had several narrow escapes to where it might have been death or being crippled. Then I would realize that God was watching over me.

When we see these miracles, we wonder why it was this way. And if it is a mystery to us, we might well ask another question such as, Why the alligators did not get Moses when he was a small baby, placed on a raft on the river. Here I believe there was an eye from heaven watching over this baby.

My love to all the readers and writers of the *Signs*, and may the grace of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ be with you all.

C. L. Berry

MANY UPS AND DOWNS

Rt. 1, Box 518,
Salem, Va.

Dear Friends:

Many years have passed since a previous incident occurred, and some moments of joy and sorrow. I sometimes feel that I have been blessed all the days of my life, and among my memories is the respect and kindness you people have shown my "Baby" and me. I heard one of my sons talking sometime ago of the good old days when we were at home; and of the company we always had. He said one Sunday there were eighteen to eat dinner with us. If she had more company than she was expecting, it took only a moment to open up a few more cans. I heard her say at the end of the canning season that she had over five hundred put up. I don't think that anyone could have enjoyed her company more than she did.

When my health got bad I quit farming and did masonry, carpenter and other work, and when I got so I could not look after the stock, I had to sell them. Soon after World War 2, the last of our children were married and left us; and soon after this my "Baby" was sick for more than two months.

After many ups and downs, I got back in the valley again, and it seemed

that the bottomless pit was my doom. When I closed my eyes during the day or at night, I could see that awful fire. I was weak for want of sleep but tried to keep going. One night I had a dream similar to a previous one, and when I could get no farther, a voice said, "Look back." And when I did, the awful fire faded out, and a light appeared on the other side of me and there was that valley again, but transformed into a most beautiful place which cannot be told. I saw nothing above the timber line — just that dark valley transformed into light from above, to look back to.

Sometime later my "Baby" (wife) was sick again for three months, and did not want to go to the hospital as the doctor attending her wanted. Another doctor attended her many trips, and she finally agreed to go to the hospital. She came back home no better. Our home doctor attended her again, and after many xrays and specialists, she said, "Don't send me back to the hospital. Let me die at home." After awhile she finally got up again.

Written by a Follower, who was born March 30, 1890.

Moses Connor

(We remember well being in their home many times while pastor of Little Hope Church close by where they lived. It was a good place to visit. He had a saw mill close by the road to Little Hope Church, and on Saturdays he had a grist mill which he would close down, and come to the Saturday afternoon meetings, and after the meeting would start grinding again. We have not forgotten his and Sister Connor's love for the brethren and the meetings. — J.D.W.)

ROMANS 10:14, 15

Route 4, Box 21A
Winnsboro, Texas 75494

Dear Elder Hudson and family:

We hope that the Lord is continuing

to bless you and family with good health and some sweet manifestation of his love and mercy.

You asked me to write you my views upon the following scriptures:

"How then shall they call upon him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach, except they be sent? As it is written how beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things."
(Romans 10:14, 15)

I don't recall that my mind has ever been given to meditate upon these verses of scriptures, but the Lord willing, may the Spirit guide my mind and pen to write something upon them; and if so, you can be the judge as to its value.

Jesus, before his death and resurrection, had previously sent his disciples to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. "These twelve Jesus sent forth and commanded them saying, Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into every city of the Samaritans enter ye not: but go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." (Matt. 10:5, 6.) Now let us take a look at the Gentiles before this time. "That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world." (Eph. 2:12.) How can these Gentiles, or the Jews who have now been broken off because of unbelief, "call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? and how shall they preach except they be sent?" First, how does a man become qualified to preach the gospel of Christ? Is it by going to some man made seminary to learn from the teachings of men? No, but he must be called of God, be qualified of God, and sent of God before he can preach the true gospel in spirit and in truth. The Apostle Paul was

called and sent to preach the gospel. "Paul, a servant of Jesus Christ, called to be an Apostle." (Rom. 1:1.) He also says, "For Christ sent me not to baptize, but preach the gospel." (I Cor. 1:17.) Was this gospel that Paul was called unto and sent to preach, taught him by man in a seminary? Or was it revealed to him from above? "But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ." (Gal. 1:11, 12.) Does this not hold true today? A man must be called of God, qualified and sent of God before he can preach the true gospel of Jesus Christ in spirit and in truth: "for how can they preach except they be sent?"

When Jesus appeared unto his disciples after his resurrection, he said unto them, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved: but he that believeth not shall be damned." (Mark 15:15, 16.) Notice the importance of believing. It doesn't say he that is not baptized shall be damned, "but he that believeth not shall be damned." Go ye into all the world, both Jews and Gentiles, rich and poor, wherever in God's providence you are called to go, and preach the gospel, the unsearchable riches of Christ: and this is the reason why God's chosen among the Gentiles have been given the sweet privilege of having the gospel preached to them. "But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ." (Eph. 2:13.)

"And how shall they hear without a preacher?" Now there is no hearing the word explained without preaching, for explaining the word is preaching. Through preaching we hear of Christ, of his blood, of his righteousness, his mercy, his love, the redemption of his people, their perseverance, sanctification, and future glorification. "It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe."

(I Cor. 1:21.) We all surely know that before a man can spiritually hear and believe, the Holy Spirit must first prepare the heart and ear, enabling him to hear, believe, and rejoice in the good news of the gospel. They must be drawn from their natural state dead in trespasses and sins, and quickened to divine life: given faith to believe the true gospel for "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." (Rom. 10:17.) The Lord commanded Peter saying, "Feed my lambs, feed my sheep."

"And how shall they believe upon him whom they have not heard?" Let us not deny that the Holy Spirit can work faith in the heart of a person who has never heard the word through preaching, and cause this person to call upon the name of the Lord: But the usual way is by working faith in them through preaching to believe and know God by hearing, *as spoken of in this scripture*. How do we believe, for instance, that George Washington was the first president of the United States? We believe that he was because of the report we have heard of him receiving into our natural minds and hearts through natural faith. We must be given spiritual life in our hearts to hear and believe spiritual things through spiritual faith. So to the Gentiles and Jews whose ears have been circumcised to hear and whose hearts have been circumcised to receive through the power of the Holy Spirit, will be given faith through preaching to believe upon God and Jesus Christ whom he has sent. Faith is a gift of God and God gives faith usually through the preaching of the word by his called and qualified ministers. We cannot of ourselves produce one grain of faith, but it is a gift from God. "For by grace are ye saved through faith and that not of ourselves, it is a gift of God." (Eph. 2:8.) The preaching or call by God's ministers may be outwardly heard by many who are not chosen, who have not been given faith through preaching to receive the precious benefits of the gospel and rejoice

in them. "For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith that heard it." (Heb. 2:2.) Can we not say then according to scriptures, that there is no hearing of Christ and salvation by him explained without preaching of the gospel as this is the usual way of hearing of God and Christ? God calls those that he has set apart for this particular work, sending them forth among his people to preach the good news and glad tidings of good things, giving hearers faith to believe and know God and Jesus Christ whom he has sent. Let us always remember that whosoever is given faith to believe is born of God. "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God." (1 John 5:1.) What a wonderful mercy it is indeed that God's people are taught by the Holy Spirit to know God and Jesus Christ, for it is life eternal. "And this is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God and Jesus Christ whom he hast sent." (John 17:3.)

"How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed?" It is impossible for one to call upon God in spirit and truth until after being born of the Spirit. "For God is a spirit: and they that worship him must worship in spirit and in truth." (John 4:24.) Before being born of the spirit we possess no living spiritual faith. "But without faith it is impossible to please him: For he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." (Heb. 11:6.) Now in reviewing the whole of verse 14, can we not say that there must be faith which is a gift of God before we can call upon the Lord? So before faith, there must be hearing; before hearing, there must be preaching; and in order for preaching, one must be called, set apart for this work qualified by the Holy Spirit and sent of God.

"As it is written, how beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of

good things." This is referring to the ministers of the gospel who are sent of God to preach the true gospel. Their preaching, accompanied with the power of the Holy Spirit informs the hearers who have been given ears to hear, that instead of the punishment they deserved, Christ has paid the full price, in their behalf, for all their sins. Such an act of grace is found in the gospel of grace and mercy. If we have been made to feel our native misery, helplessness, and sinfulness, and our needy, naked, destitute condition has been made manifest to our conscience: how wonderful it is when we are given to hear the gospel come as a message of pure mercy from heaven, without money or price. When the Holy Spirit is pleased to apply the preached gospel to the sinners' heart, it will do something for him that nothing else could do. It gives him a precious hope, and personal interest in the blood and obedience of the Son of God, and brings salvation in all its fulness and blessedness into his heart. It is an inward, divine feeling which none but the people of God know anything about. This is when the preaching of the gospel comes to them *not in word only but in power*. The gospel draws God's people together, into the same household to feed upon the gospel which is Christ, the bread of life. It is life to the inward, spiritual part of man, the kingdom of God that is within you. Jesus said, "I am that bread of life:" "I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live forever." (John 6:48, 51.) We must have spiritual life to desire spiritual food. Jesus said: "In me ye might have peace." This is the gospel peace when God's people are "raised up together and made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." (Eph. 2:6.) The messengers or ministers of this doctrine are welcomed and esteemed by those who are given to hear it. How beautiful are the feet of them who bring glad tidings of good things, because it is designed to heal

the broken hearted, to deliver the captives, give sight to the blind, unstop the ears of the deaf, and "To give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace." (Luke 1:79.) To preach a Saviour so exactly suited to their circumstances causes God's people to have strong emotions of gratitude that God has sent the minister their way, and should they not say, how beautiful are the feet that brought you in their midst? Amen.

Elder Hudson, so many thoughts came into my mind while attempting to write upon these two verses of scripture that I hardly knew which thought to write on. Please forgive me if what is written is confusing, but give God the glory for anything that might be of any comfort to you.

An unworthy brother in hope of mercy,

(Elder) Joe L. Hamrick

THE MERCY OF GOD —
SALVATION IN JESUS' BLOOD

God is Omnipotent, Omniscient, and Omnipresent, Almighty in power, Perfect in holiness, Equal in all his attributes: a God of right, a God of might; Righteous, Just, Holy, Merciful. His Justice is compatible with, or equal to his mercy; or to paraphrase it another way, his Mercy is compatible with, or harmonizes with, or does not in any wise violate, conflict with, or refute his Justice. Hence the apostle declares, "He will have mercy upon whom he will have mercy. He will have compassion on whom he will have compassion; and whom he will he hardeneth," and not because of any foreseen good or evil in the creature. For all we (the creature) like the sheep have gone astray; we had turned every man to his own way, and we hid, as it were, our faces from him, etc. And again, "For that all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God." "So death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." The children

not yet born (manifested) having done neither good nor evil, it is declared, the elder shall serve the younger. "Jacob have I loved, and Esau have I hated, that the purpose of God according to election might stand." (Romans 9:11-14)

All, all, predicated upon the premise of, "because it seemed good in his sight." And all because it is compatible with His most holy, sovereign will. The sin and total depravity of all men is firmly established in the Scriptures. Therefore then no man in his own right, can by any thought, desire, or deed, merit the mercy of God; but, rather to the contrary, every fallen soul by sinning, merits everlasting shame. So if the justly deserved merit of the creature was meted out in the strict vengeance, wrath, and justice of God without mercy, eternal ruin would be the just lot of every man.

If this doleful plight of all mankind were not true, then the doctrine of salvation by grace would be made void, and grace would be made of none effect. I well remember the place in my experience where I felt, tasted, realized, and acknowledged the Justice of God in my condemnation. In that dark hour it was beyond me to comprehend how that God could retain his justice, and yet pardon a vile, ungodly wretch such as I. I had long, weary months and years of suffering before I hope at long last I tasted pardon, peace, and full remission of sin in the blood and righteousness of Jesus Christ the Son of God. He who is called also the Son of Man by reason of His condescension, verily is God Incarnate, which by interpretation is God manifest in the flesh. I hope by faith, in the fullness of God's time, I was given to see that my condescending Lord, in his life, death, resurrection, ascension and glorification, made full, complete and ample atonement and justification in behalf of all the vessels of mercy, afore prepared (in the will and determinate counsel of God) unto glory.

Here in Gethsemane and the cross of Calvary, where vengeance strove and grappled and grappled hard with love, (see hymn No. 415 in Beebe's collection), I say it was in this conflict in His awful suffering, that the sins of all the chosen race were struck by the vengeance of God in the death of His Son, in the blood which flowed from the pierced side of Jesus, as the fountain which was opened in Jerusalem for sin and uncleanness, half of which flowed toward the former sea (back to Adam the first man), and half toward the hinder sea, on down to the last chosen son or daughter of Adam's sinful race: in summer and winter it shall be. Here the vengeance of God was appeased: the wrath of God was satisfied, and the justice of God was vindicated. Here justice and mercy met together and kissed each other. Atonement was made for the sins of His chosen people — and their sins blotted out to be remembered no more forever.

If there was the slightest ability of the creature by taking thought, to elevate himself toward God, or if by good deeds, good tempers or good frames, one could work himself into the favor of God, then salvation would be reckoned of debt and not of grace. But thanks to thy name, thou blessed and only Potentate, Lord of Lords and King of Kings

"The whole is of God, to the praise of His grace,
Salvation reaches the vilest of all the sinful race.
My hope is thy blood and righteousness;
My glorious robe, my wedding dress." Amen

In hope of mercy through the blood and righteousness of Jesus.

H. J. Bird

(Submitted by Sister Bird. Elder Bird died in 1968)

"EXAMINE YOURSELVES"

A225 Emerson Street
Winona, Miss. 38967

Dear Elder Spangler:

Paul the Apostle of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ has said, "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?" (2 Cor. 13:5).

This admonition, like all other New Testament writers, is given to the household of faith, and not to a people who have not faith. As the inspired writer was moved by the Holy Spirit to thus write these things to the Corinthian brethren, and as they were needful for God's dear people in apostolic times, so they are good for the church in our time. And no doubt when the Lord's chosen people are exercised by God given faith, they examine themselves, both doctrinally and experimentally: and, as faith is not always in lively exercise, and dark clouds of death and fears, and hardness of heart and unbelief arise, arise in us, then we like the poet are made to say, "'Tis a point I long to know; oft it causes anxious thought: do I love the Lord or no, am I his or am I not."

It is at these times in our sad experience, that we can best witness with the Apostle, who says, "I know in me (that is in my flesh) dwells no good thing." It was by grace that Paul was enabled to say these things, so is everyone who is brought from the darkness of nature, into the life and light of God's saving grace. As distressing as these dark seasons are to the children of God, they are needful and profitable to His People, to make them see what they are by earthly nature, and what they (not can be or might be) must be in Christ. This is according to divine teaching. All men by nature are both dead and blind to the law of Christ; But God has said by the prophet Isaiah concerning spiritual Israel, "I will bring the blind by a way they know not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known. I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things

straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them." (Isaiah 42:16) Jesus says, "I am the way the truth and the light, and these paths are the precious promises of God as they are taught in the scriptures of eternal truth. How sweet and precious are these promises when they are spiritually applied!

Our blessed Saviour has said that the kingdom cometh not by observation, but the kingdom of God is in you. Also the Apostle Peter as he was moved by the Spirit of Christ, says, "Add to your faith virtue; and to virtue knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity." For, says the inspired writer of these things, "if these things be in you, and abound, they make you that ye shall neither be barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ." (2 Peter 1:5-8) The substance of these divine principles is Jesus Christ who is formed in you the hope of glory: for there must of necessity first be an inward work of grace in the heart of man before there is an outward work performed in faith and righteousness by the godly man. Also it is written, "I will put my laws into their minds and write them in their hearts: and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people." (Hebrews 8:10)

Bless us, O Lord, to examine ourselves to see wherein our strength lies. In hope of God's mercies.

Elder Louis Stewart

2 CORINTHIANS 5:1

Dear readers of the *Signs of the Times*;

I have a desire to write some of my views on second Corinthians, the fifth chapter. I do not believe that this has anything to do with the resurrection of the dead.

"For we know that if our earthly

house of this tabernacle were dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." (2 Cor. 5:1)

The spirit of man is this house which is carnal, the tabernacle is the body of flesh, it does not say if the body were dissolved, neither the tabernacle, but the house of the tabernacle were dissolved, which is the carnal spirit of man. The building of God is the Spirit of immortality, and when we are clothed with the Spirit of immortality, then the spirit which is carnal is dissolved, being swallowed up of life. We experience these things in time.

"For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven." (not in heaven, but from heaven:) "If so be that being clothed we shall not be found naked. For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life."

We know that there have been times in our lives that we were carnal minded, speaking things that we ought not, and evil thoughts which grieve us in the Spirit. We know that we are clothed with the house of this tabernacle when this is the case. When we are praising God, and all evil thoughts are gone, then we are clothed with our house from heaven, not only in heaven above, but in a heavenly place on this earth here below.

"To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he might be glorified." (Isaiah 61-63) This garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness, to me, is being clothed with our house from heaven, then the house of this tabernacle is dissolved for that time being. "When sin is finished it brings forth death."

I believe in the resurrection of the

dead as much as any one, but this scripture is not referring to this subject. Read 1 Cor. 15th chapter for most of the details of the resurrection; and many other passages of scriptures, in the Old and New Testaments speak of the resurrection of the dead. I hope that I have written the truth briefly on the above scriptures.

J. R. Hollandsworth
Rt. 5, Box 104
Bassett, Va. 24055

ATTENDED PIGG RIVER
ASSOCIATION

Rt. 2, Box 188
Littleton, N. C. 27850

Dear Brother Spangler:

I will try to write a few lines tonight. I know my subscription is past due, so please give me credit for \$7.00, and use the rest as you see fit.

My husband and I visited the Pigg River Association in August. It was the first time we had been there, and we really enjoyed what time we spent with you. Everyone was so nice and friendly, and we felt so at home. We spent the night with Brother Clyde Johnson and wife. They were so very kind to us, — we will never forget them.

Brother Spangler, our little church celebrated her 200th birthday a few weeks ago. We were host to the Kehukee Association on its 209th session October 5, 6, and 7. We were blessed with beautiful weather, and with having the gospel preached by such able ministers. We had Elder Holland, Elder Agee, and Brother Carter from up your way. They all preached so very good, and we were glad to have them visit us. I think we had about 20 ministers, but I did not get all their names.

On Monday we were blessed to have Elders Wallis Smith, W. W. Taylor, Wm. E. Turner, C. D. Turner, S. R. Boykin, W. D. Godwin, and our pastor, Elder M. E. Garner. It was so wonder-

ful to have them visit our little church. May God bless them all.

I just felt that I wanted to write you. We hope and pray to be able to visit again some day. With love to everyone.

A little one, I hope,
Mrs. J. L. Smith

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Danville, Va. February, 1975

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

R. F. D. 1, Box 539 Beechwood Lane
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EDITORIAL

HEBREWS 5:11, 14

“Of whom we have many things to say, and hard to be uttered, seeing ye are dull of hearing. For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. For every one that useth milk is unskillful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil.”

As I come before you to look into the lesson being taught, I freely and I trust meekly, confess my shortcomings and lack of understanding in regard to temporal and transient things, spiritual and eternal things. If I have been translated out of the race in which a sinner runs for the things of the earth into the race of the witnesses of God's saving grace, I would beg that He make me single eyed that I not be looking to the wisdom of any man, but looking unto Jesus the author and the finisher of the faith of God's elect. I desire to love my fellow travellers, my yokefellows in the ministry, but I do not think that this given faith enables nor demands that I look to any man for guidance in divine things. These short comings, and this great lack of understanding, often brings me to wit's end, for I am not sure what is of faith, and what is of mine or some other man's wisdom. I confess this freely and without reservation, and yet I boldly say that the faith of God's elect as given to His people, does not leave the perfecting of that faith to me nor to any of my brethren. Too, I firmly believe that this faith is of the sort that saves and makes whole and does not fail (Luke 7:50; Mat. 9:22; Luke 22:32), for it is the gift of God; it is a fruit of the Spirit (Eph. 2:8; Gal. 5:22), and all salvation, and all fulness, and all being made whole, and all increase of faith comes from above (Isa. 43:11; 45:21, 22; Acts 4:12; John 1:16; Luke 5:31, 32; Col. 2:19; Luke 17:5).

As I go forth, I hope that it is because I am led forth in the right way. (Psa. 107:7) I realize that I am treading on controversial matters, and I am not, nor will I, enter into controversy for the sake of controversy. I also realize that perhaps I will venture into paths that may seem new to you, and if you do not understand me, I will, as blessed of God, humbly hear and answer your queries, but I will not pay any attention to your allegorical and hypothetical analysis of what I write.

First, I kindly ask you to go back and read the chapter down to the text that I have placed at the head of this article. Please notice that the writer had much to say about Melchisedec, who was none other than the Son of God. The determination that he had when writing to the body at Corinth is still with him, and how lamentable when any servant of the most high God has other things to write and preach. The things of God are hard to be uttered (not because they are hard in themselves, but) because of the weakness of the hearers. It was this way when the Saviour was preaching; it was that way when Paul was preaching and writing, and it is that way in our day. The writer is not out to extol the lack in those that he writes to, nor is he out to tell them that they are capable of improving their lot. If this had been his desire, he certainly would have been desirous of saying much about their ability. But he knew better than that. He knew that he, together with all of the children of God, did not have any ability save by the grace of God (John 15:4; Rom. 14:23; I Cor. 15:10; Heb. 11:6). He knew that the tree had to be made good; that the husbandman had to tend and cultivate and water and work effectually in it in order for it to produce. In no sense of the word could he pay any homage and adoration for such helpless creatures. But with Him there is everything they need, the writer had much to say. In one of his memorable farewells to his brethren he talks of (not what they can do to perpetuate their church, but) what the Lord is able to do for them. "And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace (not the written nor spoken word, but the *logos* word, the Word that was made flesh), which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified (set a part)." (Acts 20:32).

I do hope that each of us remembers clearly with what hesitancy we approached the things of the kingdom of heaven in the early beginnings of

our Christian experience. We knew (and if of God, still know) how little we knew of the things of God. Having just been found, being in need of instruction instead of instructing, we hesitated to express ourselves; having just come up out of the wilderness, we felt that it would be presumptuous for us to handle the things of such a lovely kingdom before such a knowledgeable people. However, there is also sometimes found those that have not been taught to know their frailness and their lack. As the writer leads them into the things of the covenant of grace, into the new covenant which the writer stresses all the way, that they are under, he sets them right, ever pointing out the difference between the old, which was removed, and the new, which is established in the hearts and minds and souls of those that were bewitched by the alluring things found in the old.

Speaking harshly to struggling sinners being brought from under the law is not preaching the gospel; telling them that if they had good sense they would not believe such matters, is an automatic denial of the first and last principle of the doctrine of grace. Yet, the contending for the doctrine in love, does not give us the authority to refrain from sharp rebukes to those that would belittle or nullify the covenant of grace. Speaking smooth things in the gospel field is forbidden; passing by the giving of the gospel warnings, seeking to please men, all show that we are not servants of Christ. The minister who is the only pattern of ministers, in giving the inspired instructions to ministers, tells them that we are to rebuke sharply those that oppose themselves that they be sound in the faith. (Titus 1:13) If these rebukes are not pointed out in our charges to our present day ministers it is because that we have ushered in another gospel, which is not the gospel at all; it means that we have become wise above what has been written for our instruction.

We oftentimes make fun of our friends because they tell people to prepare to

meet God. I am not afraid, nor am I ashamed to preach no more nor no less than what Amos was inspired to write more than two thousand years ago, to wit, "Prepare to meet thy God O Israel." (Amos 4:12) If we think that salvation is by our efforts; if we think that it is procured by deeds of ours; or if we think that God will get tired out by warning us of our evil deeds, then I tell you frankly, just as God spoke it by the prophet, it is high time for you to prepare to meet God. This was the import of Paul's letter to the Galatians; it was a warning to them of impending doom to the joys of their salvation because of their departure from the truth, and from the grace which they first professed to believe. This rebuke was the substance of what had been given to Israel in type. I do hope that we do not forget that each type always has a counterpart in the New Testament; that there is an anti-type for every type.

If we are New Testament ministers, we are called unto that according to the dispensation of God which was given unto us for the fulfilling the word (the logos word, definitely not the written or spoken word), and this word, which is The Word, *the only word*, that a minister is to preach (2 Tim. 4:2), and which Paul preached, and which I would preach, is to every man, warning and teaching them that they may be presented as being perfect in him. (Col. 1:28) That is what Paul is doing in the above text. This kind of preaching and writing is the work of the ministry. It is for the perfecting and teaching of the saints. A minister must be apt to teach among the saints. (Eph. 4:12, 13; 2 Tim. 2:24)

This work is the work of Wisdom, our mother. There is a lot of criticism (and perhaps justly) of women having too few or too many children, but Wisdom is justified of all of hers. She sees after every one of them. She gives to all, and upbraideth not. She not only is justified of her children (Mat. 11:19), but Her children bless her, and Her husband praises her. (Pro. 31:28) She

looks well to her household. In our text we see this good treatment exemplified. While they ought to have been teachers, they needed teaching. Let us elaborate a little here. If the system that they had been under was true; if the doing of so much work gave such understanding, *then* they should have been teachers; if Israel, by receiving from God the oracles, could gain favors from God, then, by all this, they had need to prepare themselves to meet God; if salvation is predicated on complying with the old covenant, *then*, by all means, these Hebrew brethren should have been teachers. But not so. It does not come that way. They are in need of rebuke by this writer, as he also rebuked the Galatians by reminding them of their need for Wisdom's further teaching. He is further pointing out to them that they need milk. The reason that Inspiration mentions milk and honey for the diet of the children is because no man can produce either by his works. If you have a notion that any one of Adam's offspring can do so, you have my permission to try. But the sincere milk of the word is the gift of Wisdom, the Mother, the Dietitian, the Nutritionist, to Her children. This is Her work. She administers this to her children by her maidens. (Ruth 2:8, 22; Pro. 9:3) She administers the sincere milk of the word for growth in her children. This is not their decision, but it is hers. Even in earthly things, the natural way is that they feed their children that they may grow. This feeding is not in vain among Her children. As they grow, Her wisdom that formulated the first diet of the milk of the word for that growth, changes it from milk to strong meat at her discretion. I do hope, dear brethren, that none of you are endeavoring to take over the work of our Mother in raising her children from being a babe to being a man of full age. As Her husband and Her children rise up in praise to Her, may it be our Father's holy will that we feed and thrive on her formula and thus grow in grace and in a knowledge of the truth.

As the Good Shepherd, as our Mother Wisdom, feeds us on the solid matter, even on the strong meats of the gospel, there will be a day in and a day out taking in of these good provisions. She will bless them (Psa. 132:15) to our use, and will bless us to use them, to take them as we take our yoke, sit at the table prepared for us. This taking and using these things which our Mother prepares for us, and prepares us for their reception, will cause development in the children. It is the most unique development that has ever been known. For every step of growth in this grace and wisdom and development, there will be an equal growth of fear that they are not what they should be. It produces exactly the opposite of what natural growth does. In that growth there is a continued boldness in going forth in that nature; not so in this growth, for the more he or she grows and develops in spiritual growth there is a greater hesitancy to claim that there is any growth, a greater fear, a reluctance more and more to claim any part of it.

Yet, this growth being in the Lord, it gives a coming without wavering, a faith that cannot be denied, a boldness to face any enemy, taking from him and her that is enjoying the health of well nourished children, any dread or fear of the consequences of growth into manhood. This development being from Wisdom and the feeding which she administers to them, causes them to put away childish things, to know that it is not theirs to administer the things of the kingdom of heaven, but that we have all growth, and all other things of the kingdom, as coming down from Wisdom to usward.

As we in the natural realm of existence, had five senses, and as our natural mother gave unto us that which developed these senses, even much more does our Mother Wisdom develop our spiritual senses to where that which concerns us is more and more being perfected from above. (Psa. 138:8) In these natural senses we may be deprived of many

of them, even to the extent that we do not have any recognition of any of them. But this is not true where Wisdom feeds us that which is necessary to seeing, and hearing, and smelling, and tasting, and feeling the things of the kingdom of heaven. When drinking milk, not being skillful in the word (not work) of righteousness, we oftentimes would even join a citizen to feed swine, but when Wisdom gave us strong meat our *feeling* went to our Father's house of plenty; when drinking milk, we might well leave our first love and again imbibe the unwholesome doctrine of receiving the Spirit by the deeds of the law. (Gal. 3:2, 3)

Do you remember when your sight of Him was through the lattice work of the window of your soul? If you can go back with me to those days in which you sought to see Him and the glimpse was so dim that you felt that He was not for you, then you are on your way to heaven, and you will walk softly in the presence of your Mother Wisdom and her other children. Ah, how Mary's sense of sight was increased; Ah, how the two that walked towards Emmaus had their sense of seeing cleared (Luke 24:30, 31; John 20:16) and had their eyes opened. Oh, that this poor beggar might have his sense of seeing exercised by the strong meat of the gospel that I might be as the certain Greeks, desiring to see Jesus. And I tell you without fear of any justifiable remonstrance that the strong meat will be given you by our mother until your sense of seeing will be developed to where you will cry as did Mary, "Master" (John 20:16), and as did Thomas, "My Lord, and my God." (John 20:28) Are you afraid that your hearing is imagination? If so, cheer up. Not only does He open the deaf ears, but He gives the ear of hearing what the Spirit says to the churches. If language means anything (and it does, for God always employed good language in inspiring men to write) it is a sad picture, a sad day when we have either left our first love, or never was acquainted with Him, to

say that the gift and sense of hearing has been left in the hands of babes, for mark my words well, as long as we are claiming credit for salvation of any kind, we are drinking milk and we are thus unskillful — we do not know the difference between good and evil. Ah, yes, little one, you feel your dull hearing; and my heart rejoices that maybe I have had my sense of hearing made so sensitive that I know that when you say that, that you and I both are recipients of strong things which moves us in taking the gift of Wisdom as our gift to the end that we know good and evil — that neither one of us desires the evil that is found when we are unskillful, which always says, Unto us is given the gift of increasing the uses of our spiritual senses. This strong meat will follow us in this life as administered by Wisdom, and we shall one day hear and rise and live with Him in glory.

Ah, yes, the sense of smelling will increase as Wisdom gives us strength. We, while unskillful in the word of righteousness could, like the Galatians, or like the Hebrews, go to the stink of dead works, or, if like those that went away from the Saviour's preaching, leave and follow the gathering place of every foul beast of the earth, but if we ever got to where we have our sense of smell changed and we smell the fragrance of the dressed child (church), and the rising of the sweet smelling myrrh and incense, and the perfume of the Lily of the valley we will know the difference between good and evil, and will prove them both, and hold to one and shun the other.

Ah, do you remember when you were, as the bee, from flower to flower, trying this elixir and that, and not knowing which was truth and which was false, which was good and which was evil? And when all of the tastes had proven to you that they all were potent with death and blindness, and evil smelling and loathsome things of degradation, and your soul cried unto the Lord that you might be given to see and hear Zion sing; that you might be given a crumb

of Bread to taste and a Plant of renown to perfume your bed? If you remember this sad hour you are my brother and my sister; and if there has been an hour or a moment when you could say from the depth of your soul, to Him that comes quickly, "Even so Lord come," then I feel to hope that all of our senses are being exercised towards a better country, even to heaven and immortal glory.

In conclusion, dear reader, if these things are ours; if our Mother has fed us on living food, on living Bread (which is meat and drink indeed) we have been separated from the world in our feelings. Oh, yes, we are often dejected in our feelings and cry out against ourselves when, as a matter of fact, it is a growth in grace, it is a weaning more and more from the things of time, teaching us more and more to have less confidence in ourselves, and to trust Him forevermore. This change of our feelings from running after evil things (false doctrines and idols) has been, it is today, and it will be every tomorrow still to come, in the hand of our Mother and she will keep us feeling after and running to Him in every hour of need. As a little one, we feel after Her and Her Husband. (Acts 17:24, 27)

W. D. G.

VOICES OF THE PAST
"He being dead yet speaketh"

Bainbridge, N. Y., Jan. 3, 1881.

DEAR BROTHER: — As I have never asked your views upon any portion of scriptures, will you please indulge me this once and give your views on Genesis iii. 22-24, particularly the twenty-second verse, and oblige one that would know nothing save the truth as it is in Jesus. It has been on my mind much, and I have no light on the subject. I hope you are enjoying a happy New Year, and may it be the Lord's will to spare you and to sustain you in wielding the sword of the Lord and of Gideon, is the prayer of your unworthy brother,

JEROME BUNDY.

REPLY

We cannot in truth say that we have no views on the subject presented in the text on which our brother desires us to write, but whether the publication of our views will prove edifying to our readers, or be considered speculative and unprofitable, we cannot tell. We do not feel satisfied that we have a right to withhold such views as we have when called upon by brethren to express them. We do not exact or desire any to indorse or receive our views any further than they shall find them sustained by, and in harmony with the inspired scriptures of divine truth. We are deeply sensible of our liability to err, and therefore desire that our readers may closely, calmly, and honestly scrutinize whatever we publish as our views, and always bear in mind that all scriptural instruction must come from him who teaches as never man taught. The text reads thus:

“And the Lord God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil. And now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever; therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. So he drove out the man: and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden, cherubim, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life.”

“*And the Lord God said.*” With sacred reverence and godly fear it becomes us to accept the words which come to us from the mouth of the Lord God, at the utterance of whose voice the heavens and earth, with all created things sprang into being. With profound silence and submission, it becomes us to bid every doubt of its truth depart. All that is contained in the sacred scriptures demands our most prayerful consideration, and it is infidelity to dispute what God has spoken to the fathers by the prophets, or to us in these last days, by his Son. But

when any portion of the sacred testimony is thus presented, it seems to call for more than ordinary consideration. Were it not a matter of the most vital importance to us, we cannot think we would be reminded that the words proceeded immediately from the mouth of the Lord God. The most sacred names which God has appropriated to himself, are applicable to none but himself. He is the Lord, having unbounded dominion over all things in heaven and earth, holding the destiny of all beings, all events and all worlds in his almighty grasp, and as God, the supreme Author of our being, upholder of all things, preserver of our lives, and giver of every perfect gift, possessing in himself all the infinite perfections or attributes of his most holy being, and he is the only object of worship, adoration or unlimited trust and confidence.

With this expressive and doubt-silencing introduction, “And the Lord God said,” his words are recorded, “Behold.” The Lord God commands those to whom the mandate comes, to behold! To note well, duly astonished at the weighty import of a wonderful event, in which man is humbled, and expelled from the Eden in which he dwelt, and debarred forever from all human ability to put forth his hand and take and eat of the tree of life. Cherubim and a flaming sword meet all the vain efforts of sinful man at every point. The same unchangeable God whose potent words called all things into existence, now utters the irrevocable sentence, which drives apostate man from Eden; forbids that he shall have power in himself, by willing or doing, to extend his hand to help himself to the tree of life or to do anything whereby he can gain admittance to the tree of life, or to its virtue to secure to himself everlasting life. The awful reality of the utter inability of man to secure to himself a blessed state of immortality by anything that he can do, we think is clearly taught in the personal experience of every heaven-born subject of the saving grace of God. When first arrested by a divine

power and dragged forth, like Adam, from our hiding among the trees of the garden, and stripped of our fig leaf covering in which we had vainly sought to hide our nakedness and shame from the searching eye of God, how persistently did we try to find some way of access to the tree of life, but at every attempt we were met by the angel of the divine presence in his holy law, and the flaming sword, repelling and keeping us back until we were thoroughly convinced of the wretchedness of our helpless and hopeless condition. The cherubim and flaming sword still keeps the way of the tree of life; man's hand and arm are still impotent, and nothing short of the almighty arm of God, made bare for our salvation, can meet the flaming sword, or can minister to any of the sons of men the right to the tree of life. And notwithstanding all the boasted power of free agency, free will, and human ability claimed by the infatuated children of men, none but the Savior of the poor lost sinners can unbar the gates of death, and bring life and immortality to light through the gospel. But still a greater wonder opens to our sight, while we obey the voice of God, "Behold." In deep amazement we inquire, How, or in what sense is the transgression and expulsion of Adam, like one of the "us," in the knowledge of good and evil?

In order to an understanding of this mystery, it is necessary to inquire after the meaning of the plural personal pronoun *us*. We are forbidden to believe there is a plurality of Gods. "Hear, O Israel. The Lord our God is one Lord." — Deut. vi. 4; Mark xii. 29. "For there is one God, and one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus." — 1 Tim. ii. 5. "Now a mediator is not a mediator of one, but God is one." — Gal. iii. 20" "For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one." — 1 John v. 7. "Thus saith the Lord the King of Israel, and his Redeemer the Lord of hosts; I am

the first, and I am the last; and besides me there is no God. — Isa. xlv. 6. "I am the Lord, and there is none else, there is no God besides me." "For thus saith the Lord that created the heavens; God himself that formed the earth and made it; he hath established it, he created it not in vain, he formed it to be inhabited; I am the Lord, and there is none else." "And there is no God else besides me; a just God and Savior; there is none beside me." "For I am God and there is none else." "I am God and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me." — Isa. xlv. 5. 6, 18, 21, 22, and Isa. xlvi. 9. These scriptures, we believe, fully establish the often repeated declaration of God himself that there is but one God, that the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, are but the one only living and true God. Yet the plural form of the pronoun *US* is used in giving us an account of the creation of the heavens and the earth; not to express or imply that there was more than one God, but in the beginning, when God created the heavens and earth and all that in them is, the Word which was with God, and which was God, was, in his Mediatorial Sonship, with God in all that was made or executed, for he is, not only in his eternal Godhead, but also as the Son of God, identified, and identical with the Father, for he is before all things, and by him all things consist. He is both God and the *begotten Son* of God, full of grace and truth. He is both God and with God. — John i. 1-2. This "Only begotten Son of God" is the same that in the beginning was with God, and was God, and was, in the fullness of time, sent into the world, made flesh, made of a woman, made under the law, "made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death," who was delivered for our offenses and raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, and forever lives to make intercession for his redeemed people. He is God, in the most full and unlimited sense of the word, and as such is declared by the Father, for, "unto the

Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever." — Psa. xlv. 6-7; Heb. i. 8. But not another God distinct from the Father; for as we have seen, God himself declares, There is no other God. The Father is in him, and he is in the Father, and he and the Father are one. He that hath seen the Son, in his divine fullness hath seen the Father also. Truly hath the inspired apostle written, "Without controversy great is the mystery of godliness; God was manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, believed on in the world, received up into glory." — 1 Tim. iii. 16. It was not one distinct equal third part of God, that was manifested in the flesh, "For in him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily." — Col. ii. 9. God is not divided. The Father, and the Holy Ghost in all the fullness of eternal perfection dwells in him. As the only begotten Son of God, he is not only one and identical in the God head with the Father but he is also one with his body the church. "The head of the church is Christ." Without this head, the church as the body of Christ could not exist, as no body can live in the absence of its head. "And the head of Christ is God." — 1 Cor. xi. 3. So Christ, if it were possible to separate him from his supreme Godhead, would cease to be a Savior, for he has said to the Jews, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, The Son can do nothing of himself, but what he seeth the Father do; for what things soever he doeth, these also doeth the Son likewise." — John v. 19.

Now, that Christ as the only begotten Son, and mediatorial head of the church, was in the beginning with God is, as we think, fully proved by the direct testimony of the scriptures. "Who is the image of the invisible God, the first-born of every creature; for by him were all things created that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, for him: and he is before all things,

and by him all things consist: and he is the head of the body, the church; who is the beginning, the first-born from the dead; that in all things he might have the pre-eminence. For it pleased the Father that in him should all fullness dwell." — Col. i. 15-19. In perfect consonance with his direct testimony are the words, Heb. i. 1-8, "God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken unto us by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom he made the worlds; who, being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, and upholding all things by the word of his power, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high; being made so much better than angels, as he hath by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they. For unto which of the angels said he at any time, Thou art my Son, this day have I begotten thee? And again, I will be to him a Father, and he shall be to me a Son? And again, when he bringeth in the First-begotten into the world, he saith, And let all the angels of God worship him. And of the angels he saith, Who maketh his angels spirits, and his ministers a flame of fire. But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever: a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom." Here, let us observe, both the eternal Godhead of Christ, and his mediatorial subservance to the will of the Father, are clearly set forth; as God his throne stands forever and ever, while as a Son, he learned obedience to the will of the Father. Now, both as God, and as the Mediatorial head of the body, the church, he is manifestly both the Word that was with God, and the Word that was God. And this, to our mind, explains the use of the words, Let *us* make man. We are informed, Gen. i. 1, that, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth," and in Heb. i. 2, that God made the worlds

by his Son, whom he hath appointed heir of all things, and in John i. 1-3, that all things that was made, were made by him, whose name is called "The Word of God," — Rev. xx. 13. By the Word, which in the beginning was with God, and which was God. In whom was that Life which was and is the true Light of men. Here then, we infer, is the ground on which the plural form of the pronoun *us* is used. God made the worlds by his Son, who in the beginning was the embodiment of the Life and Light of all those who were chosen and blessed in him before the foundation of the world.

Now, to return to the inquiry of brother Bundy, "Behold the man (the earthy Adam) has become as one of *us*." Not in purity, infinity or in glory, for he had sinned, and death had passed upon him and all his undeveloped posterity, but in the one particular named, "to know good and evil." He had eaten of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil. In this "Adam was the figure of him that was to come." and his following his bride in the transgression, prefigured, foreshadowed and typified the mediatorial work of him by whom and for whom all things were made, who is before all things, and by whom all things consist. The tree of the knowledge of good and evil, we take to be emblematic of the law which Adam transgressed; that law was holy, just and good, and by it also is the knowledge of sin, or evil. By eating the fruit of the law, a knowledge of the purity of God is given, and also of the exceeding sinfulness of sin. While man continued in innocence he knew not the terrors of the law, but when the woman was beguiled and deceived and in the transgression, she could not return to the state which Adam was in, and from which she had fallen, and, the woman which God had given to be with him, must have been forever separated from him, and the purpose of God in that gift thwarted, if Adam, who was not deceived, had not followed her, and from her hand received the fruit of the tree.

Admitting Adam to be the figure of Christ, and Eve of the church, which is the body, flesh and bone, of Christ, figuratively speaking, the man in following the woman, and taking her transgression on himself, was, if we rightly understand the figure, *like*, or emblematic of the Son of God, the Mediator and Savior of his people, coming under the law to redeem them that were under the law. Jesus was not deceived, nor was it by accident that he was made sin for us who knew no sin, and became the sin bearing sacrifice, in the redemption of the church, who, after the similitude of Adam, could say as Adam said, "The woman whom thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat." — Gen. iii. 12. Thus, if we rightly understand the figure, Adam in receiving the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil at the hand of his wife, completed the similitude, and became the perfected figure of him that was to come, and so like one of the *us*, named in the text.

Adam could prefigure Christ thus far, in coming under the law and assuming all its penalty, but he could go no further; here the figure ends, for Adam could not redeem, wash, purify or cleanse himself or bride from the guilt and pollution of sin. And now the interdiction is irrevocably announced, "And now lest he (man) put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat and live forever; therefore the Lord God sent him forth from the garden of Eden, to till the ground from whence he was taken. So he drove out the man, and he placed at the east of the garden of Eden, cherubim, and a flaming sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the tree of life."

Here is already set forth the total inability of mankind to put forth their hand to take of the tree of life, or to even the fearful consequence of sin. Adam is the figure of him that was to come, not only in coming under the law, and in learning its penalty, but in his progenitive headship, as the em-

bodiment of all his earthly posterity, he was figurative of the second Adam, who is the Lord from heaven, as the life and righteousness of all his spiritual seed which were chosen in him before the foundation of the world; but of this we will not now write. May the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, give us the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him, and enlighten the eyes of our understanding that we may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, and may he preserve us from error, for his name's sake.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe January 3, 1881)

ORDINATION OF DEACONS

Pursuant to the request of Springfield Primitive Baptist Church, Pittsylvania County, Va., a Presbytery met October 12, 1974 to look into the qualifications of Brethren W. C. Hamlett and H. C. Dalton, as Deacons, and if found qualified to ordain them to the full work of a Deacon.

The Presbytery was formed by choosing Elder O. K. Tench, Moderator, and Elder J. L. Boccock, Clerk. The Presbytery was composed of the following Elders and Deacons: Denver Simpson, Noel Conner, R. L. Goad, L. J. Brammer, C. B. Davis, Raymond Payne, Julian Williams, Clay Brown, Wyatt Simpson, A. C. Gibson, George Powell, Silas Payne, Richard Stegall, Burnell Williams, L. R. Willis and Clarence Stegall.

The deliberations were begun with praise and prayer by Elder Noel Conner, and after the questioning, the Presbytery being well satisfied, proceeded with the laying on of hands on motion, second, and unanimous vote. The ordination prayer was delivered by Elder Raymond Payne. Elder Julian Williams delivered a very impressive charge.

On motion and unanimous vote Deacons W. C. Hamlett and Homie Dalton were delivered back to the church as duly ordained Deacons of our faith and order. It is our belief and hope that these dear brethren will finish their course with joy, and thus hold out to the end as good and faithful servants of Almighty God.

These deliberations were dismissed by prayer.

Elder O. K. Tench, Mod.
Elder J. L. Boccock, Clerk

OBITUARIES

EMMA E. BEACH

Our dear and beloved Sister of like faith, Emma E. Beach, was born June 14, 1906, and departed this life on May 4, 1974. Even though we miss our dear Sister very much, we feel to say with Job, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

Sister Beach was the daughter of the late Ichabod Hamilton and Georgianna Evans. She was married in November of 1924 to Nolan Beach, and to this union there were no children. She is survived by one brother, Dewey Evans, of Mardela Springs, Md., and one sister, Minnie Gambrell, who resides in the John B. Parsons home in Salisbury, Md. There are several nephews and nieces that survive.

Sister Emma was baptized July 11, 1948 by the late Elder Harold M. Bennett, and her membership was and remained with the Restawico Church until her death. The writer conversed with her many times and always found her a strong believer in salvation by grace, and always found her expressing her belief that God predestinated all things before the beginning of time. The writer visited her many times in the hospital, for she was there several times, and she always seemed to be reconciled to her lot here in this life. We miss her very much but also feel that God has an appointed time for all things, and it is the prayer of the writer that those who survive of the family, and all who knew her so well, may be blessed to feel that their loss is her eternal gain.

Funeral services were conducted by the writer in the Ullrich Funeral Home in Sharptown, Md., and her body was laid to rest in the cemetery in Mardela Springs, Md.

Arthur R. Warren

WILLIAM DALLEN POTTER

On May 11, 1974, God in His Wonderful Mercy called out of nature's dark troubles, into the marvelous light of Paradise, this son, William Dallen Potter. Brother Potter was born February 28, 1895, in Pamlico County, N. C. to Cason and Caroline Voliva Potter, thus making his stay of earthly existence, 79 years, 2 months and 11 days. On December 21, 1919, he married Emma Mae Sawyer, and born to this union were 5 children.

His early life was spent in eastern North Carolina, he loved the waters of the earth and lived much of his life on it. He was a fisherman by trade, and he and his family knew poverty, and hardship as did many families of his day.

He was a sinner and knew it and lived many years convicted of sin without hope. He felt himself a failure, in business and in life and went many years with his head bowed down feeling he had no real friend in this world or in heaven. But God who gave him this tremendous feeling of guilt also brought sweet deliverances to him in due season. He gave him a sweet hope in His Mercy, and caused him to go home to his friends saying, "How Great Things God had done for him." He was received into full fellowship of the Bethlehem Church at Columbia, N. C. and was baptized by Elder A. L. McKinney. Then for a season he felt he really knew the joys of the Lord.

September 15, 1962 brother Dallen moved his membership to the church at Norfolk, Va. Most of his family lived in this area and until his death he was blessed to enjoy the sweet fellowship of God with the brethren at Norfolk, and was blessed to visit many of the churches in Virginia and North Carolina. He was firmly established in his belief, in the Gospel of the Kingdom, salvation by Grace and Grace alone, the eternal election of God and the glorious resurrection of the dead. He had no patience with any doctrine that did not always praise the name of God and abase man, and despised with a passion the doctrine of "self works."

He leaves to mourn his passing the brethren of Norfolk Church, many other brethren in the Lord's earthly Kingdom, as well as his precious family. These consist of his wife, Sister Emma Potter: three sons, Cameron L., Marvin Ray, and William D. Potter, Jr.; two daughters, Sister Ruby P. Coward, and Sister Edna P. Mears: eleven grandchildren and five great grandchildren. All of these precious heirs of his body live in the Norfolk, Virginia area. He is also survived by his darling sister, our sister Sudie P. Flynn of Newport News, Va. He lived to see his wife, his two daughters and a precious granddaughter, sister Jean Whitehurst, as members of the church he loved so much.

Brother Potter never knew the riches of this world, and such that he had, especially in his last years, were given to him by those who loved him, even the suit he was buried in was a gift from a precious daughter-in-law, Vashti B. Potter, and we believe that he is now clothed by one who loves him, even the Lord Jesus Christ, and he will be wearing this beautiful robe of righteousness when he is awakened to the "Joys of the Lord." The faith that God gave was a beautiful thing to behold, as we would observe him in the worship services that he loved so much, we could know his hope was strong and that someday, across that great divide on the other side of death's cold waters, he would bask in the sunlight of God's eternal love forever.

Oftimes as we would hear him sing, we felt the happiness that caused his face to glow as he sang, "How Firm a Foundation, Rock of Ages, and Love Divine." And as he would tell of his experiences of Grace, was best summed up by David when he wrote, "Lord when I behold thee in righteousness and wake in thy likeness, I'll be satisfied."

His funeral was conducted by Elder W. L. Everett his pastor, and A. P. Mewborn, and his body handed back to the earth in Rosewood Cemetery, Virginia Beach, Virginia to await the glorious resurrection. This is most beautifully described by Ezekiel: "Thus saith the Lord God, Behold, O my people, I will open your graves, and cause you to come up out of your graves, and bring you into the land of Israel. And ye shall know that I am the Lord, when I have opened your graves, O my people, and brought you up out your graves."

Written at the request of the Norfolk Primitive Baptist Church.

Elder A. P. Mewborn

BROTHER ALVIS LAWRENCE HANEY

It is with a very deep sense of loss I endeavor to write the passing of our dear Brother, Alvis Lawrence Haney. May the Heavenly Father bless us, the church at New Hope Primitive Baptist Meetinghouse, Rockingham County, N. C. to bow in humble submission to His holy will. We are so saddened to know we will no more see Brother Haney's humble face in our midst.

On the morning of August 15, 1974 Brother Haney was found by his son, Charles, sitting in his rocking chair in his home, peacefully sleeping in eternal rest. He appeared so relaxed and peaceful, he was called to, as to awaken.

We feel sure our precious brother will be awakened by the voice of his Saviour on the morning of the Resurrection — a voice he has already heard. Elder Thornton Manly spoke so beautifully of Brother Haney's experience of hearing the call of his blessed Lord, the call that hastens His little ones to Come, Yes, come and acknowledge a merciful God that saved a thief on the cross. Brother Haney had a wonderful experience concerning the thief on the cross, that was promised to be remembered in paradise. Many times I've had a glimpse of his smiling face at the mention of the thief at the right hand of Jesus by his pastor, Elder D. A. O'Bryant.

Brother Haney is survived by one daughter, Cora Haney Griffin, South Hill, Va.; two sons, Carlton, of Virginia, and Charles of Reidsville, N. C.; five sisters: Gertrude H. Paschal, Ollie H. Brands, Evelyn H. Chilton, Edna H.

McCubbin and Dora H. Moore; three brothers, R. C., C. A., and R. F. Haney, a faithful deacon in our church.

Written as requested in our conference meeting the first Saturday in September, 1974 by Fannie Sue Ware.

Read and approved before our church Sunday, October 6, 1974, and permission was given to send a copy to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Eld. D. A. O'Bryant, Mod.
Sister Louise Cobb, Clerk

BROTHER DANIEL CLAYTON

Malmaison Church has, according to the purpose of an all-wise God, seen a loving and faithful member of our Church taken home to glory, to that upper and better kingdom, where the saints of God will never taste death, pain, sickness or sorrow; but shall forever see Jesus as He is, and be satisfied.

Brother Daniel Clayton passed from this life August 24, 1974 at the age of 75 years. He was the son of John and Lucy Henderson Clayton. His survivors include his wife, Carolina Swanson Clayton; three sons and three daughters; one brother and one sister. His funeral was conducted by his pastor, Elder O. K. Tench, and Mr. Charlie Shelton. Burial was at the Newton Family Cemetery, Hurdle Mills, N. C.

Brother Clayton expressed to the writer a beautiful experience of how he was given to know that he was a weak sinner, but God a merciful Saviour. He spoke boldly of his hope in Christ, yet showed an humbleness and fearfulness as he spoke of his love for the church. We feel the church was greatly blessed to have fellowship with him for the short time he was a member.

May the abiding love, grace, and mercy of God be with his family and with those of us who remain, to the extent that we can believe he is resting in a Saviour's love eternally.

Humbly submitted,
Burnell P. Williams

GUY T. WILLIS

In sadness and heartache I attempt to write a few words in memory of my brother, Guy T. Willis. He was born February 11, 1912, and died August 6, 1974. He joined Springfield Primitive Baptist Church September 28, 1952, and was ordained Deacon October 7, 1967. He was faithful to the church, and performed his duties well. He was a firm believer in salva-

tion by grace, having no confidence in the arm of man. He and I spent many hours talking of the goodness and love and mercy of our God, and the many things we could feel He had done for us. I know we will miss him very much, yet knowing our wonderful God never makes a mistake.

He leaves to mourn their loss, his wife, Sister Una Willis, one son, Virgil, and one grandson; three brothers, Martin, of Danville, Va., Tillman and Louis, of Gretna, Va.; four sisters, Mrs. Rebecca Mayhew and Mrs. Ludermer Mayhew, both of Hurt, Va., Mrs. Bessie Worsham and Mrs. Ethel Worsham, of Alta Vista, Va.

His funeral was conducted at the Springfield Church by his Pastor, Elder O. K. Tench, who spoke many comforting words.

His body was laid to rest beneath a beautiful mound of flowers in Gretna Burial Park, to await the second coming of our Lord.

Louis R. Willis

IN MEMORIAM

Be it resolved that we, the Dan River Primitive Baptist Church at Ruffin, N. C. hold sacred the memory of our dear beloved brethren and sisters in the faith that was once delivered to the saints, who have departed this life of sin and sorrow into the New Jerusalem, not made with hands, eternal in the heavens where no sickness or sorrow will ever enter.

1st. We miss them so much in our Church services, but we believe our loss is their eternal gain.

2nd. We bow in humble submission to His divine will who makes no mistakes, and feel we should not grieve for them as for those who have no hope.

Be it further RESOLVED, that the names of those deceased be listed in the Memoriam, a copy be sent to the *Signs of the Times* and copied on our Church record.

Deceased

Brother A. M. Rice, August 24, 1973.
Sister Mary Spangler, November 25, 1973.
Brother Arch Spangler, December 20, 1973.
Brother Robert Davis, January 27, 1974.

Done by order of the Church.

By: W. C. Vipperman, Church Clerk.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 143

DANVILLE, VA., MARCH, 1975

NO. 3

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 3/75
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

ELDER H. M. CURRY IN 1880

Hopewell, Ky.
December 7, 1880

Dear Brother Beebe:

Since God by his kind providence put into my hands some copies of the *Signs*, I am resolved to write you. Although I feel sharply my unworthiness and utter weakness, I trust that I have been brought by sovereign grace to know the Lord.

I am yet quite young, but have read with intense interest the word of God, and have found it so different from what I have always been taught from the pulpit, that I have been greatly perplexed. All the preaching I ever heard was so different from my feelings and the scriptures, that I sometimes believed that all was heresy, and that God's church was not represented here; but when my own weakness and sinfulness were brought to view, how dare I denounce those wise and good men as heretics? When I dared assert my faith I was derided and called a heretic, and informed that of all heresies, both ancient and modern, none such had ever made its appearance. Thus things went on for years, until I received your excellent paper, and there I found the same precious faith so ably set forth and so earnestly contended for, that I

exclaimed within myself, God has a people, and I have found them. Since then I have received some numbers of your paper, which came laden with choice dainties and rich luxuries to a hungry soul. I am going to subscribe to your paper as soon as I can, for I love the doctrine it advocates and the people it represents, although we have neither here.

Do with this as you think best, and I will send you something more some day, for I want to help swell the anthem of salvation by grace, and grace alone.

Yours in hope of eternal life,

H. M. Curry

(We were glad when Sister Wood discovered the above by Elder Curry in the January, 1881, *Signs*, for it gives account of his early life when brought into the knowledge of the truth, which led to his writing the wonderful articles which appeared some years later in the *Signs*; and re-published a few years ago.

Should anyone know of other articles or letters written by Elder Curry, which we have not published, we would like to receive them. — J. D. W.)

NO PATIENCE WITHOUT TRIBULATION

704 Oakland Avenue
Rocky Mount, N. C. 27801
January 1, 1975

Dearly Beloved of the Lord:

How marvelous to be enabled by God's grace to be among the land of the living, and further enabled to say "Alleluia: for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth." To merely acknowledge the

sovereignty of God is quite different from being completely aware of His sovereignty. Wise men down through the ages have been made aware of this fact, as Benjamin Franklin is quoted as having said, "I have lived Sir, a long time, and the longer I live the more convincing proof I see of this truth — that God governs in the affairs of men."

Having been blessed by our Heavenly Father to rise from the bed of sickness, I feel that I among all men am most richly blessed. For if not deceived, our Lord does indeed govern the affairs of men; this very truth being made abundantly clear as I was blessed to "be still and know that God is God." Who would have ever thought that a mortal man, so weak and helpless as I, would say with tears swelling in his eyes, "Thank God for this heart attack?"

The beloved Apostle Paul wrote ". . . knowing that tribulation worketh patience; and patience experience; and experience, hope: . . ." was well aware of our human nature, and how difficult, if not impossible, to achieve patience, without tribulation. How pleasant it would be if we were able to acquire patience without the tribulation. But if we are honest with ourselves, we must admit that this is not the case.

Oh, my dear brethren, I do desire that I could place into words the wonderful feeling that engrossed my very being, as I was removed from Intensive Coronary Care, into a private room, which had a window to look out, and view God's wonderful world.

Yes, I had been walking in this world with 20-20 vision and completely blind. I saw the same things I had seen every day, but never seeing them at all. Oh, what a different vantage point to view God's creation.

As I viewed the changing colors of the leaves, and people scurrying about; I thought how many times I had met those I love, and never really told them I loved them. Never really taking the time to share one another's joy or sorrow.

Oh Lord, I cried how long will I have to stay down, before I can live again with all those I hold dear? How long, Oh Lord, how long? And almost instantly these words began to stream into my mind, and I called for a pen and paper, and with a God given thankful heart, He blessed me to write:

Grant me patience, Lord to bear
Each daily trial and daily care,
That when my senses fail to see
That each event is teaching me;
That Thou art God who knows what's best
Has promised grace to stand each test.

Then when again my frame forgets
Thy goodness which sustains me yet,
Oh, may I cry for patience still;
That Thou knowest best, and pray Thy will.
Dear Jesus in Thy loving care
Remove all doubt that Thou art there.

Each day of life, oh Lord I face
May patience come endowed with grace,
May I not forget Thy care
And be reminded that Thou art there.
Then as my days grow shorter in number
May Thy grace I still remember.

Yes, tribulation does work patience, and patience hope. And hope swelling within a poor sinner's breast by God's grace, will keep us pressing toward the mark for the prize.

Surely it is a miracle that even in the throes of adversity, we can cry for joy, and be content with whatever God brings into our lives. This perhaps is why the Apostle Paul could say . . . "I have learned in whatsoever state I am, therewith to be content." Yes, my dear ones, it is indeed true that trouble and perplexity drives us to prayer, and prayer drives away trouble and perplexity. In the beginning we find God and in the end we find the promises of God in Jesus our Saviour.

How wonderful it is to have felt the very presence of our Lord, and remained on earth to tell of his saving power, and preserving love. May each of you, who perhaps even now are walking in ". . . the valley of the shadow of death. . ." feel that same presence and be given fresh courage.

"Ye fearful saints, fresh courage take,
The clouds you so much dread
Are big with mercy, and shall break
In blessings on your head."

May the new year be a year of rich
blessings and renewed hope.

In bonds of love,
Elder W. L. Everett

HAS BEEN BLESSED IN READING
THE SIGNS

315, 80 Scott Street,
Brampton, Ontario, Canada
December 31, 1974

Dear Editors:

Enclosed is Money Order for \$10.00 to renew my subscription for two years: use balance as you like . . . I would not want to miss a single copy. Through the year I have wanted to write to let you know how much I have been blessed and privileged reading the *Signs*. So often I feel my judgement is being taken away from me.

I am reminded of an article written by Thelma Wilson in the January *Signs*, '72. I have read it to a few people: "So many in the world celebrate Christ's birthday on Christmas Day in a worldly way of giving, receiving, decorating and reveling." We humbly hope that Christ remembers us in all our unworthiness every day, and every hour. We have nothing to give Him, but He has a bountiful supply of love, grace, pity, and spiritual strength and hope, that He bestows on his believing children. And may we be among those to receive the gift of eternal life. Ephesians 1:6, 7: "To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved, in whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace."

So many questions in my mind have been answered in the *Signs*.

Sometime ago I corresponded with Mrs. Underwood and mislaid her address and was pleased to read her let-

ter in the December *Signs*; and will hope to write her again. Surely the "spirit is willing but the flesh is weak."

Elder Wood, I enjoyed your Editorials, and as you said, "We need the grace of God in continuing to bring the *Signs* regularly to you." Elder Hudson's writings are precious to me. So often all I can say is, "Lord help me." I enjoyed Mrs. Barron's experience. So often I have been shown that without Him I can do nothing, but with Him I can do all things. "And the rough ways shall be made smooth."

I am 76 years of age, and find that my memory isn't good. I feel I want to read again this year's *Signs*. The Editorials written some years ago, as well as "Voices of the Past," have been enjoyed.

It was a pleasure to meet Sister Mildred Dykes last year in Canada, and how much I enjoyed the "Cross of Christ" in the June *Signs*. Letters like Elder Bocock's are comforting; and Mary Parker's "Reminiscences" she surely was blessed in her weakened condition to proclaim the love of God. "Known unto God are all his works from the beginning to the end."

After reading Elder Griffin's Editorial of November, 1973, I felt I must write. At the time it seemed all the way through just what I needed sent from the Lord. I felt in the depths. He described my feelings so well. "I am not able." So often I have wanted to write Elder Lambert: his writings were always enjoyed. I could mention others.

How we would love to know more of our faith in Brampton and Toronto, both large cities in Canada.

God has blessed me to attend our Quarterly Meetings again this year in Canada. In June I felt it was almost impossible to attend; but I know it was all of the Lord, I was able to attend. I felt to rejoice, Elder Spangler, when you said you wanted us in Canada to feel the *Signs* belonged to us as much as to you folks in the U.S.. I felt so

thankful to see you and Mrs. Spangler and the Turners, and hear you ministers again. We feel we are greatly blessed to have two good ministers here in Canada, and, as I have said to them, it seems like a little bit of heaven to hear good preaching, and be with friends of our faith.

In May of this year we had Elder Griffin; in September we had Elder Donald Smith; and in October Elder Prescott to bring us good tidings. God was good to bless them in their preaching, and we enjoyed visiting with the dear ones who came with them.

May the Lord make it possible to continue the *Signs*, and richly bless the Editors, writers and readers.

Yours in sweet fellowship; but feel unworthy.

Verna Carscadden

ALL BLESSED WITH FREEDOM
TO WORSHIP

Rt. 2, Box 64,
Weslaco, Texas 78596

Dear Editors:

Am enclosing check for \$10.00 for one year's renewal of my subscription, and the remainder for Contributions.

This is Thanksgiving Day, and I am so thankful to the Lord for the Freedom we have had in this blessed country of ours. I have been reading the *Signs* for over 72 years. I was 86 April 29, 1974, and still able to work about sixteen hours a day getting out orders to doctors and Health Food Stores.

I dreamed years ago we would some day have to hide out in dens and caves to worship the Lord but, thanks be to the Lord, that day has not yet come. We are thankful to the Lord that He has blessed us with a little church this far south, just five miles from Mexico. We have been hoping that the Lord would send some of his little ones down here to be with us. Weslaco, our town here, is about fifty-five years old with over fifteen thousand people now; and still growing. Towns down here in the

Rio Grande Valey are just four to ten miles apart, and thousands of people come down here in mobile homes from the north, to spend the winter. We tell them that ducks and geese know when to come south.

My memory goes back years ago to horse and buggy days, when an Old Baptist minister got upset so badly that he put his family in a wagon and left his church and neighbors and traveled three days getting away from the Old Baptists. Late the third evening he passed a house upon a small hill, and he told his wife and children he was going up there to see if they would let them camp there in the pasture by the watertank. The owner said, Yes, and we are to have a meeting here at our home tonight, and hope you all can come and be with us. He came back and told his wife about it, and she asked, Are you going? And he replied, Well we are all strangers and we do not know what kind of people they are; so let us go. The crowd came and the preacher that was to come did not show up. Finally the owner of the ranch asked the stranger if he would offer prayer. He got down on his knees, and the Lord blessed him with a wonderful prayer. They sang some songs, and then they asked the stranger to talk some. The Lord blessed him to preach to the same kind of people he had run off from, and they were all so glad and happy that he was with them. The next morning he told his wife, I am going back —, we cannot run away from the Lord.

Some wonderful things take place in our lives which the Lord has a mysterious way to bring to pass. Years ago I baptized a sister, and when I dipped her in the water, I felt she would some day be my wife; and sure enough we got married. So thanks to the Lord for all His mercies and kindness to this poor unworthy sinner. Remember me in your prayers.

E. B. Ault

(Elder Ault is owner and operator of the Ault Bee Farms in Weslaco, Tex. Some years

ago we enjoyed a visit with Elder and Sister Ault, and found them busy with their health products. — J.D.W.)

Rt. 3

Chestertown, Md. 21620

Signs of the Times

Dear Brothers in Christ:

It has been a long time since I sent anything to you for printing, for the many beloved readers to read. I have not felt I had anything to say that was worth printing, and I would rather read the testimonies and experiences of others as we travel along this great Highway of Life. But I have recently had a dream that has left me feeling very humble, yet with a feeling of wonder at the way our Lord comes to us in the night.

Before I relate this dream, I feel I should place myself on the mercy of the beloved Editors and readers, because I feel I have been blessed with a Holy Presence and I hope each of you will understand I do not ever want to say or do anything that will take away from the glory of Jesus Christ, our blessed Saviour. Each one of the editors except the Elder McColls in Canada, know me and, I hope, love me for Christ's sake. Many hundreds of the readers know and, I hope, love me for the same reason. Not for my sake, but Christ's sake. Each one of you know I am not one to pretend or to look for praise. Most of you know how the Lord has kept me, helped me raise a large family, most of whom love the Lord. Most of you know that all through those long, hard years, the Lord was with me, even though I knew it not. He kept me, guided me, led me, and in all ways has sustained me. As I've grown older, I realize more than ever, without Him I am nothing and can do nothing. This is my reference before each of you, as to the truth of this letter. I am writing it just as the dream appeared to me two weeks ago. May the Lord be with me as I write, to state it correctly. I had

gone to bed and to sleep. I was not overly tired. I had had a good day raking and burning leaves, etc., and was satisfied with my day. My mind was at rest and no worries bothered me. I want to make that clear. I was filled with thanks to God for giving me such a fine day and a beautiful evening of music and messages over my radio station. The announcer had prayer and scripture reading before he went off the air, and it was sort of a benediction to the whole day. I fell asleep.

As the dream began, I seemed to be in a bed, no special place . . . just in bed. There was a turmoil in my abdomen, not pain, but a sort of stretching and pulling of the intestines. I thought, "I wonder if I did too much in the yard today," and was going to have trouble with my back. I was in no pain, but seemed to feel a numbness in my side and one leg in my dream. I thought I had better get up before I got so I couldn't move. I sensed other presences, but saw no one. It was dark, but I said, "Someone turn on a light." As I got out of bed, sitting on the side, two "beings" seemed to appear. (I use the words "sensed" and "appeared" because that's the way it was.) One on each side and seem to take my arms, although I felt nothing. I started, alone, to wander around. Where I was seemed to be amid ruins and desolation of all kinds. Half walls, open spaces, and all seemed to be in a foreign land, such as one sees in literature sent out showing refugees and ruined buildings. I walked, coming to a long hallway. As I looked to my left, I saw many, many figures standing in crowds, dressed in dark, shapeless clothing. Just waiting . . . for what, I do not know. I turned to the right and came to a part where it seemed only derelict men were. The same two "beings" seemed to appear again and I sensed they said to me, "You should not be here alone," and again took my arm. But one of the men, with a leering smile, led me forward and said, "I would not be alone because he would be with me. Another

said with a grin, "Yes, we will look after her." I stood and gazed around. Ahead, on my left, in the distance, I saw a long, shed-like open building with a large, long vat or tub of steaming liquid, and I saw a figure place a man upon a long slideboard-like affair and immerse him in the liquid. I heard no sound whatever. Another of the same kind of tub or vat was on my right and I watched as another figure immersed another man. As he was raised up upon the board, he appeared to be asleep. I saw another figure slink along a low wall that was between me and the area where more men were. He seemed to remind me of a rat, racing along the wall to escape whatever he knew was to be his lot. Next, I felt no surprise or horror at what I saw, only a desire to get away and find more peaceful surroundings. I turned, and wondered if there was any way out. I saw a high wall with a door. I opened the door and saw a narrow stairway of stone steps that led up. I thought, "they go up, not down." And as I hesitated, a voice in the darkness behind me said, "Ruth". I turned and saw a figure — tall and clad in, it seemed to be, golden tights, from head to foot. Deep, dark-set eye sockets, and he seemed to shine in the darkness. He held out his arm and said, "Come." I did not *feel* his touch, but I sensed it and we seemed to be carried out and away at once into glorious sunlight and over beautiful meadows. As we went, the same two beings joined us and I sang, "Praise the Lord" with a hoarse voice at first. Then as I repeated it over and over, the beings joined me, singing, "Praise the Lord, Praise the Lord" and my voice cleared as I sang. I awoke and I *did* praise the Lord at the wonder of it all.

I wished that I had a "Daniel" to interpret for me, I'm sure it has a meaning. I've dwelt upon the wonder and beauty of it many times since. The answer, in part, was shown to me a few nights ago. I was listening to my favorite radio station, WRBS in Baltimore. It was a very beautiful program of

music and message from scripture, and I had put aside my fancy work and leaned back in my easy chair to give it all my attention, with my eyes closed to keep out any distraction. The speaker was using the Psalms as the basis for his program and music. The hymns and scripture were upon giving thanks, and somewhere along the way a scripture and music were used upon the beauties of heaven and how wonderful it would be one day to be with Jesus up there. I followed along and in my mind I pictured heaven in all its glory and, dear Brothers and Sisters, I want to tell you it seemed so beautiful!! Then suddenly it seemed to me I was returned to the ending of my dream and I felt to be above *here*, and viewing Over There! Do you see what I mean? Oh, I hope so! I was given the thought "We are only visitors here, waiting for a passport over there." And the words came to me, I believe they are in "Abide With Me." "Change and decay all around I see, O Thou who changeth not, abide with me."

Dear ones, I see how the Lord has shown me as I pass through this world of change and decay (as I seemed to do that night) that His angels will watch over me and one day, I shall be carried Home to be with Jesus, Praise His Holy Name.

I am sure you all know me well enough to know that I am not given to seeing visions or vain imaginings and such. Dreams have always been dreams to me, and no more. I am sure the Lord was in this because it was so unusual and seemed to be of a spiritual nature; then had a sequence that made it clearer.

I was blessed to attend the Salisbury Association, held with the Little Creek Church this year. It was so sweet to once more be among the brethren from far and near and hear good sound doctrine preached. The Bible as it is, and preached as the Lord inspired each minister speak. We missed Elder Spangler very much, but understand why he could not be present with us. We trust

his daughter is now out of danger. We know she is in the care of one of the very best physicians that could be had.

I am still blessed to get to Welsh Tract each second Sunday and the Lord always blesses me with a way to get there. If not some of my children, then some of the grandchildren are available. The Lord never leaves us standing waiting. We all feel so wonderfully blessed to have Elder James Poole as our pastor and we love him and Sister Peggy very much for Christ's sake; and also for their own sake. He is blessed to preach the truth in all its beauty, as the Lord enables him to see it. We are a small group, but we are told "wherever two or three are gathered in my name, there I will be in their midst" and I am sure He is with us, else why would the congregation come so far to hear preaching? They are hungry and thirsty, that's why! They may not *know* they are believers, but I do not think they would come so far if they weren't believing in what they hoped they would hear. Some day the Lord will open their ears and eyes and penetrate their cold hearts with the truth. The ones that truly believe know that I speak the truth. Some day I feel He will add to our number, but until then, we continue to gather together in His Precious Name.

May He bless each and every one of the editors and families to carry on the work of the *Signs of the Times*. Its preaching for me between meeting days.

Your little Sister
In love to all
Ruth Lucht

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT OF SALISBURY ASSOCIATION

Written by Deacon Frank Holland

"Asleep in Jesus: Blessed sleep, from which none ever wake to weep"

I think of these words when I remember these dear sisters that have been removed from our midst: Sister Eva Brittingham, Little Creek Church; Sister Emma Beach, Rewastico, Church;

and Sister Betty Bedsworth, Salisbury Church.

By the will of our Heavenly Father we are sure they departed this time world with the hope of Heaven and eternal Glory in their breast, given them by our Heavenly Father.

Thy will be done, O God.

Eld. Arthur Warren, Mod.
Maude T. Laws, Hon. Clerk
William S. Adkins, Clerk
Willie A. Davis, Jr., Asst. Clerk

CIRCULAR LETTER OF THE SALISBURY ASSOCIATION 1974

Written by Elder James F. Poole

By request of the Salisbury Old School Predestinarian Baptist Association I submit these few brief lines for consideration.

Brothers and Sisters there is nothing as important in all of life as Christ in us, the hope of Glory. If we are not brought to His light, we must remain in darkness. To be translated into His Kingdom, brings inward joy that cannot be found elsewhere. Free grace is the divine means of bringing elected sinners to salvation — and that through faith. Faith is the gift of God. God is the only giver of eternal life. Hence, we find ourselves as God's children, believers in what is termed the Doctrines of Grace.

The following from Hart most feelingly express our views:

"Believers own they are but blind;
They know themselves unwise;
But wisdom in the Lord they find,
Who opens all their eyes.

Unrighteous are they all, when tried;
But God himself declares
In Jesus they are justified;
His righteousness is theirs.

That we're unholy needs no proof;
We sorely feel the fall;
But Christ has holiness enough
To sanctify us all.

Exposed by sin to God's just wrath,
We look to Christ and view

Redemption in His blood by faith,
And full redemption too.

Some this, some that, good virtue teach,
To rectify the soul,
But we first after Jesus reach,
And richly grasp the whole.

To Jesus joined, we all that's good
From Him, our Head, derive;
We eat His flesh, and drink His Blood,
And by and in Him live."

MESSAGE OF HOPE

Dear Brethren:

"Sometimes a light surprises
The Christian while he sings . . ."

The spirit of joy in the air is being stirred and diffuses a righteous virtue among all Christians as Christmas time draws near. The significance of the aged old custom of gift giving to honor the Christ child still dwells within a believer as a living spirit of light, and makes itself manifested in our walk and talk and the way we live.

Perhaps no one recorded thing held more meaning when the Christ child was born, than the light that shone 'round about Him, for it reflected the glory of God's salvation.

With the coming of this wonderful message of hope, God made His presence felt in the hearts of His people, and they were made glad in that day. It gave peace to their troubled souls, and they went on their way rejoicing, as they treasured up the sweetness of the spoken word.

Then, with time, came the profound art of the age in printing, by which the divine word of Christ's Nativity was brought to countless numbers of people all around the world. Precious words of truth were to be found in a book of books, the Holy Bible! It was like a golden urn filled with all manner of hidden manna, and words of wisdom to guide man, from which he has been able to record his own gifted thoughts in literature, and music, and the arts.

Then another message of hope arose when one born with a precious gift

could experience, in its sublime conception, a coming forth in due season and express himself before men of like precious faith. Then, and not until then, could he see among all things on earth God's glory revealed, even where signs of virtue were partly concealed in the spiritual realm of dreams; even though this is one of the most symbolic types we have with us today, that testify of the word, "Great is the mystery of Godliness" in which man realizes he has no power to join the earthly with the heavenly, so that down through the ages he can only rejoice in the divine Message of Hope to live by.

Sister Mary Hellings
Four Maple Lane
Pennington, N. J. 08534

ACCOUNT OF SISTER MARY PARKER'S LAST DAYS

By Elder Benton Jenkins

On Monday, June 17, 1895, at 9:40 P. M., at the age of 46 years, 9 months and 14 days, our beloved sister, Mary Parker, ended her weary warfare here, was released from her suffering and entered into everlasting rest and bliss.

. . . When the end came it found her anxious and ready to go. The immediate cause of her death was a cancerous tumor. She underwent an operation for the same at a hospital in Philadelphia last August, which was successfully removed, but it shortly afterwards returned, and developed rapidly. On September 5th she was taken to the home of our noble, generous and self-sacrificing sister, Mrs. M. M. Rounsavell, at Warwick, N. Y., who had visited and cared for her at the home of her brother, Mr. John Parker, New Holland, Ohio, and later was brought by her to the hospital, and finally to her comfortable home in Warwick, arriving there on September 5th, where all that loving hearts and willing hands could do was done to make her last days as comfortable and pleasant as possible.

As the end approached, the sufferings of the loved one were very great, but were borne with that quiet submission to the will of God which had characterized her through all the weary and painful years of her sufferings. Her cheerfulness and trust in her God and Saviour throughout all the years of her suffering was truly sublime and wonderful, and proved how wonderful is the grace of God in supporting His children under the most trying circumstances. With the Psalmist she could say, "My flesh and my heart faileth; but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion forever."

On the morning of the last day Sister Rounsavell said to her, "Do you know that you are dying?" Sister Mary replied, "Do you think so?" Sister Rounsavell replied, "Yes, Mary." Sister Mary then clasped her hands and exclaimed, "I'm so thankful!" As cold water was given her to slake her intense thirst she would say, "I shall soon drink at the everlasting fountain." As no opiates had been administered to her since she came east, her mind was strong and clear until about thirty minutes before the end came, when to all appearances she sank into an unconscious state, which continued until her ransomed spirit took its flight to the God who gave it.

Funeral services were held at the Old School Baptist Meeting House in Warwick on Wednesday P. M., which were conducted by Elders Silas H. Durand and Benton Jenkins. Elder William L. Beebe being on a visit to Canada. At 4 o'clock P. M. of the same day Sister Rounsavell started with the mortal remains of the loved one, expecting to arrive with them at New Holland, Ohio, at 6 o'clock P. M. the following day, where another funeral service was appointed at 10:30 A. M. on Friday, and the body consigned to its last earthly resting place, by the side of her beloved father and mother, Elder John Parker and wife, and amid the scenes of her early childhood and riper years.

Benton Jenkins

WATER CAME OUT ABUNDANTLY

Box #48

Duanesburg, New York 12056

Dear Elders Spangler and Wood;

The evening we were together, Brother Wood, at a Sister's home near Delmar, Delaware, during the Salisbury Association, you asked me why I had not written to the *Signs*.

I have been in a barren state for some time, and man of himself cannot get "blood out of a stone." It is recorded in Numbers 20th chapter verses 10 and 11 that Moses lifted up his hand and with his rod smote the rock twice, and water came out abundantly. I feel that this was no ordinary rock. This rock, I feel, was the Lord Jesus Christ and was symbolic of the living water (the word of truth) which flows from our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, to his elect people. You notice it reads water came out abundantly. The word of God is inexhaustible and is sufficient for all the congregation (elect people of God). So therefore one cannot write of himself. It must come from God for it to have any value spiritually.

The Lord has a hand in all things. It was by his good pleasure that He created the heaven and the earth. We read this in Genesis chapter 1, verse 1. "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." This gives me comfort for it was the Lord's doing not man's. Everything is in the Lord's hand and of his own doing. In Isaiah 45th chapter, 7th verse, He says "I form light, and create darkness: I make peace, and create evil: I the Lord do all these things." You will observe God says I form light. You form something you already have. I believe the light always was. God creates the darkness for a purpose. In St. John chapter 1, verse 5, we read, "And the light shineth in darkness: and the darkness comprehended it not." Peace also has always been, but God created evil for a purpose. Satan and evil are the sword of the Lord.

We see the hand of the Lord in many ways. It was the Lord's doing, that, before the beginning of time, He elected Himself a people. In Romans chapter 8, verse 33, we read, "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth." In Isaiah 59th chapter, 1st verse reads, "Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear." As we look back over our travels in this life we can see many times when, except for the Grace and Mercy of God, we would have perished.

Preaching of the true word of God is scarce in our area. There is almost a famine and when brethren meet the conversation ends with, When can we have another meeting? The word is precious and makes us think of 1st Samuel 3rd chapter, 1st verse, "And the child Samuel ministered unto the Lord before Eli. And the word of the Lord was precious in those days; there was no open vision." We read in association minutes and church history of many landmarks and wonderful works of God in this area. This makes us feel very humble when we think of the Brethren that have gone on before and the truth they held dear.

Our Salvation is in the Lord's hand and He amply provided for it before time began. Not one of the elect will be left out. Isaiah 40th chapter, verses 30 and 31, are comforting. "Even the youths shall faint and be weary, and young men shall utterly fall: but they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint."

We thank the Lord for sending Elders Arthur R. Warren, Alex and Stewart McColl to our meetings last year.

We were sad that Elder Warren was called home. We will miss his fellowship, hearty handshake and remark, "My, I'm glad to see you."

Our hope and trust is in God and we pray that He will not remove the truth

from our land.

Woodrow W. Bellinger

STANDS FOR WHAT HE BELIEVES

P. O. Box 9134

Springhill, W. Va. 25308

Dear Brethren:

You will please find enclosed a money order for one year — the remainder to be used as you see fit.

I enjoy the *Signs* very much, because it stands for what I believe. In reading the Editorials and other wonderful writings my mind is refreshed on some things that I have forgotten; and some I had not thought of. O what a wonderful Saviour the children of God have! A Saviour that did not come to this low ground of sin and sorrow, to get to be a Saviour. But He came because he was the Saviour of sinners: He came down where they were, to do for them what they could not do for themselves. There was no way given whereby they could be saved except by the birth, sacrifice and glorious resurrection and ascension of the blessed and holy Jesus. He saved them without the loss of one — He saved all that the Father gave him in eternity, before the world was. When he cried, "It is finished," the salvation of His children was completed.

May it be the will of the God of all grace to bless you Editors to keep up the good work, and the writers for the *Signs* to continue to write.

John J. Smith, Sr.

THE TWO BIRTHS

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." (John 3:3)

"My kingdom is not of this world," said Jesus. "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God," said the Apostle, "neither doth corruption in-

herit incorruption." Man in his earthy nature cannot inherit divine things, for he is of the earth earthy. Jesus said, "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." "For that which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit, is spirit."

This describes the nature of each birth: the first is of the flesh, and is flesh; the second is of the Spirit, and is spirit. The same person receives each birth; and after the second birth, the same person has been born of two natures, and thereby possesses two natures: one of the earth and is earthy; one of the divine nature is divine, heavenly, eternal. Man by the first birth is adapted to the earth and earthly things, and has no part in divine things in or by his earthy nature; man by the new or spiritual birth is adapted to divine, spiritual and heavenly things — which is separate and apart from earthy things.

Man by the nature of the second birth, sees and enters into the kingdom of God, and is heir to its blessings which are spiritual. He therefore not only sees the kingdom of God, but enters into the kingdom which Jesus said, Is not of this world; and which the Apostle said, flesh and blood cannot inherit. Man by the new birth has eyes to see, ears to hear, and a heart to understand spiritual and divine things: He not only sees, hears and understands spiritually, but he feels, tastes, smells, discerns and rejoices in the divine favors of the kingdom of Christ — which is not of this world. He walks, talks and confesses from the heart, and rejoices in the paths of righteousness; and hates evil and iniquity. He abhors and hates the sins and all works of his earthy and corrupt nature; and cannot rejoice in iniquity: he dies daily to his earthy nature because of sin which is condemned in the flesh. He is not two persons, but is called, and indeed is, the new man, and the old man. The old man perishes, while the new or inner man is renewed day by day. He is a

new man in the divine nature — which is to say, a new man or a new creature in Christ; but in Adam, which is to say in his earthy nature, he is the old man of the flesh by his first birth; and is flesh. There is not the least union nor agreement between the two natures, for, "What fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness, and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel? and what agreement hath the temple of God with idols? for ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people."

The above does not have direct reference to our subject, but rather describes the differences between true and idol worship — children of the promise and children of the flesh; but still there is no more union, communion or fellowship between the new nature, man or creature, and the old man, earthy nature of the children of God than there is between the true worshipers and idol worshipers which the Apostle is describing above. There is a complete cross between the two natures of a child of God who has been born again — having no union, communion or fellowship whatsoever. The old man, which means earthy nature and is earthy in all of its living or dying faculties, is crucified, mortified, and must die daily, for a child of grace to live soberly, righteously and godly in this present world. The renewing of the new inner man which is of the divine nature, is that which causes and enables a child of grace to deny himself, (meaning himself in the old fleshly, earthy nature) and take up the cross by which he is crucified, to live, walk, talk and act spiritually. Yet he sees by the effectual working of the Spirit and power of God in him, that he is a poor, helpless and wretched sinner, entirely unworthy of the least divine favor from the hand of a merciful, holy and righteous God

our Saviour. He feels to be poor and needy, seeking the water of life and can find none; he hungers and thirsts after righteousness, but can find none; he cries or groans deeply from his poor heart: "God be merciful to me a poor sinner."

Then he remembers the saying of the Apostle Paul: "This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief." Then he can sing from the heart in the Spirit, "Amazing Grace! how sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me." And, "Rock of Ages, cleft for me, let me hide myself in thee." And also, no doubt, "I am so vile so prone to sin, I fear that I'm not born again."

Our main thought and purpose in writing upon the two births and the nature thereof, is to try to prove by the Spirit of truth, that it is the same person who receives each birth — the birth of the flesh, and also the birth of the Spirit; and between these natures there is no union, agreement nor fellowship. And that the first nature, including the person thereof, is adapted to the things of the earth, — natural and perishable things; and by which the child of grace cannot inherit the kingdom of Christ — which is not of this world. By the second birth, the birth of the Spirit, the same person is born of the divine nature, which is adapted to, and is of the very nature of Christ's kingdom, which is not of this world. By this birth they are children of the kingdom and its King our Lord Jesus Christ; are heirs of that kingdom, and joint heirs with its king: and therefore and thereby they have no fellowship with unfruitful workers of darkness. It is just as impossible to unite the two natures of a child of grace, as it is to unite light and darkness, truth and error, or the kingdom of Christ with this present evil world.

When Jesus separates the sheep from the goats by this divine nature, it is as perfect a separation as when He divided the light from the darkness in the

morning of the world. Man may unite these which God has separated, just as easy as he can the sheep and the goats which God has separated. When He by the almighty power of his Spirit says to his people in their heart and mind, "Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord," regardless to how hard it is on them in their earthy nature, how much they suffer, how much they complain, rebel and die, they come, they obey. And though they still have that hateful, rebellious nature, He makes them hate that too, taking them up out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and sets their feet upon the Rock, establishes their going, puts a new song in their mouths, even praise to His Holy and Worthy Name.

May God bless the truth to the comfort of His children; and pardon error for his name's sake.

John L. Sanders
44 Duarett Grove,
Tuscaloosa, Ala. 35401

BLACK CREEK UNION

The next session of the *Black Creek Union* will be held, the Lord willing, at Sand Hill Church the 5th Sunday and Saturday before in March, 1975.

Everyone is cordially invited to come and worship with us.

Harold H. Pittman,
Box 744,
Bennettsville, S. C. 29512

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The *Staunton River Union* Meeting will convene, the Lord willing, with Weatherford Church the 5th Sunday in March and Saturday before.

L. H. Doss, Clerk Weatherford Church

CONTENTNEA UNION

The next session of the *Contentnea Union* is to be held, the Lord willing, with North River Church, Cataret County, N. C. the fifth Sunday in March, 1975.

All lovers of the truth are invited to visit us.

W. W. Stallings, Jr., Clerk

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NOTICE OF MEETING

The Maine Old School Baptist Churches will, the Lord willing, hold an all-day meeting the 5th Sunday and Saturday night before in March, at the home of James and Ruth Sevon, daughter of Sister Ruth Clark of the Whitefield Old School Baptist Church.

The Sevon home is in Jefferson, Maine, Route 213 on the Damariscotta Lake Road. Route 213 branches off from Route 214, which is taken at a junction in Newcastle Village. Business Route 1 leads from Route 1 into Newcastle Village.

Elder J. T. Prescott of Swansboro, N. C. is expected to attend the meeting. A cordial invitation is extended to all who may be able to attend. If more instructions are needed, write to Mrs. Ruth Clark, Clerk, Box 245, Newcastle, Maine.

Danville, Va. March, 1975

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EDITORIAL

“BEHOLD MY HANDS”

“Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing.” (John 20:27)

“Behold my hands . . .” are the words of Christ to a dutiful yet doubting Thomas. Love, empathy, rebuke, compassion embraced in the words of the King to melt the heart of the beholder. One expression was sufficient to accomplish the change. In complete surrender,

Thomas cried, "My Lord and my God."

When Lazarus died, the disciples warned Jesus not to go into Judea lest he be stoned by the Jews for they sought to kill him. At this time Thomas professed a faithfulness unto death by exhorting his fellow disciples thus, "Let us also go, that we may die with him." (John 11:16) However when Jesus comforted the disciples in John 14:1-6, by informing them that He must go to his Father's house to prepare a place for them, the same Thomas was less certain and exclaimed, "Lord, we know not whither thou goest; and how can we know the way?" (John 14:5)

Following the crucifixion of Christ, the faith of Thomas seemed to be dissolved completely for he discredited outrightly the report of the other disciples concerning the resurrection of Jesus, and declared, "Except I shall see in his hands the print of the nails, . . . and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe." (John 20:25) At this time the doubts of Thomas loomed to overwhelming proportion . . . abundantly sufficient to destroy him. What a clear reflection of the Thomas in each of us! Yet a comforting reminder to know that others as well as ourselves must be stripped of all self-confidence and self-righteousness and made to rely completely on Him.

Renewed strength came to Thomas a few days later; however, when Jesus appeared to the united disciples and said to him . . . "Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and *behold my hands*; . . . be not faithless, but believing." (John 20:27) The unbelieving finger of Thomas was satisfied. His doubts acquiesced to adoration and praise. How he must have rejoiced in having been given such assurance!

Subsequent references to Thomas in scripture reveal further evidence of the renewal of his faith and sustained presence among the disciples. He is listed among them at the sea of Tiberias when the draught of great fishes made the nets nigh unto overflowing. (John 21:1) He abode with them in the upper room

where they "continued with one accord in prayer and supplication." (Acts 1:13-14) His name is inscribed in the holy city, the new Jerusalem for as revealed to John, "The wall of the city had twelve foundations, and in them the names of twelve apostles of the Lamb." (Rev. 21:14) By the one expression of Christ . . . BEHOLD MY HANDS . . . Thomas was sealed unto the day of redemption.

Frequently in my own life the hands of various relatives and friends have arrested my attention. Well do I recall, when a small boy, the closed and stiffened fingers of an aged uncle who had spent his youth in the bush hewing timber. His hands seemed to denote labour. Then there were the hands of a close neighbor which personified kindness for he was a good samaritan in the community. The loving hands of a teacher who showed compassion . . . the deft hands of a sculptor . . . the skilled hands of a surgeon. Hands have a way of revealing character and expressing themselves on their own. But the hands which Thomas saw were unique. They denoted labour, personified kindness, showed compassion, possessed skill and worked deftly. Yet they were bleeding hands . . . hands which had wrought an incomprehensible work . . . the loving work of redeeming His people.

Hands in the scripture are used symbolically in many ways. The hand of Moses stretched out over the sea denoted power. Elisha poured water on the hands of Elijah to signify he would serve him. Pilate washed his hands publicly before the crucifixion of Christ to denote his innocence of the crime. Abram lifted up his hand unto God as an oath in declaring to the king of Sodom that he would take nothing from him after the slaughter of Chedorlaomer. Aaron lifted up his hand toward the people and blessed them. Sheba raised his hand in defiance against the King, even against David. David set the Lord always at his right hand for defense. Stephen was set aside to the full work of the ministry by the laying on of

hands. Christ declared through David in Psalm 141:2 "Let my prayer be set forth before thee as incense; and the lifting up of my hands as the evening sacrifice." Indeed His hands were solemn evidence of that living sacrifice. Succinctly Watts summed it up in saying:

"See from his head, *his hands*, his feet,
Sorrow and love flow mingled down,
Did e'er such love and sorrow meet,
Or thorns compose so rich a crown."

The hands of Christ have revealed themselves in the scriptures in many ways on many occasions. Belshazzar, king of the Chaldeans, made a great feast. While he tasted the wine, he commanded his attendants to bring the golden and silver vessels which had been taken out of the temple in Jerusalem in order that his princes, wives and concubines might drink from them. They drank steadily and praised the gods of brass, iron, wood, stone, silver and gold. The heart of this king had not been humbled even though he had witnessed his father Nebuchadnezzar dethroned and driven from men to live with the beasts of the field.

In the same hour the fingers of a man's hand wrote near the candlestick on the plaster of the wall MENE, MENE, TEKEL UPHARSIN which Daniel later interpreted to mean:

"God hath numbered thy kingdom and finished it."

"Thou art weighed in the balances and art found wanting."

"Thy kingdom is divided, and given to the Medes and Persians." (Daniel 5:26-28)

Immediately Belshazzar's countenance fell, his thoughts troubled him, he quivered in fear . . . in the same night he was slain and Darius the Mede took the kingdom. A man's hand had pronounced judgment with authority.

This same hand touched Daniel when he was by the river Hiddekel in mourning over the state of Israel. When he lifted up his eyes, behold a certain man clothed in linen appeared unto him. Im-

mediately, he lost his strength and fell into a deep sleep with his face toward the ground. Straightway a hand touched him and set him upon his knees and upon the palms of his hands. A voice similar to the voice of a multitude spoke to him saying, "Now I am come to make thee understand what shall befall thy people in the latter days; for yet the vision is for many days." (Dan. 10:14) Immediately Daniel set his face toward the ground and became dumb. This time a hand of prophecy had revealed itself. Later the hand touched Daniel again that his mouth might be opened and that his strength might be regained.

Elijah implored God to send rain. And it came to pass that as his servant went the seventh time to look, behold a little cloud arose out of the sea, like a man's hand. Soon the heaven was black with clouds and wind, and there was a great rain. The hand of providence was there to provide.

When Christ came to Bethsaida, they brought a blind man and implored Him to touch him. "And he took the blind man by the hand, and led him out of the town; and when he had spit on his eyes, and put his hands upon him, he asked him if he saw ought. And he looked up, and said, I see men as trees, walking." (Mark 8:23-24) Later Christ placed his hands again upon his eyes and he saw every man clearly.

Simon's wife's mother felt the same healing power in these hands when she lay sick of a fever. For Jesus came to her and lifted her up by the hands. Immediately the fever left and she ministered unto those in the household. Now the incarnate hands of Christ had come to heal.

In Revelation, John saw the Son of Man in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks and when he saw him, fell at his feet as dead. Immediately Christ laid his right hand upon him and commanded him to write the things he had seen, the things which are and the things which shall be hereafter. Now the hand of that glorious body sitting at the right hand of the Majesty on

High had raised a mortal to write the secrets of time.

The hands of Christ were human hands; they walked the earthly trail, felt heat and cold, gripped plane and saw, handled food, held children close. But look again . . . for they were also divine. They held and still hold a power man cannot know; give sight to the blind, unstopped the ears of the deaf, pass through closed doors, move mountains, dwell in the presence of God. What a mystery! Such hands — unrefutable evidence of the fulness of the Godhead bodily.

“For he is our God; and we are the people of his pasture, and the sheep of his hand.” (Ps. 95:7) Indeed our times are in his hand even the soul of every living thing, and the breath of all mankind. Also the deep places of the earth are held by him and the heart of a king is at his disposal.

With these same hands Jesus took bread, blessed it and broke it and gave it to the disciples saying, “Take, eat; this is my body.” (Matt. 26:26) To John in Revelation, Christ appeared holding seven stars in his right hand which are the angels of the seven churches. Later he proved the only one worthy to take the book from the right hand of the one who sat upon the throne and to loose the seals thereof.

When he comes again a sharp sickle will be in his hand to reap the harvest; balances to judge the nations and a fan to thoroughly purge his floor. But his people receive comfort from the words of Isaiah which read, “Thou shalt also be a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God.” (Is. 62:3) When we contemplate the power of his hands and the efficacy of his work it is little wonder that we fellowship David who said, “Into thine hand I commit my spirit: thou hast redeemed me, O Lord God of truth.” (Ps. 31:5)

Isaiah felt the security of the hand of God when he said “. . . in the shadow of his hand hath he hid me . . .” (Is. 49:2) Of a like mind was David in

saying “. . . and thy right hand hath holden me up.” (Ps. 18:35) But his people especially realize his love when he declares unto them “. . . I have graven thee upon the palms of my hands . . .” (Is. 49:16) Because of the nail prints in his hands, his people wave palm branches of victory in their hands for this is he “who hath measured the waters in the hollow of his hand, and meted out heaven with the span, and comprehended the dust of the earth in a measure, and weighed the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance.” (Is. 40:12)

The same hands are ever present with his people today. Sometimes they seem to be set in anger against them, sometimes heavily upon them . . . but always to their ultimate benefit. We know that none can stay these hands for they are all powerful. We know that none can pluck his people out of these hands. We know that at his right hand there are pleasures forever more. We know that his people receive double at his hand for all their sins.

The same hands that were nailed to the cross that his people might have life and have it more abundantly are constantly our stay . . . his left hand under our head and his right hand embracing us. One touch of these hands upon our shoulder accompanied by the words “Arise, O ye of little faith,” or “Be still and know that I am God” is sufficient to make us willing in the day of his power and thankful to fall before him as Thomas did crying, “My Lord and my God.”

Humbly,
Stewart McColl

VOICES OF THE PAST
“He being dead yet speaketh”

Weedmore, Pa., July 6, 1879.

DEARLY BELOVED BROTHER BEEBE —

If one so unworthy may be allowed thus to address you: — To-day, while

reading the SIGNS for July first, my heart was so drawn out in love to the dear people of God scattered through this unfriendly world, I was constrained I trust from heartfelt love, to take up my pen, and tell them how my heart has been made to rejoice in reading their rich communications. Your last editorial, "Be Pitiful, be Courteous," I think all we who name the name of Christ should ponder well, for it was rich. I do not know how I could do without our dear paper; I feel that I would rather curtail the necessaries of life than to do without it. I meet with some Baptists who say, These religious papers should be put down. I cannot see how those who profess to love the people of God can say so. It is written, "They that feared the Lord spake often one to another; and the Lord harkened, and heard it: and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord, and that thought upon his name." O what a blessed thought! When we are not able to express the emotions of our hearts, he knows our thoughts. How are we to hear from the dear people of God in these low grounds of sorrow, but through this medium? I believe it is among the greatest enjoyments with which the people of God are blessed while journeying here below, to converse with and hear from each other. It is said, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." I think sometimes that I should despair, if it were not for these blessed words.

Dear Elder, has the world that love for God's people? If it is not asking too much, I would be glad to hear from you on that point. It has caused me much trouble, for fear my love may not be the right kind. I know you can speak a word of comfort to those who are cast down.

I must stop, for my writing looks so poor and imperfect that I am ashamed of it; still I felt a strong impulse to write, and let you know how welcome your paper is. Now, dear aged brother,

may the God of all comfort be with you, and support and uphold you under all the sore trials which you have to encounter, and I know they are many. And if it be his will, may he spare you yet many years, for there is no one that can fill your place. I do firmly believe that the dear Lord has raised you up and sustained you these many years for the very position you fill; and when it is his will to call you to pass through the valley and shadow of death, may his presence be with you there, is the prayer of one who feels to be much less than the least, if one at all.

Do with this as you see proper, and all will be right.

J. F. VARNIS.

IS MINE THE RIGHT
KIND OF LOVE?

Reply to Brother J. F. Varnis.

God's people, above all other people, are exceedingly jealous of themselves; and as they have no confidence in the flesh, they are fearful of being misled by the deceitfulness of sin which still dwells in their fleshly nature. Hence there are times with them when their anxious inquiry is, "Do I love the Lord with the love which is peculiar to his own dear people, and on which it is safe for me to rely as evidence of having passed from death unto life?"

"We know that there is a passion of our earthly nature which is called love, and which is common to all the human family; and christians fear at times that their affectionate regard for those whom they esteem as the people of God is only of that kind which is natural and common to all our race. Satan, ever ready to tempt the sons of God to distrust the love of God which is shed abroad in their hearts, says, Doth Job serve for naught? is not my love and service carnal, selfish, and of the earth, earthly? But God has graciously provided some characteristic marks in his

word by which, when applied by the Spirit, the saints may determine whether they possess the love of God or not. John calls upon the sons of God to "Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed." It is *bestowed* on the saints by God the Father, through Jesus Christ our Lord. It comes from God, not through the earthly Adam, but through Jesus Christ; and is developed in us, not by a fleshly birth, but by being born of the Spirit. "We love God, because he first loved us." This love is the same in its nature when *bestowed*, as it was in God before we received it; and therefore all who possess it will love the things which are loved and approved of God, and hate the things he hates.

God loves his people in Christ with an everlasting love, and therefore the saints will also love them also with a pure heart fervently. "By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and keep his commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments; and his commandments are not grievous. For whatsoever is born of God, overcometh the world: and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." — 1 John v. 2-4.

Again, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. He that loveth not his brother, abideth in death. Whosoever hateth his brother is a murderer; and ye know that no murderer hath eternal life abiding in him. Hereby perceive we the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. But whoso hath this world's goods, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him, how dwelleth the love of God in him? My little children, let us not love in word, neither in tongue, but in deed and in truth." — 1 John iii. 14-18. If we love him that begat, we shall love them who are begotten of him; and if we truly love them, it will be mani-

festated in deeds and truth, not in mere words of profession. Jesus our Lord has said, "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another." — John xiii. 34, 35.

If then we truly love God and our brethren, the commands of God will not be grievous or irksome, but pleasant and delightful. Not always pleasant to the flesh, for the flesh must be denied, mortified and crucified; but to the *new man*, which is born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God, the yoke of Christ is easy and his burden is light, when the love of God rules in our heart. The love of God, of truth, and of the peculiar government of Christ, is by the new birth implanted in all the children of God; but the enmity of the flesh still remains in our fleshly members which are on the earth, to oppose the reign of Christ, and will remain as long as we continue in the flesh, or until God shall change our vile body, and fashion it like the glorious risen body of our dear Redeemer. The love of God in his children is fraternal, unselfish and generous; it comes from God, and rises gratefully to him again.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe in reply to Brother Varns.)

JOHN 6:44, 45

"No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him: and I will raise him up at the last day. It is written in the prophets, and they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me."

(John 6:44-45)

There is a prayer in our heart that God will bless us to meditate upon the beauty that is contained in the text. There is not a fleshly motive involved, but solely for the motive that the Holy Name of the Lord may be praised. All

the honor, praise, and glory belongs unto the Lord.

"No man can come to me." If there was no exception to this general statement, then none would be saved, and eternal destruction would face all of mankind. "As it is written, there is none righteous, no, not one. There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one." (Rom. 3:10-12) Man by nature does not even have the desire to seek after God. By nature, man has pleasure in unrighteousness, has pleasure in the things of this world. ". . . If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." (1 John 2:15) (see also 2 Thess. 2:12)

"But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep." (John 10:26) Only the sheep do believe from the heart because God has taught them. "But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost." (2 Cor. 4:3)

It is impossible for natural man to come to Jesus. "And ye will not come to me, that ye might have life." (John 5:40) Man will not come or believe in Jesus until grace has touched his heart. ". . . For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray him." (John 6:64)

We believe the expression "come to me" means believe in Jesus, look and pray to him for mercy, depend upon him for strength, all your needs, guidance, etc. You come to Jesus or believe in Jesus by the eye of faith. There must be a witness within before you can believe. The witness is Christ within you the hope of Glory. The expression "come to me" does not mean meet one another in the flesh as we meet one another as we dwell upon this earth.

There were many during Christ's time that did not believe in him. "He came unto his own, and his own received him not." (John 1:11) The ones that believed in Jesus were no more intelligent than the others. There was

no difference by nature. "Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and *were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.*" (Eph. 2:2-3) The difference is that God chose many and left the others out. This is the business of God, and it behooves us as mortal man to not attempt to meddle into God's business. ". . . Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid. For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion." (Rom. 9:14-15)

The ones that come to Jesus or believe in Jesus have been drawn by the Father. "*Except the Father which hath sent me draw him.*" Someone might say, "You mean to tell me that God draws some against their will?" We answer that God's people will be made willing at the appointed time to believe in Jesus. They believe because the witness is within and they rejoice in Jesus. "Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound . . ." (Psalms 89:15) "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power." (Psalms 110:3) Why is this sound joyful? You are blessed to know it. In order to know it, you must experience something about just why and how this sound is joyful. We think of this as the gospel sound. This is good news from a far country. This is news that a poor, undone sinner longs for, and he rejoices in hearing it. Notice the sweet welcome of Jesus, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your soul. For my yoke is easy and my burden is light." (Matt. 11:28-30) These words are sweet to those that know something about the yoke of the law. This yoke

of the law is heavy and hard to carry. The poor one realizes that the law demands everything and gives nothing. There is not any mercy in the law. "He that despised Moses's law died without mercy under two or three witnesses." (Heb. 10:28) The law demands perfection. It is a perfect law, and it is good and holy. The weakness is the flesh trying to keep the law. "For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all." (James 2:10)

How miserable it is for one to keep trying to keep the law, and the harder he works, the deeper he sinks. "I sink in deep mire, where there is no standing . . ." (Psalms 69:2) The gospel is good news to one who is weary and heavy laden from the yoke of the law. Salvation is free, and how sweet is the 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."

The Father draws all of the elect in due time. This shows the power of God, and God did not leave this up to man to teach others to know the Lord. ". . . They shall be all taught of God . . ." (John 6:45) God does the teaching to his people. ". . . *I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts . . .*" (Heb. 8:10) ". . . *I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them.*" (Heb. 10:16)

Please meditate carefully upon these two Scriptures, as they give proof that true religion is of the heart. Religion is felt within. It is heart-felt! God's people believe from the heart. Therefore a head knowledge will not stand the fiery trials that God's people have to pass through. One with only a head religion reminds me of these that receive the seed or the word of the Lord into stony places. "But he that received the seed into stony places, the same is he that heareth the word, and anon with joy receiveth it; Yet hath he not root in himself, but dureth for a while:

for when tribulation or persecution ariseth because of the word, by and by he is offended." (Matt. 13:20-21) Notice carefully that the stony hearers do not have root in themselves. God's people are rooted in Jesus Christ. "That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love." (Eph. 3:17)

In the parable of the sower, we note that only the seed that was sown in the good ground brought forth fruit. We believe this good ground represents the elect who have been prepared by God to receive the preached word with an understanding heart. "The preparations of the heart in man, and the answer of the tongue, is from the Lord." (Proverbs 16:1)

It is the work of the Holy Ghost to teach the elect. The Holy Ghost dwells in the hearts of God's people in this day and time. "And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; Even the Spirit of truth; *whom the world cannot receive*, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you." (John 14:16-17) The spirit of truth is what teaches you, and you shall be taught. The comforter or Holy Ghost did not come until after Jesus departed. "If I go not away, the comforter will not come unto you . . ." (John 16:7)

A natural teacher may know the subject well and explain it to the class well, but everyone may not understand it. It is not the teacher's fault, because the student did not have the intelligence to understand or may not have his mind on the class. Now, God gives his people the intelligence or wisdom to understand his teaching. "I speak as to wise men; judge ye what I say." (1 Cor. 10:15) "But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." (1 Cor. 1:30) God has made you wise in spiritual things by revealing them unto you. "But God hath revealed them unto us by his

spirit: for the spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God." (1 Cor. 2:10)

Paul received this doctrine by revelation, and all of God's people receive this doctrine by revelation — God reveals himself to his people in this day and time. God does not change. Fashion, science, medicine, etc. change, but the religion of God does not change. The truth is the truth, and there is no twisting it around. "For I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." (Malachi 3:6)

Why does this doctrine seem to be plain to us, and in the flesh it seems that just anybody could see it that way? We should be thankful to the Lord for this sweet revelation, and thank him for this wisdom to see the doctrine so clearly. This preaching of the cross is foolish to the world. It is foolish because they have not been revealed the beauty of this preaching. "The preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God." (1 Cor. 1:18) "We believe according to the working of his mighty power." (Eph. 1:19)

"I will raise him up at the last day." In order to be raised up, then first one must be down. We believe this has reference to the resurrection of the body. These bodies may lie in the grave for many years, and go back to the dust, but God is able to raise the bodies and fashion them like unto the glorious body of Jesus Christ. "As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness." (Psalms 17:15)

We believe that the glorious day will come in the future when the bodies of the saints shall be raised up with spiritual bodies like unto Jesus. "It is sown a natural body; it is raised a Spiritual body. There is a natural body, and there is a Spiritual body." (1 Cor. 15:44)

The promise of God will stand, and God is not slack concerning his promises. (see 2 Peter 3:9) Take courage dear ones, and wait patiently for the

Lord.

"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. Wherefore comfort one another with these words." (1 Thess. 4:16-18)

W. W. Hudson, Jr.
208 Frederick St.
Bastrop, La. 71220

OBITUARIES

DANIEL OWEN WALKER

The Lord has seen fit to call another from our church roll, Brother Daniel O. Walker, October 15, 1974. He was born in Franklin County, Virginia, January 12, 1919, a son of the late John M. and Geneva A. Walker.

On October 28, 1915 he married Garnett Doss, who survives, also two sons, Daniel E. Walker of Martinsville, Va., and Richard A. Walker of Sutherlin, Virginia; two daughters: Mrs. Celia Redd of Orlando, Fla. and Mrs. Cindy Thompson of Martinsville; four brothers: Sherman H. Walker of Durham, N. C., Billy Walker of Martinsville, and J. Hardin and Jack M. Walker both of Rocky Mount, Va.; six sisters: Mesdames Lora Doss, Rachel Jefferson, Nancy Lea and Jane Carter, all of Danville, Va., and Esther Dillon and Matilda Amos, both of Rocky Mount, Va.

Brother Walker was a firm believer in Salvation by Grace. He was a quiet man of few words. His favorite hymn was, "Amazing Grace."

May the Lord comfort the family and loved ones, and we be blessed to say, "The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh."

The funeral was held in Barker Funeral Home by Elders R. S. Payne, P. L. Plybon and O. K. Tench, with interment in the Doss Family Cemetery at Museville, Va.

BE IT RESOLVED, that a copy of this obituary be sent the family, one to the *Signs of the Times* for publication, and one put on our church record.

Done by order of Strawberry Church December 1, 1974. Read and approved by the church January 5, 1975.

Elder R. S. Payne, Mod.
Josephine N. Dodd, Clerk

LULA H. BARROW

Sister Lula Hill Barrow, an Edgecombe County native, was received into Pleasant Hill Church June 25, 1949. She was faithful to quietly fill her seat each meeting unless providently hindered. Her humble manner and the unworthy feeling she always expressed is an indication to us that she is one of His saints.

Born April 23, 1905 she travelled her allotted course for 69 years. On October 15, 1974 she was called from this world of woes. Her funeral was conducted at Johnson Funeral Home by her pastor, Elder Henry Jones assisted by Mr. Everette Marion. She left to mourn her passing one son, Wiley E. Barrow and one daughter, Mrs. Charles L. Walston of Rocky Mount, N. C., four grandchildren, one great grandchild, one sister and one brother.

Her body was laid to rest in Pineview Cemetery to await the second coming of Christ, at which time she had a sweet hope He would call her to abide in His heavenly tabernacle.

Done by order of conference, Pleasant Hill Church, Saturday, November 23, 1974.

RESOLVED, that a copy of this obituary be placed on the church records, one sent to the family, and one to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

J. Carroll Williams, Clerk

SISTER NECIE COX

Sister Necie was born in Floyd Conuty, Va. February 10, 1898, daughter of Sherman A. and Margaret Hollandsworth. She was the widow of Luther Cox, who died in 1938, and was a widow for some thirty-six years. She united with the church in 1926. She passed from this life November 6, 1974. Her journey here in this world was seventy-six years, eight months and twenty-six days.

She is survived by five daughters: Sister Nettie Duncan, Sister Dorcie Semones, Sister Mable Carey, Sister French Hogan and Sister Mary Marshal. Two sons: Brother Jack W. Cox and Herbert Cox. Four sisters: Mrs Vettie Harris, Mrs. Mazie Phillips, Mrs. Evelyn Duncan and Mrs. Blanche Gardner. Two brothers: Brother Clive Hollandsworth and Brother Martin Hollandsworth; twenty-seven grandchildren and twenty-two great grandchildren.

Even though her life was filled with many trials and tribulations, she never lost the faith. Her warm smile and tender loving kindness will long be remembered by those who loved her. It can rightly be said that she was truly a mother in Israel.

Sister Necie's home was one in which you could feel the warmth of brotherly love around

you.

She believed in salvation by grace and loved to hear it preached, and the creature works left out. Her faithful attendance at Union Church and various other meeting places was proof of her love for this doctrine, and to be assembled with God's humble poor.

I feel that our loss is her eternal gain.

Her funeral was conducted by Elder B. O. Thompson, our former pastor and Elder Hale Terry, our present pastor. She was laid to rest under a beautiful mound of flowers in Cox Cemetery, Indian Valley, Va. to await the glorious resurrection, when all the redeemed shall forever be with the Lord.

Elder Hale Terry, Moderator
Larry Hollandsworth, Clerk

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

It has pleased our Heavenly Father to remove from our midst our dear Brother Frank Lynch. He was born November 23, 1893 and died September 25, 1974, making his stay on earth 80 years. Brother Frank was blessed to join our church, along with his wife, on July 7, 1968, and was a faithful member until his death. He seemed to love the brethren, and to know him was to love him. He always carried a smile and it was a great pleasure to have him among us. He was a believer of salvation by grace and he realized that God had all power and without him we can do nothing. He felt that God was a merciful God.

In this respect we the church at Tarboro resolve:

1. That we send our sincere sympathy to the family, for we feel our loss is his eternal gain. We feel he is resting in peace with God, where all trials and tribulations have ended.
2. That three copies of this respect be made: one for the family; one for the church records; and one be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

This done in order of our November meeting.

Elder D. B. Stokes, Moderator
John H. Coker, Clerk

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

It has pleased our Heavenly Father to remove from our midst, Sister Nan Hathaway. She was blessed to live on earth for 85 years. Sister Nan was always a believer of salvation by grace, and God blessed her to unite with our church on May 7, 1972. She was a faithful member and attended church every chance she could. She always said it gave her strength to come to church, for she enjoyed

seeing the members and friends which made her forget her pains. To know Sister Hatha-way was to love her. She was always praising God for his blessings and thanking him for his goodness and mercy.

Therefore we the church at Tarboro resolve:
1. That we send our sincere sympathy to the family, for we feel she is resting with God awaiting the resurrection. We feel our loss is her eternal gain.

2. That three copies of this respect be made: one for the family; one for the church records; and one to be published in the *Signs of the Times*.

This done by order of our December meeting.

Elder D. B. Stokes, Moderator
John H. Coker, Clerk

SISTER CALLIE WILSON

It has pleased the Lord to call from our midst Sister Callie Wilson. She was born January 22, 1891 and passed away October 7, 1974 at Pine Haven Rest Home in Henderson, N. C. after many months of declining health, making her stay on earth 83 years.

She was the daughter of the late T. M. and Rebecca Slaughter Arrington. She united with Gooch Memorial Church August 14, 1960, and was baptized Sunday, September 11, 1960. She was married December 27, 1914 to Charlie J. Wilson, who survives; also, one son, William A. Wilson; two sisters, Miss Pattie Arrington, Mrs. Rassie A. Wilson; one brother, Robert G. Arrington, all of Oxford.

It is sad to part with those we love. May we bow in humble submission to God who doeth all things after the counsel of his own will. Sister Callie was a humble and lovely person with a winning personality. Her sunny disposition won for her many friends. The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away. Blessed be his Holy Name. David says, "Blessed in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints."

Her funeral was conducted at G. T. Eakes Funeral Home at 2:30 Wednesday, October 9, 1974 by Elder Donald Smith and Mr. Harvey Beeler. She was laid to rest at Banks Methodist Church.

Ordained in conference November 9, 1974.

Elder Donald Smith, Moderator
Annie C. Gregory, Church Clerk

Humbly Submitted,
Nancy B. Allen

ZENA MONTGOMERY DENNY

At the request of Hillsdale Primitive Baptist Church, I will endeavor to write a few words as a memorial to Zena Montgomery Den-

ny, a beloved friend and sister in Christ, I hope.

Sister Denny was called from her earthly home on November 5, 1974. Funeral services were held at Hillsdale Primitive Baptist Church with Elders D. A. O'Bryant and Thornton Manley officiating. Interment followed in the church cemetery. Surviving are three sisters, Mrs. Janie Oliver, Mrs. Gladys Houston, Mrs. Vera Simson, and one brother, Ambrose Montgomery, all of Greensboro, North Carolina.

She was born to Ferre Wingate and Maude Powell Montgomery in Rockingham County, September 28, 1903. She was united in marriage February 4, 1923 to Deacon Jacob M. Denny who preceded her in death approximately five months.

Sister Denny was baptized into the fellowship of Hillsdale Church in December, 1927 by her pastor, Elder George Trent. She was a firm believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace. She loved her Church and expressed her love for all the saints of true Israel, whether she knew them or not. She rejoiced in the fellowship of those who had voiced their belief in the same doctrine and felt she had been given a divine hope by Almighty God.

The last day of her earthly life was spent in our home and she expressed her belief that God was able to care for her and He would do so according to His will and purpose. Many times during visits with us she spoke of the many blessings God had bestowed upon her during her lifetime and she hoped she had been thankful for them.

The Church and her many friends will miss her deeply, but very humbly, we hope to be forever submissive to the will of our Heavenly Father in all things, for we know He doeth all things well.

We cannot help but feel as with the saints of old, "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning," and that Sister Denny has been blessed to enter into that joy that shall never cease.

Written by a friend,

Mary C. Knight

Done by order of Conference on Saturday before the second Sunday in November, 1974.

Elder D. A. O'Bryant, Moderator
Florence B. Knight, Clerk

LETHEA ANN BEENE

We bow in humble submission to the will of our God, who saw fit on October 20, 1974 to call our precious Sister Lethea Ann Beene to her eternal rest. She was born April 19, 1886 at Percilla, Texas. She married at the young age of fourteen, and to this union five children were born. Her husband died in 1914. She married the late Elder W. O. Beene in

1925. Two children were born to this union.

Sister Beene united with the Old School Primitive Baptist Church July 3, 1909 at Dickens Prairie, Texas. In later years she moved her membership to Shepherd Fold Church, Houston, Texas, when the church was constituted there. She was the last charter member. A precious sister of over 65 years suffered many trials in this time world, which we rather feel strengthened her faith in the amazing grace of her God. Though we are separated from her, we feel she is sweetly resting in the love of her God. Our fond hope is to meet beyond the silent tomb.

She leaves to mourn her passing three daughters, three sons, 15 grandchildren, 8 great grandchildren, and a host of other relatives and friends. She was laid to rest near Teague, Texas to await the call of the Saviour, "Come ye blessed of my Father."

Humbly submitted by request of Shepherd Fold Church.

C. M. Haygood

SEPTEMBER 22, 1974

PLEASANT HILL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST
CHURCH

ORDINATION OF BROTHER ALVIN
LANCASTER AS DEACON OF PLEASANT
HILL PRIMITIVE CHURCH

A Presbytery was called composed of Elder Henry C. Jones; Elder D. B. Stokes and Elder J. T. Prescott: with the following Deacons; Bro. Clyde Pridgen; Bro. George Pearson; Bro. W. E. Lupton; Bro. Amos Williams; Bro. John Williams; Bro. Rufus Jackson and Bro. M. D. Simmons, Sr.

Moved and agreed for the Presbytery to go into conference. Moved and agreed for Elder Henry C. Jones to act as Moderator. Moved and agreed for Elder Prescott to open conference with song and prayer. Moved and agreed to call Sister Nina Pearson as Clerk.

Bro. Alvin Lancaster and wife were presented to the Presbytery by Bro. Carrol Williams, Deacon of Pleasant Hill Primitive Baptist Church; to be questioned; examined; lay hands on him and turn him back to the Church as an ordained Deacon.

Elder Stokes charged the candidate, that God is the only authority you can look to. Look upon the Bible as your guide line. Make decisions prayerfully; do not be persuaded by anyone; be submissive to the brethren and your church. Serve this church as a servant. You can not serve the church without a good woman behind you. Both of you be swift to hear and slow to speak. You are a servant of the most high God. Serve your brethren and church humbly; go to the Lord in prayer. To the

Church; do not tie his hands, work together.

Elder Prescott: Thankful that the questions have been answered, and is satisfied with the brother. Thank God for such gifts; to his companion; may God bless you to fulfill this office. Remember there will be many crosses to bear. May God bless you and your companion to walk together humbly and prayerfully as the burden rests on the companion.

Elder Jones: By experience knows that it is to be in this place. There are times we don't know what to say or which way to turn. We have to stand still and wait upon the Lord. It is not an easy road to travel By the Grace of God we have been blessed to have companions to stand by us. May God lead you in the right way. He will come to your rescue.

The Presbytery laid hands on the candidate in prayer.

The minutes were read and approved.

Moved and agreed a copy of the minutes be presented to Pleasant Hill Primitive Baptist Church.

The Presbytery returned the candidate back to the church as an ordained Deacon.

Moved and agreed conference to adjourn.

Elder Henry C. Jones, Moderator
Nina Pearson, Clerk

MINUTES OF THE PRESBYTERY

On Saturday before the first Sunday in September, 1974, the Mill Branch Church met in Conference, and agreed that we ask that Brother John Williams be set apart to the office of Deacon; and the ordination service was set for Sunday morning at 10:30.

On Sunday morning September 1, 1974 the church met and conference was opened by Elder Harvey Holland. The Presbytery was organized by electing Elder Holland, Moderator, and Sister Estelle Joyner Cockrell, Clerk. Ministers and deacons present were invited to seats with us in the service.

The Moderator called for the candidate, who was presented by Deacons Amos Williams and Leon Griffin, and he was seated in front of the ministers: Elder Harvey Holland and Kenneth Windham.

The Presbytery being satisfied with the qualifications of the candidate, administered the laying on of hands and prayer. The charge was delivered by Elder Harvey Holland.

The ordained Deacon was delivered back to the church as a deacon of the Primitive Old School Baptist Church at Mill Branch, and the right hand of fellowship was extended to him.

A copy of this is to be recorded in the Church Book, and a copy sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Estelle Joyner Cockrell, Clerk
Elder Harvey Holland, Mod.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 143

DANVILLE, VA., APRIL, 1975

NO. 4

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 4/75
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

STIRRING UP THE PURE MIND

807 Pope Street,
Memphis, Tenn. 38112

Dear Elder Wood and all Editors:

The January *Signs* was so very good, and I wish I felt able in my weak way, to tell you some of the reasons it seemed especially good.

The things, or should I say the points of doctrine, were brought out so clearly the way I understand them. It did what Peter desired to do, "Stir up the pure minds." If I have this pure mind, (my hope is that I do), these words of love seem to stir this same love in us, causing us to desire and beg that God would enable us to adhere to these exhortations the Apostles are writing to them, and to us. We know the flesh, and if we have been born of the Spirit, we know that without Him we can do nothing: for we very well know what the flesh and its desires are. The Apostles did too, yet for love's sake they felt to encourage us to put off these fleshly lusts — Elder Beebe quoted Peter: they wish their brethren to see good days and love life.

I believe these things are just as needful to be brought to our minds attention, as other portions of scripture. Someone might say, "You have the Holy Scriptures, read them." We also have the scriptures telling us Christ has died,

and put away the sins of His people, but look how eager we are to go to where a minister tells us again and again about it.

"It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe. God, knowing all things from the beginning, knew who would be saved and how they would be saved. Yet it pleased Him to send ministers to preach these things to them: so He called them to that end.

Paul said his preaching was in demonstration of the Spirit and of power. Surely it was by the prompting of that same Spirit that he wrote the epistles.

The articles by Elder Campbell and Elder Beebe were so in line with each other it seemed to me,—and so exactly the way I have thought about it, and have wondered why these things were not talked among us. I wondered if I was weak and not sound in my rightly dividing the word of truth. I marked circles around paragraphs in Elder Beebe's article until I have almost circled his whole article.

Now I know, as I said before, that we are not able in and of ourselves to just up and say we will do these things, but it surely is our desire to do them, and somehow to have them brought to our minds, realizing that the Apostle Paul loved the brethren and was thinking of their welfare, gives one a little hope that we too need to be mindful of these more than we are — and that leads us to pray that the Lord would give us *the will* and *the do*, and draw us closer and fill our minds and hearts with zeal.

We know by many past experiences, that without His Spirit we grow cold, lukewarm, dull of hearing, and are subject to vanity, and we neglect the things

we desire to do. Our tongue speaks things that cause hurt, and we know that this is not good, and we also know there is a good way, and we pray for the return of that sweet spirit of love and and the fruits thereof.

Elder Wood, I had this written when your letter came, saying you would print Elder Griffin's letter to me in April. I understand and know you have much to do in getting out the paper. I trust your judgment about printing anything I send you. There are so many things I would love to ask you, but I know your time is taken up.

I am sending check for two year's renewal — use the rest as you need it.

In love and fellowship I hope,
Mrs. Lucille Young

BLESSED WITH AN EXPERIENCE OF GRACE

531 Jenks Blvd.,
Kalamazoo, Mich. 49007

Dear Elder Spangler:

I've wanted to write you for some-time, but when I endeavor to do so, I feel so poor in spirit, only God knows my poverty in spiritual things. I am so thankful the Lord said, "Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

I truly believe that, "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the Kingdom of God." I believe that this new-birth is brought about by the Spirit of God in the heart of man. It could never be brought about by any operation pertaining to the flesh, because, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit, is Spirit." (John 3:6) If a man could voluntarily of his own free will bring about his new birth, or that of another, he would have no need for God, Christ, or the Holy Spirit.

I do not know whether I am saved or not, for I have no record that God chose me in his covenant of grace before the foundation of the world, or that my name is written in the Lamb's Book of

Life; but I do know at the age of eleven something happened that made me a different person. I could see and feel that I had suddenly become different, though I couldn't understand it. Then at the age of twenty I was blessed with a very vivid and beautiful experience of grace. I could say with Jacob, "The Lord was in the place and I knew it not."

I love the doctrine of an all powerful God that does his will in heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. The world teaches that Adam was a free moral agent, and that all his posterity after him are free moral agents, and that they can voluntarily of their own free will, accept or reject eternal life. I do not believe that Adam was a free moral agent, any more than I believe that man now is a free moral agent to accept or reject things pertaining to God.

God said, "But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it." He did not stop there but also said, "For in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." (Genesis 2:17) The last part of the above is one indication to me that God knew that Adam and Eve would eat of the forbidden tree. Had God actually wanted, desired, and intended that Adam not eat of the tree, and Adam ate of it contrary and in spite of God's wishes, I would have to conclude that Adam was and is practically the equal of God, and on that case he could of his own free will and accord, accept or reject the things pertaining to God. I could never, never subscribe to that kind of doctrine.

When God made Adam and Eve, he blessed them, and said, "Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth." (Gen. 1:28) He also gave them every herb bearing seed, fruit tree, beast of the earth, and fowl of the air, "upon the face of the earth," and He said, "To you it shall be

for meat." God must have known that Adam and Eve would eat of the forbidden tree, and be driven out of the Garden of Eden, for he had already made preparations for them on the outside before he ever said, "Thou shalt not eat of it."

We hear God say, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness." Evidently there was someone present with God even before man was formed of the dust of the ground. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." (John 1:1) We also hear Jesus say, "And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self with the same glory which I had with thee before the world was." (John 17:5) I truly believe that Christ was with the Father before Adam was ever formed of the earth, I believe that Jesus Christ was just as much the Saviour at that time, as he was when he hung on Calvary's cross.

Now, if Adam had not partaken of the forbidden fruit, he would have lived on forever in the Garden of Eden, and all the herbs, fruits of the trees, beasts of the fields, etc., that were made for Adam and his posterity, would have been uselessly created. If Adam had not partaken of the forbidden fruit, God would have had a Saviour on his hands with nothing to do.

Our God is too loving to be unkind and is too wise to make mistakes. It is man who makes the mistakes and tries to put our all wise, loving heavenly Father equal with man. There is nothing like unto our God. In the 15th chapter, 16th verse of the gospel according to John, we read, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that ye should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain." God never has nor ever will need man to help him do anything. He even said that he didn't need man to praise him, for he could cause the stones to cry out in praise to his name.

We had better be praising and thanking God continually for being so good and merciful to a portion of mankind,

to choose them in his Son before there was ever any substance of them. Therefore we can truly say, "It is not of works lest any man should boast." It is "by grace that we are saved and that not of our selves, it is the gift of God." These people who are always wanting to help God, are really in a sad state. The Lord says, that the world is the Lord's and the fullness thereof: the world and they that dwell therein. For He has founded it upon the seas and established it upon the flood. This is the same Lord whom David said was his Shepherd, and therefore he confidently declared, "I shall not want." It is the same one who, "Maketh me to lie down in green pastures, who leadeth me beside the still waters." It is not left to the whims or descretion of God's sheep as to where they shall feed and lie down, or whether they shall lie down at all, for He, the great Shepherd of the sheep, works in them both to will and to do of His good pleasure.

He first prepares them for that which he has prepared for them, so that they are not only willing but anxious to be led and fed in the day of His power. He quickens them from the dead and makes them new or living creatures, requiring living food, which is signified by green pastures. Green typifies life, and neither is it left as a matter of choice with them as to what they shall do, whether they shall obey or disobey, for David said, "He maketh me to lie down in green pastures."

We understand from this that he was not a free moral agent to do as he pleased, but he was made to lie down in green pastures, and neither do I believe that any violence was offered to his spiritual mind or will in so doing, for the word which God had sent forth into his heart had prospered in the thing, and had accomplished the purpose whereto God had sent it, and being weary and heavy laden, his very soul leaped for joy at the thought of being able to lie down and rest in the pasture which the Shepherd and Bishop of his soul had, in his infinite wisdom, ap-

pointed for him, "He leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake," says David. It was not for David's sake, or because of anything he had done, or might at a future time do, but all for the glorifying of Himself and the lifting of the name of Jesus on high, or in other words, For his own name's sake. Therefore says David, "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."

O how blessed we are to have been taught in the "school of Christ," the high privilege and joy in believing in a crucified Christ, the wonderful experience of being blessed to know the King of Kings and Lord of Lords, the great joy of seeing the Holy Scriptures open up to the account of our Jesus the friend of sinners!

Please pray for me Elder Spangler, that I will be kept at the foot of the cross, ever looking unto Jesus who is the author and finisher of our faith, please pray for my precious daughter, Anne, who is very ill with pulmonary edema. She is a real true Primitive Baptist. Anne is all I've got since I lost my husband in 1967. I have three other children but Anne is the only one single, and we live together.

Thank you so very much. Love to all the dear saints of God, from one whose love is in the Lord.

Mary M. Pearson

"A LETTER FROM MY MASTER'S
SERVANTS"

Rt. 87, Box 126,
Shady Spring, W. Va. 28918

Dear Editors:

I see my subscription is past due, and you will find a check enclosed for renewal.

Let me say to one and all, may the Lord enable you to keep the good work up, writing, preaching, and contending

for the faith once delivered to the saints, that the *Signs* will be around a long time yet, for it is a letter from my Master's servants, crying that salvation is of the Lord, and it puts man where he belongs — to claim not one single thing to his credit. But does give Christ the honor, the glory and praise for the Hope in our breasts.

May we ever view Christ's merits as the pleading cause of our Salvation. My infirmities have overtaken me, so I will close.

May the Lord bless you.
Wallace Harvey

Route 4, Box 157
Quitman, Ms. 39355

Dear Editors,

Please find enclosed an article written by Isaac Backus (first Baptist historian in America) in 1773 on the *Sovereign Decrees of God*. I searched for several years for this historic document after finding it mentioned in early Backus manuscripts and found it in the John C. Stennis collection at Mississippi State University in a colonial-plantation library.

If you feel the readers of the SIGNS would appreciate it, please feel free in printing it.

Yours in hope
Stanley C. Phillips

THE SOVEREIGN DECREES
OF GOD

Boston, 1773

by
Isaac Backus

This was written by Isaac Backus to a friend in response to a paper entitled *On Traditionary Zeal* which was circulated in Providence, R. I. and vicinity in 1773, by another denomination as a reproach against the doctrine of Particular Election and Efficacious Grace in our salvation; and against

those who preached it.

This is an able exposition of the doctrine, and is worth a careful reading and comparison with the Scriptures by our readers. — EDITORS

Beloved Friend,

Although we should endeavor to avoid all needless contention, yet the *faith once delivered to the saints* is sometimes treated in such a manner as to make it our incumbent duty *earnestly* and publicly to *contend for it*. Such a case I think is presented before us by means of a printed paper lately spread in Providence and towns adjacent which you have requested me to make some remarks upon. It begins in this manner.

On Traditionary Zeal. Some good Christian pastors will not scruple to tell you that they could find no joy in their own state, no strength or comfort in their labors of love towards their flocks, but because they know and are assured from St. Paul that God never had, nor ever will have, mercy upon all men; but that an unknown multitude of them are, through all ages of the world, inevitably decreed to the eternal fire and damnation of Hell; and that an unknown number of others are elected to a certain, irresistible salvation. Wonder not, my friends, if the inquisition has its pious defenders, for inquisition, cruelty, and every barbarity that must have an end, is mere mercy if compared with this reprobation doctrine. And to be in love with it, to draw comfort from it, and to wish it Godspeed is a love that absolutely forbids the loving our neighbors as ourselves and makes the Scripture-wish, that all men might be saved, no less than a rebellion against God.

This writer's evident design is against the doctrine of particular election and efficacious grace in our salvation, and against those who preach it. And he takes the same method that the heathen persecutors did with the primitive Christians, viz., to cover them with skins of

wild beasts in order that they might be devoured by dogs, or if not, yet that they might be hated and avoided by all men. He asserts that some Christian pastors tell their people such a story as he has here related. If he can find any man upon earth that teaches so, he is welcome to correct him as much as he deserves, but till he exhibits his proof he ought to be accounted a blasphemer of God's sovereignty and a false accuser of Christ's ministers. Yea, out of his own mouth he is condemned, for as short as his paper is he has not been able to keep to one consistent story, but the same preachers that he accuses of rejoicing that God never will have mercy upon all men, when he comes to give us their own language it is, "O, the sweetness of God's election!" And neither the Devil nor any of his children will ever be able to make a rejoicing in God's *everlasting love to a chosen number* to be the same thing as it would be to rejoice in the destruction of the rest.

Our Lord says, *Every one that doth evil hateth the light, but he that doth truth cometh to the light*; and let the reader judge which of these characters suits the conduct of the writer before us. He casts out these horrid accusations against some good Christian pastors without naming any one, while his evident aim is against all that profess a sweetness in sovereign election; at the same time (like the savages) he tries to keep himself and his principles hid. Though it fares with him as it did with the old enemies of the *sure foundation* which God has laid in *Zion*, whose bed was shorter than a man could stretch upon it, and the covering narrower than that he could wrap himself in it. *Isai.* xxviii. For though by the title of his piece he would have people esteem him as a bold champion against *tradition* and a friend to Paul and the sacred writings, yet he does not so much as attempt to prove that sovereign decrees and irresistible grace are not fully taught by them. No, instead of confusing us or defending himself by the sa-

cred oracles, he, like those who prophesied out of the *deceit in their own hearts*, first makes his address to men's passions and exerts all his art to bring up the horrid ideas of an inevitable decreeing of multitudes to hellfire, of cruelty vastly worse than the *inquisition*, of God's sacrificing of myriads of his creatures to the Devil, etc., and having done his utmost thus to raise a tempest in the souls of men, he winds up by asserting that "The only possible way of avoiding every prevailing error and of finding every saving truth is to listen, solemnly, attentively to listen, agreeable to the written word, to the *still small voice within you*."

This is just like the old serpent who, with malicious reflections upon God's government and lying pretences of friendship to man, drew him into rebellion against God's *revealed will* and to gratify his own *heart's lusts*. Yet from that day to this, when the tempter thinks it will serve his turn, he is very ready to catch at some Scripture words, to entice people into violations of the *truth* which is therein taught.

Let the pretended advocate for the truth now before us mean what he will by the *voice within*, yet when he or any others are brought solemnly and attentively to listen either to reason, conscience, or the Spirit of God they will teach them that the way to avoid error and to find the truth in any case, is not first to inflame our passions before our judgments are well informed. No, for a gift will blind the eyes of the wise and pervert the words of the righteous; therefore we must have our eye single or else our *whole body will be full of darkness*. Hence appears the necessity of the Holy Spirit to renew us in the spirit of our minds and to guide our souls into all truth.

The grand contest ever since sin entered into the world has been between the will of the Creator and the will of the creature. But as it is too shocking for human nature to have it openly appear in that light, God's enemies in all ages have *made lies their refuge and under*

falsehood have hid themselves. And in the controversy before us we may take notice of the following refuges of lies which the enemies of sovereign grace try to hide themselves in:

1. As the sacred writers often appealed to men's reason and conscience and exhorted the saints to regard the teachings of the Holy Spirit in their souls above all human authority on earth, deceivers of various denominations have caught at and perverted that sacred custom as a place for setting up a standard *in themselves* to decide every case so as not to admit anything for truth that does not agree with their *inward test*. But it is well known in our nation that in order for us to enjoy our just rights and liberties, rulers as well as subjects must be governed by known laws and established rules, and that for judges to assume a discretionary power to dispense with old laws or to make new ones as occasion served would introduce arbitrary government, or rather a cruel tyranny. And were not people deluded with the religious names and great swelling words of deceivers, as their attempts to set up a *voice within* which speaks in any respects contrary to God's *written word* would appear as arbitrary and tyrannical as any such proceedings of earthly judges can be. Those holy men whom God employed to write his Word had their authority so to do *confirmed by divers miracles and gifts of the Holy Ghost*, and woe to that man who presumes either to add or take from those holy oracles.

2. The advocates for their own free will in opposition to sovereign grace have determined that the doctrine of fixed decrees in the divine mind concerning the future state of men, is consistent with the liberty of their own wills and with the proper influence of precepts and promises, rewards and punishments. And, having quoted a number of precepts with considerations to enforce them (of which the Bible is full) they boast that they have gained their argument, when in truth they have never touched the point in debate.

We know, and as firmly hold as any free willer on earth, that all men are under moral government where precepts and promises, exhortations, warnings, etc. have their proper place, and ought to influence us in all our conduct. And I believe from the bottom of my heart that God never did or ever will punish any but the guilty, and that he will finally reward every man according to his works. But in the present controversy the true state of the question is this, viz., Whether the whole plan of God's government and the final issue of every action through the universe has not been known and fixed in his counsels from the beginning, so that *nothing can be put to it nor anything taken from it?* *Eccls iii, 14.* Or whether many events are not held in suspense and uncertainty in his infinite mind, till they are decided by the free will power of men? We hold the first, they the last side of this question. But instead of attending to the true state of the controversy, and instead of referring the decision of it to the divine oracles, *tradition* and *corruption* has carried them into the way which this 'writer pursues of representing our doctrine to be that God decrees some to misery in the same manner that he does others to happiness. Yea, this slanderer, in imitation of those who have gone before him, sets reprobation foremost and would have people believe that we hold God's first design to be the damnation of *multitudes* and then, secondly, the *irrestitible salvation* of a *number!* Hoping no doubt by these horrid colorings to guard people sufficiently against all the Gospel weapons which are appointed to pull down the strongholds that are raised *against the knowledge of God*, and to cast down the *imaginations* which keep men's thoughts *too high* to yield their all to a meek and lowly Jesus, 2 Cor. x, 4, 5. Many in latter ages have carried their imaginations so high on this subject as,

3. To assume a dignity to themselves that they will not allow to the eternal

God, for they claim a *self-determining power* in their own wills while they deny it to the Most High, and insist upon it that his choice of some men to salvation rather than others, is from either a foresight or aftersight of good dispositions and good doings in them more than others, so making that to be the cause of his choice which he declares is the effect of it, and representing that God is influenced in his work by motives *without* himself, at the same time that they hold to a power to determine all their own actions *within* themselves. Can any imagination ever be entertained more absurd or more contrary to Holy Writ than these are! See *Matt. xi, 25-28; Rom. xiii, 29, 30; Eph. i, 4, 5; 1 Pet. i, 2; 1 John iv, 19.*

The people we are now speaking of commonly deny the doctrine of man's universal depravity, but if to claim a sovereignty to their own will, while they deny it to God, does not prove them to be rebels against Heaven, I know not what can do it.

Nebuchadnezzar made trial how it would do to ascribe all his achievements to himself, but after he had grazed among the beasts of the field till seven times had passed over him, he declares that, "All the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as *nothing* (before the Most High) and he doth according to HIS WILL in the army of Heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay his hand or say unto him, what dost thou?" *Dan. iv, 35.* Thus it happens that the hearts of kings are in the hands of the Lord so that as *rivers of water he turneth them whithersoever he will;* i.e. to act voluntarily as he designs to have them. From whence it appears evident that there is no inconsistency in holding God's decrees to be immutable, and yet that men act as voluntarily as if it were not so. And the great reasoners on the other side cannot avoid this consequence, if they would once own that the will of man is always determined in its choice by motive or by what they at present prefer and think to be best, for that

person must be stupid indeed who cannot see the HE in whom we live, move, and have our being, can at any time set things in such a view before our minds as to make us think it best to choose one way of acting rather than another. Though Balaam was so madly set after the wages of unrighteousness that he *would* not be turned even by the reproof of a dumb ass, yet when the Lord opened his eyes to see the angels with a drawn sword before him, he at once chose to fall to the earth or to turn back rather than run upon it, *Num-xxii. 31, etc.* In order therefore to keep up their conceit that fixed decrees interfere with men's liberty, some of their great doctors have,

4. Tried to shelter themselves in such a miserable refuge as to pretend that they have a power in their wills to act *with motive or against motive* just as the will pleases. But I suppose it is as great a piece of nonsense in itself to hold that a rational soul can act voluntarily in any case without or against motive, as it would be to say there can be a rational action without any influence of reason in it! Thus professing themselves to be wise they become fools, for as Mr. Locke truly observes, even delirious persons are influenced by reason only they reason from wrong premises. As when such a man imagines that he is all made of glass, he is moved to act with the caution that would be necessary if the case were so. And the like may be said of other imaginations. And persons must be idiots and not reason at all, or else reason and motive will always influence their choice and conduct. Evil *imaginations* and *thoughts* always move men to act wickedly, *Gen. vi, 5 and xiii, 21.* But when any are brought to *know the truth it makes them free, free from sin, so as to become servants of righteousness, John viii, 31; Rom. vi, 18.* The main objections I ever heard against sovereign election and certain salvation, by free grace alone, appear to me to spring from this root, viz., Man who was flattered with the motion of being as

gods still conceits that he has a power *in himself* to do as he pleases, let that pleasure be to comply with or to disappoint God's designs; and therefore, if they are not disposed at present to engage in his service, that he must wait their leisure, and be ready, when ever they set about the work in good earnest, to grant them the assistance of his grace and, if they improve it well unto the end, then to receive them to his glory. But for my part I have no more notion of worshipping a diety that can possibly be mistaken or disappointed in any one event than I have of worshipping Baal, who could not defend either his altar or grove when his votaries were asleep, *Judges vi, 31.*

(Continued next month)

ELDER GRIFFIN TO
SISTER YOUNG

Route 6, Box 84,
Fayette, Alabama,
May 3, 1974.

Mrs. Lucile Young,
Memphis, Tenn.

Dear Sister in Christ:

"The righteous perisheth, and no man layeth it to heart: and merciful men are taken away, none considering that the righteous is taken away from the evil to come." (Isa. 57:1) As members of the Adam family, we all unbosom our complaints in the same manner. In Christ we always triumph (2 Cor. 2:14); in Adam we always fail, all having fallen (Rom. 3:23). Thus, in our appearing before the Lord as short, we think how lamentable it was that the Lord called from hence a useful man like unto Ed Young. In this wretched condition none of us have taken to heart the joy that has been accorded him. Selfishness pervaded my heart, for I loved him dearly, and I enjoyed looking into his eyes; I enjoyed sweet fellowship with him in

the spirit of my Redeemer God; his countenance would light up with a glow as Jesus was presented to him from any text. I wanted to keep thus, for me, not for him only in an abstract way.

It always causes me to visit with those that go into another state or country. I want to know the customs of that land; I want to have clear ideas about the kind of country to which my acquaintances have gone; I want to know the make up and characteristics of the associates that my loved one has gone to. In sweet meditation I crossed death's impending chasm to dwell in Beulah land with my dear brother. He who gave the inhabitants of that land this unspeakable gift, met me in my reverie. As the light of city played upon my subconsciousness I saw that city whose Maker and Builder is God, and I saw Him. I did not see Ed, for while he was here he would not have asked me to behold him, but he would have enjoyed me preaching to him about Him that fills the glory land, for

"The bride eyes not the garment,
But her dear Bridegroom's face;
I will not gaze at glory,
But on the King of grace;
Not at the crown he giveth,
But on His pierced hand;
The Lamb is all the glory
In my Immanuel's land."

and that is exactly as it has been in my proclaiming Jesus while still in time's state — I did not look upon my congregation as men and women, but I only saw the Lord as I looked at them. So it was in my musing; I did not see him with the eyes that I saw him recently in your home. I saw him in a state of future glorification, and I knew him in Christ, and they were together, and as one, and yet it was Master and servant; it was bride and bridegroom.

As James and Peter and John were led up into the mountain of Transfiguration by the Saviour for the important lesson wherein Moses and Elijah vanished from sight and only Christ remained, then they were led down by the same Hand. When I came back from my

journey yon, and had been set down again among transient things, I had, at least for the time, an unforgettable lesson imbedded in my mind.

I had been chosen and made to approach unto the Lord (Psa. 65:4), and to dwell for a little while in His courts, and to rejoice that my precious fellow-traveller had been called from a world of sorrow and anxiety and misgivings into a land of perpetual joy and happiness. As always when my weakness finds me out, I trembled in His presence. (First, read Rom. 8:3; read it carefully, and then turn and read carefully Ex. 19:16, and then read Num. 32:23). I had violated an injunction of my blessed Lord. I had reversed heaven's order. He that appeared unto John commanded His servants to write, "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord, that they may rest from their labors, and that their works do follow them." (Rev. 14:13), and His counterpart said, "Better is the day of death than the day of birth." (Eccl. 7:1). I remembered my sin (Gen. 41:9); I had been complaining; I had said, Why doest thou? I had attempted to stay His hand; I had acted selfish; I had not taken Ed's case to heart in the acceptable way. Rejoicing set in; I was carried away in holy ecstasy that my dear brother had gained that land where the inhabitants shall never thirst, never hunger, never stumble because of darkness, never be sick, never have a clouded day. I was made so unconcerned about dying, for I had seen it as a passport given out by the Benefactor of heaven that another of His saints might enter in spirit into the haven of divine rest.

Yes, his works will follow him. As his spirit is resting in the sublime courts of glory, his works while here on this earthly globe will follow him. These works will not be seen as the work of a sinful man, but as the handiwork of him that walked in love among His brethren." (See Isa. 26:12)

How lovely God works. All blessings came from the Lord. I had wanted so badly to visit in the home with Ed. I had learned what a prince he was, and there

is not anything equal to sitting down in a home and sharing with that household where love dwells. It is a quiet place, and to share a morsel in quietness is a lovely thing. (Pre. 17:1) I had not been able to find the time to come, and the time found me. So many times since we heard the news of his death, we have been brought in thankfulness to the mercy seat, and we have been met there by Him that gave that blessing of refulgent glory. We got to come. It may be that some would say we could have come earlier, but not so, for we were blessed to be with him just before the Bridegroom took a member of His body through the threshold of death into a chamber of unsurpassed glory to rest in love of God until the Master of the guest chamber comes to make up His jewels —not to make jewels — but to make them up into a glorious body into a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God.

I am glad he has gone to be with the Lord. I am glad that he believed the future resurrection of his body. I am glad, I well know, and I hope I am thankful to have been with him as he faced the gathering of the shadows just before the bursting forth of heavenly light.

May God bless us poor sinners that are left on time's rough and ragged shore; may it grieve us in such a way that in our anguish we cry out, "Even so, Lord, come quickly."

We can not pause beside his grave; we must not pine away. Our days, be they few or many, must be lived out. May God enable you to gather up the tangled threads knowing that He that knitted you into the body of Christ in love, will, in the same love, unfangled the skeins of life's thread to His name's honor and glory, and to your comfort in the Lord.

In love and fellowship,

W. D. and Lois

702 W. Academy Street,
Madison, N. C. 27025

Dear Elder Spangler:

Enclosed is my check for \$10.00 to renew my subscription to the *Signs of the Times*, use the balance on expenses.

Brother Spangler, I want to share a dream with you I had 63 years ago. I was in my early twenties, and I will be 83 in September. It is just as plain to me tonight as it was on that dark and cold night 63 years ago.

I was lost in the ocean, clinging to a big rock that was higher than the sea was deep. I was all alone with no one in sight. I called for help but no one answered. Everything was so dark: even the water was black, not even a star or the moon shining. I knew my only help must come from heaven. I begged the Lord with all my heart, and with all my soul, and with all my mind and strength, to have mercy on this poor sinner, and save me from that watery grave. I could feel my hands slipping, and I knew I could not hold on much longer. I was praying for life and forgiveness of my sins; "You know my heart, dear Lord. Thy will be done — my hands are slipping and I am falling; and I cried out in anguish, Oh Lord, if there is a God in heaven, please let me see a star." Then an arm reached down and lifted me up on a high mountain; and everything looked so peaceful and serene.

I was all alone, not even with the one who lifted me up; but in my heart I felt the Lord had heard my prayer. I walked around and was not afraid. I kept on walking, and came to the edge of the mountain, and there was a deep gulf between me and the most beautiful place I had ever seen. It was beyond describing. As I stood there in amazement and wonder, I knew I could never cross that gulf to the other side. Somehow I felt resigned just to be able to see the beauty of it all. Then a door opened over there, and a beautiful Bride came out in the garden — I could never describe how lovely and beautiful

she was. Her wedding gown was beautiful beyond words. Then the Bridegroom came out and took his bride in his arms and kissed her. I cried for joy, and asked someone to tell me who the bride was, for I had never witnessed love like that; and a voice spoke behind me and said, "She is the Bride of God the Lamb's wife."

I have had many sweet dreams, and ups and downs, but none that has touched my life like this one. When I get so deep in the valley, this is a beacon of light; and I am still searching for that star, and hope some day I will cross over to the beautiful garden.

Love and sweet fellowship,
Emma S. McCollum

"REMEMBERING FORMER DAYS"

P. O. Box 6,
Shokan, N. Y. 12481

Dear Elder Wood:

I have had a sincere desire to write a few lines to you, and ever remembering former days and the joy of meeting, hearing the preached word to our comfort, with love and fellowship.

I will put the pen to the paper, and opening the Blessed Book we come to the 8th chapter of Romans, reading the 26th verse, which says, "Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered." "With groanings which cannot be uttered." Well then the next verse says, "And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God. 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."

Now, "Who shall separate us from the Love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril or sword?"

In all this we are concerned with suffering, concerned about ourselves, Yes, but where do we look? The lessons or lessons may be hard to learn, and the experience trying and even disagreeable, but if given strength to endure along with submission to the will of God, we will at some time, (and that time His also,) we shall see its refining effect, for there is a refining to be done: in passing through the refiner's fire, all the dross to remove. Suffering then seems to be, let us say, the measure of the lot of His people: some more and some a little less. This God, our God, the God who governs the world in righteousness, is teaching us this lesson which we must needs know.

We would ask then what must we need to know. We find in reading the Word of God that God teaches by His Son Christ Jesus, that He came as the Saviour of sinners, of which we all are, but the saving of these sinners meant bearing the burdens, the sorrows, the pain and perplexities of life here on earth with patience, with a strong heart and pure trust in his Heavenly Father.

Jesus Christ became a living example of partaking of all the hardships of life upon himself, that is, Christ was submissive to the will of the Father in heaven. Beloved, let us praise the Lord. Christ Jesus was not bound by limitations. We cannot reach up to the infinite, but we must understand that the infinite can and must come down to do the will of the Father. Again also, we cannot really compare our physical sufferings with the suffering of our precious Lord and Saviour Christ Jesus. All of us have our peculiar trials which this one or that one must and does endure. O yes, there are those that, like Job's wife when she saw all his trial and suffering, and says to him, "Dost thou still retain thine integrity? Curse God and die."

At this place we must not leave out what Job said to his wife, — "Thou speaketh as one of the foolish women speaketh. What? shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not

receive evil?" This is the word — "In all this did not Job sin with his lips."

This is also the measure of suffering one has to pass through, even as a refining fire. Now we cannot say that because Christ was divine, His experience here below was less painful or more easily born than ours. Beloved, there is no pretense. He suffered for all those the Father gave Him, for the Word says in 2 Timothy 2:12, "If we suffer, we shall also reign." And Jesus says in John 10:25, "I told you, and you believed not, the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me. But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you. My sheep hear my voice and *I know them* and *they follow me*. And I give unto them eternal life and they never shall perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand. I and my Father are one."

Beloved, your sufferings have redemption; and further this blessed Word says, "The foxes have holes, the birds of the air have nests, but the Son of man hath nowhere to lay his head. That is a little more suffering on our Lord's part for you and for us. Also, you know if you read, how our blessed Lord suffered in Gethsemane, on the cross and before, to be cursed, scourged and spit upon; All this, I say again, all this for you and for me. Then what about our sufferings, and those we know about? Beloved there just is no comparing, for truly Christ Jesus tread the winepress alone.

But it was all for our sakes, yours and mine. Are our griefs so great that we cannot be comforted? Are the lives of some but a desert? because in their distresses, their fears, their trials, they fear that even God has forsaken them. I have found there is but one place to go, and that is to God the Father in prayer, and you will find Faith and His great Love, that the Father suffers even with you, for He reveals his Fatherly feelings for you in the very suffering of lonely Christ Jesus.

The Father sees the blind leading

the blind, He sees the degradation of His Holy Name. He sees and is grieved with the works of scribes and Pharisees in the temple, and drove them out (the money changers); and he suffered the power of darkness — But remember He suffered and endured all these things for His very elect, His very own. Then He says in John's gospel, "I pray for them, I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me: for they are thine, and all mine are thine, and thine are mine, and I am glorified *in them*. "*In them*." that is in you, Beloved, that have suffered, and He has blessed you and me, and all of like precious faith, and by the Holy Spirit bears you up in all needed strength, that you can bear the burden of your sufferings lightly, ever remembering He is your burden bearer, and mine. God the Father has laid on His only begotten Son the iniquity of us all.

Christ Jesus the Son even said, "Eli, Eli, Lama Sabachthane," that is to say, "My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken me." and then in submission said, "Nevertheless thy will, O God, be done."

So for our sake His own dear heart was moved with tender compassion so much, to bear with fortitude and faith in God the Father for us, a perfect sacrifice for sin as Captain of our Salvation — So let us look up to our Heavenly Father in true thankfulness, and praise His name. Christ said to his Father, "The glory which thou has given me, I have given them, that they may be one as we are One," "Father I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory?" "I have declared unto them thy Name: that the love wherewith thou hast loved me may be in them, and I in them."

So then, beloved, are your eyes given sight, are your feeble knees strengthened, and in Faith your heart moved to compassion for Christ Jesus' sufferings for us? He doeth all things well, that some day, and even soon, all our trials, tribulations and sufferings will be no more, and we will be with Him in his

kingdom, eternal in the heaven. This is for all of like precious faith. "Praise His Holy Name. Selah."

Dear brother, at this place I know tribulation, and my beloved wife and sister in Christ even knows it far more, and both of us can say as Paul said about his trials to the Corinthians, "If I must needs glory, I will glory in the things which concern my infirmities."

Dear Brother Wood, what is the little flock up in this north country (New York State) going to do? We now have no pastor in the whole state, Elder Slauson having been called to his eternal home, and we are still poor and needy, needing both the sincere milk and the strong meat, and seemingly no one to nourish us. Yet we are thankful to our God that we are blest to meet in a covenant way. But this is the winter season and we are still hungry.

We do enjoy the *Signs* and testify to the truth in your Editorials. We are sending \$4.00 for one year's renewal, and the rest for the Contributions — total \$15.00.

Our love and prayers to you and yours, and those of the *Signs*.

Deacon Edward K. Adsit,
Olive and Hurley Old School
Baptist Church

902 Maple Avenue,
Torrance, Calif. 90503

Dear Editors:

I enclose money order of \$4.00 to renew my subscription for another year.

May the Lord always bless you Editors to continue writing, as well as those of our precious faith to express to others what the dear Lord has given them for those who love the Truth.

A sister, I hope in the Lord,
Neva Brooks

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Danville, Va.

April, 1975

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EDITORIAL

EXPERIENCE

“Knowing that tribulation worketh *patience*; and patience, *experience*; and experience, *hope*; and hope maketh not ashamed; because of the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.” Romans 5:3-5. We want to put the spotlight on EXPERIENCE in this treatise. Experience really means in this quotation: to observe diligently, or the proof of testing a thing. We rejoice in tribulation because it works out or produces patience, while the latter develops an experience

of God. Patience works experience in bringing out as a proven fact God’s power and love toward us in our preservation *in* and our deliverance *out* from trial. Experience means the sum of practical wisdom taught by the events and observations of life. “EXPERIENCE is the Lord’s School, and they who are taught by Him usually learn by the mistakes they make that in themselves they have no wisdom; and by their slips and falls, that they have no strength!” (John Newton). I have adopted Laban’s phrase to Jacob: “I have learned by experience.” Gen. 30:27.

I have learned by experience that experience is not transmissible. I must suffer myself. I cannot learn from another person’s suffering. I cannot fully sympathize with anyone’s loss unless I experienced the same loss about the same time under like circumstances. True, we can give advice based upon our experience; yet it takes the same experience to bring forth conduct by the other person. Differences in degrees of experiences and revelation causes us to differ in our opinions upon the same scriptural subjects and texts. I have had such varied experience in my life. Almost all the things I was so sure about in my young life have sunk into oblivion, so that I am not so sure about anything other than what God has revealed.

Since I have not written to any of you either by letter or the printed page, I feel that I must tell you some of my experiences and revelations for the past two and one-half years. I reckon that the greatest shock that I have experienced was the loss of my wife, Dessie Mae, January 4, 1973. She opened the door in response to a caller and said, “Come in.” She immediately fell backward and died within a few minutes as the result of a massive heart attack. I was away from the house and did not learn of her death until her body was in the funeral home after she had been pronounced DOA at the hospital. You can only imagine the impact of two words that were said to me by a neighbor as I waited alone in the darkened house anticipating Dessie

Mae's return from a hurried visit to some neighbor. All this person was able to say to me was, "She's gone." These two words together with the anguished expressions on the tear stained face of this neighbor have haunted me so much since then. This shock sapped all the energy from me that I was in such dazed condition which resulted in lack of consciousness of things occurring around me. I was awakened into consciousness by the words, "We are praying for you." I beheld a house full of people and read their faces which revealed love and a deep concern for my welfare. I responded, "I know it. I feel the power of the inspiration of the Holy Spirit." It calmed me. I was given a sweet peaceful and submissive mind as well as strength to my physical body. Your words of condolence both by mouth and by letter together with the flowers and contributions kept me mindful of your loving fellowship and labour of love in my behalf. I have been unable to answer any of these with the proper response because a severe attack of influenza upon my weakened body prevented me from doing anything other than that which was absolutely necessary.

The Lord says through the inspired writing of Paul, "My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness." See 2 Cor. 12:9. So much of the time for the past two years my weakness of mind and body has caused me to consider breathing a task. This extreme weakness coupled with having to live alone for so long has resulted in much anguish, which has made my life almost unbearable. The hope of being enabled to again experience the God-given power to preach the unsearchable riches of Jesus Christ from the pulpit is the only thread that keeps me from insanity and the jaws of death. I know that God has miraculously strengthened me with physical ability and illuminated my mind with a chain of fast-moving well-ordered thoughts, as well as miraculously loosening and using my tongue to declare the gospel as it is being revealed to me. Unless you have ex-

perienced such a long siege of extreme physical and mental weakness; unless you have experienced such drastic change as I have indicated during this same time for two hours each week — you could not know what I am talking about. The hours spent in the houses of worship with the saints of God, I LIVE. I merely exist with much confusion of mind and conscious of my loneliness and extreme weakness between these precious hours. Some precious hours have been spent in godly conversation while visiting some earnest inquirers for the truth as the Holy Scriptures relate. (I am glad I began this treatise because I had been thoroughly convinced that I could never write again. Now, I feel the strength to perform it.) God's strength has been perfected in my weakness. Now, I glory in my infirmities for when I am weak, then I am strong in the Lord.

Every time I meet a gospel preacher accompanied by his wife, I want to say to him, "How rich you are to have such a wonderful gift as a life-long help-meet who works behind the scenes and shares all your sorrows, heartaches, burdens, persecutions, problems, etc., one who possesses special characteristics qualifying her to be a minister's good companion. May you stop to tell her once in awhile how you appreciate her." I told Dessie Mae many times that she was my *drawing card*. I informed a precious brother a few days ago that I had experienced a drastic change in the number of telephone calls and visits since Dessie Mae's death. He told me quickly that, "a preacher loses his social standing in the community when he loses his wife. You cannot expect the church members nor friends to visit you. We look to the preacher's wife as the better-half of the necessary team socially." I have about decided that a pastor should be the husband of one wife. Because of my weakness and inability to visit, it became necessary to rent a house in the midst of the churches I try

to serve as Pastor in Arkansas. The first time I entered the place as my "hired house," I noticed a plaque over the door. I read it aloud to the people who were inside to welcome me: GOD BLESS OUR HOME. I responded, this is not a home. It is only a house. The plaque clearly indicates that it takes more than one to make a home. A home can be converted into just a house instantly. Many times I have gone from the hired house in Norphlet, Arkansas alone to enter a house to dwell alone in Winnsboro, Texas, which was *our home*. These houses are 200 miles apart. I stay in each house several days of each month. I now consider this a blessing because I could not bear to stay in one house all of the time.

Sometime after I took up housekeeping in the vicinity of Eldorado I became very perplexed with the problems, burdens, and expenses of trying to keep two households going. Finally, something said within me, "Open the Bible as a venture and begin reading on the right column of the right page. You will find an answer." I picked up the Bible at hand as the same Voice said, "Not that one. You have used it." I looked around and was surprised to find a new Bible that had not been taken from the box. It fell open and I began reading the last part of the last chapter of ACTS. Surely there is no answer in this chapter, I reasoned, I know its contents. I was greatly surprised and elated to read the last two verses: "And Paul dwelt two whole years in his own hired house, and received all that came in unto him, preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ, with all confidence, no man forbidding him." Acts 28:30-31. I received the answer with rejoicing. I was too weak to get out of the house. Paul received all that came in unto him. He did not go out to seek some one to talk with. I was to open the door to anyone who knocked. This means that I have two whole years for these problems to work themselves out. I should not be anxious over these nat-

ural things. I am to devote my time, "Preaching the kingdom of God, and teaching those things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ," with the complete confidence that no person would hinder me. Hours of meditation that week-end upon this text clearly defined the difference in preaching and teaching. Those who really believe in the heart the *preaching* of the kingdom of God, are fit subjects to receive the *teaching* concerning the things of the Lord Jesus Christ. The quintessence of gospel truth is that JESUS CHRIST is the perfect and complete Saviour of each and every one for whom He lived and died and arose. Other so-called gospel is preaching and teaching that Jesus Christ's life, death, and resurrection is ineffective because some for whom He lived and died will fail to inhabit eternal Heaven and immortal glory. The doctrine of Arminianism is the doctrine of Anti-Christ. I hate this doctrine with a godly hatred. I do not hate the people who believe it because I once believed it and preached it with all my heart. I denied the power of the Holy Ghost not knowing really what I was preaching. God had great mercy upon me because I did it in unbelief of the truth, verily thinking I was doing God's will. That was the greatest sin I have ever committed.

I must tell you of an experience I had while in the jaws of death in the house in Winnsboro. I was exhausted before I left Norphlet for Winnsboro after the third Sunday of one month. I drove the 200 miles suffering with a nagging nervous backache to Winnsboro. I hardly could walk in the house. I went to bed without anything to eat. I was so dizzy that I could hardly move. I would look across the room to the telephone and think of many who had told me that they were as near to me as my telephone. I wouldn't dare try to get to the phone. I lay there for days all alone unconscious a big part of the time. I felt the grip of death and began trying to pray, "Lord, I'll be your *anything*." I could not get connection with God. I kept trying to pray, getting no relief.

Finally in desperation I prayed, "Lord, I'll be your *nothing*." He heard my prayer and I received some relief. Saturday morning came and I was absent from church services. Several came by and found me in critical condition. When the doctor finally saw me, he prescribed something for me that gave me some relief. My son and wife came from Hot Springs and stayed a few days until I gained strength to get about in the house. I have been submissive to be God's *nothing* since then. I could not be depended on to conduct funerals.

I am now gaining a little in strength and weight. Am yet trying and being blessed to attend Rehobeth, Antioch, and Bethel churches in Arkansas as well as Good Hope and Paran churches in Texas. Letter writing is yet out of the question so I receive very few letters. I have hope of being enabled to visit the brethren some day and regain contact with the people who are so precious to me. Pray for me. Write me, bear with my infirmities. I yet love you for Christ's sake, I trust.

E. J. Lambert

EXPANATION OF OUR VIEWS

In our haste we published without comment in the February issue, a letter in which the following statement is made:

"Let us not deny that the Holy Spirit can work faith in the heart of a person who has never heard the word through preaching, and cause this person to call upon the name of the Lord: But the usual way is by working faith in them through preaching, to believe and know God by hearing, as spoken of in the scriptures."

We did not note the expression "the usual way" when we read it. This does not at all express our understanding of the matter. We do not question what God has done or can do, but we do not understand that it is the "usual way" for God to impart faith through preaching. We believe, and have always maintained,

that first there is a quickening of the Lord's people by the Spirit, which brings them out of darkness into His marvelous light. This work of Grace brings them to the new or spiritual birth, and being born of the Spirit they have the fruit of the Spirit, such as love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, *faith*, etc. They know and understand spiritual things, and have hope of eternal life. Then when they hear the truth preached, they know it is the Truth, and rejoice in it.

The preaching of the gospel in spirit and power, is for the comfort and edification of the Lord's people, and to His praise, honor and glory. "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches."

This is the doctrine the *Signs of the Times* has always maintained, and, the Lord willing, it will continue to be advocated as being the doctrine of God our Saviour. We know that many English writers have used such expressions as "means of grace", but such do not express to us, the "faith once delivered to the saints."

We feel we must give this explanation, and believe most will agree with us upon further light upon the subject.

Editors

VOICES OF THE PAST
"He being dead yet speaketh"

ELDER KER TO ELDER CHICK

Middleton, N. Y.

Dear Brother Chick:

I have just read your Editorial in the *Signs of the Times* for February 15, 1901, on the subject of prayer, with comfort and instruction. This subject has for many years given me much comfort, as well as many doubts and fears. The question often with me is, What is prayer? and do I know anything about it as the children of God do, who often

express themselves as to the comfort and sweetness of it, or in it, to them? I can remember when a mere boy I would often try to thank God for the preservation of my life, and the blessings as I as a child enjoyed, also when I did wrong would ask His forgiveness. I can say, for the last thirty years I have been trying to pray, and today I ask solemnly, Have I ever in the Spirit approached the throne of grace?

My dear brother, such questionings occupy much of my time. My doubts and fears are many, but my assurances few, as I hardly ever get above doubt and unbelief, and some of the questions I find in my mind often bring with them horror, I am made to mourn because of my lack of faith, trust and confidence in an all wise and gracious God, whose promises are yea and amen in Christ Jesus our Lord. I can now see that my prayers when a child were entirely selfish and without faith, and I fear they are the same today.

When speaking publicly in the way of prayer, I often feel it is cold, lifeless and without faith, and often would rather try to preach than to try to pray. When I seem to have freedom of mind in making my wants and desires known to God, the devil comes and tells me, You are doing well today, the brethren will enjoy such a prayer, at once horror takes hold of me and I fear and tremble. Again, when I seem to stammer and stumble, the devil comes and says, You have not prayed in your heart, and this is only form and mockery; and my soul sinks within me. Sometimes at night in my wakeful hours, and again at my duties in the day, I try to pray, and address the Father of mercy and the God of all comfort, begin with a few words, and perhaps in a few moments I come to myself, and behold I have forgotten I began to pray; my mind has been taken up with something of the world, and again I fear and quake. Do you wonder at such a poor, helpless, dependent sinner as I, having doubts, fears and sufferings of mind?

"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 am not born again."

Lord, decide the doubtful case and give my weary conscience ease.

The few thoughts above will give you an idea of what troubles I have passed through in regard to prayer, but feel sure you cannot fellowship such an experience, and this causes me to doubt also, to know I am alone in such an experience, but just so I am, and instead of growing stronger, as I hoped years ago, I am getting weaker and weaker each day of my life.

You say in your Editorial, the Lord waits his own time to answer prayer, and if He waits long we should not faint or be discouraged. This I fully believe, but sometimes the request is not granted at all. Now the idea presents itself that a form of words is not always prayer, and many times when we have a thought we were praying, there was not a word of prayer in it; words without faith never reach God. You well remember when President Garfield was shot, how the different denominations of the United States set apart a day to pray for his recovery, but he died, this fully demonstrates the fact that all which is called prayer is not prayer. Had one of the thousands who desire his recovery had faith to believe God would hear or grant his request, the President would have lived.

James tells us, "We ask and receive not, because we ask amiss." We do not know what we need, and if all our desires were granted, we would soon be cut off from the fellowship of God's people, or would have a very different experience from what we do have. We ask to be delivered from temptation, affliction, fears, doubts, sorrows and pain, if this was granted how could we be conformed to the image of the Son of God? How could we grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ? Nature and grace have their opposites, so what seems evil

to us is good and to the glory of God. The sick child would prefer sweets to the bitter medicine it needs, and so with the children of God, they would have the sweets at all times, but their Father knowing what is good for them, gives affliction, sorrow and pain, not that he has pleasure in their sufferings, but that they may know more of Him, and his strong arm, that they may have fellowship with the sufferings of Christ, and know the power of His resurrection. If we could feel as we would like, the time would be but short before we would be proud Pharisees, and would be thanking God that we were not as other men. This is not according to the will of God, therefore we are a poor and afflicted people, yet trust in the name of the Lord. The very knowledge we have of our sinful and depraved nature is a blessing, because it brings us to God, and here we see Christ the Mediator between, in garments dyed with blood; He is seen and not us. He paid the debt and is forever at the right hand of God to make intercession for us.

Now the question comes, who prays and whose prayer is answered always? The Apostle tells us in the following language, "Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. And he that searcheth the heart knoweth that is the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to the will of God." (Romans 8:26, 27) Nothing therefore in the way of prayer is answered but that which is in accordance with the will of God, consequently such petitions are given of God, and ascend to him through the Spirit, as Jesus said, "No man cometh unto the Father but by me." Hence we cannot come unto Him in prayer only through or in Christ, anymore than we can ascend to Him when the summons comes that calls us from time to eternity, without having Christ, the truth, the way and the life. We poor worms of the dust should indeed be thankful and

rejoice because we have such a high priest who can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, and who being tempted in all points like as we, is able to succor us who are tempted, and with his own blood did cleanse us from all sin. Yet we feel the leprosy remaining, and are in continual warfare, but through him the victory is ours, over death, sin and the grave. Notwithstanding all this, we find ourselves trying to pray always, and are neither faint or discouraged though we wait and wait again.

The prayer of the publican is in the mind of the saint more than any other, and whether a child of God or not, it suits my case: "God be merciful to me a sinner." For surely sin is mixed with all I do, and mercy and grace I need every moment of my life. Mercy because of my sin, unbelief and rebellion, and grace to keep me and sustain me in the trials and conflicts of my pilgrimage. So, because of my crippled condition, I go halting and stumbling along, finding in this life no continuing city, but I seek one to come, where prayer and desire are no more, but there the saints have fulness of joy, and pleasures for evermore.

With love and fellowship I am your brother in hope of the gospel.

H. C. Ker

ELDER CHICK'S REPLY

It affords us much pleasure that the Editorial upon the subject to which Brother Ker refers, has called out such an excellent letter from him. We can assure him that we are fully aware of the very conflicts of which he has spoken. In all our ministry we have found more perplexities and anxiety regarding prayer, than we have ever known concerning preaching. Perhaps we might be understood if we should express our feelings in this way: In preaching we are talking to men who are in some sense our equals, in prayer we are speaking to that God who is supreme, and who knows every thought of the heart, and who shall bring every secret into judg-

ment. We do not know what to pray for as we ought, and we may add that we feel deeply that we do not know how to pray as we ought. Yet it has been our encouragement that the Holy Spirit does make intercession for us according to the will of God, and we understand that this intercession, and groaning of the Spirit which cannot be uttered, goes on in our own heart.

LIFE AND DEATH — LETTER
AND EXPERIENCE

P. O. Box 13,
Boones Mill, Va. 24065

Dear Brethren:

To faith, Love and Life are not two different things, but are the same thing. Therefore those who abide in death, are those who hate, and those who abide in love, are those who own Christ our Life. This is brought about when the beast is slain upon the altar. As the high priest under the law took a beast from the herds and slew it with a knife upon the Jewish altar, it was a shadow of the sword of the Spirit slaying our beastly affections, and the altar is our heart renewed. The High Priest is Jesus Christ.

Now the reasonable service of the temple is acceptable to God because Jesus is the High Priest who dwells in His people, whose bodies are the temple of the Holy Ghost. Here Jesus dwells as He inhabits the praise of Israel, and deep within their purified conscience, called the Holy of Holies, or Holiest of All, He alone enters to bear witness with our spirit that we are His children.

This Voice is heard by faith, and is the Bread of Life called Shew Bread in the shadow of the law temple which clothes the stones but left the children naked. Thus His communication is eternal life: which life is bestowed by Love, and locked in the temple by our pure minds, or our remembrance.

When the Lord enables a preacher to preach and the silver trumpet is sounding Jubilee, then pure memories are

stirred up and we eat of that Bread which causes us to rejoice in Christ Jesus by the grace of Jesus Christ.

Within every new born child of God Jesus dwells, and He is our Righteousness. This is shadowed forth as the veil of the temple, and it cost the blood of Christ and makes us acceptable to God, for it has a double in it which both hides our infirmities, and decks us with His virtues.

The royal law and the pot of heavenly manna are shadows of the keeping power of the Shepherd, who prevents and constrains us from evil to come, and from sinning beyond the reach of His mercy, while the pot, at His times, provides holy consolation, and we feed on heavenly manna as the Lord gives sweet absolution and freedom from the things that torment us; and from within fire of the altar is kindled, and we love one another; and this by the inspiration of God. As His Divine graces unite in harmony we sing unto Him who bestows more favors and comforts than tongue can tell — but including in every saint faith, hope and charity.

I have tried to show from the scriptures, which all testify of Jesus, who dwells in His people which He seeks out to surely save and never forsake, that as an earthly king could not lawfully inherit his kingdom until the king before him dies, Jesus died to make us kings and priests unto God. He at this present time is the only One that is the Living One, — the rest of us are dying.

When Christ calls us from the dead at the last day, then we shall be entirely like Him that truly says, "I am he that liveth and was dead, and behold I am alive forevermore."

In bonds,
J. L. Boccock

WORDS OF EXPERIENCE
AND COMFORT

Rt. 2, Box 78A
Strong, Ark. 71765

Dearly Beloved Sister Barron:

My mind is on a few things you said to me last Sunday, as well as some scriptures and thoughts that come to mind. My desire is that I might write something that will be of comfort to you. You spoke of being so dried up much of the time and that it seems to be not so with me as it was with you: You saw others rejoicing, when you couldn't. I do not know whether I have as many dry seasons as you do, or not, but still I have many barren and empty dry seasons filled with mourning, sorrows, doubts and fears of being one of the Lord's little ones — desiring of Him to show a token of his love and mercy to a vile and sinfully wretch as I.

At times I have felt to be a hypocrite. I recall hearing a minister in his preaching mention the Pharisee justifying himself before men; and I thought that I might be as that Pharisee, trying to justify myself, and I was saying within, Lord have mercy on me a sinner: let me not be as the Pharisee, when these sweet words came to me in a still small voice, "You are not your own, you are bought with a price, therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are his." I rejoiced greatly in the Lord with tears. It was also communion time after the preaching that day. When the communion service started, I felt there was a coldness among us, and I was saying within, O heavenly Dove send thy Spirit down and warm these cold hearts of ours. Again I rejoiced with tears when a few more sweet words came to me, "I am thy God, and will still give the aid."

That was a sweet communion to me, as there was much love made manifest among the brethren. I haven't seen myself many times as I desire to be: it seems often I have such dull seasons of being shut up in prison, with no feeling of love and joy in heavenly things. So I believe that if we did not know something about being down in the valley, the slough of despondency, neither would we know anything of rejoicing on the mountain tops of God's love.

His love for his people is an everlasting love. He said, "I have loved thee

with an everlasting love, therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee." Is it not wonderful to the little children of God, when the Lord sends them a little drink now and then, when they have been in a dry and thirsty land where there is no water? "When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the Lord will hear them. I the God of Israel will not forsake them, I will open rivers in high places, and fountains in the midst of the valleys. I will make the wilderness a pool of water, and the dry land springs of water." (Isa. 41:17, 18)

How sweet and comforting are these words to the poor and needy! Jesus said, "The poor have the gospel preached unto them." Is it not precious to them when the Lord blesses them with ears to hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches, a heart to perceive and rejoice in the true gospel of our Lord and Saviour. They cannot rejoice in the absence of their Saviour: it is indeed a dry, empty, barren season to them. We find we are unable to control our seasons — they come and go as our Lord sees fit. Our prayer is a sincere desire of the heart to the Lord to restore unto us the joys of his salvation.

Worldly minded people say they can find Jesus anytime: they boast of their good works, thinking they can save souls for the Lord, they feel to be rich and have no need. "They that trust in their wealth, and boast themselves in the multitude of their riches, none of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him." (Psalm 49:6, 7) "They are not in trouble as other men, neither are they plagued like other men." (Psalm 73:5)

"Poor and afflicted, yet they trust
In God, the gracious, wise and just,
For them he deigns this lot to choose,
Nor would they dare his will refuse."

The Lord hid his precious truth from the wise and prudent, and revealed them unto babes. How weak and helpless and dependent are these babes upon the Lord for all things. He works both the will

and the to do of his good pleasure, before they can do any good thing, or think any good thoughts, whether spoken or written. Dear sister, I believe if I was given a gift to write, it was made known to me before I joined Good Hope Church. In a dream I was sitting in my yard, there was clear water around me. I was handling three or four white doves that were gentle to me. Then I was embracing three or four little girls.

Three or four years ago I was called on to write and keep the minutes of Good Hope Church, and when I was called on to write my first church letter to the District Meeting, as well as the associations, that dream came to my remembrance. I hope the Lord has enabled me to write a few things concerning spiritual things, and to embrace the little sister churches of like precious faith, in that love for the precious truth as it is in Jesus, if I be a vessel of His mercy fitted in his building, for my Master's use.

. . . You mentioned to me that you didn't visit the sick as much as you should, and the things you felt you should do, you did not do. That is my feeling too. Sister Barron, I believe you have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you, as well as all of the Lord's people. I believe there is a spiritual sickness, as well as natural sickness. We read in the scriptures about many being weak and sickly. To support the weak, we don't know when we visit the sick — it could be in person, or thought, a friendly smile, a few kind words of love and sympathy, helping one that is in need, or entertaining, desiring to help in ways the Lord blesses us to. It could be in words spoken or written, who knows, but the Lord only. Saith the Lord, "Inasmuch as you have done it unto the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.

I do not know if I have given spiritual light from my Lord concerning the remarks you made and the thoughts I had, and have written. They express my feelings of thought and mind. If this is not

of the Lord, it will be of no interest to you. Dear one, I hope I have written this letter in the spirit of love.

Your little sister, I hope
Lula Fox

OBITUARIES

MRS. IDA T. GHEEN

Our Heavenly Father was pleased to remove our much loved Sister, Ida T. Gheen, from the earthly scenes on January 5, 1975. She was born September 8, 1880 in Loudoun County, Virginia, the daughter of William H. Franklin and Laura Bitzer Franklin.

Sister Gheen was united in marriage to Nathaniel J. Gheen, October 28, 1896. To this union were born five sons and one daughter, George F. Gheen of Herndon, Va., Rufus Gheen of Leesburg, Va., Reginald K. Gheen of Leesburg, Va., William Robey Gheen of Arlington, Va., and Ralph H. Gheen of Leesburg, Va. These sons all survive, together with eleven grandchildren, fourteen great grandchildren, and two great great grandchildren. The daughter, Elvie M., died at the age of four years.

For many years Sister Gheen lived with her son and daughter-in-law, Ralph and Betty Gheen near Leesburg. She was faithfully and tenderly cared for, and lacked for nothing, for all the family was solicitous of her health and welfare.

She was a member of Frying Pan Old School Baptist Church for more than seventy years, having received a hope at about sixteen years of age, and united with the church in 1902. She was a firm believer in salvation by grace alone and the sovereignty of God over all things. She would state her faith firmly, yet with meekness, so that she was loved and highly respected by all who knew her. She loved to assemble with her brethren in the meetings, and always had a way to be with them while her husband lived, and by her children after his death. For several years in latter life she was unable to attend the meetings often, but she was with them in spirit.

It was a great pleasure for us to visit Sister Gheen, for she was a ready conversationalist, remembering many interesting things pertaining to the church and other subjects. She was always humble, giving all the praise to the Lord.

Funeral services were held at the Muse-Reed-Bange Funeral Chapel in Leesburg, by her pastor and Mr. Charles H. Walton, and she was laid to rest beside her husband in the

Sterling Cemetery, to await the second coming of her Lord, when she, together with all the redeemed of the Lord, shall receive His promise to them, that they should be conformed to the image of Jesus in the Resurrection: thus fitted for heaven and immortal glory.

A great many friends were in attendance at the funeral, and the flowers, together with the many contributions to Frying Pan Church in memory of Sister Gheen, testified to the high esteem in which she was held.

May all who mourn Sister Gheen's passing, be given reconciling grace to say with Job. ". . . the Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away, blessed be the name of the Lord."

John D. Wood

ELDER ARTHUR R. WARREN

It is with saddened heart that I attempt to write an obituary of our beloved pastor, Elder Arthur R. Warren, who passed away November 20, 1974.

He was born near Berlin, Maryland, the son of Albert and Della Rayne Warren, February 26, 1900. He was married to Mattie M. Byrd October 11, 1924, and to this union a son and a daughter were born: Edward Warren of St. Martins, Maryland, and Mrs. Loren Kunkle of Wilmington, Delaware, who survive. Five grandchildren also survive.

Elder Warren joined the Indiantown Old School Baptist Church September, 1950, and was baptized by Elder Harold M. Bennett. He was appointed Deacon in 1951. He was liberated to speak in 1953, and was ordained to the ministry March 13, 1957 by Elders Harold Bennett, John D. Wood and Amasa Slauson. He served as pastor of Whitefield and Bowdenham churches in Maine, Hopewell, N. J., and Indiantown, Forest Grove, Little Creek and Rewastico of the Salisbury Association.

Elder Warren was a faithful Pastor, visiting the sick and those in trouble of any kind. He preached the sovereignty of God and salvation by grace, and had no confidence in the flesh. We will miss him, but believe our loss is his eternal gain.

Funeral services were conducted by Elder James H. Poole November 23rd in the Indiantown Old School Baptist Church, and was laid to rest in Forest Grove Cemetery. May we be made reconciled to the Lord's will, especially his dear companion who was a faithful pastor's wife.

Written by request of Sister Warren.

Sister Charlotte Adkins

DEACON NOAH E. DAVIS

Members of McCray Church would like to pay tribute to a faithful Deacon for several years, Brother Noah E. Davis. Uniting with the church August 16, 1959, shortly thereafter the church soon recognized in his leadership the gift of a deacon and we was ordained October, 1960, serving until his passing January 25, 1974.

He always manifested a love and interest in the welfare of the church and we feel he was a man of understanding in the Word of God. His advice in church matters and it's doctrine was very sound, always generous in giving his labor and financial aid. Among his special joys was being with those of like faith where he often visited and especially visiting the sick, sometimes traveling many miles to visit among other churches and associations. Brother Davis was the son of the late Dvero Davis and Mollie B. Davis of Person County near Roxboro, N.C., where he was born and grew up on the farm and continued to live. He was survived by one sister, Maie Francis Davis and one brother, Charles Burch Davis, both of Roxboro, North Carolina. He was married to the late Myrtle Blalock Davis, November 13, 1943. Many will remember the pleasant visits in their home. Her death came in April, 1971 from a car accident in January of the same year. Later he married Lola Stevenson of Danville, Virginia, who survives along with several nieces and nephews. Among his nephews is Elder C. B. Davis of Roxboro, North Carolina.

His funeral was held at McCray Church, conducted by his pastor, Elder Wallis Smith assisted by Elder Raymond Goad of the Staunton River Association, interment was in the church cemetery.

Brother Davis was a veteran of World War I, served overseas eighteen months with the 30th Old Hickory Division, returning home on his birthday, June 18, 1919 and continued active in the Veterans Administration throughout the years.

His toils and cares of this life are over and his work on earth is finished. Indeed it was well done and his memory at McCray Church and among his friends shall not fade, but will linger long.

In the interest of McCray Church, with Elder Wallie Smith, Mod.

BERTHA E. WHITE

Was called home to be with her Lord, at the age of 89, on Monday, December 9, 1974, after a long illness, where she lived with her daughter in Salisbury, Maryland.

Born near Snow Hill, she was the daughter of the late John H. and Mary Hastings Truittt

and widow of the late Ernest E. White.

Surviving are her five children, 11 grandchildren, 15 great grandchildren and two sisters. One daughter, Mary Perdue Jarvis died in 1963.

Left a widow in 1924, with six small children, she kept her family together by carrying on her farm and working in the fields like a man. She never ceased to praise God for his strength and grace and provision to keep her little family together. A devoted mother, she was always happy, when she had her family around her.

Sister Bertha was brought up in the Primitive Old School Baptist faith, where her father was a deacon and faithful member of the Primitive Baptist Church, Snow Hill, Maryland. She was a member of the Little Creek Old School Baptist Church, near Delmar, Delaware, where she was baptized in 1942 by Elder Harold Bennett. She served her church well as Clerk as long as her health permitted.

A devoted member and contender of the faith, she was always happiest when she met with "her people" as she called her Sisters and Brothers in Christ, who believed in the Sovereign will of God and salvation by grace. Although unable to attend her church during the later years, due to illness, she was always vitally interested in her church and so happy to see the many faithful ones that visited her.

Although her last four years were spent on a hospital bed in her daughter's home, she exhibited great patience and cheerfulness and never ceased to praise our sovereign and gracious God for his loving kindness and grace to see her through. She longed to see her Lord and Saviour and although she will be sadly missed by her family and many friends, we can only praise His Holy Name for taking her home and out of her suffering.

Just three weeks after her beloved Pastor, Elder Arthur Warren, went to be with his Lord, she was laid to rest in the Primitive Old School Baptist Church yard in Snow Hill, Maryland, beside her first husband, Oscar A. Perdue.

Funeral services were conducted by Elder James F. Poole in the Snow Hill Church.

Written by Her Daughter,
Frances Jarvis

I can truthfully say Sister Bertha was a faithful member in the Church and was loved by all who knew her. One of her favorite hymns was "His Loving Kindness." God surely did bless her with his loving kindness for Frances was a faithful daughter, as well as all the children, but Frances was surely blessed with God's grace and mercy to do what she so graciously did for her mother. Never did she once complain, and we all love her for her loving kindness to her mother. Frances came

before the church and will be baptized at Snow Hill February 2nd, with her membership at Salisbury.

Pattie B. Krewatch

WE SHALL SEE HIM AS HE IS

Not as He was, a homeless stranger,
With no home to shield His head;
Not as seen in Bethlehem's manger,
Where the horned oxen fed.

Not as in the garden groaning,
Plunged in deep, mysterious woe,
All the guilt of man bemoaning,
While the precious blood-sweats flow

Not as seen on Calvary's mountain,
Where He offered up His soul,
Opening wide that sacred Fountain,
Which alone can make us whole.

Not as He was, a pale and breathless
Captive in the shades beneath,
But as He is, Immortal, Deathless,
Conqueror o'er the powers of death!

Yes we shall see Him as our Saviour,
Seated on His lofty throne,
Loved, adored by every creature,
Owned as God, and God alone!

There countless hosts of shining spirits
Strike their harps, and loudly sing
To the praise of Jesus' merits,
To the glory of their King.

When we pass o'er death's dark river,
We shall see Him as He is —
Resting in His love and favor,
Owning all the glory His.

There to cast our crowns before Him —
Oh, what bliss the thought affords
There forever to adore Him —
King of kings and Lord of Lords.

Selected

(From an old book published many, many years ago)

"... as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also. For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith." (Romans 1:15-17)

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 143

DANVILLE, VA., MAY, 1975

NO. 5

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 5/75
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

EXPERIENCE

Vesta, Va. 24117

Dear Elder Spangler:

It is time to renew my subscription to the *Signs*, also to ask you to send it to the two friends mentioned. Enclosed is a check to cover all three, plus \$2.00 to help the *Signs*.

I want to tell you how much my wife and I enjoy the paper. It brings back memories long past, when the thought of going to church was enough to lift the spirits. Just to meet the brethren and shake their hands, was enough to bring tears to my eyes. I often think of the happy hours we spent in your home, talking of the goodness and mercy of God. I felt to be just a small boy as I listened to you brethren talk. I felt you were the greatest people on earth, knowing things naturally as other people, and also possessing that spiritual knowledge which comes only by divine revelation to the household of faith. It seems to me that all was love, joy, and perfection, but since then I have had many heart-aches and trials.

One experience I would like to mention. On April 4, 1944 I said goodbye to my wife and four little girls, having been drafted in the U. S. Navy. I welcome that call for I thought that by going I could escape the calling from on high, to go to the pulpit. I knew of

myself I could never preach to God's little ones, so I thought when I had served my time for my country, I would be too old to preach, and the burden would be gone. Little did I know that I was going the exact way God had before determined. About the middle of July, 1944 we left New York for Ireland. On the third day at sea we were ordered to mount our battle stations, and fasten our life jackets as tightly as possible, in case we had to jump overboard.

I was standing at the bottom of I-9 Deck near the stairway. I lifted my eyes with a groan and looked toward Heaven, thinking of my little girls at home. Suddenly a three colored rainbow appeared and encircled the ship. I knew it was the hand of God, and the old ship would sail on. I laid aside my life jacket and began to tell the men around me that God was at the Helm, and was ruling Heaven and Earth. I don't remember all I said. Some of the men thought I had gone out of my mind from fright. It was not fright, but was, I feel, the time and place appointed by God to relieve the great burden I had carried for so long. While speaking, a young man fell into my arms, and cried out, saying, "I told mother when I left home this man would be on this ship." He and I sat and talked for some time. He was in the Army and I in the Navy, and we did not see each other for eighteen and one-half years. At the end of that time I visited a church near Danville, Va. While trying to speak, I told part of this experience, and a young man shouted. He later made himself known to me. During all this time neither of us knew who the other was, or if living.

I did not mean this to be so long, but would like to say, I believe that journey was to teach me that Salvation was and is by the grace of God. I fully stand on that ground. In my feeble efforts I want, "Thus saith the word of God" as my witness. I want my heart and experience to correspond with the Scriptures. Then I can say, "The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want." I hope a few times while in company with the church of God, I have felt that in my heart. Then I can say, "Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for Thou art with me, thy rod and staff they comfort me."

I have heard you preach when my cup ran over. One time at Cascade, I fully thought I would have to ask for a home, but there is a time and a season to every purpose under heaven.

An unworthy brother, if one at all.

Bennie Clifton

ADAM AND EVE

Rt. 5, Box 140,
Bassett, Va. 24055

I desire to write some of my thoughts on Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden, and his fall, along with all mankind.

"And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul. And the Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden, and there he put the man whom he had formed. And out of the ground made the Lord grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of the knowledge of good and evil." (Genesis 2:7, 9)

"And the Lord commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: but of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it, for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die. And the Lord God said, It is not good that man should be alone." (Genesis 2:16-18)

I believe that Adam was a figure of Christ and Eve a figure of the church. Eve was in Adam in the creation and also in the formation.

In the third chapter we read, "Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the Lord God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat the fruit of the trees of the garden: but the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden. God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: for God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil. (Genesis 3:1-5)

The serpent told Eve a lie first, then told her the truth to get her to believe a lie. This is the way he deceived the woman.

"And when the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was pleasant to the eyes, and a tree desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also to her husband with her, and he did eat. And the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked: and they sewed fig leaves together, and made themselves aprons. And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day: and Adam and his wife hid themselves from the presence of the Lord God amongst the trees of the garden." (Genesis 3:6-8)

Adam was a figure of Christ, and Eve a figure of the church. Eve was deceived: Adam was not deceived. I believe that the reason Adam took the fruit, was because he loved her. Christ was made sin for the church, and a curse, yet he knew no sin. It was because he loved us, taking our sins upon himself: our sins imputed to him, and his righteousness imputed unto us.

"And the Lord God called unto Adam, Where art thou? And he said, I heard thy voice in the garden, and I was

afraid because I was naked, and I hid myself."

Brother Spikes of Mossey Rock, Washington, asked me what it meant when Adam heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the cool of the day in the garden. I paused for a moment or two, and said to him, Don't you think that he was under conviction? Brother Spikes smiled and said, "That is it." Let us turn back to the second chapter, verse 21: "And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof, and the rib which the Lord God had taken from the man, made he a woman and brought her unto Adam. And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called woman, because she was taken out of man. This is a beautiful type of Christ and the church. David was a type of Christ, and he said, "Ye are my brethren, ye are my bones and my flesh." (2 Samuel 19:12)

Christ spoke by the mouth of David and said, "I may tell all my bones: they look and stare at me." This does not mean only at the time he hung on the cross, but every one that is brought under conviction, for every repenting sinner by faith views and stares at Christ in the Spirit of prayer, crying, God have mercy upon me a hell deserving sinner. And he knows that if Christ did not atone for him, that he is hell bound. To me this is when we are in the cool of the day just before sun rise, when we realized we were naked and were afraid. This was the case with Adam when he heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the cool of the day. When the Lord clothed them with the skins, there had to be the shedding of blood to obtain the skins: this being a type of the shed blood of Christ. The blood of Christ was just as effectual then as it was when it was shed when he hung on the cross; for without the shed blood of Christ there could be no remission of sin — no forgiveness, no justification, no glorification.

We notice that the term Lord God was used in the beginning. Lord to me means to rule; God means to be mighty — Almighty God. And being almighty means the Lord rules supremely: He does all his will and pleasure, because he is Almighty.

I will stare at Jesus, but not without hope. I am hearing the voice of the Lord walking in the cool of the day, for I have this hope that the Son of Righteousness has shined upon me. The church and Christ will never be put asunder. "What therefore God hath joined together, let no man put asunder." This has to do with Christ and his bride.

"Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Romans 8:28, 39)

J. R. Hollandsworth

THE SOVEREIGN DECREES OF GOD

(Concluded from last month)

Those who are determined to believe nothing but what they can comprehend, are determined to be idolators, for 'tis certain that anything which can be comprehended by a finite mind cannot be the infinite Jehovah whose wisdom, knowledge, and judgements are *unsearchable* and his ways *past finding out; of whom, through whom and to whom are all things; to whom be glory forever, amen, Rom. xi 33-36*. Thus to believe, adore, and obey is not, as many would have it, a sacrificing of reason to tradition and blind devotion; but the contrary. As, for instance, should any man conceit that he could not know whether or not there was light in the sun or warmth in the fire without looking through the one and running

into the other, and should try the experiment till he became blind and burnt, he could not from thence convince me that I had lost both my sight and feeling because I still professed to enjoy great comfort in the cautious improvement of those blessings. Now the perfections of the deity are compared both to the sun and the fire, to teach us the importance of receiving his grace freely, of acting towards him *uprightly*, and *serv- ing* of him with *reverence and Godly fear*, *Psal.* lxxxiv, 11; *Heb.* xii, 28, 29.

Some serious persons are afraid to give in to the doctrine of immutable decrees lest they should make God the author of sin, but Mr. Norton, one of the fathers of this country, justly replied to this objection that sin is a defect, and God is the author of all efficiency but not of any defect at all. An illegitimate child is the creature of God, but its illegitimacy is wholly from its parents. It was their lusts which caused the *defect* or want of its being lawfully begotten. Yet the child is God's creature, and if he please he makes it a subject of his grace. The heat of the sun that attacks the secret virtues of the earth, is not the cause of the stink of the dunghill. And though carnal reasoners try to persuade people that to hold every event to be certain in the divine councils, takes away the guilt of evil actions, and the virtue of good ones; yet the word of truth abundantly shows the contrary. It shows that Joseph's brethren were as *verily guilty* in their actings against him as if they could have frustrated God's design, and yet that he over-ruled their *wrath* and *cruelty* towards their brother, for His own praise, (*Psalms* 56: 10) and to make Joseph much more of a public and extensive blessing than they could have made him in Canaan, if they had tried their uttermost for it. At the same time the sacred story clearly shows that they acted quite voluntarily, both in their wretched abuses to their brother, and in humbly prostrating themselves before him afterward. They acted by motive; when they first saw Joseph coming to them, they

felt so that they thought they would slay him: But upon another view murder appeared so shocking that they thought it best to gratify themselves another way, which moved them to choose that way. On the other hand, when Joseph was tempted by his wicked mistress, though men were absent, yet God to whom he was under infinite obligation, was present to his thoughts, and that proved a sufficient motive to make him choose any suffering rather than to sin against such a glorious being.

The inquiry and pursuit of all men is after *good*, and the believer finds it only in God, who is *good* and is always doing *good*, and this causes his soul to be in earnest to *learn his statutes*, *Psal.* iv, 6, 7 and cxix, 68. Others do not like to retain the true God in their knowledge; neither his nature nor his government appear good to their carnal minds. Therefore they worship and serve the creature instead of the Creator, setting up gain, honor, or pleasure as their chief good. Yet to appear nakedly irreligious, is too shocking to multitudes who at the same time are very far from desiring to set the Lord always before them, so as to be influenced by him in all their conduct. Therefore they choose their *idol* shepherds that will prophesy *smooth things* to them rather than faithful watchmen who represent the true character of the *Holy One of Israel before them*, *Isai.* xxx, 8-11; *Zech.* xi, 17.

A darling topic with the carnal reasoners of our world is this, they say that either men are *able* to obey and serve God, or else, if they *cannot* do it, until God is pleased to convert them. they are not to blame for neglecting of it. But the truth is, the natural man *cannot serve God* because he does *love* and *serve* an idol. And the soul before it is slain by the law, cannot be *married* to Christ because it is *wedded* to its own doings, *Matt.* vi, 24; *Rom.* vii. Yet this inability is so far from being any just excuse that the more unable they are to love God or to believe in Christ the

greater is their *condemnation*, *John iii*, 16, 19. And it is a most wicked device in the writer of the paper now in hand, to use the word *inevitable* concerning the reprobate and *irresistible* concerning the elect in such a manner as to exclude the idea of their own choice; whereas the vessels of wrath say, *We WILL walk after our own devices*, and *EVERYONE that doeth evil HATETH THE LIGHT*, *Jer. xviii*, 12; *John iii*, 20. And vessels of mercy pursue the same ways till God works in them to *will and to do of his good pleasure*, *Phil. ii*, 13; *Tit. ii* 3i,-5. Therefore though the final event is as certain to the one as the other, yet the manner of its accomplishments is vastly different. The vessels of wrath, *after their hard and impenitent heart, treasure up wrath TO THEMSELVES, while God endureth with much long suffering with them*. But he makes known the riches of his glory in effectually calling the vessels of mercy which he had afore prepared unto glory. *Rom. ii*, 5 and ix, 22-24. And renewed souls are so far from assuming to themselves a power to be God's counselors or venturing to act upon secret things which belong to him, that where he has told them of his designs concerning any future event they have not made the design of the great Ruler but the laws he has given to his subjects the rule of their conduct; and the difference between subjects and rebels is discovered by this. As, for instance, God let David know that he designed to remove Saul and to make him king in his stead. Yet David refused to smite Saul when he had opportunity but left it with God to remove him in his own way, *1 Sam. xxiv*, 12, 13. Whereas when the Jews heard Caiphas' prophecy concerning the death of Jesus from that day forth, they took counsel together for to put him to death, *John xi*, 49, 53. And God's accomplishing his infallible decrees in that great event, while the Jews were inexcusably guilty in their actings about it, are strongly asserted by the inspired apostle. *Him, being delivered by the DETERMINATE COUNSEL and foreknowledge of God, ye*

have taken and by WICKED HANDS have crucified and slain, Acts ii, 23.

They acted most wickedly in conspiring against our Saviour who was perfectly holy and harmless and constantly went about doing good. Yet God's purposes and promises were thereby exactly accomplished in bestowing infinite and eternal mercies upon guilty and miserable men. Pharaoh used great subtlety and cruelty in order to keep Israel in bondage and set up his will at the highest rate against releasing of them. Yet God in his providence caused things to appear so to him and his subjects that they voluntarily furnished Israel with silver and gold, and *Egypt was glad when they departed, Psal. cv*, 37, 38, and that on the selfsame day which God had told Abraham of above four hundred years before, *Exod. xii*, 41.

These and many other instances of men's voluntary actions, the Lord declared with a perfect exactness before they came to pass, because he *knew* that with a *brazen obstinacy* and *wilful treachery* they would rather give this glory to their idol than to him, *Isai. xlviii*, 3-8. But the firm faith of the saints in every age in the certain accomplishment of God's promises, has made them the more watchful and active in the rational choice that he furnished them with for attaining the desired end. Jacob wrestled and prevailed with God, yet that did not make him neglect and to wisely improve the best that he had in his power to calm his angry brother, and it had the desired effect. Paul *believed God* that the lives of all those who were with him in ship should be saved, yet when the men who were skilled in managing the ship were about to leave it, he said to the centurion and to the soldiers, *Except these abide in the ship ye CANNOT be saved, Acts xxvii*, 25, 31. Here was a certainty of the event, and yet it is expressed conditionally, while both were true. It was true that all should be saved, and it was as true that the mariners must be instrumental of it.

Thus my dear friend, I have endeavored in as plain and brief a manner as I could, in the little time I had for it, opened and vindicated the great Scripture doctrine of God's sovereign decrees against a malicious attempt which has been made to villify the same. It may well seem surprising to those who are acquainted with the seventeenth article of the Church of England to hear that a minister who has solemnly engaged to maintain the truth therein expressed, should have a great hand in spreading this blasphemous paper which is diametrically contrary thereto, as has evidently been the case. But I leave him and all others in the hand of a righteous and gracious God, and rest,

Yours, etc.

Isaac Backus 1773

ONE GENERATION IN CHRIST JESUS

We have received many traditions from our fathers in the flesh, yet more meaningful from the apostles of old; II Thessalonians 2:15: "Therefore, brethren, stand fast, and hold the traditions which ye have been taught, whether by word, or our epistle."

We read much about the generations gap. I am sure there were problems in the generations of this world before now, yet it was a tradition of our forefathers to use discipline in love and understanding with patience.

I believe our Heavenly Father, the God of patience, chastises the precious ones whom He predestinated to be conformed to the image of His Son; because they are sons, and they love Him because He first loved them. We love our parents because they first loved us.

We as parents cannot teach as the Holy Ghost teaches, yet we teach our children obedience because we love them; and I believe this is the tradition of the apostles, for in the First Epistle of Paul, the apostle, to Timothy is given the qualifications of bishops and deacons; one of them is having their chil-

dren in subjection with all gravity and ruling them and their houses well.

I don't know how many generations there have been in this world nor how many God has appointed to be, neither do I know what the future holds; though I believe I know who holds the future; Ecclesiastes 1:4 "One generation passeth away, and another generation cometh."

It is most inspiring to see the young and the old in years brought together in love and fellowship one for another, showing there is but one generation in our Lord and Saviour, for it is written ye are all one in Christ Jesus. We have access by one Spirit unto the Father; and the age of the Holy Spirit cannot be measured neither by years nor generations.

While attending my home association, The Upper Country Line, I was brought in remembrance to the many precious brethren that are now resting from their labour; and I wondered who would be missing at our next meeting. I know there is an appointed time to die, and the Lord is calling both young and old from the trials and troubles of this low ground of sin and sorrow.

I have no desire to praise man, yet there have been many precious ones who by the manifestation of the Holy Spirit have made my life richer. I feel most thankful for our moderator, Elder David V. Spangler, whom the Lord has blessed to preach the Gospel to the poor for more than 50 years; one who has been kept by the Grace of God through faith not to be ashamed to own his Lord nor defend His cause.

Through brotherly love and understanding and a desire to comfort the people of God, Elder Spangler is known over the United States and our sister country of Canada, wherever this people he so dearly loves are found.

One of his most precious gifts is his helpmeet of more than 50 years. One whom the wear of the years has never marred the depth of her beauty nor diminished her love and kindness, his lovely wife, Sister Nannie Spangler.

There is no generation gap in the little ones who are spiritually discerned.

The youngest minister in our association is Elder Wallis Smith by age. We have known him and his precious companion, Sister Ella Marie Smith, since they were brought to our meetings in their mother's arms; and the Church at Bush Arbor recognized the working of the Holy Spirit in their lives; and we saw them baptized together by their pastor, Elder W. C. King, assisted by his daddy, Elder Harvey Smith.

The Church called Brother Smith out of the congregation and gave him liberty to speak. He proved his calling and was ordained to the full work of the ministry. They are loved and esteemed by the people of this faith, both the elderly and the youth; for there is but one in Christ.

I oftimes feel so unworthy of the blessed privilege of talking about precious things with my family. Our daughter-in-law told of an experience while Elder H. W. Wray was preaching how there shined round about him a light and the things around him shined like pure gold. She is more to us than just our son's lovely wife, for there is a love that flows from heart to heart and breast to breast.

Of myself, I am a miserable failure. I fall short on every hand. I don't feel to know how to thank the Lord nor praise His name for the blessings He has bestowed upon me, even to see our son baptized into the fellowship of the Primitive Baptist Church at Gilliams; a joy I have no words to explain. There are a few moments in my life I would like to live over, though I try not to look back at the many things I would like to forget.

Clifton C. Robertson
Route 1
Reidsville, North Carolina

"BECAUSE YE ARE SONS"

"And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into

your hearts, crying, Abba, Father."
(Gal. 4:6)

Here, somewhere in time, is a little one who cries out to Heaven above and says "Abba, Father". This may be all that he says. He may not offer a long, carefully worded prayer, filled with pious phrases that would be pleasing to the ears of man; but he cries out from the depths of his heart unto a great power above; to seek from Him all the blessings of comfort and strength which he needs. There was one of old whom Jesus declared bowed down in the temple to pray; he could not so much as lift up his eyes toward Heaven, so great was the feeling of his unworthiness; he offered no long, precise petition designed to please the ears of those about him or to speak (as the Pharisee) of his own works or efforts; but simply that old publican cried to the God of Heaven and earth and said but this: "God be merciful to me a sinner". What did he cry? "Abba, Father". Jesus said he went down to his house justified. (Lk 18:9-14).

There was a little sister who cried "Abba, Father" also. She had asked for blessings from the hand of our Lord and he had told her that she was but a dog—not privileged to receive the things belonging to those of the kingdom. She did not become offended at His words, for she knew within her heart that He was right; that she had no righteousness of her own to offer; nothing good to bring before the King and lay at His feet; but yet something within her caused her to know that only this King had the power to bring healing to her daughter. And so she confessed her plight, as did the publican in the temple, that she was but a dog—a poor, miserable, lost, and undone sinner—but yet she cried "Abba, Father"—for she said, "Lord, yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their master's table." (Mt 15:21-28).

My brother, my sister, have you ever cried unto the God of Heaven as this poor woman did — and as the old pub-

lican in the temple did? Perhaps not in words pleasing to the ears of men; perhaps not with all the elements that the theologians say must be present to constitute a proper prayer—but from the depths of your poor heart—perhaps in the face of sickness or death—perhaps in the dark hours of the night, when sleep would not come—perhaps in the face of decisions that you could not make—in trouble—yes, and sometimes in joy as you are blessed to walk upon the top of the mountain — has there not issued a cry from the depths of your heart unto the great King above? You knew you were not worthy to enter His presence or to look upon His face—and yet something within you drew you to Him for there was nowhere else to go and no one else to help; and you turned to the God of comfort above; with no ability or words to describe your helpfulness; and simply breathed “Oh God, Oh God”. “Abba, Father”.

And wherever there is one who so cries—not with the lips but from the heart—whether they are black or white; bond or free; young or old; rich or poor; male or female; that cry identifies the recipients of Divine Grace. History reveals that long before our ancestors settled this land, among the redmen were those who would steal away into the woods by themselves and utter such a cry. They did not learn it from the books of men for they had no books; nor from the teachings of man for they had no churches and no preachers. Yet these savage, uneducated people knew something far deeper and greater than the white men who came to “missionize” and “civilize” them; for they knew that God was a Spirit. (John 4:24). The white man brought his idols and images and said “bow to these Gods”; but the elect of God among the redmen knew that no image could convey the nature of God, the Great Spirit.

What caused them to cry “Abba, Father”? What causes any trembling child to look upward to Heaven and cry out for the blessings from above? Did

he learn it at his mother’s knee? Did he inherit it from his parents? “Flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in Heaven”. (Mt. 16:17). Did the preacher bring him this privilege and plant this desire within him? No, but the same power which found Jacob in the waste howling wilderness found this little child at God’s appointed time and placed within Him a desire to call out unto His father in Heaven; yet realizing he had no right nor power within himself to do so. Does he cry because he “accepted Christ”? Or, rather, does he cry because Christ has accepted Him in the beloved (Eph. 1:6) back before the foundation of the earth and has now made manifest His love unto him.

God is the God of order. He who set the stars in their perfect course in the Heavens above so that they constantly move through centuries, yet without collision one with the other; He who designed the order of nature which we see about us; is in all things a God of order. See it plainly written through the scriptures—“We love him, because He first loved us”. I Jn 4:19. Here is God’s order. First, He moves, then we respond. First, He loves, then in His appointed time He makes manifest that love unto us, and fills our hearts with love that issues back to him.

What makes us cry “Abba, Father”? Read the text again. It is not this old Adam man that makes such a cry. Not a decision on his part, or an effort he has put forth. But it is the “Spirit of His Son” within our hearts that cries “Abba, Father”. John said it was “not of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.” Jn 1:13.

And so it is not you or I that makes such a cry—not the Adam nature which we bear which suddenly decides to turn to the Giver of Life above. But it is when the Giver of Life reaches down with the gift of life and imparts it within our hearts; then that gift of life (the Spirit of Christ) is what cries unto the Giver above and says “Abba, Father”. But what causes the God of

Heaven and earth to send forth this spirit into the hearts of certain people?

I heard a man recently at a funeral read from a new "version" of the Bible that God chose men because He foreknew that they would believe on Him. If that be so, then God foreknew nothing. Left to ourselves, Adam's race would never turn to God or cry out unto Him. "There is none that understandeth; there is none that seeketh after God." Romans 3:11. This is plain language and to use the expressions of our day—it tells it like it is. Of all of Adam's seed—Jew and Gentile alike—the Apostle declares that there is NONE—not a single one—that would seek after God. So if God chose only those whom He knew beforehand would believe on Him; He would have chosen none at all; for God knew that there would never be one of Adam's race who in and of Himself would seek after Him.

No, the reason does not lie in man—in his works, in his thoughts, or in his desires. The reason lies in God and is as old as God Himself. Before this world ever was, God chose a people as His own—a people to be His family, His children—and predestinated them to be adopted as His children and conformed to the image of Christ. Eph 1:5; Rom 8:29. They were His children in His mind and purpose from all eternity past—not in actuality for they were not yet born in time, the earth not being here to furnish the dust for Adam to be made of; but they were God's children—His family—His sheep—His loved ones—in His plan and purpose from all eternity. They cry "Abba, Father" in time because the Spirit of God within cries such; and the Spirit of God within was sent in God's appointed time not to make them children—but the text says "Because ye are sons."

Observe God's order. Election, calling, prayer. To those whom He chose He sends the Spirit of His Son (Calling) and because that Spirit abides within, they pray. The world looks at the little child who prays and says, you did it of yourself—now God will save

you. But the scripture says that the little child who cries out "Abba Father" declares the evidence of the hope of salvation that God has planted within. So many times our "prayers" are but words upon our lips; but those times when they spring forth from the heart within with the cry of "Abba, Father" they speak of that blessed Hope which God has given to His own. Brethren, pray for me, and give all honor and praise to Him to whom it is due. A little one in hope,

(Elder) Bob Dickerson
Box 2262, Valdosta, Ga. 31601

SUBSCRIBERS FOR FOUR GENERATIONS

55 Maple Ave.,
Warwick, N. Y. 1099

Dear Elder Wood:

If I am not mistaken, my father told me that his father took the *Signs of the Times* from the time it was established in 1832, or soon thereafter. So if that is the case, the *Signs* has been coming to this Vail tribe for four generations: My Grandfather Vail, my father, mine, and my son Albert Vail, Jr. They were all members of an old "Hardshell" Baptist Church. Thanks for putting up with this Tribe.

And love to your good wife from my wife and me.

Albert R. Vail, Sr.

"THE BODY IS OF CHRIST"

"Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect to an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days which are shadows of things to come; but the body is of Christ. Colossians 2:16-17)

The words, "Let no man therefore judge you," in the nature of their use in this scripture, are positive in their order and could not possibly be wrested by the vanity of men's minds, to signify conditions on the part of men,

as having relation to something which we ought not to allow men to do, without doing violence to the preceding verses in this chapter. (Please read the entire chapter.)

This is just as positive in its nature of meaning, as if it had been rendered, "no man can judge you." Men may try, and do try, with all their might and main, to judge another man as to what he may eat doctrinally, or as to what he may drink to the assuaging of his spiritual thirsting after righteousness, and their efforts just utterly fail, because all of this eating and drinking, the place experimentally of your keeping of an holy day unto the Lord, or of the new moon, (servitude of the law,) of the sabbath days, (gospel rest seasons of the soul,) are all fixed of God in the personal experience of each heir of promise, out of the unwasting bounty of a kind and merciful Father, all of these things are meted out to the exercising of the soul individually, experimentally, to every one who, in his or her travel of experience of soul, through the administration of the Holy Spirit, has tasted that Jesus is gracious, as the Holy Spirit takes the things of Jesus and shews them unto you: Hence no man can judge you. When the Master, even Jesus, the high priest and bishop of your soul, brake the bread and blessed it, and gave to the twelve apostles, and said, "Take, eat, this is my body, broken for you; And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, drink ye all of it: for this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins."

He was not leaving the matter optional with them as to whether they ate or drank, but rather made this positively mandatory—not only to them but to all who have tasted that the Lord is gracious in the pardon and forgiveness of their sins. Every heir of promise, regardless of whether they have ever partaken of the emblems of the Lord's Supper, or not, in the order of what the church calls the keeping of the ordi-

nance, they have and do subsist upon and eat the spiritual essence of the Lord's broken body, and drink his blood of the New Testament, every time they experience a season of rejoicing in a Saviour's love. Therefore, all of this being fixed in the experience of every heir of promise, "No man can judge you."

Again, when we come to examine the nature of an "holy day" the season or time, the day of days experimentally, the day when peace was spoken to your soul: when Jesus was revealed to you as your Saviour, when with tear bedimmed eyes you, by faith, beheld Jesus, God incarnate, smitten, afflicted, wounded for your transgressions, in your law room and stead, drinking the gall of the fierceness of the divine wrath of God, which was justly your due, and when you behold the mystery of mysteries, Jesus treading the winepress alone, and you beheld his garments dyed in the winefat, (his own blood,) and by faith you hear the sweet whispers of his love to the chief of sinners, saying, "I bore all of this for you, to set you, the lawful captive, free, and thus have taken the prey from the mighty, and have put away your sins by the sacrifice of myself, to be remembered against you no more forever. Even I have taken away the handwriting or ordinances (carnal commandments) which were against you and contrary to you, having nailed it to my cross, having slain the enmity thereby."

O holy day when I first rejoiced in a Saviour's love. There is no other day like it in my life. This is the day when the sun stood still and the moon stayed in its motions, while God fought your battle for you. The sun was turned to darkness (Jesus smitten: put to shame for you.) The law demanded the life of every guilty transgressor. Hence when Jesus agonized in Gethsemane and poured out his soul unto death on the tree of the cross, the Just for the unjust, the law which demanded the life of the lawful captive—when it got his life, it got your life: Jesus being your life.

"When he who is your life shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory."

In his personal coming, dear tried and tempest tossed children of God, in your own personal experience and revelation of his gracious power to save: when it was yours to taste by faith, the moon (law) stood still, i.e. ceased to have dominion over you. The moon (law) was turned to blood in the obedience of Jesus unto death on the cursed tree of the cross. (see the prophecy of Joel) The strict justice of God was forever satisfied in your behalf—the wrath of God was appeased. "Mercy and truth are met together: righteousness and peace have kissed each other." and the prey was taken from the mighty, and the lawful captive (poor guilty sinners) was delivered.

All of this must have its place in application in the experience of God's trembling children. And hence, this is the new moon to you. The law (moon) is fulfilled—forever satisfied by the obedience and righteousness of Jesus, even his obedience unto death. And thus the moon (law) experimentally is put under your feet: Jesus your Friend having satisfied its every just demand for you, having done for you what you could not possibly do for yourself. Therefore, in this glad day (season of rejoicing) you received your first tasting of the "sabbath days" seasons of rest in the finished work of Jesus. This rest is seasonal and intermittent from the time peace is spoken to your troubled soul until the time of your final and full deliverance: when and where you, dear weary child of God who are often cast down, groping in darkness, cast down by sore and fiery doubts, and often feel to be a cast away, you shall see the king in his beauty, in his holy glory, with unclouded eyes: eyes no longer fettered by sin, you shall see Jesus without a veil between, when mortality shall be swallowed up of life, and you shall be ushered into his holy presence to dwell in his fulness forever and forever.

This is the ultimate of your hope, the

fulness of his grace. "Let no man therefore judge you . . ." for Jesus is the judge of the quick and dead. All of this dear children of God is yours to experimentally taste by the sovereign and irresistible will of God and sweetly yours through his abundant mercy, and predicated solely on the premise of "because it seemeth good in His sight," and not because of worth or merit of the creature, for they have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. Every moment of your rejoicing is before Him in love when you are lifted up from your dead state in nature's night, and translated to His native air, (the Eden of love,) raised up and made to sit together in love before His wondrous throne, and taste through grace the dainties of Wisdom's table. All of this in its entirety, is but a little foretaste received in measure here, of that which shall be yours in its unmeasured fulness, when that which is in part shall be done away: When you are finally ushered into the fulness of His presence and of His glory, and shall see him as he is and be like him, and be forever satisfied in the ultimate of your hope: your hope is ended in fruition and faith is turned to sight.

Therefore these little seasons of His heavenly visitations, the seasons of tasting of wine on the lees, and of fat things full of marrow, when compared to the ultimate, and the glory which shall be revealed in you, to the praise of the glory of His grace, rightly are, "but a shadow of things to come."

But hear the conclusion of the whole matter: lest any flesh should glory in his presence, "the body is of Christ," and the body fitly framed together of Him, is nourished (strengthened) by joints and bands, and groweth into a holy temple in the Lord, to the measure of the stature and fulness of Christ,—and God sets every member in the body as in please him. Jesus Christ himself is the chief cornerstone, in whom (not just merely on whom) all the building fitly framed together, groweth unto a holy temple in the Lord. Where is boast-

ing then? Excluded! By what law? By the law of works? Nay, but by the law of grace!

This is my hope, my all, yea, all my consolation, all my joy, resting in the full weight of conviction, that the body is of Christ, first, last, and forever. Therefore it is of grace through faith to the ultimate praise of His holy name. Blessed be His name forevermore. How unsearchable are his judgments and his ways past finding out, how little a portion is known of Him. How great is His love! How wondrous is His grace!

Finally, "Of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God, is made unto us wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption:

My God my life, my love,
To thee, to thee, I call
I cannot live, if thou remove,
For Thou art all in all.

Submitted in love of the truth,
H. J. Bird

October 30, 1951

(submitted by Sister Bird)

ENJOYED THE MEETING

Signs of the Times,

Dear Brother Spangler:

I am writing of a beautiful meeting at Valley View. We were disappointed the Elder B. O. Thompson could not be with us as he was ill. He and his wife, as they labor in His ministry, are indeed God's humble servants. However our assistant pastor, Elder Roy Agee, preached so beautifully. The songs filled our hearts, especially, "Amazing Grace".

... At times we receive a little manna but stay in the wilderness most of the time. My dear sister, Glenna, remarked several days ago that she would like to have more compassion. This too is my wish. Oh Lord, help us to live more pleasing, and give us more spiritual understanding—without you we can do nothing. We read in the scriptures of His hand leading us: when the lambs go astray, he will lead them back safe-

ly. We were all surely fed that day.

The following was written by Elder C. H. Martin's daughter, Ethel Martin Hawks. She was a neighbor of ours in Radford:

SEEING GOD

I see God in the heart of a rose,
I feel His love in the breeze that blows.
I see God in the beautiful trees,
I hear Him in the hum of the bees.

I see God in the blue of the sky,
I trust He guides me with his eye.
I see God in the beautiful spring,
I hear him when the little birds sing.

I see God, Yes all the year 'round,
Even when the snow falls on the ground.
I see God in a little child's face:
Sense His abiding, sweet love and grace.

I see God when His dear people meet,
I hear Him in the songs of Zion, sweet.
I see God when we bow down to pray:
Sometimes feel His glory on that day.

I see God when the Apostles preach:
I see Him as they comfort and teach.
O, may I see God fully, complete,
Praise Him in heaven when we all meet.

—Ethel Martin Hawks

We are enclosing some money to be used as you wish.

In hope of eternal life,
Brother and Sister Wells

REQUESTS COMMENTS

2378 Sycamore Road,
Hurricane, W. Va. 25526

Dear Editors of the Signs:

Please renew my subscription to the *Signs of the Times*. Am enclosing check for \$10.00 for two years—use the balance as you see fit.

I enjoy reading the wonderful writings, and don't want to miss an issue. Thank God for you brethren who send out the Signs each month.

Would like for someone to comment on this scripture: Solomon's Song, 5th chapter, 3rd verse.

In bonds of love,
Elder Ernest Breedlove

(Will be glad if someone can answer
this request.)

CHANGE OF MEETING TIME

The *Salem Primitive Baptist Church*, Benton, Ill., meets every First Sunday at 10:30 a.m. with communion service the First Sunday in May.

All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

Elder Wayman Chapell, Mod.
Wm. Vantrease, Clerk
408 S. Commercial St.,
Benton, Ill.
James Cunningham, Asst. Clerk

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**A BRUISED REED—
A SMOKING FLAX**

(Isa. 42:1,4; Mat. 12:18, 21)

As the Saviour preached His own everlasting gospel He set a precedent for all gospel preaching today. The Spirit was upon Him to the end that He was anointed to preach good tidings to poor troubled sinners, and I am sure that no minister of the gospel of the grace of God has ever gone forth preaching who had not been anointed to that end. He must be called, as was Aaron, and he must be anointed as was Aaron. God anointed His Son to preach the gospel, and every minister is now anointed by

the Holy Ghost.

The commandment to go forth preaching, is always accompanied by a description of the ones that must be preached to. Make no mistake, no minister has ever been sent to preach the gospel to anyone save those to whom the Holy Ghost dealt with. The government that rests on the shoulder of the child born, the Son given, is in harmony and it is consistent within itself. It does not send men to preach without direction, fields to labor in, people to preach to, results certain. Servants of the Lord Jesus Christ are limited as to where they go, and great is the sorrow when they undertake to hold the reins (Isa. 6; Jer. 1; Ex. 3; Mat. 28:18, 20; Jer. 10:23, 24; 20:9; Jonah).

To me, every word in the testimony of God is sent in mercy to His people. It is true, that some things are said to the unregenerated, but it is yet to be applied to them, for they can not receive it now. It is true that some things in the Bible are the sayings of Satan and his hosts, and those sayings are not by the leadership of God's Spirit; but the men of God are moved by the Holy Ghost to give an exact recording of the things said by false prophets and false witnesses and by Satan, for our benefit in dealing with such things in our time.

To me, the work of God, and of Christ, and of the Holy Spirit, are for the benefit of poor sinners. I notice from time to time that learned (?) men say that our family pets and other such absurdities will be in heaven. That is too foolish to be considered. But the question is often propounded to me that the mercy of God is often said to be applied to many things in the kingdom of heaven other than men and women. And, invariably, I give a negative answer to any such thought. We must remember that our Master hides from one class and reveals to another, and that He is well pleased that it is that way (Mat. 11:25, 26); that He speaks in parables and in allegories and other figures of speech and does it that understanding is given to one and withheld from another

(Psa. 78:2; Mat. 13:11).

How lovely is the unity between God the Father and God the Son. How often that honor is paid to the Son by the Father. "Behold my servant whom I have chosen; my well beloved, in whom my soul is well pleased." This is a source of great comfort and satisfaction to find that the Father is satisfied with the work of redemption. This revelation was brought about by the God of all grace, and was mutual between God the Father and God the Son. It pleased the Father that in Christ all fulness should dwell (Col. 1:19); it pleased the Son that His Father had hid the things of His kingdom from the prudent and had revealed them unto babes (Mat. 11:25, 26). Twice we have heard coming down out of heaven the voice of the Father accompanying a visit of a dove saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." (Mat. 3:17), And on the Mount of Transfiguration we hear the voice of God coming out of the cloud as He said, "This is my beloved Son: hear him." (Luke 9:35).

As we launch out upon the blessedness of this precious Redeemer God we are face to face with the mystery of godliness, something that only the source of the mystery will ever be able to explain. Each one to whom the mystery has been shown is helpless to explain it. He or she may show the mystery, but explain it never. (I Cor. 15:51). How fruitless are the saviours of men in exploring the depth of the love of God. He or she that is dependent on Christ the Saviour of all people of God, can not give the saviour to another. The revelation of Christ, and the seeing in His face our God and Father, is the most sublime blessing in this time state; it is a saviour of life. It will be the beginning of the unfolding of the mystery of godliness, but this all being by faith, and faith being the gift of God, it will be according to the good pleasure of God. It will be according to the gift and measure of Christ to us, according to the measure of faith (Rom. 12:3; Eph. 4:7), and it is of His fullness (not the

fullness) ; it is here a little, there a little, line upon line (not line by line, precept by precept. (Isa. 28:10), and they will all come to feel as did Job that we know but a little portion of Him. (Job 26:14).

Salvation is an unbroken chain. It had its beginning in the eternal mind of God. If some man can affirm (his affirmation will have to be confirmed) how old God is, then I will instantly tell you how long that salvation has been in His mind. The beginning of this salvation has continued *with* God from then until now, and it has continued to us ever since His determination to save. No gaps have entered into this salvation. God has not had any lapses in His memory, nor has He had to lay this salvation aside for secondary matters, nor has He had to do a lot of traveling and counseling and begging and reconciling differences between intermediate agencies and powers before He could go on. All things have been, and are, in His hands. He is the first cause in this salvation, and nothing can be the cause of that which is in itself the cause of everything. In the order of things the first man was of the earth earthy, and therefore spiritual things were not first, but natural things (I Cor. 15:46, 47) : The history of the law and its reign together with the travel of poor frail sinners under it,—and since Christ we have had spiritual things. Each of these dispensations of rule has been effectual and complete and sovereign. The law reigned unto death, and grace reigns unto salvation.

In this reign of grace Jesus Christ has sent and shown judgment unto the Gentiles. A Gentile is an unbeliever, a man without God and without hope in the world, a man that had not been known as a chosen vessel, a man that was not known as the people of God. In this sense, all mankind were in that condition, both Jews and Gentiles, or all men. It pleased God to put away His chosen nation because of their unbelief, and to bring in the Gentiles. The rejection of the Jews was as a people, not as individuals; likewise the bringing in of the Gentiles was a people, not as in-

dividuals.

This judgment of God has been belittled and ridiculed by sages down the ages, but it stands today. The accompanying judgments were brought down upon the heads of those thus shown this judgment. He has shown mercy to whom He would show mercy and those not shown this mercy have shown their intense dislike of God's ways and judgments; but have also shown that they have not found out His judgments and ways. (Rom. 11:33).

The showing of this judgment has been in a unique manner. In order for us to know something of this uniqueness we will have to observe all other organizations in the carrying out of their crusades. It is not necessary to designate and personalize denominations and organizations. Look around you and see how the political, religious, economical, social, or any other organization carry on their advertisements and drives and lobbying and buying support. They are all alike, for they are all of the world. They will all acknowledge that without all of this wind and great crusade and heated campaigns, they would not be successful (I Kings 19:11, 12). Now I did not say it, but God has sounded the death knell of every last one of such drives and campaigns and crusades made in order to save sinners or to further their success.

Through the tender mercy of God I am spared to once again present the Lord Jesus Christ. His coming is not preceded by a band, and no radio nor television nor newspaper advertisements are displayed to announce His advent as an infant, or his arrival in any city or church. He does not defend himself; He does not strive to head off a source of opposition to His work; He does not strain and strive nor carry on a plan of espionage to out wit His adversaries, nor is His voice raised to carry His message beyond that of others. In the thickest of opposing forces and voices He does not cry out to gain support.

He is not heard in the streets. It may be considered folly, but if thus consid-

ered, then, by all means, I am filled with folly, but I can not conceive of a situation arising to where that I would go out into the street of a town for the purpose of preaching the gospel. To some, it may be too much spiritualizing, but I will not be found, if kept by grace, going into the ways (streets) of any order or denomination in proclaiming the doctrine of God our Saviour, and if I am wrong in spiritualize in this case, to those that deem it wrong, then, by all means, I suggest that they go in the streets and preach the gospel.

In the dispensation of bringing judgment to the Gentiles, He will not break bruised reeds. The kingdom of heaven is not composed of bruised reeds; the Gentile nation is not composed of natural bruised reeds. I am writing about spiritual things, and I am well aware that I am accused of drawing pictures that are overdrawn, but this has been my way for forty years, and as He gives me utterance, I will continue it. My reason for doing this is because my Master spiritualized, speaking in allegories and parables to His people which were enlightening and edifying to them; but which caused the unrighteous to turn away.

There are two main references made to reeds in the Bible. The first one that I would notice briefly is its use as a measuring rod. Rev.. 21:15, 16; Ezek. 40:3, 7). The other is used in setting forth the children of God in this spiritual kingdom. In the habitation of dragons, where each lay, shall be grass with reeds and rushes. (Isa. 35:7). In these places of dragons we were sore broken, and we were covered with the shadow of death (Psa. 44:19), but what an amazing wonder is performed before our astonished eyes. The Saviour of sinners is seen to step between us and the dragons. He makes our cause as His, although it necessitated His going in among the sleeping places of the dragons. I am left speechless and without coherent thoughts as I ponder the amazing battle on the brow of Golgotha's Hill. The Immaculate Lamb of God stepping into

another man's affray, and the preciousness of Christ is brought to bear upon my soul as I am made to realize that the man is black and vile and guilty of transgression. (Job 40:4; S.S. 1:6; Rom. 3:19) In this gigantic battle, every mandate of the law which was against us, is met and overcome, and is nailed to the cross of crucifixion. (Col. 2:15) The dragons of the law, their sharp and tearing teeth spent fury on the reeds and rushes in the outset of the battle, but when the glorious Benefactor stepped in the fray they turned upon Him with *all of their fury*. He took them on in battle, nailing them to His cross, taking them out of the way.

What compassion is shown as He comes from Calvary, marching in His overcoming and victorious strength. (Isa. 63:1) He comes to broken reeds. He does not tantalize and accuse; He does not discourage nor upbraid. (James 1:5) He could have justly brought great sorrow upon many (Luke 22:60, 62; John 4:17, 18), but His understanding and acquaintance with our already broken condition forbids such an action (Heb. 2:18; 3:15). O my dearly beloved, what a lovely doctrine is this to those that have come to Mount Sinai and heard the threatenings of the Holy God against sin. I look across the vista of the past with the broken reeds, and I see them all in the babe left unwashed and unsalted in the field, and how that One had compassion on it (Ezek. 16); I see them all in the person of poor old Job when One had compassion on him and blessed him to see Him as all of his salvation; I am standing on the sidelines when my Saviour dies, and I hear Peter's denial, but I also see that my hand was involved in the nails that pierced His hands and feet, and platted a crown of thorns for His brow, and my mind is entranced in vision and I hear once again what I hope that I heard on the plains of Southeast Missouri, in 1923, "Son, thy sins are all forgiven thee." He did not break me, nor will He ever break one poor bruised sinner.

“Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness, and hath no light? let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God.” (Isa. 50:10) Ah, there is smoking flax. Such was the use of flax in the time of the Saviour in the making of wicks for the lamps, and such is its use in our text. If the quotation above does not fit you, dear reader, how would language be clothed to do so? Does it seem to you that you are in the darkness? Does it seem to you that you do not have any light? Does it seem to you that the Lord has covered the light that you once thought you had, with dark, lowering, threatening clouds? Do you, dear readers, long to feel the warmth of His love as you did in the zeal of your new born condition? Cheer up saints, the Lord has come, and His mission is not to put to death; it is not to quench your light. To these stars in the kingdom of heaven, here is hope for them in the Lord Jesus Christ. When a man lights a candle or a lamp he puts it in an advantageous position. Who puts it in an advantageousness position? Who is light? As far as the characters in our text are concerned there is but one source of light; that light is *all* in God (John 1:2, 9; I John 1:5); their feelings are that they do not have any light. What does the Lord say to them? If your light seems to be gone; if it is flickering and casting doubtful shadows about you; if it seems to have one time been lighted up with the light of heaven, but has since seemed to you a smoking wick of flax, His injunction to you is: Let him trust in the Lord, and stay upon his God. He is light, and in Him there is no darkness at all. In our alienated state we are in darkness and do not have any light at all. Since men do not put lights under a bushel, and since God's ways are higher than the heavens, even so does God light His church and people with the light that emanates alone from Him, and He sets it on a hill, and since those that have this light in them belong to Him, the

lighting of them, together with the light, is His to command. What He does is done forever. No man, including the one in whom the light is put, will ever be able to diminish the light, much less put it out.

“He made the stars also.” (Gen. 1:16) Look out tonight and view the starry heavens. Watch the twinkle of each star. Those lights are placed there figuratively of the stars in the heavenly kingdom. Not one of them will ever go out. I know well enough that they feel in themselves to be walking in darkness; that they have no light, but only He that gives light can put out light, and He will never, never, no never quench the light out of His people.

W.D.G.

BLACK ROCK ADDRESS & KEHUKEE DECLARATION

This is a compilation of issues relating to the Baptist Separation between 1825-1840, including the Kehukee Declaration of 1827, the Black Rock Minutes and Address of 1832, Second Black Rock Minutes 1834, Biographical Sketch of Gilbert Beebe and editorials on the modern mission movement, etc.

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We gladly recommend this book published by Elder W. J. Berry — EDITORS

VOICES OF THE PAST
"He being dead yet speaketh"

Romans 8:31

"What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?"

Dear Editors and Readers of the Signs:— In response to a number of solicitations from different sections of the country for me to write for publication in the *Signs*, I am sending you the following thoughts for your examination and disposal, which are submitted entirely to your judgment without prejudice on my part; only I would suggest that more suitable matter be not displaced to make room for this.

The quotation from Paul's letter to the church at Rome at the head of this article presents in two questions a wide field for thought. "What shall we then say to these things?" That is, the things which he has just been affirming to the people of God with such comforting assurance. "These things" embrace all of the transactions and relations of the "elect" under the law and the power and dominion of sin, their covenant standing in Christ as portrayed through Abraham, the father of the faithful, their redemption, justification, calling, adoption, sanctification, resurrection and glorification. The apostle took the various transactions up step by step and showed the ruined and needy condition of the subject of all these favors, his utter helplessness, without merit, without strength, without desire for holiness, without God, for he had separated himself from God by his sins, and without hope, for the law which was the creature man's only way of access to God had been closed and the flaming sword of God's vengeance against sin had been planted as an everlasting barrier against man's future attempts to reach God through the law. The apostle then declares how Christ, in whom are hid all the treasures of eternal favors, has met all the

demands of infinite justice on their behalf, and so completely blotted out every claim that stood in justice against them, that he challenges all worlds to bring a single charge against God's elect, by asking, "Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect?" Affirming, "It is God that justifies." The apostle shows also the nature and strength of the obligation laid upon these justified and called sinners to serve God. It subsists not any longer in the strength of the law's commandments and threatened penalties, but in a relationship established and promoted by love which is infinite in its origin and endless in duration. In making up his case the eminent apostle has raised up the victorious reign of grace in contrast to the conquests of sin, and showed how complete and how decisive is the victory, and admonishes the redeemed and called saints not to yield their members as instruments of unrighteousness, and assigns as the basis of his admonition, "For sin shall not have dominion over you," because you are not any longer under the law from which sin gets its strength, but under grace, which dethrones and abolishes sin and death and gives life to the dead and liberty to the captives under sin.

Now what shall we say to all these things? Are we doctrinally, practically and experimentally in accord with these things, or are we arrayed against them? We would do well as the professed disciples of Christ and faithful adherents to the divine record to follow the sacred injunction to "examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove yourselves," lest we be proven reprobates, having only a form of godliness without the power that establishes its being in God. Then doctrinally do we believe and teach that in our standing in Adam none are righteous and none seek after God? that together all are unprofitable? That while dead we were reconciled to God by Christ? That when we were without strength Christ died for the ungodly? That when

Christ died and rose again he freed every heir of promise from all claims of the law? and that the Holy Ghost takes the things of Christ and shows them unto his children and guides them into all truth? Reveals to them and in them first their own utter poverty and worthlessness, and then the treasures of the riches that are in Christ; and takes possession of them and dwells in them and leads them, directs and instructs them, keeps them and trains and disciplines them, that they may show forth the praises of him who has called them out of darkness into the marvelous light of Christ? And does our experience and practice harmonize with these glorious truths?

But to proceed a little further. Are we willing to acknowledge that without Christ we can do nothing? That to will is present with us, but we cannot find how to do the things that we would? That not only is it necessary for us to be made free from the legal claims of sin, but before we can enter the spiritual service of God we must be made free from the power of sin? "What shall we then say to these things?" Is that your experience, or are you a conditionalist and can set sin on the throne of grace just as you will? Can you become the servant of sin or of righteousness at your own behest? What are Paul's instructions on this point? I have felt that our experiences teach us much the same truth as he asserts. Hear him: "Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness."—Rom. vi. 18. Now to establish the fact that this freedom from sin was an experimental freedom from the reigning power of sin I will refer you to the sixteenth verse and the nineteenth verse of this same chapter, which show that you are the servant of sin if you yield your members as instruments of unrighteousness, and that at such times you are free from righteousness. The twenty-third verse shows clearly that we cannot serve God under such conditions, but must wait upon the Lord, must be made free from sin

before we can have our fruit unto holiness. This I think is much the same as the apostle expressed when he said, "To will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not." It is true this leaves the child of God helpless and dependent and exposed to all the corruptions within and all the temptations without, so far as his own strength of armament is concerned. When the strong man was stripped of all his armor wherein he trusted by the stronger who came upon him, he was from that time on defenseless in his own right, and so we hear him crying, O Lord, I am undone. I am a man of unclean lips; I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips. Yes, every trembling prisoner of hope has been brought to this point of desperation where he could have called for the rocks and mountains to fall on him and hide him from the face of him that sat on the throne.

But in the experience of these little ones are distressing scenes, threatening storms, frowning providences, legal doubts, heart conflicts, cruel persecutions, gloomy fears pouring into the soul. Can we do nothing about it? Can we not run away and hide from all this? Where shall I go and whither shall I flee, is the distressed soul's inquiry, but the answer comes back, "If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou are 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." These heart exercises are designed for the trial of your faith which is more precious than gold, and you cannot run away from them. Then what is the defense of the Lord's children? How may they travel with safety through a world which is infested with bitter foes? The answer to every such inquiry is found in the latter clause of our text: "If God be for us, who can be against us?" I wonder if we comprehend just what it means for God to be for us. It means that all the

persons and all the perfections of Deity are engaged in our behalf; that nothing in the whole realm of God's government can operate subversive to our spiritual interests. "We know," says the apostle, "that all things work together for good to them that love God." Even though these searching experiences come which distress you, alarm you, wound you, strip you, humble you and cast you into midnight darkness, your interests are none the less the object of His constant concern than when you are mounting on eagles' wings to behold his glory. His consoling words are: "When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee." And again, "No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the servants of the Lord; and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord." He has engaged to make darkness light and crooked things straight. Everything can be found in Christ that a poor soul can need and all that a sovereign God can give. "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?" The greatest, the most precious, the most costly gift that heaven contained was freely bestowed to secure the heirs of promise in their inheritance, and the question now is, "How shall he not with him also give us all things?" Is it any surprise then that the apostle would say, We know that all things work together for good to them that love God? If God is for you, then, dear children of God, you have nothing to fear. He will turn every cross, every doubt, every tribulation, every persecution, every foe, to the promotion of your spiritual good. Your merciful Father has made that his concern, and he has assured us that he will not suffer his faithfulness to fail. It is a comforting truth that our safety or our happiness does not depend upon our

faithfulness, but all that concerns our spiritual well-being depends upon his faithfulness to his covenant promises and his immutable oath. It would be as easy for God to cease to be God as for one of his promises to fail. So intent is Jehovah upon safeguarding the interest of his elect that he bestowed upon them in Christ the fulness of God, and turned all that befell him at the hands of his enemies to their everlasting benefit. His Flesh is their food, his blood is their drink, his stripes are their medicine, his righteousness is their garment, his salvation is their walls and bulwarks. When his enemies wounded and bruised him, crucified him and pierced his side, the fountain was opened for the sin and uncleanness of his people. He proved in every transaction that he was for them and that the worst that sin and Satan and the world could do did not in the least endanger the interests of the objects of his love and care. No wonder the apostles could say, "Why do the heathen rage, and the people imagine a vain thing?" when the rulers and the people were gathered against Christ. They raged because they were not reconciled to his authority and preeminence, and they vainly imagined they could destroy his power and set his counsels aside. But how vain were all their efforts; they only succeeded in doing just what God's hand and counsel predestinated; no more and no less; and this is just what he assures works together for good to them that love him. All of your interests, dear child of God, are intrusted to Christ and he guards them continually. He is that "nail in a sure place" upon which is hung not only "all the glory of his Father's house," but "the offspring and the issue." There is nothing that concerns God's glory or the welfare of his children that was not fully provided for in that fullness that dwells in Christ. This is that fullness that "fill-eth all in all." When Christ took that out of the way that was "against us" and "contrary to us" and "nailed it to

his cross" he left his children exposed only to such things as he had designed should work for their good, and in it all he has gloriously proven that he is "for them." "What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?" Let the apostle answer. He says in all our tribulations, distresses, persecutions, famine, nakedness, peril or sword, we are more than conquerors through him that loved us, and then adds, "For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." Then let us say with the psalmist, "Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted within me? Hope thou in God; for I shall yet praise him for the help of his countenance."

Should this find its way into print, and be blessed to the comfort of one of the little ones in Zion, I shall be bountifully rewarded for the effort; and if your thoughts are for a little moment engaged with heavenly things, it will be to the praise of God's glorious grace.

Yours in humble hope,

(Written in February, 1932, by the late Elder J. R. Hardy, Dallas, Texas.)

PREDESTINATION AND FATALISM
(Republished by Request)

Is the doctrine of the predestination of all things fatalism? If not, wherein do they differ? Those who assert that they are the same, certainly betray an entire lack of understanding of the meaning of words, or of their uses; and besides, they are certainly ignorant of what the doctrine of fatalism is. They are not in the slightest degree the same. Fatalism was held by some in the past centuries, and we are informed by writers, that some people in the east hold this dogma still. It means that there

is an indefinite something which has no consciousness, and therefore no will, and which is blind, which fixes the destiny of God, as well as of men. It is a dumb and dead power that is supreme, and from which the divine powers can no more escape than can men. In heathen ideas, the many gods whom they worshipped, were all subject to this intangible, indefinable power, as completely as were men. On the other hand, the doctrine of predestination declares that there is a supreme being, who ever lives and reigns, and whose purpose is eternal, and who governs all things, and moves all things, and is moved by none. This God is the Sovereign arbiter of all, and all things must bow to his sway. There is no power back of him, but he is himself the source of all power, and being, and life. We trust that those who have been saying that predestination was fatalism, have been ignorant of the difference, for if they have not been, they have been guilty of willingly deceiving, or trying to deceive the people by saying that they were the same. All things are fixed, but not as fatalism claims, by a dumb, dead power, above and beyond Diety, but by the sovereign will and power of the all-wise God himself.

Elder F. A. Chick

December, 1897

"MY REDEEMER LIVETH"

Dear Brethren:

When by grace a real preacher stands to speak for the comfort of heavy laden souls, and for the benefit of others of the blood bought family who have tasted that the Lord is gracious, that minister will always advocate that God, according to His eternal purpose and immutable counsel, and everlasting covenant which contains all of salvation from vast eternity, and from whom for all of his people He spake by the prophet, saying, "I will ransom them from the power of the grave, I will redeem them

from death: O death, I will be thy plagues, O grave I will be thy destruction: repentance shall be hid from my eyes." (Hosea 13:14)

These glorious words our Lord will not alter: and our God's honor shines upon this promise so that here is that which saved us from the hand that is stronger than our own. When our Lord made this promise He knew He was able to do his entire will.

Then, faithful to his promise He came down from heaven to save His people from their sins: and He did not fail nor turn back in the day of battle. Of all that Jesus did on earth we cannot tell—the earth would not hold the books, but He answered all the law's demands, and satisfied justice, and obeyed and glorified God on earth: He suffered, bled and died, and finished forevermore the work which made an end of sin, and brought in free and everlasting righteousness. So now complete salvation surrounds the entire election of grace, the church of God forever, and has her sins all put away, her debts satisfied: the battle is fought, the victory gained by One who fills every longing soul with a kingdom which cannot be moved.

In Jesus Christ every single one of God's children has all things, including an interest in His precious blood to cleanse from all guilt of sin, grace to pardon, peace which cannot fail: and above all a Friend that sticketh closer than a brother, who has purposed to remove all our pollution, heal all our wounds, and prepare us to stand before Him cleaner than sin ever made us unclean—more alive than death can ever make us dead, more happy, more complete and more able to sing unto Him that loved us. And nothing short of this that satisfies God, shall ever satisfy any soul who anticipates the day when we shall see our Saviour's face and dwell in that City.

Yes my brethren, the hour is coming, and Jesus is coming again to receive us unto himself: then we shall see Him. And this is because He will take his servants up singing, "Salvation to our

God, which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb."

By grace through faith these blessed facts are felt with a living unquestionable reality, in the sons of God at times, and then they can say, though they be covered with boils, "I know my Redeemer liveth . . ." This knowledge is life eternal.

In bonds,
J. L. Boccock
P. O. Box 13,
Boones Mill, Va. 23065

READS SIGNS FROM WAY BACK

Live Oak, Florida

Dear Brother Spangler:

It is about time to renew my subscription for the *Signs*, and I decided to write you a few lines to tell you how much I enjoy it—and I don't know what I would do without it.

My wife passed away May 12, 1945. She was confined to the house for almost four years, and my son-in-law was in the hospital at the time, and I came as soon as I could to try to be of some help to my daughter. He had a bad operation, and isn't back on a regular job yet. My daughter works in a bank. I do get lonely, but I read my *Signs* from a long way back. If I live to March 18th of this year, I will be eighty-seven years old. I want to tell you that my father was Clerk of the association when it was organized November 27, 1875. He was born Dec. 19, 1823, in Coffee County, Ga. I also have a copy of a letter his church gave Brother September 27, 1875.

I have stayed in the world of sin and sorrow longer than any one of my family. I have had my ups and downs, of course, but I want to say I have been wonderfully blessed, and do hope and pray I am thankful for all the good Lord's blessings. I wish I could visit more than I do.

Lots of love from a brother in hope. May the good Lord bless each and every one there, is my prayer.

A. J. Beauchamp

OBITUARIES

VERA FORSYTHE FAUCETTE

Out of a deep sense of appreciation for the life of our Sister, Vera Forsythe Faucette, the Church at Durham wishes to express its sense of loss at her death March 5, 1974—at the same time acknowledging the sovereignty of our God in all things.

Sister Faucette was born in Durham County on August 31, 1883, the daughter of James Smith Forsythe and Elizabeth Frances Waller Forsythe. On November 10, 1908 she was married to Samuel Fred Faucette. They became the parents of nine children—three of whom, Samuel Fred, Jr., Robert Kenneth, and Naomi Hand Fosdick—preceded her in death. On August 16, 1924 she was received into the fellowship of Durham Primitive Baptist Church and was baptized the following day. She lived a sweet life in the Church, constant in her love and fellowship toward the other members—always preferring them above herself. She served the Household of Faith with her own special gifts of grace: love, humility, and genuine hospitality.

She is survived by her children, Mrs. James S. Poole, Mrs. Charles Allen, and George Faucette of Durham, N. C., Billie F. Faucette of Fairfax, Va., Chesley Horton Faucette of Louisville, Ky., and James W. Faucette of Hillsborough, N. C.; one sister, Mrs. Omar Pope Darrow; 15 grandchildren and 15 great-grandchildren. Her husband had passed away June 18, 1968.

She truly manifested that her treasure was laid up in heaven.

Submitted in love,
D. V. Spangler

EVA BRITTINGHAM

The Lord called from our midst Sister Eva Brittingham. She passed away in the Millsboro nursing home, March 5, 1974, making her stay here on earth 86 years. She was married to Larry Brittingham in 1908, who preceded her in death June 1925. She was the daughter of John S. and Sallie P. Benson.

She leaves to mourn two sons, Olen and John Brittingham, and a step-daughter, Margaret Lowe. Also, a niece Sallie Hastings. Sister Brittingham raised her step-daughter and niece as her own children. Her only daughter, Mary Gordy, was very faithful in taking care of her mother, until she left these mortal shores. Then her niece Sallie took care of her until her health failed.

Sister Brittingham's membership was with the Broad Creek Church and was baptized in August 1942. The Broad Creek Church mem-

bership decreased and two members came to Little Creek Church in November 1966.

Sister Brittingham was a firm believer in Salvation by Grace, and was faithful in attending the meetings when her health permitted to do so. She was always glad to have her loved ones visit her, even though she did not feel able to carry on a conversation. Her Minister Elder Arthur Warren was always faithful and visited her often. We hope to be submissive to God's will and made to feel our loss is her eternal gain.

Her funeral was conducted by Elder Warren from Windsor Funeral Home in Laurel, Delaware, and her body was laid to rest in the Broad Creek Cemetery.

Pattie B. Krewatch

BROTHER OWEN SLOAN

It pleased our Heavenly Father to call home Brother Oliver Sloan June 13, 1974. He was born March 31, 1905, making his stay on earth 69 years.

Brother Sloan was blessed by God to ask for a home with the New Bay Primitive Baptist Church while in the hospital. On August 20, 1972, he was baptized along with his wife by Elder D. B. Stokes and S. P. Jones.

Although he did not live very long after he united with the Church, he had been a believer of Salvation by Grace for a long time. His affliction was very painful. He was faithful to attend Church as long as he was physically able. He was loved by all who knew him.

His funeral was conducted by one of his pastors, Elder D. B. Stokes, at Edgerton Funeral Home. His body was laid to rest in Devotional Garden Cemetery under a beautiful mound of flowers, where we believe he is resting in peace waiting for the second coming of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ.

He is survived by his wife, Sister Lula Sloan, who was a faithful and loving wife to the end. Four brothers and one sister.

Done by order of conference, September 1974, written by one who loved him.

Nettie Brown

REMEMBERING HER HUSBAND

Ferrum, Va.

Dear Brethren:

Today has been a rainy and cloudy day. I received the *Signs of the Times* today and have just finished reading the good writings, and enjoyed them so much.

It has been seven months and ten days since the passing of my husband. I miss him so much, but I wouldn't call him back if I

could. He told his nurse the morning before his passing, to bathe him because he knew death was near, but he was ready to go. He ate a good lunch and began to get worse and soon passed away. I saw him on Wednesday and asked him if he would rather I come back and see him over the weekend or for me to go to Old Republican Church for the meeting, and come to see him on Monday the Lord willing. He said he would rather I go to the meeting. I went to Republican, and received the sad news that he had just passed away. It was such a shock, though I knew he could not get well, but did not think he would go so quickly.

My daughter-in-law saw him the same day, and when she went into the room she thought he was asleep, and told the nurse she saw the cover move, and she said that was his last breath. His passing was easy.

I dreamed I was with him, and heard him say, I have put her away, but she is my charming beauty. These words I can't forget—they have brightened my life so much.

Your in sweet fellowship
Hattie Radford

SISTER HELEN GUILLIAMS

The hearts of many, and especially Pigg River Church, were saddened on August 19, 1973, by the passing of Sister Helen Hale Guilliams.

At the special request of her husband, I will attempt to write this obituary. Sister Helen was born in Franklin County at Ferrum Virginia, May 20, 1911, the daughter of John and Lilly Howell Hale, making her stay on earth 62 years. She was married to George Guilliams on December 25, 1927. To this union were born two daughters and two sons: Miss Doris Guilliams, Mrs. Goldie Agee, and Donald Guilliams all of Callaway, Va. Earl Guilliams, deceased, and four grandchildren.

She united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Pigg River the fourth Sunday in December, 1948, and was baptized the fourth Sunday in January, 1949, by her pastor at that time, Elder John P. Helms.

She loved her church, and manifested it in her efforts to have her brethren and friends in her home. It was a welcome place for the Old School Baptists.

She was a devoted wife and mother. Her funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder W. M. Holland and Elders Julius Bocoek and Amos Hash. She was laid to rest in Pigg River Church Cemetery beneath a beautiful mound of flowers.

We will miss her but feel our loss is her eternal gain. May we all be reconciled to the

will of our Heavenly Father, who does all things well.

In love,

Bobby and Reba Bernard

Read and approved in our conference meeting at Pigg River Church Feb. 22, 1975. A copy to be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication, one to the family, and it is to be recorded on our church record.

Elder W. M. Holland, Mod.
W. W. Abshire, Clerk

LESLIE ARNALD HUNTER

Brother Leslie Arnald Hunter was born October 20, 1913, and departed this life April 12, 1974. He was the son of the late Charles and Zillah Fountain Hunter, and was married to Irene Raynor Hunter on February 17, 1934.

Brother Hunter was a firm believer in Salvation by the Grace of God, and that only by the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ could a sinner be saved.

He was in poor health for a long time, yet he was one who never complained about his illness. He was blessed beyond measure, in that he always had a smile and was soft spoken.

He was in Duplin County Hospital when his family called on March 27, 1974. When we arrived his speech was beautiful concerning the Lord Jesus Christ and his unworthiness to hope that Jesus came to die for a sinner as he felt to be. As he expressed it, he felt that he could not leave this world without telling the Church of his condition and his hope and trust that they would have understanding and fellowship for him. On this night, he asked for a home with the New Bay Primitive Baptist Church. It was a great privilege to hear this brother tell his experience wherein we had been called to travel and to hear him give praise to the name of our King.

On April 10, 1974, Brother Hunter received that call which took him from this life. His body was laid to rest at the side of his wife, we feel to await the second coming of the Lord Jesus.

He is survived by two sons, Charles and Carrol, and three grandchildren. It is our prayer that God may continue to reconcile his sons to their loss; as well as those who knew and loved him in Christ.

Written by order of Conference of the New Bay Primitive Baptist Church.

D. B. Stokes, Moderator
Norman Jenkins, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 143

DANVILLE, VA., JUNE, 1975

NO. 6

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 6/75
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

HAPPY AT BEING BROUGHT
TO THE CHURCH

Dear Elder Spangler:

After talking with Peggy today, I understand that Elder Poole called you last night, and told you about my uniting with the Snow Hill Church. I am so glad he did for I had you on my mind, and did so much want you to know. I'm not too good talking in person, so I thought perhaps a note would do.

I can't begin to tell you the joy and happiness I have felt since yesterday afternoon. I find myself happy and smiling when reflecting on the events that occurred. I hope I can stay this way for a little while, for I know I must be brought back down. When I awakened yesterday morning and saw it was snowing, I was so depressed for fear there would not be church. I called my father-in-law and he laughed and said, "Don't you know a little snow never stopped an Old Baptist from having meeting?" I was thrilled!

All week I had felt and hoped that perhaps Sunday there would be two to be baptized instead of one, but just couldn't see how it could be. Sunday morning I went by myself to Salisbury Church, and after getting there, I saw there was neither of the three deacons there from the Snow Hill Church. I

felt this was to tell me I would not go before the church that morning, and I didn't. Elder Poole preached so beautifully on the 23rd Psalm, which had been on my mind during the week. (He talked so nicely to me during the lunch hour, too.) I went home so upset that I went to my bedroom and got down on my knees and begged God that if I was to unite at the water, that I might be given the mind to take clothes. The words of Ananias to Paul to, "Arise and be baptized," came to me, and I gathered some things together.

But even at the church, I still felt hesitant as they were singing. Then Elder Poole said he felt to read out of Acts where Phillip preached Jesus to the eunuch, and baptized him: that was God telling me to go now, and I went. It was with trembling that I went down into the water, but with such a peaceful, joyful feeling I came up out of the water. Never such happiness have I felt! I keep thinking over and over, "Praise God from whom all blessings flow." I was so afraid they might see me as I am, and turn me away. Oh, I know that my Redeemer liveth! I can't put all my feelings into words.

I was unaware until after the baptizings were over, that the hymn they were singing when I went before the church, was "Amazing Grace." I have always loved it, but it was the hymn sung when Mom went before the church. Also, my Daddy went at the water—remember. And all last week the last two verses of "How sweet the name of Jesus sounds" were going over and over in my mind. This was a favorite hymn of Daddy's, so Elder Poole tells me. I feel like God gave a tie spiritually strong, between Mom and Daddy and me.

I don't know if that makes any sense. I had to go back home Sunday night—went by the cemetery, then up to Audrey and Billy's. It seemed right that I should be home: all of us children were together there.

Don't know if this letter will sound O. K. to you, or not, but I hope I have not written to sound like I had any part whatsoever. God forbid it. There could never be condemnation enough for me, if flesh entered into something so precious.

I love you and Sister Spangler and wanted to talk with you. I told Richard I wished I was close by so I could embrace you both.

Hope to see you soon. Remember me when given to prayer,

Lovingly,
Linda Adkins

“HEARD THE VOICE OF GOD WALKING”

Elgin, Oregon 97827

Dear Elder and Sister Spangler:

We have long neglected writing you, and know that unless our minds and hands be guided we can say nothing that will be of comfort to the household of faith, yet, though we feel inadequate, we will attempt, the Lord willing, to write a few lines, and enclose two year's renewal for our family paper.

Genesis 3:8: “And they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden in the cool of the day, and Adam and his wife hid themselves amongst the trees of the garden.” This expression, “and they heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the garden,” has been much on my mind for several months, for herein lies a great mystery.

The fall of Adam had already taken place for they, Adam and Eve, had eaten of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, and the eyes of them both were opened, and they knew that they were naked (sinners). Right here is where they began their work system, for the scriptures read, “And they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves

aprons.” (Genesis 3:7)

Although God had said, “Let there be light, and there was light.” (Genesis 1:3) this commandment of God was not yet applicable to them in a spiritual sense, for they were in a state of darkness spiritually. When one stands in total darkness he can hear the footfalls of another's approach, but cannot see him, and more often than not one will tremble in fear and seek a hiding place. And so it is in the beginning of regeneration, for each footfall of the voice of God makes us only the more aware of how great and how holy is our Lord God, and how totally depraved is the nature of man.

“I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee.” (Jer. 31:3) This drawing, so to speak, is the fruit of God's love to usward, for we love Him because he first loved us: and so it was with Adam as God made His light shine out of darkness, making manifest the power and mercy of the omnipotent God.

“When a strong man armed, keepeth his palace, his goods are in peace: but when a stronger than he shall come upon him and overcome him, he taketh from him all his armour wherein he trusted, and divideth his spoils.” (Luke 11:21-22) Oh, how secure one feels in his own works until the appointed time of his hearing the footfalls of the voice walking. “He looketh on the earth (these clay vessels) and it trembleth.” (Psalms 104:32) No wonder Adam hid himself. For now he stood justly condemned before the righteous, just and holy God, and was given light to see the fallacy of his apron (works).

“And unto Adam also and to his wife did the Lord God make coats of skin, and clothed them.” (Genesis 3:21) A skin cannot be provided without the shedding of blood, and this all points to our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ who stood a Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. Yea, there is no depth to which the loving kindness and mercy that the Lord God cannot reach. For David said, “If I

ascend up into heaven thou art there, if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there."

Give our love to all the brethren. In much love

Lloyd and Florence Spikes

LORD I BELIEVE

Do you have a hard time believing in God sometimes? Do you have doubts that there is a heaven above the clouds or some where "up" there? Do you find it sometimes impossible to believe that some sweet day you will be carried to heaven? Does doubt ever creep in? Do you sometimes think there just could not possibly be a place where there is nothing but peace and joy and love, no pain, sorrow, worries or cares? Yes, I think all of us have these doubts. I think some times it is impossible to conceive a power like God, a place like heaven, Noah and the ark, the garden of Eden, people being raised from the dead, streets of gold, and on and on. No, we just become more and more doubtful when we think about the magnitude of our "belief." We lack the ability to understand and to conceive something that is beyond our power of understanding. Yet, we sometimes began to think that it is like the Indians believing they were going to a great hunting ground or the people of India believing you keep going up and up each time you are born and die until you reach the heights of king or something or other.

Let us pretend we do not believe there is a God . . . How then would we explain the birth of a baby? We do believe in birth, we have to, all we have to do is look in the mirror to know people are born. We know there is such a thing but, do we understand it? I can not say I do and I would hate to be given the job of explaining it especially while I am "pretending" I do not believe in God. I do not know how it could be done unless you believe. The little seed is planted, it begins to grow and if it is a nor-

mal seed a certain blueprint is followed. The mother does not have to worry about when to start this and when to stop that. The arms come out from the shoulders. The nose grows out from the face and not from the elbow. Do you understand how it can develop and grow and be fed inside the mother's body? Remember, we are pretending not to believe in God. We have to explain it without giving the credit to a Supreme Being. How can the baby live and know when to start the downward plunge to air, light and breath? Why does it not struggle to go upward instead of downward? Have you ever thought about that? How does it know how to breathe, and all the other things that it comes here knowing? Well, we may say, "nature teaches it . . ." What is nature? We are not believers in God or nature remember.

Gaye and Joan, our daughters, are nurses and they were taught and trained and then placed on duty in the maternity or delivery section of the hospital. When they saw their first birth of a baby they each had to call me on the phone, long distance, and tell me about it in their own words. They were almost ready to shout. They were so excited and filled with awe. They could not believe the miracle of it all. One of them said "Mother, you cannot imagine how hard it is to believe what you are actually seeing, the witnessing of a life coming into the world." They each spoke so sweetly of God and His power and how only He could perform such a miracle. You see the only way they could explain a birth to me was to say, "Mother there has to be a God!" This made me think of that song "How Great Thou Art."

It says something in it about "every-time I hear a newborn baby cry . . ."

There are a few "simple" things I would like to call to your attention to that are hard to understand and impossible to explain (without believing). Why do the leaves die and the trees and plants rest and then come back to life? How do they know when to go to sleep and when to wake up? Who planned cows for milk, chickens for eggs, herbs

for medicine, coal, gas, oil, clay, and the millions of other things we have. Man might have discovered their being here and use of them but we certainly did not "put" them here.

Can you understand or explain love? It is one of the greatest mysteries isn't it? Now if we can't explain man's love, how can we explain God's love? I forgot, we are pretending to not believe in God though, aren't we? I can't for the life of me, tell you why I love Hartsel Cayce, why I love my children, my mother, etc. All I can say is something draws me to them. When they hurt, I hurt, when they are sad, I am sad, when they want something I try to get it. I can't tell you why or what it is. I can honestly tell you this, however, I do not love any other man like I love Hartsel. Why is that? I love many children but I love my children in a different way than I love your children. I love many who are mothers but none like mine.

So you see there are many things we are forced to believe in life not because we understand them or can explain them but we are forced to believe because of the evidence that it is true!

There is a God! He lives! I do not know how or why or understand, I just know HE IS REAL. I have that that testifies within me that HE is real! Even if I have doubts and have (sometimes) to look about and consider all I see . . . I KNOW within me that HE LIVES! I see Him in the sunrise, the going down of the same, I see Him in the dew as it sparkles on a spider web, I see Him in the little blossom as it blooms and drops and the fruit begins to form. I see Him in the little bee as it carries out the pollination plan (which is a miracle in itself). I have seen Him (and I hold the memory so precious) as I looked down upon my nursing child and was held spellbound by the wonder of it all. But I will have to admit to you precious brothers and sisters, the thing that makes my belief the sweetest and dearest and most precious is that which I feel is within me. It causes me to want to shout from the highest mountain top

"LORD, I BELIEVE!" Yet, I have days when I am forced to cry out in despair "Lord help my unbelief."

Love,

Jo Ann Cayce

(Copied from The Primitive Baptist)

"I HAVE CALLED YOU FRIENDS"

704 Oakland Avenue

Rocky Mount, N. C. 27801

My dear brethren:

It is a very serious undertaking to attempt to write about the scriptures that have dominated my thinking of late. While feeling inadequate, I also feel compelled. May Jesus prove to be the compelling factor.

I will not attempt to quote all of the pertinent scriptures, but will leave that to you, my dear reader, to read for your self. May God bless you to search the scriptures.

Jesus said to His Disciples before the time arrived for His own death, "Henceforth I call you not servants; for the servant knoweth not what his lord doeth; but I have called you friends; for all things that I have heard of my Father I have made known unto you." (John 15:15)

Before uttering these wonderful words, He had previously mentioned a new commandment of love, and that His words were spoken that our joy might be full.

At this point I ask myself when did our Lord refer to His followers as servants; when did they cease to be servants, and begin to be His friends. Oh, the many questions that come to mind, and the many thoughts that come to mind is I ponder the depth of His riches.

Reverting to Jeremiah 25:4, we find the prophet saying ". . . And the Lord hath sent unto YOU all his SERVANTS the prophets, rising early and sending them; but ye have not hearkened, nor inclined your ear to hear." There are

many passages that suggest that God referred to not only His people as servants, but also anyone of mankind that He designed to use in His eternal purposes. These references to God's servants came while the Covenant of the Law and of the Prophets was in effect. The ultimate way of God's people had not yet been manifested, as it pertained to salvation. Therefore, it quite naturally follows that in the age of Grace, God's way of salvation was to be revealed in His Son Jesus.

Having reached the end of His purpose, Jesus openly revealed the way to His followers; that which He had predicted aforetime when He began His ministry. Now, at the end, and the purposes about to be fulfilled, the relationship is changing. Changing from the dispensation of the law, to the age of Grace. The dispensation that now exists, of no longer being under the bondage of the law. In other words, no longer are we servants of the law, but have entered by God's grace into the Covenant of Grace.

Paul said "But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference: For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God; being justified freely by HIS GRACE through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus . . ."

The grand apostle is saying that it is clear that we cannot attain the righteousness of God by the deeds of the Law, but that righteousness is by faith in Jesus Christ. Which faith we are told is a free gift of God. "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Jesus Christ, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."

So now, as Jesus approached the agony and death on Calvary's cross, the Covenant of God is changing. Changing from the state of servants, to the wonderful state of intimate friendship with

God's begotten Son. "Henceforth I call you no longer servants, but friends. . ." Fully revealed now, Jesus' followers can see God's way of redemption. And further our Lord had quite thoroughly stated the circumstances. Now His disciples were aware of this abiding friendship.

"Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." Jesus willingly, and knowingly laid down His life for you, that the righteousness of God might not be by the deeds of the law, but by faith in the Son of God. "For as by one man's disobedience (Adam) many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one (Jesus) shall many be made righteousness."

And now we come to the point of the friendship of Jesus. One song writer wrote "what a friend we have in Jesus, all our sins and grief to bear . . ." But this still presents the thought of who initiated this glorious and abiding friendship. Who attached themselves to Jesus? Or rather whom did Jesus attach Himself to.

Webster's definition of friend is ". . . one who is attached to another by affection or esteem " . . . because He first loved us." And He loved you before the world ever was. And because God loved us, He sent His Son to die for us. Oh Blessed Hope, Oh Blessed Hope, what sweet experiences have reinforced that Blessed Hope!

One cannot underestimate the value of our natural friendships with those we love and esteem. It is truly in an hour of distress and need that our natural friends rise to the occasion, and in natural way succor our sinking spirits. Our natural friends come to our rescue in our daily trials, and prove themselves real and abiding friends.

When you were down, did you receive a cheery card? When your spirits were low, have you ever felt uplifted because some friend cared enough to come by. Just to have someone say "I love you." Yes, our natural friends are truly precious, and this world would be very desolate without these ties of friendship.

But when all seems hopeless, and life

is at its darkest hour, and our friends have failed to reach our case; even though they desired to raise us up from the pits of despair, it is then that we begin to search for a stronger and more powerful friend.

It is in such conditions of life that we now begin our searching, yes even begging for a friend to come to our rescue. We begin to seek God . . . but where do we go? We begin to seek help, on whom do we lean? In such a state of life, we begin to feel the attachment of someone who is standing nearby. A presence that can be felt, but not explained. Had not His presence been there all along? Had not Jesus been attached to you all the time? Had not He loved you, even though you felt Him not. Yes, oh yes, Jesus was with you, watching, loving, caring; even as a friend.

As the presence of Jesus is felt in gloom and despair, could you, dear reader, not cry with me? Could you my dear Brother and Sister not utter with me, as we seek that “. . . friend that sticketh closer than a brother.” Cannot you see the attachment now as we cry:

Lord Jesus take me by Thy hand
When before God's Throne I seek to stand;
I know not how to beg or pray,
I know not what to ask or say.
Sweet Spirit cry for me again,
Then Jesus be to me a friend.

Lord Jesus take me by Thy hand
And lead me through this sin-scarred land,
For I am weak and cannot see
The rugged road ahead of me.
When faith grows weak and doubts slip in,
Then Jesus be to me a friend.

Lord Jesus take me by Thy hand
When I fail to do what I think I can,
And grant me strength to face the fight
And be my lamp to face the night.
Then when I cry from deep within,
Then Jesus be to me a friend.

Lord Jesus take me by Thy hand
And reassure this failing man,
That Thou who suffered Calvary
Did set this erring Adam free.
Show me that in believing, 'tho I sin,
That Jesus will be to me a friend.

Lord Jesus take me by Thy hand
And grant me faith to see the land,

That when this sojourn here is o'er
I might arrive on that fair shore.
But while here I must toil and bend,
Then Jesus be to me a friend.

Lord Jesus take me by Thy hand
And give me grace to understand,
That Thou who led me in the past
Will not forsake me at the last.
Then may I hear thee bid "Come in"
To be with Jesus, Lord and Friend.

Upon the death and resurrection of our Lord, who even now “. . . sits at the right hand of God,” the dispensation of Grace was ushered in, and now His little ones are no longer servants, but friends. Friend, because He loved them. Friend, because what is to be known of the Heavenly Father is revealed in Jesus. Friend, because He laid down His life for you.

So now, the promises of God, being fulfilled in Jesus the Christ, take on more significance, more sweetness when He said “Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls.”

Henceforth Jesus calls you not servants, but FRIENDS. Oh blessed hope!

Your in love,
Elder W. L. Everett

PSALM 137

“By the rivers of Babylon, there we sat down, yea, we wept, when we remembered Zion.”

This scripture has been in my mind for sometime, and I feel like trying to write a few lines on the subject. I do not know whether it will be of any benefit to any one. We read in Psalm 46:10, “Be still, and know that I am God: I will be exalted among the heathen, I will be exalted in the earth.”

Brethren when we are made to sit down in the sense that David did, then we are made to remember the working of our God — then we can sing the songs of Zion, which is God's dwelling place,

and are made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ to worship him in Spirit and in Truth, They that worship God must worship him in spirit and truth. We must first know what the Truth is before we can worship him in Spirit: then we can sing the songs of Zion, and make a joyful sound to our God.

When our heart-strings are in tune and a tongue of utterance is given, we sing and preach the gospel according to the power of our God, and not of anything pertaining to man's works. Aren't we glad that the gospel is the power of God preached for those that are called; and sent to the Believer! God's elect are kept from singing the songs of Zion in a strange land. When God sent Philip to go down south to the way that goeth from Jerusalem to Gaza which is desert, Philip went according to the command of God, like everyone else who is called to sing and preach the word.

The Psalmist would have forgotten Jerusalem if he could have sung songs to the Babylonians. Daniel had no desire to turn to the Babylonian people because God kept him from their false doctrine. David could not sing songs of Zion in a strange land. He had no desire to forget his Harp.

There have been enemies of the truth, and still are, ever since the beginning of time. But I am made to believe that everything works according to God's will and purpose, because there is a season and time to every purpose, a time to be born, a time to die. God is the time of all things, because he upholds all things by the word of his power. He is our God today as he was in the days gone by. He is from everlasting to everlasting, and beside him there is no saviour.

"Be still and know that I am God," for in him is peace, love and enjoyment when we are enabled to worship Him. "He hath made the earth by his power, he hath established the world by his wisdom, and hath stretched out the heaven by his understanding." (Jeremiah

51:15)

Brethren, a word that is fitly spoken is like apples of gold in pictures of silver,—Proverbs 25:11. The word that is spoken is to the man of God, because all scriptures are given by inspiration of God, and are profitable to the man of God. David was one of the sweet singers in Israel. David knew that God knew every word that was in his tongue, and his thought afar off.

"Glorious things of thee are spoken,
Zion, city of our God!
He whose word cannot be broken,
Form'd thee for his own abode.
On the Rock of Ages founded,
What can shake thy sure repose?
With salvation's walls surrounded,
Thou may'st smile at all thy foes."

When David hung his harp upon the willow, it was a sign of grief, because he was tormented in knowing what had been done to him and his yokefellows. I believe God had pronounced the daughters of Babylon their doom, this being done in the beginning of time. We read in Genesis 2:1, 2 that God finished the heaven and earth and all the host of them, and on the 7th day he ended his work which he had made: and rested on the 7th day from all his work. "Known unto God are all his work from the beginning." Our God is all wisdom, and Wisdom is justified of all her children, because the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are his. This is from righteous Abel to the last one of His witnesses, for God will never leave himself without a witness. We believe the promises of our God, for "the promise is unto you and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." This gospel has been preached all through the ages, and is still being preached and believed by those that have been born again.

"Saviour, if of Zion City
I through grace a member am,
Let the world deride or pity,
I will glory in thy name.

Fading is the worldling's pleasure:
All his boasted pomp and show.

Solid joys and lasting treasures
None but Zion's Children know."

O, how wonderful it is to know that there is a rest for God's humble poor: the poor have the gospel preached unto them. Jesus said, "Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." "And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs of everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." (Isaiah 35:10) "This people have I formed for myself, and they shall shew forth my praise." (Isaiah 43:21)

I am glad that the elect of God do not praise men, for the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly but by reason of Him who hath subjected the same in hope." (Romans 8:20) We are saved by hope, we walk by faith and faith is the gift of God. Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God. Jesus is the strength of Zion. Zion is what David remembered, and he wept. I believe that the Babylonians just wanted to have David sing for them for amusement. But He remembered Zion, and could not sing the Songs of Zion in a strange land. "What wondrous love is this, O my soul," when we are able to sing the songs of Zion, and we cry out, "Lord have mercy on us," for God is a merciful God having mercy and compassion on whom he will have compassion.

So, Brethren, "the lot is cast into the lap, and the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord." May the God of all grace be with us, is my prayer.

In bonds of love to all,
Elder Herbert R. Prince
4307 Manor Haven Drive
Memphis, Tenn.

EXPERIENCE

Ekfrid, Ontario, Jan. 2, 1905

Dear Brethren: — When about ten years old my father and mother joined

the Presbyterians. It did trouble me for fear they had not known that change of heart I felt all should have before sitting at the communion. About that time in a vision I thought the world was coming to an end, and saw the Lord coming down from heaven with wings like an angel, to take me. How I did beg of him to take my eldest brother with me. From that time I was given great exercise of mind until the day of my wonderful delivery, when the blessed Jesus was revealed to me, as I hope, my salvation and my Redeemer.

How often I had desired to be prepared to sit at the communion. This Saturday while going into the meeting the lines were with me: "I joyed when to the house of God," &c. Go up, they said to me. Then came the thought, But I am as unfit as ever. The text was given out, "If the righteous scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear?" That was the last I heard. What a power of condemnation rested upon me. I was taken out of the body, and saw hell open before me, and was ready to be cast in, but that did not seem to trouble me, but that I had crucified the Lord of glory. When in that distress the Savior appeared to me, and said, "Your sins, which are many, are all forgiven; put your hand in my side, and your fingers in the print of the nails; I will put my robe upon her, and shoes on her feet, and a ring on her hand." Then the Lord alone has brought salvation unto me. He took me from the fearful pit, and from the miry clay, and on a rock he set my feet, establishing my way. We were in the meeting from eleven a.m. until four in the afternoon, but I did not hear a word of what went on after the text was given out. When they dismissed I was weeping, and they asked my trouble. I said, Surely it is the work of the Lord; so I joined them, and I wondered that they never asked me to tell any experience; not one ever mentioned to me about the work of grace.

I was with them for over twenty years. Though feeling there were some of the Lord's people among them, I never

got anything from their preaching, but would feel it was in myself when I did not hear. All this time I was hearing the Old School Baptist preach, and while listening to their wonderful tidings would have a great conflict to conceal my feelings. It would come to me that I was like Joseph: I knew my brethren, but they did not know me. At God's own appointed time I was brought to the home of my friends, and baptized by the people I so dearly love, though I had to leave my kindred after the flesh. The text the Presbyterians had before I left was, Choose ye this day whom ye will serve, &c. The speaker made it all so natural I could not go any more. I remember at one time of wanting to tell my mind to a dear one (she was a member of the Baptists,) and she seemed to turn away, so I thought it was because I was a Presbyterian, but when this dear saint was on her death bed she asked me if I had ever felt the cleansing power of Christ. I said, It is some time since I felt he took me from the fearful pit and from the miry clay. She said, "It is enough."—The very words that came to me on the street in Glasgow.

I have passed through wonderful darkness as well as rejoicing. One evening while in sweet communion with my heavenly Father, his love rested upon me in such power that I felt loath to return to my family. When I was going before the church I felt forsaken, when the words came, "Think not what thou shalt say, for I will be a mouth to you." I dared not think what to say, but was given liberty to tell what I had passed through. A few years ago in a dream I thought I stood before God, who was as a flame of fire, and the words came, "Who shall be able to stand before God? when the Savior passed between us; he is the great mediator between God and man." At one time of the Ekfrid quarterly meeting, while weary in body and dozing to sleep, the words came, "Keep close to the shepherds' tents." Another time when very sick, and not expected to get better, I seemed carried above, and the words were with me, I am the

purchased of the blood of Christ. After that I was for some time in such darkness that my heavenly Comforter seemed entirely gone, when he appeared, and the words came, All the devils in hell could not keep my Redeemer from me, for he is from everlasting to everlasting.

(Mrs.) Angus McTaggart.

(Sister McTaggart's obituary was published in the July, 1922 issue of the Signs. Her experience re-published by request)

WHEN WE ARE WEAK,
THEN WE ARE STRONG

117 Bon Air Road,
Baltimore, Md. 21225
April 12, 1975

Dear Brother and Sister Wood:

I trust you will not be offended by the above salutation, but I find it a great joy and comfort, through weak and vile as I am, to be able to call and to feel from time to time that the blessed saints of God, such as you both, are my brother and sister in the Lord, and that by the grace of God claim kinship with our Elder Brother Jesus.

I have felt to be weak and so far from the things of God lately that I fear at times to even be in the presence of His people. I fear that I am the biggest deceiver that ever was, and sometimes I am persuaded that I should stay away from the assembly of the saints.

Oh, but then my soul grows faint and hungry, and I find myself looking forward with eager anticipation to the next meeting. Such was the case last Sunday when we were blessed by a most gracious God to enjoy two lovely meetings. Although I am weak, vile and unworthy, I feel that surely God was in our presence. O, what a blessed privilege it is to meet together with the saints of God, and be enabled from time to time to worship Him in spirit and in truth, and to have no confidence in the flesh.

Daniel, the prophet of old, was cast into a den of lions because he was heard

making prayer and supplication before his God. Yet while he was there, all the night long his God was with him, and suffered him not to be hurt, but sent his angel and shut the mouths of the lions.

And we remember that Shadrack, Meshach and Abednego were cast into the midst of a burning fiery furnace that was exceedingly hot, and the flames of it slew those men that cast them into the furnace. Yet we find that these men trusted in God, and He delivered them, and the fire had no power over them, nor was a hair of their head singed.

Nebachadnezzar, the king that commanded these three to be thrown into the fiery furnace, said, "Lo I see four men loose, walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt, and the form of the fourth is like the Son of God."

Is it not a great comfort to know that God never leaves nor forsakes his people, and that He is with us even though we may feel to be in the midst of a fiery furnace? Our God knows what his people need: He knows their weaknesses and their sinful condition. Were it not that way, what need would there be for a Saviour?

But thanks be unto God that these things are not left to us, but He has fixed the end from the beginning: chose His people in His Son before the world began, and reveals His Son unto his chosen vessels of mercy here in this time world, and makes them to know that His is the only name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.

"Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." May we ever be blessed to praise His holy name, and exalt it above every name that has ever been named, is my hope and prayer for Christ's sake.

May His people be able to come together in the bond of unity, and may they be enabled to pray one for another, and hopefully for

Barnabas J. Brammer

RECEIVES SPIRITUAL FOOD

843 Glendale Ave.,
S. Charleston, W. Va.

Dear Editors:

Enclosed is a check to renew my subscription for another year — the remainder to be used as needed.

I want to tell you dear Editors how much I appreciate the time and effort you spend publishing the precious *Signs*, although I know it is all through the love of God and the inspiration He gives you, that you do this.

It feeds my hungry soul from month to month, and so many times has answered my prayers. No other editorials I have read can so completely satisfy my needs. What a gracious God we have that bestowes his love and mysterious wonders upon his believing people!

Brother Wood, I think so often of you and Sister Wood, and hope to meet with you again in the near future.

In bonds of love.

A sister I hope,
Mrs. Lester (Vertal) Haning

A HAPPY DAY

Rt. 2,
Elon College, N. C.

Dear Elder Spangler:

Hope this finds you and your family well. It has been my desire for a long time to express my feelings, with the help of the Lord. Without Him I can do nothing, but with him I can do all things.

I have so much to be thankful for: My dear, sweet daughter asked for a home at Pleasant Grove Church last Sunday. She told of her love for them, and asked if they would accept her, and she was baptized Sunday afternoon. We had a wonderful, happy Lord's day, and I am so glad for her.

There has been a lot of trouble in my life, but I am thankful for the trouble the Lord has blessed me with, because

it has worked for my good. I love my Lord: He has been so good to me, and I hope I am thankful for I have much to thank him for.

Brother Spangler, I am thankful for the *Signs of the Times*, for I enjoy reading it so much. You may put this in the *Signs* if you desire. I don't have much earthly learning, but I hope the good Lord is blessing me to grow in the Spirit that I might have a thankful heart to him.

From a little sister in Christ, I hope,
Rosa S. Page

THE LORD IS REIGNING

St. Charles, Ky.

Dear Brethren:

Just a few lines to make me feel I am one of you. I read the *Signs* as long as my eyes will hold out, and get such a pleasure out of it, because I do not get to go to church very often where I get the truth as I believe it.

We enjoyed our meetings so much while Elder Biggs lived. We now have only three members, and two of them too old to go all the time, and all the preachers that could come to us, are so far away. But we are hoping the Lord is leading us. We are a people who are wandering on as did old Abraham. Our pathway is not strewn with roses. His people are called out of many tribulations, and we hope for our good and His glory.

So don't announce our meetings in the *Signs* (New Hope or Lick Creek, north of Dawson Springs) until we can have a preacher. I will notify you.

It is all for the glory of the God of heaven and earth as we travel through this vale of tears, and may we never forget in these dark and troubled times, that the Lord is yet reigning, and his purposes are not disturbed.

I love to read often the good writers. Brother Campbell had such a good piece awhile ago. I hope they will continue to write for the pleasure of us older people. I have traveled a long way, and have seen many mercies come. I feel we are traveling fast to the final wind-up

of time, and my prayer is for the Editors and writers to be enabled to keep on writing.

Love and fellowship,
Mona McGregor

BLACK CREEK UNION

The next session of the *Black Creek Union* will be held, the Lord willing, at Mill Branch Church the 5th Sunday and Saturday before in June, 1975.

Everyone is cordially invited to come and worship with us.

Harold H. Pittman, Clerk
Box 744,
Bennettsville, S. C. 29512

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

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EDITORIAL

"To the praise of the glory of His grace, wherein he hath made us ACCEPTED in the beloved." (Ephesians 1:6)

This scripture has lingered in my mind for several months. In verse 1, the author, Paul, puts his name, declares his office, and how he came into it, and describes the persons to whom he wrote, "the saints which are at Ephesus and to the faithful in Christ Jesus". In verse 2, Paul gives the salutation which is common to his epistles. In the rest of the chapter, the apostle gives thanks for blessings received by him

and them; in which the efficient, moving, procuring and final causes of salvation are noted; and the several parts and branches of it are observed. The chapter is concluded with prayers for the Ephesians and various things are mentioned to the comfort of the saints and to the glory of Christ. The believer, Paul the apostle, writes to believers about their belief in the Lord Jesus Christ, whom to know is life eternal.

"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ", writes Paul in Ephesians 1:3. Here Paul gives thanks to God, as the God and Father of Christ, for spiritual blessings in Christ in general. In Ephesians 1:4, Paul proceeds to particulars and begins with election, which he represents as an act of God the Father choosing particular persons, as done in Christ, before the foundation of the world. The end of this is that "we should be holy and without blame before him in love." Ephesians 1:4. In Romans 8:29, it reads, "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren." The above is further illustrated under the name of predestination in Ephesians 1:5, where Paul writes, "Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will." This blessing makes possible the adoption of children, those that he foreknew, by Jesus Christ to himself, the instrumental cause or means. The end is with God, "according to the good pleasure of his will." Ephesians 1:5.

Ephesians 1:6 reads, "To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us *accepted* in the beloved". Here, "according to the good pleasure of his will" is explained as "being to the praise of the glory of his grace"; to which grace, acceptance in the beloved (Christ) is owing. Here then we have the third spiritual blessing mentioned, that is, "accepted in the beloved." The

three spiritual blessings so far as as follows: election, predestination, *acceptance* in the beloved, which is a branch of election and predestination. In the three spiritual blessings so far mentioned, the *past tense* of the verb is used in each case; "hath chosen us in him", "having predestinated us unto the adoption of children" and "hath made us *accepted* in the beloved".

There are several words in the scriptures which come from the root word *accept* which is a verb: *acceptable* (adjective), *acceptably* (adverb), *acceptance* (noun), *accepted* (adjective and past tense of verb). It is interesting to look them up in the concordance to see how each scripture relates to the text in question. It is also interesting to look up the word "*accept*" in the dictionary to see its various meanings and synonyms.

Sometimes men say that they have *accepted* the Lord Jesus Christ. Others call upon men to *accept* him as their personal Saviour. Let us examine these ideas. Paul writes in Ephesians 1:9, "Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself." This settles the matter. God reveals to poor sinners that they have been made *accepted* in the beloved to the praise of the glory of his grace. Let us look further to the scriptures. In Job 34:19 and 21, it says that God does not accept the persons of princes nor does he regard the rich more than the poor, for they are all the work of his hands. "For his eyes are upon the ways of man and he seeth all his goings." In Galatians 2:6 it reads, "God *accepteth* no man's persons." In Psalm 130:3 it reads, "If thou, Lord, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand?"

Flesh and blood cannot enter into the kingdom and it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps. Jesus said to Peter in Matthew 16:17, "Blessed are thou, Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven".

Here, again, we find that Jesus speaks of the revelation of the mystery of his Father's will which is made known according to his good pleasure which he has purposed in himself. If a man says that he has *accepted* the Lord Jesus Christ and he means that the Father has revealed unto him that he has been made *accepted* in the beloved to the praise of the glory of his grace, this is according to scripture. Why do I say this? Some dictionary meanings for the word *accept* are as follows: "to regard or value", "to highly esteem", "to acknowledge as valued or received", "to acknowledge" and "to confess". I am fearful, however, that what is often meant by "*accepting* the Lord Jesus Christ," is not in accord with the less common meaning of *accept* as outlined above.

While God does not *accept* any man's person and it is out of reach of man by nature to be *accepted* by God, there are certain scriptures which should be cited to clarify the situation further. In Acts 10:34, 35, it reads, "Then Peter opened his mouth and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness is *accepted* with him." Here we find those that fear God (and perfect love casteth out fear) and worketh righteousness are *accepted* with him. In Romans 4:3 it reads, "Abraham believed God and it was counted unto him for righteousness." Our sins are imputed unto Jesus and his righteousness is imputed unto us. It is the work of God that we believe on him who he hath sent. It is the work of God that we believe that he hath made us *accepted* in the beloved. In Job 42:8, it reads, "And my servant Job shall pray for you: for him will I *accept*" and again in Job 42:9, "The Lord also *accepted* (the face of) Job." In Romans 8:11, 12 it reads, "Now therefore perform the doing of it; that as there was a readiness to will, so there may be a performance also out of that which ye have. For if there be first a willing mind, it is *accepted* according to that

a man hath, and not according to that a man hath not. A man must have faith (which is the gift of God) to be *accepted* with him. In 1 Peter 2:5 it reads, "Ye also, as lively stones are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices *acceptable* to God by Jesus Christ."

We find then not by nature but by grace hath he made us *accepted* in the beloved.⁶ We do find in scripture that certain things are acceptable to God, things done by those who have been touched by his hand. Indeed we are under exhortation! In Jeremiah 37:20 it says, "Let my supplication, I pray thee, be *accepted* before thee." David writes in Psalm 19:14, "Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be *acceptable* in thy sight, O Lord, my strength and my redeemer." Paul exhorts believers in Romans 12:1 as follows, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, *acceptable* unto God, which is your reasonable service." Again Paul speaks in Romans 14:17-18, "For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. For he that in these things serveth Christ is *acceptable* to God, and approved of men." In Ephesians 5:8-10, Paul gives the exhortation, "For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light: (For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth;) Proving what is *acceptable* unto the Lord."

In 1 Peter 2:20, Peter writes, "For what glory is it if, when ye be buffeted for your faults, ye shall take it patiently? but, if when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is *acceptable* with God. In Paul's epistle to the Hebrews he writes in 12:28, "Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved let us have grace, whereby we may serve God *acceptably* with reverence and godly fear; and our God is a consuming fire." Believers are under exhortation re their walk, and their

talk and their conversation. Finally in II Corinthians 5:6-10, "Therefore we are always confident, knowing that, whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord: (For we walk by faith, not by sight:) We are confident, I say, and willing to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord. Wherefore we labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be *accepted* of him. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ: that everyone may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad."

Those that by his grace have been made accepted in the beloved are found in all nations, and kindreds, and people and tongues, as in Revelation 7:9, in fact a great multitude that no man can number. Indeed, "The foundation of God standeth sure having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are his," as in II Timothy 2:19. Yes, they are from both the nations of Jew and Gentile! In Romans 15:16, it reads of Paul, "That I should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the Gospel of God, that the offering up of the Gentiles might be *acceptable* being sanctified by the Holy Ghost." In Ezekiel 20:41 it speaks of believers among the Jews, "I will *accept* you with your sweet saviour when I bring you out from the people, and gather you out of the countries wherein ye have been scattered; and I will be sanctified in you before the heathen." In Romans 9:23-24 it reads, "And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory, even us, whom he hath called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles."

In Ephesians 1:3, as mentioned earlier, it reads, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ." Three of the spiritual blessings have been named: election (hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world),

predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, and hath made us *accepted* in the beloved; all in the past tense. As well, we receive the following spiritual blessings as outlined by Paul in this chapter of Ephesians: redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, the revelation of the mystery of his will, that in the dispensation of the fulness of times, he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth, we obtain an inheritance (which is incorruptible and undefiled and fadeth not away), that we should be to the praise of his glory, we trust in him, we hear the word of truth, the gospel of our salvation, we are sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest (promise) of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, and we have been made members of his body, the church. Why are we blessed with all of these spiritual blessings? Paul says in Ephesians 1, that it is according to the good pleasure of his will (vs. 5), it is to the glory of his grace (vs. 6), he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence (vs. 8), it is according to his good pleasure, which he hath purposed in himself (vs. 9), it is according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will (vs. 11), that we should be to the praise of his glory (vs. 12), and it is according to the working of his mighty power (vs. 19). We do not need any more to persuade us of the goodness and certainty of his divine will.

In Isaiah 61:2, it mentions the "*acceptable* year of the Lord" in relation to the office of Christ. In Luke 4:18-21, Jesus read from Isaiah 61 as far as, "to preach the *acceptable* year of the Lord." What is the acceptable year of the Lord? Not an exact year but time in general is meant. The whole time of Christ on earth was an acceptable and desirable time. The allusion is to the year of jubilee when there was a proclamation of liberty, of release of debts, of restoration of inheritances, and of

cessation from work, all of which must make it an acceptable year. This proclamation was made in the time of atonement. This was made by the sacrifice of Christ and is proclaimed in the gospel as the acceptable year of the Lord and was acceptable to God himself, as were the incarnation of Christ, his obedience and righteousness, his sufferings and death, and his sacrifice and satisfaction. Hereby the perfections of God were glorified, his purposes fulfilled, his covenant confirmed, and his people saved. It was acceptable to men, as were the birth of Christ, and the things done by him. Peace was made, pardon was procured, righteousness was brought in, and salvation wrought out, all of which must be acceptable to such who are lost, and know it, and are sensible that nothing of their own can save them. No wonder the multitude of the heavenly host praised God saying, "Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace, good will toward men." Luke 2:14.

How do we come to realize that he hath made us accepted in the beloved? He, through the work of the Holy Spirit, even the Spirit of Truth, makes known unto us the mystery of his will. It is the work of God that we believe on him whom he hath sent. Paul says in I Timothy 1:15, "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all *acceptation*, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief." How beautiful to a poor sinner is this good news from a far country!

May the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of Glory give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him; the eyes of your understanding being enlightened, that you may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, and what is the exceeding greatness of his power to usward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly

places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come.

May my service which I have for Jerusalem be accepted of the saints.

(Elder) D. Alex McColl

VOICES OF THE PAST
"He being dead yet speaketh"

THE NEW BIRTH

(A reply to Elder John R. Martin)

Elder Martin will, we trust, pardon our delay in replying to his inquiries. His letter had been filed with others, and overlooked until the present time. We will try to make our views more clear and intelligible to him, and to others who have failed to understand us on the vitally important subject of the new birth.

Our esteemed brother repeats the words which we used in our reply to sister Phillips in the *Signs* for Sept. 15th, 1876, namely, "That which is born of the Spirit is spirit; it never did belong to any other family, for it is born of God, and never was defiled with sin; it is born of incorruptible seed — and was never corrupted — being born of God; it was not purchased, redeemed nor adopted." Having quoted these words of ours, brother Martin asks, if the soul or spirit were never defiled with sin, were never corrupted, what necessity there was of being born again? Answer. The soul and body and spirit that were and are born of the flesh, were in that birth born of corruptible seed; they were not only corruptible, but actually became corrupted, defiled, sinful and depraved, and necessitated to be redeemed, washed, cleansed, purified and born again, in order to see the kingdom of God. But what we contend for is, that the spiritual life which is given to us in the new birth, is not born of blood, nor of the

will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but is born of God. And the scriptures testify that "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 iii. 9.

We were trying to show that all in us which is born of the flesh is flesh, and all flesh is born of corruptible seed, has become corrupt, depraved and sinful. But all that is born of God is born of incorruptible seed, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever.—1 Peter i. 23. Our first or natural birth, which was of corruptible seed, developed or brought forth that life, in soul, body and spirit, which God gave us in common with all mankind in the earthly Adam. In him we all die: death has passed upon us all, for that all have sinned. If our natural birth constituted us children of God, it would also constitute all mankind children of God, and then we could see no need of a second birth to make us manifest as the children of God. But Jesus our Lord says, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh." Our fleshly nature was not produced by being born of the Spirit, nor was our spiritual life produced by a fleshly birth; for all men are born of the flesh, but all men have not the Spirit of God.

We presume that brother Martin believes as we do, that God gave us our natural life in common with all the human race in the earthly Adam, and that except we were born of the flesh we could not see this natural world or be manifested in it. And that he gave us spiritual, incorruptible, eternal life in Jesus Christ, who is the second Adam, and the Lord from heaven, and that a spiritual birth was indispensable to bring us forth in that spiritual life. None of our brethren, it is presumed, will contend that our spiritual, incorruptible and eternal life is born of the flesh, or descended to us by generation from the earthly Adam; or that our natural, mortal life or earthly body is the production of the new and spirit-

ual birth. Now we hold that this natural man that is born of the flesh is a sinner, conceived in sin and shapen in iniquity. It is this earthly nature that is under the law, and that has transgressed the law and fallen under the curse, and which must be redeemed, washed from pollution and guilt by the blood of Christ, and then be born again, not of a corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever.

This Adamic man, born of corruptible seed, who has sinned, must be redeemed by the precious blood of Christ, and born again of a pure and incorruptible seed, or he cannot see the kingdom of God; for that life which is born of corruptive seed is corrupt and sinful. But we hold that eternal life which is given us in the new birth, being of incorruptible seed, is not susceptible of corruption or pollution; therefore it was not redeemed, for it was never defiled with guilt, and it cannot sin, because it is born of God, and his incorruptible seed remains in him, and he, or it, cannot sin, because it is born of God, and therefore of a seed that cannot be corrupted. This life is Christ in us, the hope of glory. "For, for me to live is Christ, and to die is gain." "I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." "When he who is our life shall appear, then shall we appear with him in glory." "This life which was with the Father, and was manifested unto us."—1 John i. 2. "Which God hath given us in his Son."—1 John v. 11, 12. And which is hid with Christ in God.—Col. iii. 3.

This life, we have said, was never bought nor sold, was never condemned by the law, never needed redemption; but those of Adam's race who are by grace the recipients of it, were by nature children of wrath, even as others. This life in us is born of the Spirit, and is spirit; but it is not the spirit of the flesh, which is vile, but it is the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead, and which shall also quicken our mortal bodies in the final resurrec-

tion, when these mortal bodies shall put on immortality, and these corruptibles shall put on incorruption, and the saying shall be brought to pass, that death is swallowed up of life. We who have received this spirit still do groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our bodies.—Rom. viii. 23.

"Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption."—1 Cor. xv. 50. Why? Because it is born of incorruptible seed, and this earthly relationship which we now bear in our flesh, and in all our mortal powers and elements, must be dissolved by death; and when quickened in the resurrection by the Spirit which now dwells in all who are born again, they will bear the image of the heavenly Adam, as in our fleshly nature we now bear the image of the earthly Adam. Then when these vile bodies are changed, they shall be presented in glory as the children, not of the earthy Adam, but as the children of God, being the children of the resurrection.—Luke xx. 36.

We have tried to make ourself understood by brother Martin, and by all who read our views. We do hold that our body, soul and spirit, as born of the flesh, of corruptible seed, was corrupted, depraved, and justly condemned by the righteous law of God, did and do belong to another family than that of God, by nature were afar off, but are made nigh by the blood of Christ, and that in their new and heavenly birth they receive an incorruptible life, which is and always was pure and holy; and although we are still in these vile bodies, in which there dwells no good thing, we have the blessed assurance that our God will change our vile bodies, and raise them up from the dead by his Spirit which now (by the new birth) dwells in us. This mortal must put on immortality; it has not yet put it on, although we have received the spirit of adoption, as the earnest of our immortal inheritance, and the full assurance that these bodies, with all the

corruptible elements to them pertaining, shall be sown as natural bodies, in death; but they shall be raised from the dead as spiritual, immortal bodies, in the likeness of the risen and glorious body of our Lord Jesus Christ.

We cannot claim that anything in or about us that is sinful, depraved or mortal is born of God, or is of an incorruptible seed, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever; nor that anything in or about us that is pure, spiritual, incorruptible or immortal is born of the flesh in us, as our daily experience as well as the scriptures fully demonstrate, is flesh, and all that we receive in the new birth is spiritual, and that these two elements are contrary one to the other; in the flesh dwells no good thing, in the Spirit there dwells no evil thing. The flesh wars against the spirit, and the spirit wars against the flesh; and this warfare will continue until the earthly house of our tabernacle shall be dissolved, and we shall be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven.—2 Cor. v. 1-5.

In conclusion, suffer a few words on 2 Cor. v. 17: "Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is (or as in the margin, *let him be*) a new creature; old things are passed away, behold all things are become new. And all things are of God," &c. In the context we are told, "That if one died for all, then were all dead." And that he (Christ) died for all, (all his people, or members,) that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him who died for them, and rose again. Wherefore henceforth know we no man after the flesh; yea, though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we him no more. That is, from the time of Christ's resurrection and ascension to glory, we know him only as he is revealed to us by his Spirit. As he was put to death in the flesh, which was our flesh, which he took on him for the suffering of death, and he was quickened by the Spirit; all those for whom he died were baptized into his death, and raised with him

from under the law, and unto and into newness of life. When he was known in the flesh, he was recognized as in our law place; but now being raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, he is no more known as the man of sorrow, nor under the law, nor subject to death, as death hath no more dominion over him. He destroyed death, and him that had the power of death, and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. To know him after the flesh would be to know him under the law, for in being made flesh he was made under the law; but he has suffered for us in the flesh, and now is known to us in the newness of resurrection life, by the power of an endless life, in all the glory which he had with the Father before the world began. Now if any man be in him, he also is known in the fellowship of the Spirit, as crucified with him, raised up from the condemnation of the law, and a partaker of his resurrection life. The recognition of the saints is not on the ground of any fleshly excellence. The body is dead because of sin; but the spirit of life because of righteousness. The unity of the saints is in a unity of the Spirit. If any man has not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his; but as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. Our flesh is still mortal, corruptible, and under the irrevocable sentence, "Dust thou art, and to dust thou shalt return." Hence it is said, "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above," &c. "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. Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth," &c. "For which things' sake the wrath of God cometh upon the children of disobedience.—But now ye also put off all these, anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communications out of your mouth. Lie not one to another, seeing ye have put off the old man with his deeds, and have put on the new man, which is

renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him. Where there is neither Greek nor Jew, circumcision nor uncircumcision, Barbarian, Scythian, bond nor free; but Christ is all in all.'—Col. iii. 1-11. "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free, and have been all made to drink into one Spirit." 1 Cor. xii. 12, 13.

From all these scriptures we see that it is not our perishable, corruptible bodies which are in Christ, but our life which is hid with him in God; and we see that our fleshly natures have not become *new*, but are *dead* because of sin. And all things which have become new to us are of God; none of them are of the earthy Adam, of the flesh, nor of the earth. To be in or present with Christ, is to be absent from the flesh, "Therefore we are always confident, knowing that whilst we are at home in the body, we are absent from the Lord. (For we walk by faith, not by sight.) We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord. Wherefore we labor, that whether present or absent, we may be accepted of him." 2 Cor. v. 9-9. "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." "So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his. And if Christ be in you, the body is dead, because of sin; but the Spirit is life, because of righteousness."—Romans viii. 1,8-10. So then to be in Christ is not that our carnal nature is in him, but all the gifts of the Spirit, by which we are recognized as the members of his spiritual body, and which things to us are *new*, and of God, and which we have received in the unspeakable gift of God's dear Son. Old

things, such as the law, with all its carnal ordinances, its cursings, and its thunderings, are passed away; and while abiding in him, we walk not after the flesh, as formerly, but after the Spirit. Not in the oldness of the letter, but in the newness of the Spirit.

We submit these explanations of our views to the consideration of our beloved brother Martin, and to all who are of the household of faith. So far as they are sustained by the scriptures, and opened to our understanding by the Spirit, may they be received; and wherein they are not so sustained, may the Lord enable us all to detect all that is wrong, and to receive with joy all that is approved, and may his great name be magnified forevermore.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe January 1, 1877)

P. O. Box 551,
Monticello, Ark. 71655

Dear Elder Spangler:

I see that it is time to renew my subscription to the *Signs*, and am enclosing check to cover two year's renewal, and use the balance as you see fit. I have been enabled to get much comfort in reading past issues of the *Signs*, and am so very thankful that the all wise and merciful God has given you editors and associate editors, grace to carry on the good work which began over an hundred and forty years ago, and which has brought comfort and consolation to so many of God's humble poor. I hope and pray that the Lord will continue to bless you all in every way that is pleasing to Him.

Dear Brother in Christ I hope, if you should be given a mind to do so, I would like to have your views on the 51st chapter of Isaiah, where it reads, "Harken unto me, ye that follow after righteousness, ye that seek the Lord: Look unto the rock whence ye are hewn, and to the hole of the pit whence ye are digged." Those that the Lord speaks to, are the ones that follow after righteousness, and

they are such as seek the Lord. They are not seeking to please men, they are not seeking to please themselves. But they are seeking the Lord their God, and to obey His commands. But there are those to whom Jesus speaks, "I go my way, and ye shall seek me, and shall die in your sins: whither I go ye cannot come." And again, "Ye shall seek me, and shall not find me: and where I am, thither ye cannot come."

But there are those who seek the Lord, and follow after righteousness. And therefore He said, "Look unto the rock whence ye are hewn, and to the hole of the pit whence ye are digged." Look unto your origin—Look unto the Rock, Look unto the hole of the pit, and verily you will find in the beginning that Rock is God: the eternal God, who in the very beginning created all things for himself, and for his own glory. And therefore he made man that he might show the praise of God's redeeming grace, which was done by the first born of many brethren, and show forth the first fruits of the praise of them that love Him.

My brethren, we believe from the depths of our hearts that man is not the product of evolution, for God Almighty made man from the dust of the ground. And we see that in the beginning God created the heaven and the earth, and all things which are therein. There is not a single thing that exists under the sun, that was not created and/or made by Him. Therefore you look back even before the hole of the pit whence ye are digged: you look to that Rock, for in that Rock (Jesus Christ) you had a name before the foundation of the world, and in that Rock your name was engraved, and your name was written in the Lamb's book of life from the foundation of the world.

As you look to the Rock, you notice that the Rock is a solid Rock — a rock of eternal ages. It has no beginning, and it has no ending. It is none other than Jesus Christ the only begotten of the Father: the foundation of the Church, the foundation of all Truth. And in that

Rock you had your origin, if you be one of those what loves righteousness and seek after the Lord. If this be your state and this is your standard, your heart is in the very love that is on the heart of that Rock of everlasting love: then your origin came from there. If it were not for the Elect, it does not appear that God would have created any man. You look to the hole of the pit from whence you were digged, and man in nothing and less than nothing, and altogether vanity.

My precious brethren, it is so very plain that salvation is the gift of God, and comes not by any merit of the flesh, and no matter how very hard a man may try, it is utterly impossible for any to be saved except by God's grace.

Dear Brother, after reading some of yours and Elder Wood's editorials, and Elder Griffin's and others, it seems I would be very thankful if I could meet you face to face, and hear you speak on the unsearchable truths of Christ Jesus our Lord. In time past I have heard many of the Elders preach, and I humbly hope that I am thankful to the Lord for each and every one of them and their gifts: that by grace given them by the power of the eternal God, were made able to bring glad tidings of great joy on many occasions, to the comfort and consolation of many.

Yours in a sweet hope, I hope
David B. Lawson

CLAY IN OUR FATHER'S HAND

P. O. Box 1103
Panama City, Fla. 32401

"For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." (Romans 8:18)

The words suffer, suffering, and sufferings are many in our Bible. The word suffer means pain, agony or distress. God's people experience all these things before they enter the Kingdom, for Jesus has said that it is through much

tribulation that we enter his kingdom. Those who have not suffered, have not yet entered, for His word is truth and righteousness, and cannot be made void.

Jesus said that except we become as little children we cannot enter the Kingdom. Let us consider what a little child is. First of all a little child is totally and altogether dependent upon the parent. The child must look to the parent for his livelihood in every aspect,—not for just a part but absolutely every shred of it. That is just how dependent a child of God is upon our Heavenly Father: We must look to Him for every breath of life, for every step we take, and for every blessing we receive, may it be natural or spiritual. It is surely not given the child of God to direct his steps of his own accord. We are no more than clay in our Father's hand, and are altogether dependent upon Him for all things, let it be great or small.

Those who claim to have a free will, have not yet come in contact with my Holy and Righteous Father through Jesus my precious Lord and Saviour. Contact with Him will change their way of thinking and understanding, for He opens blinded eyes and causes hearts to understand that He is the great and eternal God who made heaven and earth, and all things therein, and that He truly rules all things according to His will and purpose.

When He brings us to the knowledge of himself, and we behold his power and his glory, then it is that we realize we have nothing whatever of our own, but all belongs to him. Today I surely know that the life in this body belongs to my eternal Father, to give or to take at his own will. It is in Jesus precious name I pray, "Thy will be done."

The precious treasure of my heart
Is Jesus Christ my King:
From him I never want to part,
For he's my everything.
To me He is eternal life
Which flows from heaven's throne,
Tis He who keeps my soul from strife:
In him sweet peace is known.

He is that pearl of greatest price
Which long my heart had sought,

And it was by great sacrifice
This precious pearl was bought.
I prayed and labored for so long,
Through many doubts and fears:
It seemed that everything was wrong
And bitter were my tears.

Then, lo, one day my Saviour came
And gave me perfect peace:
And glory to His precious name,
His praises never cease.
He truly is my life, my all,
So precious is his love
Some day I know I'll hear his call
And go to live above.

Ethel Gilland

OBITUARIES

ELDER ERNEST ATTEBERY

Elder Ernest Attebery was born February 20, 1892 in Latah, Wash., and departed this life November 8, 1974 at the Marion Nursing Home in Sublimity, Oregon, just one year from date of admittance, age 82 years, 8 months and 18 days. He was the son of Elder T. E. and Martha Attebery. He was united in marriage January 1, 1914 to Flossie Newman, who survives, with the following children: Donald Attebery, LaCenter, Wash.; Orville Attebery, Dayton, Wash.; Virgil Attebery, Eugene, Ore.; Mrs. Loren Gower and Mrs. Irvin Holmquist of Aumsville, Ore.; Mrs. Vernon Bryson, Hood River, Ore.; and Ila Martin, San Rafael, Calif. Also twenty-two grandchildren and thirteen great-grandchildren, one brother and five sisters.

Brother Ernest Attebery and wife was received into the fellowship of Salem Old School Baptist Church in Weiser, Idaho in June 1944, and baptized by Elder B. O. Jeffery. He was ordained Deacon of the church August 1951. In September 1953 the church licensed him to preach. He was ordained to the full work of the Gospel ministry in November 1954. They maintained membership here for sometime, but was later moved to Pleasant Grove Church in Naches, Wash., where it remained at the time of his passing. During Elder Attebery's ministry he had the Pastoral care of three to four churches. For sometime he was also holding meetings with a few of the scattered Baptist and friends in the Spokane, Wash., area. He was faithful in serving these churches for many years, being a firm believer in the Sovereignty of God, and well established in the doctrine of Salvation by the Grace of God, and he delighted to proclaim it.

The funeral services were conducted by his pastor, Elder Ben F. Preston at the Weddle Funeral Home Chapel in Stayton, Oregon on November 11, 1974. His body was laid to rest in

Lone Oak Cemetery at the edge of the city, there to await the second coming of the Lord, when this natural body is raised a Spiritual body, there to awake in His likeness and to be forever with the Lord. This is the reality of the Christian hope.

May the Lord bless his faithful and devoted wife, the family and all those that mourn, to feel that all is well with our loved one, and that our loss is his eternal gain.

Submitted by the unworthy writer by request of his wife.

Ben F. Preston

RUTH SAWYER RESPESS (1897-1975)

Sister Ruth was one of those few who are better described by their countenance. She was so wonderfully blest in that humility was ones' first impression of her. Her smiling "I thank the Lord that I am able to be here" endeared her to all her friends. Sister Ruth suffered very much in her later years from acute emphysema and breathing was always difficult.

Sister Ruth married Augustus Respass, deceased, and two sons were born to this union, Asthus Respass, deceased and Lee Respass of Washington, D. C. who survives.

She joined the church at North Creek on Friday night before the first Sunday in October 1942 and was baptized by the pastor, Elder S. Gray, the following day.

Sister Ruth died January 10, 1975 and was laid to rest January 14, 1975 in the church cemetery under a mound of beautiful flowers. Her funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder J. T. Prescott.

We feel that her hope was such that she will hear that blessed call "Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world".

Elder J. T. Prescott — Pastor
Reeves Smith — Committee

SISTER MARY CAYTON SMITH (1888-1974)

Since it pleased our Heavenly Father to take from our midst on December 20, 1974 our beloved Sister "Mamer" as she was affectionately known, we pray that we, along with her family may be reconciled, that God does all things well.

I will not attempt to eulogize her because I believe that the life that she lived was as a light upon a hill, or maybe better expressed in this way, that her light so shined among her friends that they could see the spirit of God in her and render unto Him all the praise

and glory.

Sister Mamer asked for and received a home with the Church at North Creek on Saturday before the third Sunday in September, 1915 and was baptized by the pastor Elder D. W. Topping the following day.

Sister Mamer was twice married, first to Charlie J. Marslender July 1, 1905 and to this union three children were born, Carlton W., Earna J. and Mrs. Verena M. Paul all of Route 2, Belhaven, N. C. and all survive. On May 3, 1916 her first husband died and on February 10, 1918 she was married to Fred W. Smith, Sr. who survives. To this union were born Fred W. Smith, Jr. and Cecil O. Smith, Mrs. Cora S. Bond and Mrs. Kathleen S. Sawyer all of Route 2, Belhaven, N. C., Forrest L. Smith of Biloxi, Mississippi and Mrs. Frances S. Carter of Portsmouth, Virginia all of whom survive and Miss Madeline Smith, deceased.

Sister Mamer was laid to rest in the Community Cemetery with her beloved pastor, Elder J. T. Prescott, conducting the funeral. The many beautiful flowers attested to the esteem in which she was held.

She has crossed the barrier that finishes sin and awaits the second coming of our Lord and Master to gather the jewels of His mercy — there to ever be with the Lord.

Elder J. T. Prescott, Pastor
Reeves Smith, Committee

DEACON J. M. DENNY

By the request of the Church I will try to write a little memorial of our dear and precious Brother J. M. Denny, our Heavenly Father having called him home, June 10, 1974, leaving his dear wife together with the brethren and sisters to mourn his departing. Brother Denny was born December 25, 1897, and died June 10, 1974, making his stay in this life 76 years and 6 months and a few days.

Brother Jake was blest to join the Hillsdale Church by experience the 3rd Sunday in November, 1927, and was a faithful and precious member, and was greatly loved by all his brethren and friends. He was a good singer and loved it, and took great pleasure in leading the songs in all of our services: making melody in his heart, which was greatly cherished by all the brethren and friends. The brethren of Hillsdale Church felt the gift of a Deacon in him, and set him apart to this office, and ordained him on the 3rd Saturday night in August 1949. He filled this office well right up to the time of his death. He faced his affliction with courage, not giving up, and attended his services many times when he was so weak that he had to have help to move

around. Brother Denny made the church a good secretary and clerk. He served the brethren faithfully and was deeply loved by all, including the writer. He and his dear wife were very close to me.

He was established in the doctrine of the absolute predestination of all things. He was strong in his belief and was not easily confused. He was willing to take the lead in any matter that came up, and was highly respected by his brethren and friends, and his influence was great among them, for they respected his judgment highly. He will be greatly missed by Hillsdale Church together with all of his friends, but we desire to bow to the will of the Heavenly Father, and thank Him for the life of Brother Denny, and for the gift he was to the church. We certainly would not wish him back here after seeing him suffer so much, and bearing it so patiently over such a long period of time. We would not awake him from his precious sleep and rest, but would say, Sleep on Brother Jake and take your rest. We the church sympathize with Sister Denny, and our prayers are that the good Lord will give her grace and strength to stand up with courage, and face the problems of life she will be confronted with, and that she will find peace and comfort in the thought that it will be only a short time when she will join him in the sweet beyond, and will know as she is known.

The church has asked that a copy of this be given Sister Denny, and one be for the Church record, and one be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

D. A. O'Bryant

(See the March issue of the *Signs* for Sister Denny's obituary. We regret that these were not published in the proper sequence.—J.D.W.)

LILLIAN MAE TICKLE MOORE

It has pleased our Heavenly Father to remove from our midst our very dear and precious Sister Lillian Mae Tickle Moore. She was born May 2, 1889, and was called home October 7, 1974, making her stay on earth more than 85 years. Her husband preceded her in death many years. She was blest to mother five children, one having preceded her to the grave, leaving four to mourn her departure. She was blest to see two of her children unite with the church of her faith, and see them baptized.

Sister Moore united with the church at Hillsdale the third Sunday in September, 1926, and was baptized the third Sunday in October. She loved her church — the brethren and sisters were dear to her, and she loved her services. She was always present when she

was not providentially hindered. On her last trip or visit to the services, she was blest sit in the car and see her son Luther baptized, and then was able to go to the house and sit through the rest of the service, and enjoyed it greatly.

She was a dear old mother in Israel. In her last years she kept her Bible near her chair and read it a lot, and had a wonderful understanding of it. It was a pleasure to visit with her and hear her express her experiences and belief. A dear old soul indeed is now resting peacefully in the presence of her dear Saviour. We certainly do not grieve after her, as we would one who had no hope, but would say to her children and many friends that Sister Moore did have a precious hope: she believed that Jesus died and rose again for the sole purpose of redeeming His people. She had evidence of being one of them. Her hope was that when He comes again, He will bring her with him. Yes, she is sleeping in Him. Paul has told us that God will bring with him all that are asleep in him, and those that are alive and remain shall not prevent them which are asleep. No, 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 we shall ever be with the Lord.

We will miss Sister Moore, but we are not grieving or sorrowing because she is gone, but hope that we have thankful hearts to the God of all grace for her sweet and precious life.

The Church requests that a copy of this be given to the family, one kept for the church record, and one be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication. Written at the request of the church, by her humble pastor.

D. A. O'Bryant

MEMORIAL OF SAM D. BRITTON

In great sadness I attempt to comply with the request that I write a brief summary of the life and labors of one I loved, and was loved by his wife and family. My father, Sam D. Britton, was born April 16, 1901 in Madison County, Alabama, and called away from the walks of thi sworld on May 10, 1974 in the Fifth Avenue Hospital, Huntsville, Alabama.

He was married to Virgie Ann Fanning in 1922 in Jackson County, Ala. They were bound in love for 51 years and 6 months. They were married the eleventh hour, the eleventh day of the eleventh month and gave birth and raised eleven children with God's grace and mercy.

Daddy was the first of our family to be called away. Due to his illness, this was his prayer and wishes for a long time. It was very

hard to say goodbye, but knowing he had a good hope in Christ and his desire to go, it helped some. I know Daddy's death was for a reason, and not just something that happened and we should not question God's reason.

He was the son of the late R. G. and Angie Clark Britton. He leaves behind his wife, Virgie Britton, five daughters and six sons and three sisters. His passing has made a great miss and sadness to his family. Daddy received a hope in Christ and united with the Mint Springs Primitive Baptist Church August 19, 1926. Elder Jessie Towery baptized him and he served this church as a Deacon for several years. He was very much involved with his church before he became ill. Even after his illness, he still wanted to go to church.

Here are a few things Daddy believed and lived by:

Songs of Soloman 2:17 "Arise my love, my fair one and come away." Here we see the Lord's people being called away by Christ out of the darkness into his most marvelous light. As Paul says in II Timothy, verses 1-9, who hath loved 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. The wisdom of God established this world. God is all wise. God has known all things from the beginning. God declared the end from the beginning. God has a purpose in all things. "There are no new things under the sun." Eccls. 1:9. Col. 1:16-17. God makes us and shapes us in the way that is pleasing to him. It is but natural for men to say that it would be unjust for God not to give everybody an equal chance to be saved. "God has no respecter of persons". We have heard it said that it would not be fair if everybody did not have the opportunity to make his decision between accepting or rejecting Christ. But "As it is written, eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God had prepared for them that love him. But God has revealed them unto us by his spirit." "When I was a child, I spake as a child, I understood as a child. I thought as a child. But when I became as a man, I put away childish things." Man goes to school to learn earthly things. But there are no schools where man can learn spiritual wisdom. This spiritual wisdom comes from God." "But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, righteous, sanctification, and redemption." Through all of the external learning, man thinks as a man and cannot think as God does.

"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."

The nature of man is to run after evil. It is nature for man to make clean the outward part and appear righteous unto man, to hide his weakness. "The nature of man is to do evil." Jer. 13:23. There must be something done for him to do good in the sight of God.

Since man cannot change himself, then God does this work by his spirit. Since the nature of man is to reject God, to choose evil rather than good, our case is hopeless unless a higher power takes hold of us. If it were not for the mercy of God, our end would be everlasting destruction from the presence of God. But God, through his Grace and mercy, saw fit to choose his people and let the other perish in their sins. The love of God just passes them by. Why? It is not for us to question. "What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid. For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion." Rom. 9:11-15.

These are a few things in which Sam D. Britton believed and lived by.

Written by his youngest son.

Charlie M. Britton

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT MARY A. ANDREWS

We, the church at Tarboro, N. C., trust it has pleased our Heavenly Father to call our dear Sister Mary Andrews.

She was born January 18, 1907, and died January 23, 1975, making her stay here 68 years. She attended our church for many years before asking for a home with us the first Sunday in August, 1971.

She was a faithful member and was always praising her God for all His blessings. Sister Mary believed in God as her Saviour and she lived by hope that she would meet Him in heaven someday. To know Sister Andrews, was to love her.

THEREFORE WE RESOLVE: 1. That our loss is her eternal gain. 2. That we send our sincere sympathy to her family. 3. That three copies be made and have one sent to the *Signs* for publication; one to be sent to the family and one to be kept in the church records.

This done by order at our February meeting.

Elder D. B. Stokes, Moderator
John H. Coker, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 143

DANVILLE, VA., JULY, 1975

NO. 7

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 7/75
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

"BLIND BARTIMAEUS"

217 Bastrop Dr.
Monroe, La.

Dear Brethren and Sisters:

I am fearful to write anything concerning spiritual matters, for I have not the gift to express what I feel in such a way that it might be rightfully understood. I do feel, however, to write a few of my thoughts; and if anyone should receive any comfort or joy from them may the praise and glory be to our most precious and merciful heavenly Father from whom all blessings flow; for I know that of myself I can do nothing that is right and good.

Blind Bartimaeus sat by the wayside begging. I would think he sat there daily asking alms of the people. Then on the day Jesus passed his way he was made to beg for mercy. He did not ask alms of the Lord; but mercy. Mark 10:47. "And when he heard that it was Jesus of Nazareth, he began to cry out, and say, Jesus, thou son of David, have mercy on me." The people charged him to hold his peace; but Bartimaeus would have none of that and cried out even more. "And Jesus stood still, and commanded him to be called. And they called the blind man, saying unto him, Be of good comfort, rise; he calleth

thee." Dear Brethren and Sisters, can there be anything of more comfort to the poor sinner's heart than to hear the call of our blessed Savior when he says, "Come unto me." Bartimaeus was literally blind, and, I believe he represents the spiritually blind. At one time we were as blind as he to our sins, but when the Lord opened our eyes and heart that we might see and understand we were made to cry out as Bartimaeus, "Jesus, have mercy on me."

"And he, casting away his garment, rose, and came to Jesus."

He cast away his garment. That left him naked, did it not? But being a blind beggar and having nothing more than a filthy garment he cast it aside to appear before his Lord naked. When we see our own self-righteousness as filthy rags in which we are clothed, then we, too, will cast them aside and appear before our blessed Savior naked, helpless and begging to be clothed in the righteousness of our Lord Jesus Christ. As the poet wrote:

"Nothing in my hand I bring;
Simply to thy cross I cling;
Naked, come to thee for dress;
Helpless, look to thee for grace."

This poem, or song, means much to this poor sinner; for I feel to always stand naked, helpless and begging before Him with absolutely nothing to offer for my own salvation. And were it not for His great love and mercy I would have been cast into hell a long time ago.

I recently read, and also heard on the TV, an advertisement that made my poor heart cry out in anguish. It said, Booze, broads, auto chases, violence and vengeance; all the things that make life worth living. O, my soul! What is this

world coming to? If these are the things that make life worth living then give me death. I know, however, that if it were not for the mercy and grace of our most precious heavenly Father that I would also be looking at these horrible things as making life worthwhile.

Bartimaeus desired that Jesus give him sight, and Jesus said unto him, "Go thy way; thy faith hath made thee whole." He had faith; for Jesus said he did. From whence did this faith come? Could he just say I will have faith. All I need do is ask, and he will give me sight? No! He could not do that, for faith comes not that way. Paul said, "For by grace are ye saved thru faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God; not of works, lest any man should boast." God gave Bartimaeus faith to believe on the Son whom He had sent; therefore he was made whole.

"And Jesus said unto him, Go thy way; thy faith hath made thee whole. And immediately he received his sight, and followed Jesus in the way." No! He did not go his way. He followed Jesus in the way. Jesus said, "I am the way, the truth and the life." Can any true child of God, who has had his eyes and heart opened, do anything other than did Bartimaeus?

I have written only a few of my poor thoughts on this great subject. It is my hope that they are in accord with His holy word. If you do not find them to be in agreement with your own experiences then cast them aside. Please spread a mantle of charity over my many errors, and when at the throne of grace may it be the will of Almighty God that you remember this poor sinner in your prayers.

Clifford Wilbanks

EXPERIENCES SHARED

704 Oakland Ave.
Rocky Mount, N. C. 27801

Dear Elder Spangler:

It has been some months now since I last spoke with you, but I must say that

our last occasion to be together has been sweet to me. I have often thought of our conversation and the closeness I felt to you that day. I hope that God will bring us together again, that we might share our experiences in life once more.

After all, life is simply made up of each of our experiences, together with our reaction to that experience. Total together each experience, and each reaction to that experience, and we have the sum of our lives. Even reflecting into our childhood, when our parents would punish us for our misbehavior, and our reaction to that punishment, we find that simple experience having a great influence in our lives. Yes, we find that every experience in life influences our present behavior.

Each day brings to each of us a new experience, and a new reaction. May God bless us to react Christ-like, that when our life is totaled, we may be found among the faithful.

Even our short encounter, and my reaction to that association, has been a blessing to me; and thereby becomes a part of my life. I thank God for those sweet actions and reactions of God's people in my life. And that it will become a part of my life, and a part of me.

As we share each experience in a spiritual way, so we share each experience in a natural way. We still live in a natural world, and we are still carnal and mortal, and we share friendships in a natural way also. It is in this vein of thinking that I would like to share this experience with you, as well as others of "like precious faith."

Though I am recovering well from a Myocardial Infraction, and beginning to get out a little once more, I still remember a sweet incident while I was hospitalized, that proved that even in nature, God is revealed. That man too, is revealed in all created things. Even more so when we are blessed to "...stand still and see the salvation of the Lord." Praise God for each experience that reveals the truths of old, those truths as recorded in God's written Word.

One morning in early November a nurse friend came into the room I was occupying, with a single rose bud that extended from a long stem. As the young lady placed it into a slender white vase before my eyes, I thought how beautiful and how thoughtful; the beauty of the rose and the thoughtfulness of the person.

As I watched the rose unfold each day, little by little, revealing more and more of its beauty, my mind began to dwell on what Job said many years ago. Speaking of man, he said "He cometh forth like a flower, and is cut down: . . ." Of a certainty man does come forth like a flower, the little bud of childhood in all its beauty and honesty; and little by little more and more is revealed, as in the rose.

The petals as they began to open more, revealed also the imperfections that were not seen before. Yes, that too is like unto man. As we grow older we see more imperfections in ourselves and in others. But still we remember the little bud as it was before the imperfections came to light. That little rose had no control over the blight and disease that might attack it. So it is with man, his own utter helplessness over his destiny or character. We all have imperfections that we wish others did not see, but we hope that like the rose the overall view will hide the imperfections.

Isn't it wonderful to have a blessed hope that we "are new creatures in Christ Jesus." And that like the rose has more than one petal, so does God's little ones have more than one trait, that the beauty of each is seen as a whole, overshadowing the imperfections. But alas, both the disease of the rose, and our imperfections are still there.

And one day man will be as the rose, when all the petals have finally fallen away, as the petals fell from my little rose bud. Gone! But still I remembered the beauty as a whole. So man, and the friendships of man, are indeed like a rose.

Someone once said that to have a friend, you must be a friend. Our friends

are a blessing to us in a time of need. As friends respond to our adversities we see their kindness and thoughtfulness, that we really never expected to see. Or one who comes to help that you might not expect.

As the rose in its vase, daily revealed more of its beauty, so friends each day reveal more acts of friendliness, when one is in need of real friendship.

When our eyes are drawn to the beauty of a rose,

Or perhaps our thoughts to a friend,
What do we see when viewing the rose
Or how do we think of a friend?

Each day we see a rose and a friend
And view them only as a whole;
Why, oh why do not our thoughts ascend
And thank God for each petal and soul?

We pass through our life never seeing
The real beauty of both of God's gifts,
The individual petal that is gleaming
Or the friend that gives each burden a lift.

Should each rose have only one petal to see
And each friend have only one trait;
Would the rose appear in its beauty
Or friendships would we appreciate?

But to see each as a part of God's goodness
That makes the whole a beautiful sight;
It seems we must undergo illness
To appreciate the meaning of life.

And by then His light we can see
The lovely rose and a real friend,
And thank God for granting the key
To unlock our thoughts to a friend.

Then again when blest to greet one another,
We might be reminded anew,
That this might be our last time together
And be blessed to say "I love you."

Our natural friends are a blessing indeed in this life. And Job goes on to say of man that "he fleeth as a shadow, and continueth not." Even though man comes forth like a flower, one day he will be cut down and will continue no more.

How marvelous that as man cometh forth as a flower in the springtime, that one day our Blessed Hope will be fulfilled in the spiritual springtime, when the Friend of all Friends shall appear to call his little ones home.

Thank you for sharing your life with me; may we meet again very soon.

In bonds of love,
Elder W. L. Everett

ROMANS 9:13

Cadiz, Ky. 42211
Rt. 5,

Dear Elder Wood and Spangler:

"Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." (Romans 9:13)

A few lines for your consideration. The Doctrine of Election is a most glorious doctrine to me: it is the truth, and gives God all the glory. It shows that he is a sovereign God, and works all things in heaven and earth after his own will. All things praise him, even the wrath of man.

It has been said that if God loved some of the Adam family more than others, He would be unjust. I ask, has not God the right to do as he pleases with his own? I remember when I was a youth, in nature and in the ministry. I saw an article written concerning Jacob and Esau, and the writer said that Jacob represents the New Man, and Esau the Old Man, and I thought it was the best piece I ever read. I was making cross-ties in the woods, and read this when I went to dinner. I went back to work rejoicing over what I had read, and something said to me Esau cannot be a figure of the old man, for God hated Esau, and God does not change. "I am the Lord, I change not, therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed." (Malachi 3:6) "Every good and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variability, neither shadow of turning." (James 1:17) And Paul wrote in Ephesians 2:4-5, "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved,) . . ." God hated Esau, but he loved the Elect before they were quickened and while they were yet in sin and walking according to the course of this world, and were by nature the children of wrath. But He loved Jacob that His purpose might stand, not of works but of Him that calleth.

It is written, "Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." and this was before the children were born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand. And since God does not change, he hated Esau as far back as he loved Jacob. "What shall we then say, is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid." I say He has a right to do with his own as He pleases. All things are his, the earth and the fullness thereof. He said to Moses, that He would have mercy on whom He would have mercy, and compassion on whom he would have compassion. "So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy. "Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will? Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour. What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much long suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: and that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory."

We see him calling Jacob to make it known that He had power to love one, and power to hate the other, as He pleased. Jesus said, two shall be in the field, one shall be taken and the other left, two women shall be grinding at the mill, one shall be taken and the other left. We read in Malachi 1:3, 4, "I have loved you saith the Lord. Yet ye say, Wherein hast thou loved us? Was not Esau Jacob's brother? saith the Lord: yet I loved Jacob, and I hated Esau and laid his mountains and his heritage waste for the dragons of the wilderness. Whereas Edom saith, We are impoverished, but we will return and build the desolate places, thus saith the Lord of hosts, They shall build, but I will throw down, and they shall call them, The

border of wickedness, and, The people against whom the Lord hath indignation for ever . . .”

Then if it is forever there will be no end. We see that Esau would have inherited the blessing, but he was rejected for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears. Esau was called Edom. (Genesis 36:1) “And I will lay my vengeance upon Edom by the hand of my people Israel: and they shall do in Edom according to mine anger and according to my fury, and they shall know my vengeance, saith the Lord.”

We have tried to show the destruction of Esau, we will now look at Jacob whom God loved with an everlasting love. Remember that God loved Jacob and hated Esau, that the purpose of God might stand, not of works but of him that calleth, and “I will have mercy upon whom I will have mercy.” “But now thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not: for I have redeemed thee. I have called thee by thy name, thou art mine. . . . For I am the Lord thy God, the Holy One of Israel, thy Saviour . . . Since thou wast precious in my sight, thou hast been honorable, and I have loved thee: therefore will I give men for thee, and people for thy life. Fear not: for I am with thee: I will bring thy seed from the east, and gather thee from the west, I will say to the north, Give up, and to the south, Keep not back: bring my sons from afar, and my daughters from the ends of the earth.” (Isaiah 43)

Many will quote that God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son that whosoever believeth on him shall not perish, but have everlasting life. I ask, What world was it that the Lord loved? Was it the world that wondered after the beast, and the one that God loved, the same beast? Was the world that Christ prayed for, and the one that he didn't pray for, the same world? What world was it that Jesus came in the end of, to put away sin by

the sacrifice of himself?

So we see that there is more than one world. I do not believe the scriptures cross themselves. Paul wrote in 2nd Timothy, “Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.” John wrote, “Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them (the spirit of anti-christ in the world), because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world. They are of the world: therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them. We are of God: he that knoweth God heareth us: he that is not of God heareth not us. Hereby know we the spirit of truth, and the spirit of error. Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God, and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. He that loveth not knoweth not God.” (see 4th chapter of 1 John)

If we love God it is because He first loved us. May it be God's will that the great love wherewith he loved us while we were dead in trespasses and sins, and raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, ever be with us in this world, and keep us by His power unto that eternal inheritance, which is undefiled and is reserved in heaven for you who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

Unto Him, be glory now and forever, is our prayer for Christ's sake. May God bless the truth.

J. N. Darnall

PRAYER

The subject of prayer must be carefully considered and we need the spirit of God to enable us to rightly divide the word of truth. Prayers, exhortations, admonitions, reproofs, etc. are all embraced in the plan, purpose, decree or predestination of God. All of these which are directed and received by the Spirit of God are effectual.

True prayer is inspired by God. One must feel the need of prayer before he prays. What causes one to feel the need of prayer? I believe that God has purposed the cause of the need of prayer. All of the events that lead to one feeling the need of prayer have been decreed by God.

God has decreed or purposed that his people shall pray to him at the appointed times. "He shall call upon me, and I will answer him: I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him, and honour him." (Psalm 97:15) Why does one call upon God? He must be in trouble, doesn't he? One prays when he feels the need. God has purposed or decreed the circumstances that cause one to feel the need of prayer. We will not attempt to go any deeper in this matter, but will stop here and say these things are too deep for me. "Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain unto it." (Psalms 139:6) "The secret things belong unto the Lord" (Deut. 29:29) These are things that are beyond man. "There is no searching of His understanding." (Isaiah 40:28) "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." (Isaiah 55:8-9)

God has a purpose in the exhortations, encouragements, etc. concerning prayer; especially in the following parable. All of this is embraced in the predestination of God.

"And he spake a parable unto them to this end, that men ought always to pray, and not to faint; Saying, There was in a city a judge, which feared not God, neither regarded man: And there was a widow in that city; and she came unto him, saying, Avenge me of mine adversary. And he would not for a while: but afterwards he said within himself, Though I fear not God, nor regard man; Yet because this widow troubleth me, I will avenge her, lest by her continual coming she weary me. And the Lord said, Hear what the unjust

judge saith. And shall not God avenge his own elect, which cry day and night until him, though he bear long with them?" (Luke 18:1-7)

The theme of this parable is to encourage one to ever keep praying in spite of discouragements.

The widow did not stop seeing the judge again because he did not avenge her of her adversary. She had the endurance and the courage to keep going back to the judge and plead her case, in spite of the discouragement of his failing to fulfill her request.

Even though he was an unjust judge and did not fear God, yet he avenged this widow because he was tired of her coming back to him time and time again. He fulfilled this widow's request because he did not want to be bothered by her pleading her case any more.

The point is to show that God does avenge his own elect in due time. (7th verse) This is to encourage them to keep praying and pleading. God does answer in due time.

This reminds me of the time when Jacob wrestled with the angel all night. (see Genesis 32:24-30) The man asked Jacob to let him go. Jacob said, "I will not let thee go, except thou bless me." (Genesis 32:26) Jacob had the courage to hold on to the angel until he was blessed. (see Hosea 12:4 for proof that the man Jacob wrestled with was an angel.) Do we have that courage? Would we faint at the first discouragement? Jacob felt the need of the blessing, so was enabled to hold on.

Moses felt the need of the presence of God, so he told God that was his main desire in his travels here. "If thy presence go not with me, carry us not up hence." (Exodus 33:15) God was with Moses in the wilderness. May the Lord bless us to take courage at the thought that this same God is with his people in the wilderness of sin during this day, and will be with his people in the ages to come.

Let us not be discouraged by those who hold to the "Fatalist Point of

View". We believe that prayer as well as repentance, etc. is embraced in the predestination of God. God's people shall repent at that appointed time. The command was given to those that were pricked in their hearts. "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." (Acts 2:38) Let us carefully consider these two points: "Repent, and be baptized."

John the Baptist told some that desired baptism; but the evidence shows that they did not bring any fruits of repentance: "Then said he to the multitude that came forth to be baptized of him, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruits worthy of repentance . . ." (Luke 3:7-8) Let us carefully keep this in mind, as we believe all Scriptures are given by the inspiration of God. Since we are so few in number, we may be tempted to take just "anybody" in the church that desire to unite with us. Are they bringing forth fruits of repentance? "Ye shall know them by their fruits." (Matt. 7:16) The goodness of God leads one to repentance. (see Rom. 2:4) The Lord turned Ephraim and he repented. "I have surely heard Ephraim bemoaning himself thus: Thou hast chastised me, and I was chastised, as a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke: turn thou me, and I shall be turned; for thou art the Lord my God. Surely after that I was turned, I repented; and after that I was instructed, I smote upon my thigh: I was ashamed, yea, even confounded, because I did bear the reproach of my youth." (Jer. 31:18-19) By examining these Scriptures, we note that God caused Ephraim to repent. We believe that repentance is a gift of God. "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning." (James 1:17)

We believe that true prayer is inspired by God, and this is embraced in the purpose of God. "He shall call upon me,

and I will answer him: I will be with him in trouble; I will deliver him, and honour him. With long life will I satisfy him, and shew him my salvation." (Psalm 91:15-16) Let the reader please give special attention to these words: "He shall call upon me and I will answer him." This is a positive declaration that one must call upon God or that one must pray unto God. The promise of God will not fail. "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is long suffering to usward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." (2 Peter 3:9) Therefore the prayer of one unto the Lord, as well as God's answer to this prayer, is all embraced in the predestination, decree or purpose of God.

Again, this parable is to encourage one to pray even though it may appear to you that there is not any feeling in your prayers. "Pray without ceasing." "Continue in prayer." Why do you pray for mercy? Is it because you deeply feel the need of mercy? Why do you feel the need of mercy? Is it because of a burden that is laid upon you? You pray because you want relief, and you desire to be delivered from that low state. Why do you pray for strength to bear all the trials, tribulations, and afflictions? Is it because your own strength has failed you, and you are blessed with the faith to believe that your God is able to give you sufficient strength and Grace to bear your daily trials?

May the Lord bless you to cast all your care upon him for he careth for you. (see I Peter 5:7) May the Lord bless us to keep praying in spite of difficulties, discouragements, etc. May we be blessed to seek the presence of God and not fear the scorn of men.

W. W. Hudson, Jr.
208 Frederick St.
Bastrop, La. 71220

EXPERIENCE

Dear Editors of the Signs,

One night several months ago I was

unable to sleep and it seemed I had a strong desire to express some thoughts that were running through my mind at that time. I went downstairs in the middle of the night and wrote the following:

Oh my GOD, my GOD, how sweetly and how wonderfully you have blessed me. All the days of my life you have watched over me, guiding me down the pathway of life, thy mighty hand upon me to give me strength and courage and love where there is much weakness and despair and hatred in my natural being.

Oh how wonderful it is from time to time to feel thy blessed presence, to be made to know without any shadow of a doubt that YOU are GOD and there is no other; to be drawn near to Thee; to know you are the great Creator of ALL things, declaring the end from the beginning and from time past the things that are yet to come. Oh, to be blessed with faith to believe in our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, in His birth, His life, His death on that cross. But for me? Oh surely not. I know myself too well to think that the blessed Lord would suffer such shame, such agony, such pain and die on the cross for me. I *know* I am not worthy for I am vile and full of sin and unrighteousness and think not of God but only of myself. I deserve nothing but to be cast in the everlasting fire. Is it really possible that the blessed Lord Jesus Christ shed his blood for one such as I? Oh, if I could only *know* that He shed that precious blood for me, and that someday I might be gathered with all the saints to sing His praises forever and ever.

But alas, I cannot know that, but I thank Thee, O God, for that precious hope which from time to time bears witness within me, and I am made to wonder; could I possibly be among that number who were marked out and chosen by the Father before the dust of the highest hill was laid? How presumptuous of me to even think of such a thing! And yet the question persists—could I be your child? Oh Lord, when will we

know?

I feel to be so richly blessed far above and beyond what I deserve or could ever hope for. A most wonderful and faithful wife who always shares my heartaches and disappointments, and is always there to lift me up and encourage me when I need it most. A wonderful and faithful mother to our children. And our children; oh Lord, how could we be blessed with such loving children? Two fine sons and two beautiful daughters all full of life and health and love.

I know, Oh God, everything I have or shall ever receive is a gift from Thee. I have nothing that I have not received and therefore I pray you cause me *not* to be boastful or a braggart but always to look upward with a thankful heart for all Thy bountiful gifts. Draw me into thy presence more often Oh Lord, and deliver me from the constant cares and worries of this world that I may more perfectly worship Thee and sing honor and praise and glory unto thy Wonderful, Eternal and Holy Name.

I have hesitated to send this to you for I fear it to be unworthy of publication but please do with it as you see fit.

Respectfully submitted,
Bob Champeau, 803 W. Brooks
Norman, Oklahoma 73069

SOLOMAN'S SONG 5:30

Dear Brethren:

The following thoughts are sent by request of Elder Breedlove in the May, 1975, issue of the *Signs*, concerning Solomon's Song 5:3.

"I have put off my coat, how shall I put it on? I have washed my feet, how shall I defile them?"

While Jesus was here in the flesh He fulfilled a law which says, "He that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none . . ."

The Lord Our Righteousness never needed anything. And while he went about doing good, He, by His obedience,

wrought out a robe of righteousness which in that sense made two coats, i.e. the righteousness that was His yesterday, today and forever, plus also the robe He wrought while He who knew no sin performed for us even unto death, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him. This coat of righteousness the Lord puts off as it is imputed to the children of God, who put it on by faith after grace brings it nigh from the Fount of every blessing. "How shall I put it on?" is a reminder that nothing can be added to the righteousness of our Lord, a reminder that He who has righteousness to bestow, is more blessed than those who receive, a reminder that Jesus who suffered did so to bear our guilt in love, in pity, in reality, in faithfulness,—not to receive anything himself, but that we poor sinners might have the blessedness of the man whose transgression is covered by our Lord's obedience, and our transgression gone by his precious blood which washed us white as snow.

"I have washed my feet." is a prophesy which the unerring utterance of certainty God speaks by the mouth of the prophet, is telling of the shed blood of Jesus which was to be shed on the cross. The body of Christ, or that part of the body of Christ which needs washing and keeping, is called "feet". John saw these feet "as if they burned in a furnace." (Rev. 1:15)

Why don't He wash the Head? The head needs no washing. He keeps the feet of his saints — the head needs no keeping.

"How shall I defile them?" is a reminder that "I have washed my feet" is what God who cannot lie said. So justification is of God, and none can defile and none can condemn.

In sending these hasty views, I do so only to mention the primary meaning of Song 5:3. Their Speaker understands His words better than any man can, and He speaks as never man spake. Therefore, Songs 5:3 is exceedingly sincere, searching, truthful, and the message is weighty, and sharper than any two-

edged sword: It is judgement to the line and righteousness to the plummet. And I, together with Elder Breedlove, feel the need of faith which alone can bring distant things near as we read the words of our Lord, who, we hope has made us not ashamed to ask questions, for every genuine preacher feels the need of confirmation of truth to assure him that he is called of God, and approved by the Holy Ghost.

In bonds,
J. L. Bocock
P.O. Box 13
Boones Mill, Va. 24065

HEBREWS 9:24-28

"For Christ is not entered into the Holy Place made with hands, which are the figures of the true, but into Heaven itself, now to appear in the presence of God for us, nor yet that he should offer himself often, as the high priest entereth into the holy place every year with the blood of others: for then must he often have suffered since the foundation of the world: but now once in the end of the world hath he appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment: so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many, and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation." (Heb. 9:24-28)

Most of us are acquainted, at least in part, with the sacrifices and offerings which were offered under the law dispensation once a year for sin. But the text reads, "Once in the end of the world, (end of the law dispensation) hath He (Christ) appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment, so Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many: and unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation."

Having the foregoing scriptures be-

fore us, it seems clear that Christ took the place of his people — the Many as given in the text, in life, in death and in judgment, under the curse and wrath of God, which He bore and trod alone, and of the many people there was none to help. He did this to bear the sins and full penalty, curse and wrath, due divine justice for the sins of the Many, and they are the ones who look for Him, and to whom He will appear the second time without sin unto salvation. The Scriptures teach that Jesus bore their sins in his own body on the cross, making an end of sin, and arose victorious over death and hell for the justification of the Many for whom he died and arose again. Their sins were laid upon him, and he, making atonement for them, made perfect satisfaction to the Father. This was fully accomplished according to the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God. God raised him from the dead for the complete justification of all for whom he died: and being freely justified by his grace, we have peace with God through him, and He is made unto us righteousness, justification and redemption . . .

The above being true, with the Apostle, "What shall we say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" This is based entirely upon what Christ accomplished for his people. In the triumphant victory which Jesus obtained for them over sin, death and hell, included tribulation, distress, persecution, famine; nakedness, peril, sword: so that death, life, angels, principalities, powers, things present nor things to come, height, depth, or any other creature shall be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord. And not only so, but above all this victory, He obtained an eternal inheritance for those who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed when Christ appears unto the many the second time without sin unto salvation.

It may be suggested that if Christ overcame and obtained victory for us over all these, and bear the just wrath and punishment for our sins, iniquities and transgressions, making an end of sin, moving them from us as far as the east is from the west, bearing them into the land of forgetfulness, completely abolishing and destroying them for his people: Then why are we killed all the day long? Why are we counted as sheep for the slaughter? Why do we grieve, weep and mourn as a dove bereaved of her mate? Why do we often have our sins come before us as mountains? Why should we have a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, and feel to be a poor wretched worm of the dust as we know we are, how could we possibly be one of the favorites for whom Jesus obtained eternal redemption and glory?

Are all of these things suffering with Christ? and according to that which Paul speaks, "That I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable to His death"? It is quite something to be refined as silver is refined, and purified as gold is purified: And Jesus is an all sufficient refiner. Paul said, "I have suffered the loss of all things (temporal things) and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, and be found in Him, not having mine own righteousness which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith."

Jesus kept and fulfilled the law of divine justice, magnified and made it honorable, raising it as high as His throne of judgment, mercy, grace, truth and love for his people, and he orders and establishes his children, church and kingdom with the same judgment, justice, grace, mercy, truth and love. It is this judgment which Paul said, "Must first begin at the house of God." And also, "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ: that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done,

whether it be good or bad." This does not say that every one will have to give an account to divine justice for all or a part of his sins, neither in this life, and much less in the resurrection of the just. The Lord's people are the just which live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved them and gave himself for them; and thereby redeemed to God that they should be holy and without blame before God in perfect love. And these whom the Lord loves He chastens, rebukes, teaches, leads, guides, keeps, preserves in and by Christ Jesus, and thereby He administers unto them every needed blessing for their good and his Glory in this life. The law of the new covenant is, (and Christ himself is the covenant,) "I will be merciful to their unrighteousness and their sins and their iniquities I will remember no more." And this very One is exalted a Prince and Saviour, to give repentance unto Israel, and the forgiveness of their sins. That which the law of divine justice demanded for the sins of the people of God, Jesus met and paid in full, and now the same divine justice rightly and justly demands mercy and freedom to the transgressors for whom Christ died. The judgment seat of Christ is in the heart and mind of His people where He put and wrote the laws of the New Covenant — written not with pen and ink but with the Spirit of the living God. This judgment seat in their heart and mind, equally applies to his church and kingdom, as the apostle said, "Judgment must first begin at the house of God," also His kingdom which he orders and establishes with judgment and justice. This is experimental with every child of grace in this life, and has no reference to them beyond this life, for Christ shall appear unto them the second time without sin unto salvation. To teach that the Lord's people will be judged and have to give an account for all or any part of their sins in or after the resurrection, is an error, denying the sacrifice and atonement of God's dear true and eternal Son, and has no place in the gospel of Christ, nor in the heart

and mind of His people, and must return to its native darkness where all errors in all ages have come from. When we are judged, we are chasened of the Lord that we should not be condemned with the world.

The book, "written within and on the back side, sealed with seven seals . . . and no man in heaven, nor in earth, neither under the earth, was able to open the book, neither to look thereon." (Rev. 5th chapter) This book is called the Book of Life, which was sealed with the seven attributes of God back in the law covenant dispensation, at which time the new covenant, or gospel dispensation was given in types and shadows. The Apstole John said, "And I wept much, because no man was found worthy to open and read the book, neither to look thereon." "And one of the elders saith unto me, Weep not: behold the Lion of the Tribe of Judah, the Root of David, hath prevailed to open the book and to loose the seven seals thereof. This book is worthy of its name and all it contains: it is The Book of Life: "The Lamb's Book of Life," and it is far from being a book of condemnation, or of death, but the Book of Life. Christ is the Book of Life, and all that accompanies it. It is of Him the fruit of the tree of life is found, the gospel of salvation: and the gospel of Christ is the gospel of our salvation.

All those whose names were not found written in the bok of life, were judged out of the things written in the books. This includes the dead, death and hell, and death and hell were cast into the lake of fire, called the lake of fire and brimstone where the beasts and false prophets are. This seems to be that which the apostle called the second death, (but I admit that I do not understand these things, and feel it is good that I don't.) The judgment of God and all His attributes are eternal, and He is eternal: whether we call it good or bad, all comes to pass or is executed accordingly to the eternal purpose and counsel of His own will. Jesus said,

' . . . 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." God's children escape all this evil, for their names are written in the Book of Life, and it is only those whose names were not found written in the Book of Life, that were judged out of the things written in the books. Jesus is the resurrection and the life of his people, just as he is all of their salvation: and, as has been said, nothing in life or death shall separate them from either Him or his love. Though they often fear and tremble, yet they are as secure as His throne and all His glory. All things are His, and all things are theirs in Him.

Please suffer me to say in as few words as possible: First, the sins of the Lord's people were open before hand, when they were laid on and charged to Christ Jesus by the Father, and He suffered the just wrath of God on the cross and atoned for all their sins by his own precious shed blood in His death, and arose from the dead for their justification. Second, when the commandments of the Spirit of life experimentally came to them, they thereby were condemned, and the sentence to them was death, and they felt to be under the same curse and wrath of God for their sins, which Jesus had previously trod alone, and by His blood atoned for their sins. Because of the guilt and condemnation they felt, and were in, they fully confessed their sins and transgressions before God with all their heart and mind. When all hope was gone and despair had seized them, immediately to their joyful surprise Jesus stepped in, stayed the execution, removed the sentence, pouring in the oil and the wine, bringing forth His righteousness as a great light, and His judgment as the noonday. Thereby loosed the captivity and let the prisoner go free. Therefore, "If the Son shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed.

John L. Sanders

UPPER COUNTRY LINE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION, 1975

The Upper Country Line Primitive Baptist Association cordially invites ministers, brethren and friends of our sister nation Canada and the United States of like faith and order, to its sixty-ninth session to be held with Pleasant Grove Primitive Baptist Church the third weekend July 19, 20 and 21st, 1975, with services beginning at 11:00 o'clock Saturday and ending Monday.

Pleasant Grove Church is located in Locust Hill Township, Caswell County, North Carolina. Coming from the east via Yanceyville on 158 take left at Casville and church is about 1 mile on right. From the east via Burlington, take 87 to 150, turn right to Chilton's Store, take left about 2 miles to church.

Coming from north or south to Reidsville, N. C., take 158 about 12 miles east to Casville, take right about 1 mile to church.

Donald E. Smith, Assn. Clerk

PIGG RIVER ASSOCIATION

The 1975 session of the Pigg River Association will be held, the Lord willing, at the Pigg River Meeting House in Franklin County, Va. the 1st Sunday in August, and Friday and Saturday before. (August 1, 2, 3)

Those coming from the north on U.S. 220 turn right on to State Route 919 (which is three-quarters of a mile south of Boones Mill, Va.). Follow 919 to State Route 641 and turn right on 641 to Callaway, Va. Then turn left in Callaway on State Route 602, and follow signs to the Meeting House.

Those coming from the south take State Route 919 to the left just north of Rocky Mount, Va., and turn left on State Route 641 to Callaway, Va., then turn left on Route 602 and follow signs to the Meeting House.

A cordial welcome is extended to all lovers of the truth.

John D. Wood, Clerk

STAUNTON RIVER ASSOCIATION

The one hundred thirty-fourth session will convene with the church at Cane Creek July 11, 12, 13 (Friday before the 2nd Sunday through Sunday), the Lord willing.

The church is located on State Road 726, located between Highways 29 and 58, in Pittsylvania County about ten miles east of Danville, Va.

We invite all of our faith and order to visit with us. We long to see our brethren of sister associations, and trust our God will richly

bles our meeting together in our attempt to worship His Holy Name.

Burnell B. Williams, Assn. Clerk

ALL-DAY MEETING AT
SLATE HILL, N. Y.

The All-Day Meeting at Slate Hill, N. Y. is appointed to be held, the Lord willing, on Saturday, July 5, 1975.

Brethren and friends are invited to attend.

NOTICE OF MEETING

The Maine Old School Baptist Churches will, the Lord willing, hold an all-day meeting the 5th Sunday and Saturday night before in June, at the home of James and Ruth Sevon, daughter of Sister Ruth Clark of the Whitefield Old School Baptist Church.

The Sevon home is in Jefferson, Maine, Route 213 on Damariscotta Lake Road. Route 213 branches off from Route 214, which is taken at a junction of Newcastle Village. Business Route 1 leads from Route 1 into Newcastle Village.

Elder D. B. Stokes of Jacksonville, N. C. is expected to attend the meeting. A cordial invitation is extended to all who may be able to attend. For more information if needed, write Mrs. Ruth Clark, Box 245, Newcastle, Maine.

ANNUAL MEETING

The Annual Meeting of the Pine Creek Primitive Baptist Church will be held, the Lord willing, July 4th, beginning at 10:30 a.m.

The church is located five miles from Floyd Courthouse, just off of Route 221, east of the town.

This is to be an all-day service, and a cordial invitation is extended to all interested.

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Mr. & Mrs. Bill Davis, Jr., Va.....	11.00

PSALM 100

- 1 *Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye lands.*
- 2 *Serve the Lord with gladness: come before his presence with singing.*
- 3 *Know ye that the Lord he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.*
- 4 *Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him and bless his name.*
- 5 *For the Lord is good; his mercy is everlasting, and his truth endureth to all generations.*

Danville, Virginia

July, 1975

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

R. F. D. 1, Box 539 Beechwood Lane
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EDITORIAL

EPHESIANS I

I do hope that I have an abiding interest in the children of God, and that having an interest in them, I am concerned about the salvation of them all. If I am not mistaken about the desires and what concerns them as pertaining to their welfare in this world and in that which is to come, I am sadly mistaken for they are daily seeking tokens (Psa. 86:17), and are constantly imploring the Lord for a refreshing from the throne of grace. It was said of me when I began to speak in a public way that I would be an evangelist among

our people. As to the general idea about what an evangelist is to do, I have not been impressed to that end, but as to what the Bible tells us about what an evangelist is, and what his work is to be, I do hope that I have been impressed, yea, called to that end. An evangelist (that is, a Bible evangelist) is to be one that announces or tells good tidings. If that is not my calling, I am the most miserably deceived mortal that has ever been. Not only have I felt the weight of preaching the gospel to him that has an ear to hear, but I have felt a heavy burden in the seeking of them out in the midst of a perverse generation.

In this series of articles, if the Lord is pleased to give me grace and the things that accompany salvation (Heb. 6:9), I will first call your attention to this above noted chapter. If I know my heart, be it far from me to throw any aspersion on any of the inspired writings, for I tell you frankly, the setting aside of one writer's testimony in order to make any theory plausible, is, to say the least of it, inexcusable, and, to me, is equal to a denial of the Lord. I well know that Paul makes a clear case in his Roman letter in regard to the predestination of saints to glory, but the thought that I have in mind is more readily served by his letter to the Ephesians in regard to the chosen people of God.

I do not have any desire to put words in anybody's mouth nor mind, but neither is it my mind to have someone taking words *out* of my mind nor out of the mind of God, nor out of His divine testimony to poor sinners. For me, God has not done anything in time that He did not determine to do in eternity, or before the world was made. He is *the* God of purpose (Pro. 15:22; 20:18; Jer. 51:29; Rom. 8:28; 9:11; Eph. 1:11; 3:11; 2 Tim. 1:9; Isa. 14:24; 46:11), and since, without counsel purposes are disappointed, and, since every purpose of God is established by counsel, and, since He worketh all things after the counsel of His own will, I am con-

strained to believe that He is *the* God of purpose, He being the only one that can purpose a thing and a likelihood of frustration or disannulment not stare Him in the face. "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." God's purpose was to save His chosen people. The choice was His, was it not? May God enable me to comfort the poor and afflicted and troubled hearts of the people of God with the assurance that it was not left to them to choose Him but that He did, in eternity, choose them. But if this glorious and comforting doctrine falls on deaf ears, *then* you tell me what part that any man has played in this choice. Do not ridicule me; that is the weakest argument that you have, for it will not hurt me, but it will hurt you. Here in eternity, God moves towards the people that He loved from all eternity. This is a movement of God towards His people, and it is an action of love. (1.) God chose them before they were manifest in the morning of creation. That choice was according to His good pleasure. (2.) Simultaneously with making choice of them He blessed them for their time journey. The choice of them made in eternity, the blessing of them for their time journey made at the same time. His choice of them was the sovereign work of His eternal or *now* mind. When all the arguments have run their course, the glorious doctrine of God's choice of His people is still recorded in this illustrious chapter that God did, for a purpose of His own glory, choose a portion of the future generation of mortal men to salvation. Since they were chosen in Christ, at that time, God did bless them with all blessings necessary for their salvation in time. That is what Paul was moved by inspiration to write. This blessing of them with all things necessary for this salvation to be accomplished was at

exactly the same time, and as much according to His purpose as was the choice of them. If this blessing was weak, so is the choice; if this blessing was not full and complete to the saving of them during their time journey, and the final bringing of them home to glory, just so is the choice as filled with loopholes as is the salvation, for as the first was, so was the second according as the first.

"Having (at the precise time of the other) predestinated us (the chosen) unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will." Now here is the medium by which this predestination comes about. Here is the embodiment of all spiritual blessings; they were assigned unto the children of God in Jesus Christ before the world had its being, and the manifestation of them, and the fulfillment of them, and the application of it to us in time, stems from the Lord Jesus Christ. This was, and still is, God's will towards you, dear reader. It was not a *rather not* will; it was not a captivated will; it was not a will yielded over to the captivator of sinners, but it was the will of Him that, since the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage (Heb. 2:14, 15). This is a universal deliverance, that is, it delivers each and every one chosen to that end, and this deliverance is common to them all. It is so common and so well known among them all that anywhere, at any time, however many or few that are present, if they have had a double application of these things to them; if they have had both the first and second application of spittle to their eyes; if they have really and truly been to the pool of Siloam for the washing; if they have had Jesus to live and die for them; if they have been chosen and caused to approach unto Him, they will raise their

jarred and feeble voices in holy union and royal ecstasy in praise to God for this universal and common salvation that reaches into every nook and corner of the globe and brings the Ethiopian (Ham's descendants), the Jew (Shem's descendants), and the Gentile (Japheth's descendants), and makes them lie down in unity and sweet complacency to that salvation wrought out by the Lord Jesus Christ. This royal doctrine made manifest in their lives will make Ham and his family serve as a servant without stealing from his master, and without trying to usurp power and authority that has not been delegated to him by the Lord (perhaps by earthly governments, yes, but even that to be redressed at the proper time, even though it brings down both governments and servants); it will make Shem a lowly and humble follower of the Lamb, even though he sees his once proud domain in ignomy and shame and shrinking as the tents of Japheth are enlarged and his descendants living in the spiritual ordinances that first belonged nationally to all of his (Shem's) people.

It is a wonder indeed as we watch the unfolding of the work of God towards this chosen vessel. All of the work begins with the choice (and that according to eternal purpose) of this vessel of mercy. It is not any small wonder that God questions Job so rigidly. These questions, when asked of any man or woman, will bring them down into humility and it will provoke them to acquiescence to His Holy will, even though that will condemn to death (Job 13:15). However, these questions are never (at least in this life) asked of the ungodly; they are truly reserved for the ones chosen and beginning to be caused to approach unto Him. (See Job 28). May these questions be asked of us all. Unless the Lord is pleased to grant unto us that needful blessing, blind unbelief will still carp and blaspheme in regard to the text. Where were we *when* God loved us? Where were we when He made a world that this love might be made manifest? Who or what was it

that suggested, and, after suggestion, watched over and helped in making this eternal choice? Oh, how glorious is this God, and what a precious and abiding hope He has given us in His darling Son. And let me say, and having said it, may the reverberations of it sound out to all Christendom, that He is as much a darling Son to us as He is to His Father. By Him the Father and the subject are reconciled to each other, and reconciliation settles all variance and animosity, and brings both parties into peace and joy and love.

This is a divine movement. There is not a shred of human ability or emotions mixed in it. It stems from God, but if any one has the audacity to say that the nth part of it stems from some other quarter than divine and eternal love they must tell us what power that it comes from, and before this audacious spirit begins its monologue I feel bold to lay down these maxims, to wit, God is before all things, and He that is before all these things cannot be superseded by any of these things; that there is not any god save the God of Israel (Isa. 43:10, 13; 45:21, 22); that all power is of God; that power is made manifest in the face of Jesus Christ to the end that this government of His is laid squarely and pointedly on His shoulder for the ordering and establishment of it henceforth and forever. Now if any of my readers have in mind that this purpose to choose and cause to approach unto God was of, or by, or through any other medium than the God of Israel, I move that you begin right where this poor lisping stammering sinner has stopped. Or, if it cannot be found (and it cannot be) that this movement towards sinners began in any other than the God of Israel, and there is a lingering doubt that it begin with men, there must be a Bible explanation that will remove all fog and delusions and mystical conjectures out of the way as to God having created the man. In eternity (if you want to hold to this idle tale that man has anything to do with his salvation you may tell us how

long before) God chose and loved, and simultaneously with the love and that choice, He blessed or appointed the object of His choice, and whom He had loved with an everlasting love, all needed grace and peace and love, yea, even all things that pertain to God and godliness in time, and necessary to present him before the Creator unblameable and unproveable in love: and this must have accompanying it the way that this uncreated man influenced or moved the Creator to thus make these moves towards his salvation.

I have heard it said that order is heaven's first law. I am well aware that this is not in the Bible in so many words, but I am equally sure that the truth if it is taught from Genesis to the Amen in Revelations. To all the poor and the needy; to all those that feel their weakness, and feel that they are not equal to the task of their own salvation, I beg of you to follow with me the work of God as portrayed in this chapter. (1). God chose the children of God in Christ Jesus before the world was created. (2). At this time, and in conjunction with the choice, God blessed and gave this royal nation every thing needed that they be saved, and that He have all the glory for that salvation; that this blessing entailed the involvement of Jesus as a Man in this salvation, that the blessings was so extensive and complete that it embraced all that pertains to life and salvation,—that pertains to God and godliness. This work was ordered in eternity, and the order covered from the time of the ordering until the order is finished, which embraces the deliverance home to glory of each and every heir of promise. This order embraced the dying of Jesus Christ. He could not have died unless it had been His Father's will, but it was His will not to spare Him, but, according to His purpose, to bruise Him,—in short, put Him to death. The purpose to save would have gone awry had God deviated from this consignment to death of His Son. He did not deviate;

He did not spare Him. The sparing was designated to us, and this could not go awry. This part of the order could not be broken, and the sparing of us could be. As the sparing of Him could not be, even so, in like manner, to the same degree, no more, nor no less, can the giving unto us all things treasured in Him for us to be spared. (3). At this time He predestinated us unto the adoption of children. This is not a new thing. Carpers have said that the doctrine is new. That is correct. It is new to him or her that only knew the old song of creature effort. However, as an act of God it is as old as God is old. (4). This predestination of God has the approval of God. It was according to the *good* pleasure of His will; it pleased God to execute this predestination on His Son; it pleased the Son for the Father to hide it (to order it) from one segment of humanity and to reveal it to another. (5). This was all to the praise of His grace. (6). At the same time, we were made accepted in the beloved. (7). It was appointed at this time that we have redemption in His Son. (8). This redemption was through the blood of the Son, and it was bestowed upon us according to the riches of His grace.

Then, dear reader, let us draw near with a full assurance of faith that the purpose of God in regard to salvation will be carried out to the full salvation of our souls. He that gathers all in One, even Christ the Lord, has given us an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose (order) of him that works all things after the counsel of his own will. I hope that you will notice that the predestination first covers individuals, secondly, that it covers the inheritance (v, 5 and II), and, since any predestination that is contingent on the whims of devils or men or angels is not certain, it covers all that was done on Golgotha's hill by Pilate and Herod in the courtroom and at the place of crucifixion together with the whole mob, for, if the determination of God on that rugged hill is uncertain, likewise, even

so, no more, no less, the predestination of God in giving us adoption by Jesus Christ, and the predestination of an inheritance for us are beset by just as many ifs, ands, and buts as are found on Calvary's hill, for the predestination in Romans 8, and Ephesians I, comes from the same root word that *determined* comes from in Acts 4:28. If I did not know that this is true, I would not have contended for the things that have gone before in this article.

I promised about two years ago to let you know about my welfare. I have said, and now say again, that I have not quit the ministry. I have not quit preaching and writing. I am doing now what I have tried for nearly fifty years to do: preach and write the good news of the gospel. To be sure, I am breaking the doctor's orders; to be sure, I am paying for it when I do, but I tell you unashamed and unabashedly that even though the old building is being erased and that it suffers pangs of sorrow at the taking down, and pays in a natural way for going contrary to earthly orders, that this going in heaven's ways and orders are as restful and as full of joy and keen anticipation as ever in days of yore; and that I will, as blessed of God, continue to go on, yet being as careful as I can to take it easy for the sake of my brethren and my family.

I am losing weight continually although there is not any apparent organic reason for it. What the future holds for me, the God of all grace knows, and whatever it is, it will come to pass, for His will must be done. Please be patient with me in my continued weakness in preaching and writing, and when you have reasons of being closeted in with the King mention my name to Him.

W.D.G.

VOICES OF THE PAST
"He being dead yet speaketh"

LUKE XV. 28-32.

Seminary, Ark., Feb. 10, 1877

Eld. G. Beebe — Dear Brother: —

Please give me your views on Luke XV. 28-32.

E. E. Smith.

R E P L Y .

The text referred to is the closing part of the parable of the prodigal son, in which the elder brother was angry, because his younger brother was restored with joy and festivity to the family, after having wasted his portion of the estate in profligacy and riotous living.

The occasion which this and the two preceding parables were spoken, is given in the first two verses of this chapter. The pharisees and scribes murmured because Jesus received and ate with publicans and sinners. In reproving their murmurings, these publicans and sinners are compared in the several parables to the lost sheep, the lost piece of silver, and to the prodigal son. As lost sheep, they had departed from the Jewish fold, probably when Israel seceded or revolted from the house of David, in the reign of Rehoboam, and like the piece of silver, were lost to the Jewish nation. But in the application of the last parable—The certain man who had two sons, was, in our view of the subject, Abraham. The elder son was the Jews, who had never departed from the house of David; and the younger son represents those who took their portion of the goods at the inauguration of Rehoboam, and organized a separate government in Samaria, under Jero-boam.—See 1 Kings xii. These seceders were always regarded by the Jews as sinners, and as many of them were employed by the Roman Government to collect tribute from the Jews, to support the Romans, the hatred of the Jews to them was greatly intensified, as to them it was hiring themselves to feed swine; for the Jews regarded the Gentiles as swine. This younger son, though taking with him a portion of the rites, ceremonies and ordinances of Judaism, soon ran into gross idolatry, and was intermingled with

and contaminated by the Gentiles, and so wasted and expended all his portion in riotous living, and came to a sad state of destitution and want. In their famishing extremity they desired to return to the family and home of Abraham, their father, if only to be recognized as servants, and not sons. While he was yet a great way off, Abraham saw and recognized his wayward son, and embraced him as his son, and gave him a joyful restoration to his long deserted home. Meanwhile the elder son, the Jews, were in the field of their perpetual labor, in which they had been so long and unremittingly engaged, in performing the works of the law. It is true, the Jews had never been able to lay up anything, for the law had demanded constant and perpetual labor, and had never allowed them so much as a kid, with which to make merry. Still they were in Abraham's house, under the old covenant of works, and all that belonged to that house, under the legal covenant, they had, but by the works of the law they could have no more.

Now the parable seems to us to set forth metaphorically the relative state and condition of the Jews, and the publicans and sinners, and the unrelenting prejudice of the former towards the latter. The Jews and Samaritans had no dealing together, where Jews could avoid it. This accounts for the murmuring of the pharisees and scribes when they saw the publicans and sinners coming to, and received by Christ.

But there is also clearly set forth in these parables the enmity of the Jews, and of all legalists who, like the Jews, expect to be justified before God for their obedience to the law, or upon the ground of their own merits. They are angry when the gospel of God our Savior is proclaimed, setting forth that salvation is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy. The self-righteous scribes and pharisees were exasperated at the thought that they, with all their law-righteousness, and

with the blood of Abraham coursing in their veins, were to be cast out, and publicans, harlots and Gentile sinners were to come, by the saving grace of God, from the east and west, the north and south, and sit down with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, in the kingdom of our God. And this humiliating doctrine is as hateful to the pharisees of our age as it was to those of the time when these parables were spoken.

These parables also set forth the bitter enmity of all the workmongrel tribes of the earth, who, like the pharisees and scribes, expect to be justified before God by their own works, against the doctrine of salvation by grace. They think it hard, that with all their self-righteousness, those whom they regard as sinners should be received into the gospel kingdom by the grace of God, without any works of righteousness which they have done to commend them.

The elder brother, in the parable, was angry. The grace which saves poor, lost, guilty, bankrupt and helpless sinners, through the blood and righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ, without any merit on our part, did not suit his ambitious aspirations; for it excludes all boasting, and secures all the glory to God. This is too humiliating to please the boasting pharisees. "He was angry, and would not go in." That is, he had no appetite for such a feast. No pharisee or self-righteous legalist ever had a relish for gospel food; nor have even poor prodigals, until they are made willing in the day of our Redeemer's power: "For it is God that worketh in them both to will and to do of his good pleasure." Until God so works in them, they have no will or desire to partake of the feast which is presented to the poor, destitute, prodigal, starving sinners who are saved by grace.

We do not understand the father of the two sons, in the parable, to mean God, but a *certain man*. Both the father and the two sons are clearly set forth in the allegory recorded Gal. iv. 23-31. God does not entreat, but "He spake,

and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast."—Psa. xxxiii. 9. But Abraham did intercede for Ishmael, and prayed that he might live. "Nevertheless what saith the scripture? Cast out the bond woman and her son; for the son of the bond woman shall not be heir with the son of the free woman."

Our Savior said to the Jews, "Ye will not come unto me that ye might have life." Salvation by grace has no attraction to the self-righteous pharisees. They would not go in, or participate in the provision of the gospel. Nor would the prodigal Samaritans, if they were not reduced by famine and starvation: for Christ came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.

The whole account of the younger son is strikingly illustrative of the experience of the children of God, who, being subdued by the Spirit, find themselves in a perishing, starving condition, deeply sensible of their utter unworthiness, guilt-stricken, and without a single thing to commend them, trusting solely to the gracious compassion of him who alone has power to save, fall tremblingly and confessing at the feet of sovereign mercy, deeply conscious that if repelled and spurned, it is just; but if saved, it is alone of free, sovereign and abounding grace to the very chief of sinners.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe, April 1, 1877.

OBITUARIES

DEACON JAMES WILBY BLACK

Deacon James Wilby Black, age 88, died in St. Thomas, Ontario, on September 30, 1974.

Brother Black was born in 1886, second of four sons born to Brother Archibald John, and Sister Kate Rawlinson Black of the St. Thomas District. He was married in 1917 to Sister Annie Louise McColl. Children surviving at time of death are Mrs. George (Flora Leslie) Snowden of British Columbia, Mrs. Lloyd (Muriel Elizabeth) Blackman of Saskatchewan, Gilbert Duncan of London and William Theodore of Colorado. Another son, Lieutenant James Black was killed in action in Italy in 1944. As well as fourteen grandchildren and four great-grandchildren, two brothers, Daniel Crawford of Los Angeles and Kenneth Leslie

of Detroit survive.

Brother Black united with the Covenanted Baptist Church in Winnipeg in 1915. He was baptized by Elder Silas H. Durand. His membership was transferred to Dunwich in 1972. In the same year he was appointed a deacon.

Brother Jim remained steadfast in the faith once delivered to the saints. How he loved the scripture in Psalm 103:1, "Bless the Lord, O my soul: and all that is within me, bless his holy name." He was an inspiration to all who knew him and gave liberally, as he was prospered, to the cause of truth. We miss him much but are persuaded that our loss is his eternal gain.

Funeral services were conducted from Dunwich Church on October 3, 1974, by the writers. Interment was in the McColl Cemetery at Eagle, Ontario.

Resolved that a copy be sent to the *Signs* for publication and a copy be entered in our church records.

(Elder) J. Stewart McColl, (Elder) D. Alex McColl
Pastors - Covenanted Baptist Church in Canada

SISTER MAUD PEARL McINTYRE

Sister Maud Pearl McIntyre, age 90, died in London, Ontario, July 7, 1974.

Sister McIntyre was born in Hollow Rock, Tennessee, the daughter of the late Elder William Isaiah Cornell and Martha (Stocker) Cornell. Sister McIntyre came to Canada in 1900. In 1902 she married James Alexander McIntyre of Lobo, Ontario, and to this union were born twelve children. Curry died in infancy and Eva (Mrs. J. Wilson) died in 1965. Ten children survive: Mrs. J. (Leota) Orr, Mrs. C. (Leona) Dobie, Mrs. D. (Norma) Cochrane, Malcolm, Theodore, Mrs. C. (Gladys) Martin, Mrs. C. (Mildred) Mayo, John, Frederick, and Mrs. G. (Betty) Barton.

As well as the ten living children there are forty-five grandchildren, ninety-two great grandchildren, four great, great grandchildren and five chosen grandchildren, in all, one hundred and fifty-six descendants, all healthy and well at the time of her death.

Sister McIntyre united with the Covenanted Baptist Church of Canada at Lobo in 1957. She remained a faithful member as long as she lived and was a great encouragement to her brethren and pastors. As Moses wist not that his face shown but Israel saw it, so it was with Sister Pearl. She often told how her father, Elder Cornell, who served the Church in Canada, raised his hand in the hour of death and said "soaring on high".

Funeral services were conducted for Sister Pearl at the Needham Memorial Chapel in London on July 10, 1974, by Elders Stewart

and Alex McColl. A large company of friends and descendants paid their respects to this "mother in Israel". Interment was in Dorchester Union Cemetery.

Resolved that a copy be sent to the *Signs* for publication and a copy be entered in our church records.

(Elder) J. Stewart McColl, (Elder) D. Alex McColl

Pastors-Covenanted Baptist Church in Canada

BROTHER THOMAS HOARACE WILLIAMS

It is with a deep sense of unworthiness that I attempt to comply with the request of the church at Flat Swamp, to write a few words of respect for our highly esteemed and beloved Brother in Christ and Deacon, Thomas Hoarace Williams.

Brother Thomas was born in Pitt County, N. C. on June 10, 1908 and passed to his reward in Pitt Memorial Hospital, Greenville, N. C. February 25, 1975. He was the son of the late Thomas Henry and Lucy Wilson Williams, who were faithful members of Flat Swamp Church. He was married to Marjorie McGee of Knoxville, Tenn. on November 22, 1940.

Brother Thomas professed a sweet hope in the Lord Jesus Christ and united with the church at Flat Swamp the first Sunday in September, 1962, and was baptized by Elder W. E. Grimes. On July 10, 1963 he was ordained a deacon, and was a deacon indeed. He loved his church and was a strong believer in Salvation by Grace — a gift of God. His Christian ideals, wise council and firmness will be greatly missed. He desired that the peace and sweet fellowship of Christ the Saviour dwell within our hearts. He will be missed at our church and the various churches and associations where he was blessed to attend. He was an inspiration to all who knew him. We feel we can say that he kept the faith, and there is laid up for him a crown of righteousness. Though his work on earth is finished, his memory will remain with us.

He was a kind husband, a loving father and a good neighbor, always lending a helping hand to those in need.

Funeral services were conducted at Flat Swamp Church February 28, 1975, by his pastor, Elder J. T. Prescott, assisted by Willis Wilson. His body was laid to rest in the Robertsonville Cemetery under a large arrangement of beautiful flowers, in the presence of his many friends and relatives.

Left to mourn his passing are his wife, Marjorie, one son, T. Jerry of Raleigh, N. C., one daughter, Brenda J. of Ahoskie, N. C., four sisters, Mrs. Wilma Denson, Mrs. Nettie

Daughtery and Mrs. Mary James of Rocky Mount, N. C. and Mrs. John Council of Sarasota, Fla., one brother, Robert S. Williams of Rocky Mount, N. C., and two grandchildren.

The Flat Swamp Church extends her deepest sympathy to his family. We feel this loss deeply, yet all must submit to the will of God, believing that our loss is his eternal gain.

Done by order of the church at Flat Swamp in conference Saturday before the first Sunday in March, 1975.

Elder J. T. Prescott, Mod.
Hassel Allen, Clerk
Mary J. Jenkins,
Committee

ADA FAY BARTLETT

We bow in humbly submission to the Divine Will of our Heavenly Father who recently called home one of the few remaining members of the Whitefield Old School Baptist Church in the Maine Association. Sister Ada Fay Bartlett departed this life of sin and sorrow, April 12, 1974, and went, we hope, to join her Maker. She was a precious sister, frail of mind and body, but strong in the faith which was once delivered to the saints.

She had little in the way of worldly happiness and her happiest times were when the brethren gathered for meetings. She is fondly remembered by the many who visited her parent's home.

Sister Bartlett was born in Newcastle, Maine, May 11, 1932. She was the daughter of Sanford and Ida Bartlett, both members of the Whitefield Church. Sister Ada united with the Whitefield Church at the Maine Associational Meeting in August 1950 and was baptized by Elder E. C. Jones.

Shortly before her death, she wrote of her experience, some of which I quote below:

"Dear Brother in Christ,

I thank you for your lovely letter as I need the Word of the Lord, and as I hear the Word, He gives me more faith.

I wish I knew more than I do, but I believe that He is watching over me. I pray that I can start the New Year so that my sickness will stop. I hope to be able to go to sleep and I think if I have His Word I will be a lot better. I read my Bible every morning. I have been reading in Matthew, Mark, and Luke where it tells about His making the sick well, so I only pray that this will be my end."

Our little sister had only a short time before the Healer *did* come and give her eternal rest and relief from the handicap which had plagued her mortal body all her days.

Sister Bartlett is survived by four sisters and four brothers who will always remember with love, a little sister who was close to God

because He first loved her. One of her sisters, Ruth Clark is Clerk of the Whitefield Church. Ada was laid to rest beside her father and mother in the family cemetery on the old Bartlett homestead in Newcastle, Maine. There she will remain—

Asleep in Jesus. Oh, for me
May such a blissful refuge be;
Securely shall my ashes lie,
Waiting the summons from on high.

Written at the request
of Sister Ruth Clark,
Corrone E. Bryant

DEACON KING DAVID STEWART

It is with sadness we attempt to comply with the request that we write a few lines in memory of a dear brother, King David Stewart.

Brother Stewart was born February 28, 1892. He was the son of Jesse Martin Stewart and Mary Canady Stewart.

Brother Stewart was married December 24, 1913 to Callie Raynor. He was received into fellowship of the church on November 1, 1964. He was baptized by his pastor, Elder Lester Lee, and was ordained as a deacon the third Sunday in August, 1967.

Brother Stewart died on January 24, 1975 in the Cape Fear Valley Hospital in Fayetteville. He was in ill health for about 2 years. He attended church as long as his health permitted.

He was survived by 3 daughters, Mrs. Allene Wood of Benson, N. C., Route #2, Mrs. Corene Williams of Erwin, N. C., Route #1, Mrs. Alice Wood of Godwin, N. C., Route #4, one brother, Mr. Daniel Stewart of Fayetteville, N. C. and 3 sisters, Mrs. Mary Wagstaff of Dunn, N. C., Mrs. Louie Young of Dunn, N. C., and Mrs. Katie Barefoot, of Spring Lake, N. C. He was survived also by 6 grandchildren and 6 great grandchildren. Surviving also were a host of nieces and nephews, and many friends.

The funeral was held in Rose Funeral Home in Benson, N. C. by Elder W. D. Godwin, Elder C. D. Turner and Mr. J. W. Smith. He was laid to rest under a beautiful mound of flowers at the Banners Chapel Church Cemetery.

Brother Stewart was a firm believer in salvation by grace. May the Lord comfort the family and bless them to say, "The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away."

We express our deepest sympathy to the bereaved family.

BE IT RESOLVED, That a copy be sent to the family, a copy to the *Signs of the Times*,

and one copy be placed in our church books.

Committee,
Sister Leacy Beasley
Sister Gertrude Royal

MINUTES OF THE PRESBYTERY

April 6, 1975

Ordination of Brother Wilbert Ennis as deacon of Liberty Primitive Baptist Church.

On Saturday before the first Sunday in April, 1975, the Liberty Church met in conference, and it was moved and agreed that Brother Wilbert Ennis be set apart to the office of Deacon, and the ordination service was set for Sunday morning at 10:30.

On Sunday morning April 7, 1975 the church met and conference was opened with hymns and prayer by Elder W. D. Godwin. The Presbytery was organized by choosing Elder C. D. Turner, Moderator, and Brother James G. Young, Clerk. Ministers and deacons present were invited, Elder W. D. Godwin, Deacons: Brother Faison Barefoot, Brother J. H. Barefoot and Brother James Young.

The Moderator called for the candidate, who was presented by Deacons J. H. Barefoot and Faison Barefoot, and he was seated in front of the ministers, Elders W. D. Godwin and C. D. Turner. The charge was given according to the Scriptural reading by Elder Godwin. The Moderator examined the candidate as to the duties of the deaconship, and his answer was that he would with God's help serve with the best of his knowledge. The Presbytery was well pleased. The laying on of hands and prayer proceeded, and he was presented back to the Church by the deacons, and the right hand of fellowship was given by all members.

A copy of this is to be recorded in the Church Book, and a copy sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Elder C. D. Turner, Mod.
Brother James Young, Clerk

MRS. NANNIE F. DEW

On October 7, 1974, the Lord in his kindness called our dear Sister from this land of the dying to what we feel the land of the living. Sister Dew was born December 4, 1892. She was the daughter of the late Jesse D. Fly and Ellen Proctor Fly, and the wife of the late Brother Frank Dew. She joined The Falls Primitive Baptist Church second Saturday in July, 1963, and was baptized the same day. Sister Dew was always faithful to attend church and had been a lover of the truth, salvation by grace a long time before she was

blessed to unite with the militant church. It indeed was a joy to be in her presence as her speech was concerning things that pertain to life eternal and of the things she had hoped that God in his infinite wisdom had done for his people through his Son Jesus Christ. Sister Dew indeed, I feel, enjoyed entertaining the brethren and friends of the church in her home, especially while her husband Brother Frak Dew, a Deacon of The Falls, lived. It was always a joy to be with them, and the doors of their home were always open.

Even after the death of her companion she continued to entertain and have the Lord's people in her home.

She shall be missed by her brethren and her friends, as well as her children and grandchildren.

Surviving are three daughters: Mrs. Mildred D. Kerr, of Rocky Mount, Mrs. Dorothy D. May of Red Oak, Mrs. Frances D. Whittington of Benson, and one sister, Mrs. Lola F. Felton of Rocky Mount, six grandchildren and four great grandchildren.

Her funeral was conducted at Gay Yost Funeral Home Chapel by Elders D. B. Stokes and William Everett. She was laid to rest in Pineview Cemetery to await the second coming of her Lord.

It is our sincere prayer that God would grant peace and reconciliation to her children as well as to us who loved her at the Falls.

Written by order of conference by her Pastor.

Elder D. B. Stokes

IN MEMORY OF BROTHER
DAVID PARSONS

It has pleased our Heavenly Father to call from our midst our beloved Brother David Parsons born June 20, 1895 and died Feb. 9, 1975. Brother Parsons joined Springfield Church September 13, 1924. He was faithful to the church and filled his place most every meeting as long as he lived. He was a firm believer in election and salvation by Grace believing it was all fixed in the mind and purpose of God before time was. Springfield Church bows in humble submission to the just and holy will of our Lord knowing that He doeth all things well.

Brother Parsons leaves to mourn their loss his wife, Sister Mary Parsons, two daughters Sister Ruby Atkins of Charlotte Court House, Mrs. Gracie Mohr of Cullen, two sons Courtney Parsons and Fred Parsons both of Cullen, one brother James Parsons of Charlotte Court House, five grandchildren and four great grandchildren.

His funeral was held at Oak View Presby-

terian Church by his pastor Elder O. K. Tench, assisted by Elder Denver Simpson and Donald Wilkerson and his body laid away beneath a beautiful mound of flowers in the church cemetery to await the second coming of our Lord and Savior.

Written by L. R. Willis

SISTER MARY ANN WALTON

Once again the dear Lord has seen fit to remove one of our dear sisters, Mary Ann Walton. She was born at Keeling, Va. February 23, 1887, a daughter of Rufus Wise Walton and Laura Walton, making her stay on earth 87 years. She had been in declining health and semi-invalid for about twelve years.

She had been a member of Malmaison Church for more than fifty years. Her husband died in 1954. She leaves 2 daughters and 6 sons, 18 grandchildren, 34 great grandchildren and 14 great great grandchildren, with a host of friends who loved her, to mourn their loss. We feel our loss is her eternal gain. She loved the church and the doctrine it stands for, and she attended as long as she was able.

Her funeral was conducted at Swicegood Funeral Chapel by her pastor Elder O. K. Tench and Elder David Spangler. Her body was laid to rest in the Walton Cemetery to await the resurrection morning, when the dead in Christ shall rise to meet the dear Lord, be like Him and be satisfied.

BE IT RESOLVED, That a copy of this be put on our Church Book, a copy sent to the *Signs*, and a copy sent to the family.

Written by one who loved her.

Kate Dodd

IN MEMORY OF
SISTER MINNIE TERRELL SIMMONS

God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble. Many hearts are saddened, many nice things said, that were very fitting to our Sister who was blessed with a meek and quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God, of great price.

Death relieved Sister Minnie Simmons of her suffering on February 25, 1975. She was patient in long suffering and established in the faith with a good conscience.

She was received by the church at Bush Arbor in July, 1942 and was baptized by her former pastor, Elder W. C. King.

We bow in humble submission to the will of our Lord, feeling that our loss is her eternal gain. Now her suffering is over, after sixty-nine years in this low ground of sin and sorrow.

May the Gracious Lord continue his blessings upon her devoted family, and bless her precious companion of fifty years, Brother Porter G. Simmons. May He comfort him that he may wait with patience to join the one so near and dear to his heart in that peaceful rest.

In Brotherly love, we extend our heartfelt sympathy to our Brother and their ten lovely children whose hearts are saddened by so great a loss, Mrs. Dorothy Stainback, Mrs. Claudia Clayton, Mrs. Alice Stokes, Mrs. Elsie Overman, Mrs. Leona Reagan, Mrs. Mildred Davis, Misters Billy H., James P., Johnny C., and Gilbert M. Simmons.

Sister Simmons was blessed with a love for the church at Bush Arbor, where her funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elders Wallis Smith and Donald Smith. Her body was laid to rest and to wait that glorious resurrection, in the church cemetery beneath a mound of beautiful flowers, a symbol of love and esteem for the life she was blessed to live.

Written by request of the church at Bush Arbor by Clifton Robertson.

Read and approved at their conference meeting May 10, 1975.

Elder Wallis Smith, Pastor
Brother Earl Rudd, Clerk

JAMES JOSEPH PRUITT

Born January 29, 1916 the son of Benjamin Lee and Nellie Myers Pruitt. Called out of this time world September 22, 1974. Making his stay on earth 58 years 7 months and 24 days. Brother Pruitt was married to Mary Walker Pruitt who preceded him in death. He later married Catherine Anthony.

As I think back over the years and the life of Brother Pruitt, I remember him always being willing to help in the up keep of the church here at Bush Arbor. He spent a lot of his time and resources here at this church when the new building was being built. Many a Fourth of July he helped with the erection of the stand for our association. All that he did was done because he had a love and respect for Bush Arbor Church and for the brethren here.

While in the hospital he expressed a love and a desire for a home with Bush Arbor Church. He was received into the fellowship of the church September 12, 1974. Brother Pruitt never gained his health back so he could be baptized with water, but we feel that he was baptized with the Holy Spirit. We read in first Corinthians 12:13 "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body."

He expressed to his wife how happy he was to have been received into the church that he had loved for so long.

After living a quiet humble life it pleased our Heavenly Father to call our Brother from his loved ones here in this world. His funeral was conducted at Bush Arbor Church by Elder Wallis Smith and Mr. Charles Morton. His body was laid to rest in the cemetery at the church.

He is survived by his wife, two sisters and six brothers. We shall miss him. We feel a loss to have him taken from our midst, but we feel that our loss is his heavenly gain. So along with his wife, sisters, and brothers we mourn. But we mourn not as one without hope, for our brother had hope of life eternal.

Humbly Submitted
D. O. Chandler, Jr.

ADA THOMAS MINTER

Our beloved Sister of like precious faith, Ada Thomas Minter, was born March 19, 1888. She died as she lived, a Christian lady, on October 11, 1974.

In addition to the hundreds of saints who knew her and loved her, she leaves to mourn her passing, 3 sons: Edward, Raymond, and Len, and 3 daughters: Ida, Myrtle, and Alice. Also 13 grandchildren and 28 great grandchildren.

Sister Minter was afforded the finest treatment that loving children can provide. The writer, being her unworthy pastor, often talked to and visited with this precious Sister, and from personal observation feels constrained to be a witness that when Sister Ada was called to die, it was by the same voice she already knew and followed as being led by the hand and Spirit of Almighty God, who was, who is, and ever shall be Ada Minter's Lord and Saviour.

At Basham Primitive Baptist Meeting House, on October 14, 1974, the writer conducted her funeral, while wondering how we can ever be thankful enough for such a precious Sister, whom God added to our number after He had taught her that Jesus Christ is the Lord who has never failed in any one thing He ever set out to do.

The writer is happy in the belief that the family understands that our loss is her eternal gain. Yet we greatly miss the sweet smiling face of this dear one in Christ, who was so evidently His workmanship, who has prepared for his people a City where some sweet day the Church of God will all see Jesus and dwell forever with Him in the free Jerusalem, to praise Him who owns the kingdom for which our tears now fall.

Written in sadness by one who loved her dearly.

J. L. Bocack

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 143

DANVILLE, VA., AUGUST, 1975

NO. 8

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 8/75
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

REMINISCING

209 Taylor Underwood
Collinsville, Va. 24078

Dear Brethren:

Many thoughts have been entering my mind, and I will pen them—the evil and the good.

Elder John Peter Helms was my pastor at old Republican Church, Franklin County, Virginia, and passed away in the year 1966. His last sermon was from the text in the 5th chapter of Matthew, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in Heaven."

Those that do the will of God are those in whom He works the will and the do of His good pleasure. (Mark 3:31) It is the only way that one glorifies Him, giving him all the honor and glory.

I united with the church in the year 1939, Elder George Dyer being the pastor. He told us then he had seven years longer to live as the Lord had shown him. He passed away in 1946, and we were left to select another pastor, which was Elder Helms. He asked us to take it to the Lord in prayer. He served us until his passing, which was in 1966.

After his passing Brother William Holland was chosen pastor, who serves us now. When reading the first chapter of 2nd Peter, I think of Elder Dyer — what the Lord had shown him. I enjoy reading from the Apostle Peter exhorting and reproofing of sin found as in Acts 8:18-23, also the Apostle Paul in 2nd Timothy 3rd and 4th chapters, and also his writing to Titus.

I enjoyed Elder Lambert's writing in

"WITHOUT HIM I AM HELPLESS"

Dear Elder Spangler:

I realize my subscription to the *Signs* is nearly due, so I am enclosing the amount. I have been a reader of the *Signs of the Times* since my girlhood days, which has been edited by several editors. I still love to read it.

I am nearing my 85th year. My parents were members, also my grandparents, and they read the *Signs of the Times*. I have been a member nearly 63 years. I deeply love the doctrine. We have some wonderful meetings here in California. Salida and Ceres churches are near each other, so I get to meetings each week end. I do praise God for it all, for without Him I am helpless, but with Him I am strong. He is our Master Pilot over all in all.

I spend most of my time reading my Bible and Baptist papers. Elder T. R. Bonds is our pastor and Elder H. J. Donahue is pastor at Ceres.

My old home church in Missouri is still having services. "I love thy church, O God, her walls around thee stand, dear as the apple of thine eye, and graven in thy hand." In Him I feel easy, without Him I am weak and feel the least of all.

May God bless you and all there. My Christian love to all.

Mrs. Mabel Lindsey

the April issue of the *Signs*. Those who have gone through great tribulations have their robes washed and made white as snow in the blood of the Lamb, and do not stand before Him naked, but clothed with the righteousness of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, and are no more strangers but fellow citizens with the saints of the household of God: not boasting what they have done for the Lord, but what He has done for them—not the law covenant but the grace covenant: He bearing our sins in his own body on the tree. I know that if it had not been for free grace I would be eternally lost. I love to read 2 Peter 3:8, "But, beloved, be not ignorant of this one thing, that one day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day."

Sincerely,
Mrs. Harry Underwood

NAOMI AND RUTH

Naomi out there in the country of Moab was just about as unattractive to the people of that land as the church of God is to the people of the world. She was not interested in them and they saw nothing to admire in her. A poor and desolate old woman—that is all she was to the Moabites; and she was the more unattractive to them because she did not feel at home among them, and cared nothing for their affairs. Two of them only were of any interest to her, and that was because they were her daughters-in-law.

To the world the church of God appears as devoid of interest or value as Naomi did to those people of Moab. How any one can care for such a poor, insignificant people the world cannot see. They are generally unlearned and poor, and are so few compared with other religious people. They were very few in the Saviour's time; he called them a "little flock". They were then looked down upon and despised by the world, and every where spoken against, and have been ever since. And they seem to

have but little interest in the world, and especially in the doctrine and religion of the world. Naomi was homesick for Bethlehem, the house of bread, and so are they.

How come Naomi there? Although it was through a wrong, selfish, fleshly spirit in Elimelech, yet there was a wise purpose of God in it all. The predestination of God appears to his people, when they are spiritually exercised, not as an abstract question to discuss, but as a truth vitally connected with our hope of salvation, and with our spiritual concern and our experience of grace. The clouds interest us because of the shade they give us, or because of the rain that falls upon us from them, and the sun because of the reviving and healing power of his beams. So the doctrine of the foreordination of God is of infinite interest and importance to us because it is a part of that doctrine which drops like the rain and distills like the dew.

When we have had such experiences as Jonah did in the depths, which is the sign that Jesus gives of himself, and when we have seen in ourselves such rebellion and fretfulness against the Lord as he displayed, then there is a special humiliation and peculiar comfort and contrition brought about in our poor hearts by seeing the Lord's hand in all these terrible and wonderful exercises in our souls. We are led to praise him when we are given to know that he sent out the mighty tempest to arrest the fleeing prophet; and he prepared the fish to swallow Jonah when he was cast into the deep; and he spoke to the fish when the appointed time had come for him to be delivered and to know and acknowledge that "salvation is of the Lord"; and that he prepared the gourd to be a shadow over Jonah while he waited to see what would become of the city, undoubtedly wishing his word might come true; and that the Lord prepared the worm to smite the gourd, and that he prepared the vehement east wind, which, with the beating of the sun upon his head,

made Jonah faint, and wish he was dead: and all to make us know the infinitely tender pity of the Lord toward the heathen, and toward the little ones who do not know their right hand from their left, and even toward the cattle.

What a terrible thing it would be to have to believe that anything, however wicked, could take place that wasn't embraced in the infinitely wise purpose of God. "Who is he that saith and it cometh to pass when the Lord commandeth it not." We could feel no safety if such be the case.

Naomi went to Moab because her husband would go, but it is likely she made no objection, for she afterwards spoke only against herself. Her husband's name was Elimelech, which means, "God is King." The truth thus expressed in his name was proved in the just judgment of his king against him, for he died in Moab, where he had gone because there was a famine in his own land. He forsook his people in their affliction, and went away to seek worldly help for himself and his family, instead of trusting in the Lord. "If ye live after the flesh ye shall die," is the law we are under to Christ. Those who turn away from Christ in time of famine and go seeking worldly goods, do not die literally as Elimelech, they die to spiritual usefulness and comfort during the time they are thus in Moab. They find no nourishment for their souls in the doctrines of men. Those who are taken up with worldly cares and elated by worldly prosperity are dead while they live. "She that liveth in pleasure is dead while she liveth." (1st Timothy, 5:6).

The two sons also died. Their names were Mahlon (sickness) and Chilion (pining). This signifies all that had been the lot of this now lonely woman during her sojourn in this strange land, sickness, pining, and death. Her days had been filled with care and sorrow, and all that came with her out of Bethlehem, and all the goods she brought, were gone. "I went out full," she said to her people when she got back to

them, "but the Lord hath brought me home again empty." She said moreover that the Lord had testified against her, and had afflicted her. She attributed nothing to chance, nor to men. She recognized God's hand in all that had happened to her.

"Then she arose with her daughters in law, that she might return from the country of Moab: for she had heard in the country of Moab how the Lord visited his people in giving them bread." How she longed to be with her own people again. In her desolation how her heart yearns toward them. She cannot feel that it is her right to share their prosperity, but she must be with them, though she came among them as one who can only look on them in their joy. She cannot stay away longer, though she has lost her right among them, as it seems to her.

"Wherefore she went forth out of the place where she was, and her two daughters in law with her, and they went on the way to return unto the land of Judah." These daughters in law are all that she has acquired in the country of Moab. They belonged to her only as widows of her sons. Their real home and relationship are in Moab. According to custom it is their duty to go with her to her home and remain with her while she lives, and they do not seem inclined to evade that duty. But Naomi knows that their hearts are really with their own people, and that it would be a sacrifice on their part to follow her,—and that she does not want, however willingly made.

She has a real desire for their comfort, and she knows they would not feel at home in her land. She knows by a sad ten years' experience what it would be for them to dwell among a people they knew not heretofore. She tenderly entreats them for their own sake, to leave her to go on alone, and go back. "Go, return each to her mother's house: the Lord deal kindly with you, as ye have dealt with the dead and with me. The Lord grant you that ye may find rest, each of you in the house of

her husband. Then she kissed them: and they lifted up their voice and wept. And they said unto her, surely we will return with thee unto thy people."

This is a touching scene, beautiful and lovely as showing the truth and tenderness of these earthly relationships. But so far it is all natural. They are willing and even desirous to go with her, but it is on her account instead of theirs, and she knows it much better than they do, and she cannot have it. She also stands as a type of the church as it appears and stands in relation to the Gentiles, and in that typical character it was necessary that these daughters-in-law do not follow because of that relationship, as a duty and as a sacrifice of their natural desires. Therefore she constrains them to go back, urging upon their consideration the lack of all hope of advancement or prosperity such as they would naturally desire if they go on with her.

Thus the church of God is shown in the peculiar characteristic. She does not want any one to go with her whose affections are with the world. Instead of extending invitations to such, and urging people to go with her, the true church refuses such sacrifices. She wants none but those whose hearts are with her. While their hearts are with the world a membership in the church would only be in outward appearance. It would not be a spiritual union. To all such the church would say, Go back to your own people.

Orpah is persuaded. Her name means "back, departure." She would sacrifice her own feelings, but it would be a natural, not a spiritual sacrifice. She kissed her mother in law, "but Ruth clave unto her." What an astonishing thing this is to that homesick, lonely woman. Orpah going back along that lonely road they have come, but here stands Ruth yet. She is not even looking back, but her face is toward Naomi, and toward Bethlehem, and what a new light there is in her eyes, and what an expression of more than a daughter's love there is upon her face,

as she still stands looking into the face of her mother. But Naomi has not yet seen the secret of Ruth's tender heart, nor has she yet known the deep meaning of her name: Friend. "And she said, Behold, thy sister-in-law has gone back unto her people, and unto her gods, return thou after thy sister-in-law."

Now is to be seen why Naomi came away from the land of Judah to dwell and suffer for ten long years in the country of Moab; that Ruth might see and love her, and return with her. Now is to be seen the wonderful works of God in the heart, and how he brings his people from the ends of the earth unto himself. And now is Naomi to know something of the Lord's purpose in her long and afflictive sojourn here in this strange land. Orpah would have made a sacrifice if she had gone with Naomi, but Ruth makes none. She has no people any more in Moab, nor any gods there. Her name is "Friend," but it is a friend to Naomi and Judah, not to Moab.

What wonderful words fall from her lips! What tender love and faithfulness are shown to Naomi as she thus opens to her view the secret feeling of her heart. And Ruth said, "Intreat me not to leave thee: not to return from following after thee for where thou goest I will go; and where thou lodgest I will lodge; thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God; where thou diest will I die, and there will I be buried: the Lord do so to me, and more also, if ought but death part thee and me."

Here is the most sweet and true expression of the Lord's work. Here is manifested the new and everlasting covenant, as the Lord writes it in the new heart. It binds all the Lord's people together in unity. It is the same covenant that was made between Jonathan and David. These words of Ruth do not express the feeling that she can be of help and benefit to Naomi. It is for herself she is speaking. It is on her own account that she pleads to go with her mother-in-law. Her desire to be in

that dear company is so strong and masterful that her words express assurance and sweet determination as well as desire. Nay, even she speaks with the authority of inspiration. She speaks for the Lord's people throughout all time, as they come, one by one, from the ends of the earth, drawn by that love of God which passes knowledge to the church of the living God.

When Ruth came to Bethlehem with Naomi she must glean in order that they, too, might live. Her hap is to light on a part of the field belonging to Boaz; that was the gospel field. Boaz finds her there and admonishes her not to go into any other field to glean. His expressions of kindness and favor astonish her, seeing she is a stranger. That is ever the feeling of those poor souls that come hungry into the gospel field to glean. They are astonished at the handfuls they sometimes find, not knowing that God's command is upon the reaper in their favor; and they are astonished at the tokens of care and love that come to them, since they are strangers. For so every one feels more or less a stranger, and not like one of the Lord's own people.

But Boaz lets Ruth know that he has heard about her, and has been told how she left her own father and mother and the land of her nativity to come to a people she did not know before. And he says, "The Lord recompense thy work, and a full reward be given thee of the Lord God of Israel under whose wings thou art come to trust." Now what reward could here possibly be for Ruth for doing the thing that was her one desire. In all the world there was but one thing she wanted to do, and now it has been her privilege to do it. Can there be any reward for this? Yes, the reward is in the engagement of the thing itself. That is the case with all those who truly desire one thing of the Lord: "That they may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of their life, to behold the beauty of the Lord and to enquire in his tem-

ple." Their reward is in that sweet employment. To behold the beauty of the Lord is enough. This is the reward, to be married unto him who is risen from the dead, to rejoice in him and love him in eternal glory.

Silas H. Durand
Southampton, Pa.

(From Zion's Landmark, February 15, 1904
—Republished by request of Elder Noel F. Conner)

Rt. 2, Box 124,
Willis, Va. 24380

Dear Brother Wood:

By consent of our Pastor, Elder Hale Terry, I am sending you a letter I received from him after our April meeting, to be published in the *Signs of the Times*. It was so comforting to me, I felt it would be of interest to the readers of the *Signs*.

Hope you and Sister Wood are well. I remember so well the times I have spent in your home in the past: they are precious memories. I was 81 years old last October, and don't get to go to church very often on account of arthritis, and can't be on my feet without the aid of crutches.

I enjoy the *Signs* so much and read it through as soon as I receive it. I have been a member of our church 52 years last January, and have received the *Signs* most of that time. Would love to see you and Sister Wood again.

Your brother in hope,
Guy B. Phillips

(Dear Bro. Phillips: Many thanks for your letter with the one by Elder Terry enclosed for publication. These letters brought back many memories of the 1930's etc., when we lived in the vicinity of Roanoke and visited the brethren in Floyd County, together with Elder Terry's father, grand parents, uncles and aunts, etc. It is good to know that the doctrine they stood for is yet being maintained by Elder Hale Terry among the brethren, for which we are thankful unto the Lord.)

Yours in the best of bonds,
John D. Wood

GOOD LETTER FROM HIS PASTOR

Collinsville, Virginia

Dear Brother Guy (Phillips):

I am still rejoicing over the meetings this weekend. You were in my thoughts so much and the day was too short to visit you so I will make an attempt to write you a few lines to tell you about the wonderful meeting yesterday. You may have heard who all were with us. Elder Lycliston, Elder Hash, Elder Wray and Elder Leonard Key. Elder Lycliston and Elder Agee were with us Saturday. At Laurel Creek Saturday night there were five—Elder Agee, Elder Lycliston, Elder Conner, Brother Lane Carter and I. I thought that we had an association Saturday night but I don't have words to describe the meeting yesterday. I feel that it was as close to heaven as we will ever be here on earth. All were blessed to declare the whole Council of God. I can still hear the beautiful singing today and at times shed tears over the preaching as the sweet thoughts flood my mind. He is a wonderful God and the surety of his salvation to poor sinners will be declared by his servants as long as this world stands.

I am so unworthy of the blessings that I received by the preaching of the brethren. When Elder Lycliston arrived at 10:00 p.m. Friday night the doors of Heaven were opened. We talked until 2:30 a.m. Saturday morning. We were blessed to go back in our childhood days and tell of the dealings of the Lord and his mercy to such unworthy sinners as we feel to be. I am reminded of Jacob when he was fleeing from Esau and the night he made a pillar of stones and saw the ladder that reached from earth into heaven with the angels ascending and descending and he said surely the Lord was in the place and I knew it not. When I am given to view my unprofitable life I am made to realize that God loved us even when we were dead in trespasses and in sin. We may have at times wondered why things were as they were but when Christ appears we then have fellowship with

Jacob. When I think of the angels and the ladder I somehow see his servants as they are caught up (ascending) and blessed to preach his Glorious Gospel and then down, down into the valley (descending) once more to keep them humble and cause them to cry unto him for *all* of their help and strength, and in his wonderful work make them to know where preaching comes from.

As each one came in his own gift the preaching grew sweeter and sweeter and I could see his bride and feel that we are married to him. As King Manasseh, after the Lord delivered him, built a wall around the city and set watchmen on the wall, Christ is the watchman over the city that is set upon a hill and it cannot be hid. On the hills of Mt. Zion the King is sitting on his throne. But Israel will say the Lord hath forgotten me and has forsaken me. The King speaks, can a mother forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, she may forget, yet will I not forget thee, Behold, I have *graven* thee upon the palms of my hands; thy walls are *continually* before me. Oh how wonderful, my precious brother, to realize that he is present and with his people continually even when we in our weakness forget him.

I have written more than I intended and must close. I hope this finds you feeling better and pray that God will enable us to be together again soon, that we may by his Grace be blessed to rejoice in his love that he sheds abroad in our hearts. Give Lucille our love.

A little one with Love,
Hale
(Elder Hale Terry)

ROMANS 10: 16, 17

"But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report? So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." (Romans 10:16-17)

We hope and pray that God may enable us to rightly divide the word of truth and speak things that become sound doctrine. (see 2 Timothy 2:15 and Titus 2:1) Even though Paul is dealing with the condition of natural Israel when "blindness in part is happened to Israel" (please read the 10th and 11th ch. of Rom.), do you believe this text applies to God's people whether they be Jews or Gentiles? Is it not true that the Scriptures are directed to the Children of God?

Before we get to our text let us quote this Scripture to support our position that we are not taking the text out of its setting: "The Lord of hosts hath sworn, saying, *Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass; and as I have purposed, so shall it stand:* That I will break the Assyrian in my land, and upon my mountains tread him under foot: then shall his yoke depart from off them, and his burden depart from off their shoulders. This is the purpose that is purposed upon the whole earth: and this is the hand that is stretched out upon all the nations. *For the Lord of hosts hath purposed, and who shall disannul it? and his hand is stretched out, and who shall turn it back?*" (Isaiah 14:24-27) The setting around this Scripture is that God would bring judgments upon the Assyrians. *Do you believe this Scripture also applies to the power, wisdom, decree, purpose, predestination, etc. of God?*

Let us notice Romans 10:3: "For they being ignorant of God's righteousness, and going about to establish their own righteousness, have not submitted themselves unto the righteousness of God." This has reference to the self-righteous people who are not blessed with the Spirit of God in their hearts, and are ignorant of the righteousness of God. "The carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." (Romans 8:7) Man who is not blessed with the indwelling Spirit of God will only have an outward religion, and does not

know anything about the power of God. "Having a form of godliness, but denying the power thereof: from such turn away." (2 Timothy 3:5)

Let us consider Romans 10:13: "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." What causes one to call upon the name of the Lord? Is it because of the outward knowledge of the Scriptures and the doctrines of grace? One may obtain such knowledge by reading and studying the Scriptures, religious books, and hearing many sermons—but all this will be just head (or outward) knowledge. *Those who are blessed with the indwelling Spirit of God in their hearts are the only ones who call upon the name of the Lord.*

Let us note Romans 10:14: "How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?" Please keep in mind that one must call, believe and hear; and none of this depends upon the efforts of the creature. Man by carnal reasoning cannot believe and hear the truth. May God bless us to consider the word "hear." Man by carnal reasoning may hear (by his outward ear) the truth spoken, but it does not mean anything to him. Maybe some of you dear readers have heard the truth spoken for many years but it did not mean anything to you at that time. Then there was something that took place within you that caused you to hear as you had never heard before. Now you believe this doctrine is the truth and it is your meat and drink. Why do you believe it is the truth? Is it because your parents or friends told you it is the truth and you took their word for it? No! Christ is dwelling in your heart. ". . . which is Christ in you, the hope of glory." (Col. 1:27) Jesus said, "And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with

you, and shall be in you." (John 14:16-17) This Scripture proves that the Holy Ghost, Spirit of Jesus, Spirit of Truth, or Comforter dwells within the Children of God. "... we will come unto him, and make our abode with him." (John 14:23) "... he shall take of mine, and shall shew it unto you." (John 16:15)

Let us get back to the word "hear": Those who are blessed with the indwelling Spirit of God are the only ones who hear the truth with an understanding heart. You must be blessed by the Spirit of God to really "hear" a sermon, (or hear inwardly or given an ear to hear.) "He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches:" (Rev. 2:7)

I believe that the expression "*preacher*" in this Scripture has reference to the Spirit of Jesus. "... how shall they hear without a *preacher*?" Please notice that the term "*a preacher*" is in the singular. "And how shall *they preach* except they be sent?" The term "*they*" is in the plural, which has reference to the ministers that God calls and qualifies. "*They*" cannot preach except they be sent by God. This shows that God sends his ministers to the appointed places.

Christ is the shepherd, and his ministers are the under-shepherds. "I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep." (John 10:11) "The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: *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.*" (1 Peter 5:1-4)

When the 5 thousand were fed, please notice that Christ gave the broken fish and bread to his disciples and *they distributed them to the multitude.* (see Matt. 14:19, Mark 6:41, Luke 9:16,

John 6:11) Jesus gave the loaves to his disciples to set before the multitude. What a beautiful picture! We view the Spirit of Jesus upon a minister as he sets forth this wonderful doctrine of Salvation by Grace, and this is good news from a far country which is food for a hungry sinner!

How strange are the ways of God! "*God moves in a mysterious way, His wonders to perform.*" I have been fed by being blessed to hear the truth preached, listening to singing, having a Spiritual conversation with Brethren, reading religious articles when the Spirit of God testifies to me that it is the truth, etc. The Spirit has preached to me and also often blessed me to read the Scriptures with an understanding heart; and all this has fed me. I have been blessed with the sweetness of the presence of God during fiery trials. The presence of God seems sweeter and more comforting during times of trouble.

By my experience I have to advocate that *Christ is the "Preacher"* who calls and qualifies his ministers and sends them to the appointed places. The Spirit told Philip to go and minister to the eunuch. (see Acts 8:26-29) The true minister is the mouth of God. (see Jer. 15:19) "I have put my words in thy mouth." (Isaiah 51:16)

The ministers do not manufacture the food—meaning the true ministers do not prepare their sermons, but they wait upon the Spirit of God. "The preparations of the heart in man and the answer of the tongue is from the Lord." (Proverbs 16:1) As Paul said, "my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: *that your faith should not stand in the power of God:* (1 Cor. 2:4-5) "For as the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give seed to the sower, and bread to the eater: So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but *it shall accomplish*

that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it." (Isaiah 55:10-11) Jesus told Peter, "Feed my sheep." (John 21:16) What is the purpose of preaching? It is to comfort, edify and feed the Brethren. "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, *to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood.*" (Acts 20:28) I have already quoted 1 Peter 5:1-4, but let us quote again part of the 2nd verse: "*Feed the flock of God which is among you . . .*"

"*Faith cometh by hearing.*" Faith is a gift of God. (Eph. 2:8) It is not something to reach out and grasp with our hands or to learn or study, etc. "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variable-ness, neither shadow of turning." (James 1:17) It is not my desire to be misunderstood. I believe that the word "hearing" goes deeper than just natural hearing, as mentioned before. It has reference to "spiritual hearing," meaning that the Spirit of God is dwelling within one and blesses him to hear the truth, and also blesses him with faith and a sweet hope. All of this is included in the experience of God's people, and they all experience the same things, even though it may be in different ways. They all know something about the sorrow of darkness, experience trials, afflictions, tribulations, etc. "We are troubled on every side, yet not distressed; we are perplexed, but not in despair; persecuted, but not forsaken; cast down, but not destroyed." (2 Cor. 4:8-9) *On the bright side, they have all tasted that the Lord is gracious.* "As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby: If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious." (1 Peter 2:2-3) Peter stated that he was a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed. (1 Peter 5:1) I think of this as a taste of heaven. Dear reader, have you tasted that the Lord is gracious? Does not this cause you to yearn for a

closer walk with God? The children of God experience the sweet song of redemption. "Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and translated us into the kingdom of his dear son." (Col. 1:13) "But 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." (1 Peter 2:9)

"Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." (Hebrews 11:1) Please keep in mind that one hopes for things which he cannot see. We walk by faith and not by sight. "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." (Romans 8:24-25) This hope saves one from despair, saves one from this untoward generation, gives one fresh courage to press on in spite of trials, tribulations, afflictions, troubles, etc. "Save yourselves from this untoward generation." (Acts 2:40) The word save, saved, and salvation is mentioned in the Bible a number of times. (Since this goes into much detail, we do not have a mind to deal with that subject at the present.) *To be brief, I believe that Salvation is by the Grace of God and not by any works of the creature.*

"For unto us was the gospel preached, as well as unto them: but *the word preached did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in them that heard it.*" (Heb. 4:2) This Scripture proves that just hearing the gospel preached will not generate or impart faith to one. One must have the faith within his heart before he can really "hear" a gospel sermon.

"*Faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the word of God.*" Some take this to mean that the preaching of the gospel is used as a means to generate or impart faith to one. This leads to the theory that a minister is an instrument to impart faith to an individual or that a sermon is an instrument to infuse

faith in one. I cannot have fellowship with that doctrine, because my experience teaches me different. *Since faith is a gift of God, we advocate that the Lord works directly with one by the Holy Ghost.* It is the work of the Holy Ghost to bless one with faith and with Spiritual understanding. Often when one reads the Scriptures, the Spirit of God blesses him to read with an understanding heart, and to bless him with sweet meditation. "My meditation of him shall be sweet: I will be glad in the Lord." (Psalm 102:34)

Jesus said, "This is the work of God, that you believe on him whom he hath sent." (John 6:29) You cannot believe in Jesus unless you have the witness within your heart. If you really believe in Jesus, then the Spirit of Him is dwelling within—or the Holy Ghost is dwelling within you. You hear the preaching and the Spirit within testifies to you that it is the truth. The minister may mention things that you have not thought of and you believe it is the truth. Why? What causes you to believe it is the truth? The Spirit within testifies to you that it is the truth. "The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God." (Rom. 8:16)

May the Lord bless the truth in honor and praise and glory to His Holy Name. Please excuse any errors of this writer.

W. W. Hudson, Jr.
208 Frederick St.
Bastrop, La. 71220

ROCK OF AGES

"*Rock of ages cleft for me.*" "He only is my rock and my salvation, The rock of my strength." Psalm 62:6, 7

"*Let me hide myself in thee.*" "And it shall come to pass, while my glory passeth by, that I will put thee in the cliff of the rock, and will cover thee with my hand while I pass by." Exodus 33:22

"*Let the water and the blood.*" "This is He that came by water and blood,

even Jesus Christ, not by water only, but by water and blood." 1 John 5:6

"*From thy riven side which flowed.*" "But one of the soldiers with a spear pierced His side, and forthwith came there out blood and water." John 19:34

"*Be of sin the double cure.*" "And Elisha said, I pray thee, let a double portion of thy Spirit be upon me." 2 Kings 2:9, 10

"*Cleanse me from its quilt and power.*" "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow." Isaiah 1:18

"*Not the labor of my hands.*" "I can of mine own self do nothing." John 5:30

"*Can fulfill the law's demands.*" "Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets, I am not come to destroy but to fulfill. Verily, I say unto you, till heaven and earth pass, one jot or one tittle shall in no wise pass from the law, till all be fulfilled." Matthew 5:17, 18

"*Could my zeal no respite know.*" "Let not those that wait upon the Lord God of hosts, be ashamed for my sake." Psalm 69:6

"*Could my tears forever flow.*" "I am weary with my groaning: all the night make I my bed to swim: I water my couch with my tears." Psalm 6:6

"*All for sin could not atone.*" "Wherefore when He cometh into the world, he saith, Sacrifice and offering thou wouldest not, but a body hast thou prepared me: In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin Thou hast had no pleasure." Hebrews 10:5, 6

"*Thou must save, and thou alone.*" "By the which will we be sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. Hebrews 10:8, 10

"*Nothing in my hand I bring.*" "Ho, everyone that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money, come ye, buy and eat, yea, come buy wine and milk without money and without price." Isaiah 55:1

"*Simply to thy cross I cling.*" "But

God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world is crucified unto me, and I unto the world." Galatians 6:14

"Naked, come to thee for dress." "But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ." Romans 13:14

"Helpless, look to thee for grace." "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." Philippians 4:13

"Black, I to the fountain fly." "Purge me with hysop, and I shall be clean, wash me and I shall be whiter than snow." Psalms 51:7

"Wash me Saviour or I die." "If I wash thee not thou hast no part with me." John 13:8

"While I draw this fleeting breath." "As for man his days are as grass, as a flower of the field so he flourish. For the wind passeth over it, and it is gone: and the place thereof shall know it no more." Psalm 103:15, 16

"When my eyelids close in death." "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the Spirit shall return unto God who gave it." Ecclesiastes 12:3, 7

"When I soar to worlds unknown." "In my Fathers house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you, and if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto my self: that where I am, there ye may be also." John 14:2, 3

"See thee on thy judgement throne." "When the Son of Man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall He sit upon the throne of his glory." Matthew 25:31

"Rock of ages cleft for me." "And did all drink of the same spiritual drink, for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them, and that Rock was Christ." I Corinthians 10:4

"Let me hide thyself in Thee." "Keep me as the apple of the eye, hide me under the shadow of thy wing." Psalm 17:8

(The above was submitted by Elder W. R. Williams, taken from the Banner-Herald of October, 1921.)

EXPERIENCE

Dear Friends:

I cannot tell you the joy and peace I have found in reading the *Signs of the Times*. Nor the tears of sorrow I have shed until I could not see to read.

Dear friends, is there anyone like me? As poor and hopeless that I cannot think of the least thing I ever did for my Creator to merit staying here this long. If it be His will, I would like to mention some of my life and hint at a few things I hope I have seen and felt.

I grew up on a farm in the Blue Ridge Mountains of Virginia as a poor boy among the rich folks and society. My father was a quiet, somber man that I never heard sing a note or whistle a tune. He did not even use a byword. My mother was a member of the old Primitive Baptist Church near by. She sang the old-time tunes going about her work, as far back as I can remember; and until a few days before she passed on. I was in my thirties then. But I have heard them in my mind many times since.

The first two times that I remember being at the church I went with my grandfather and father when they went to help clean up the church ground. And then when they went to help dig a grave, I was afraid to get close to it that I might fall in it. As they dropped out later, to some extent I hope I took over. The first time I remember being in the church I was with my mother, and the first time at the stand I was with my mother.

The first preacher I remember was Elder Turner. He and his wife and son and others spent the night at our house during a "big" meeting.

A few years later, disregarding a good start, my life became an unexplainable tangle, with nothing good I ever did to merit the notice of my Creator who has blessed me. He never needed the help of any man! He has blessed me I hope all the days of my life, not for what I have done or I will do.

In my early teens I began beating on a

banjo and sawing on an old fiddle. How my mother stood the noise, I don't know. A few years later a neighbor and I took to playing for parties and would go sometimes 3 or 4 miles to play. We drank some but I never was drunk in my life, but the older I got the more wicked I became. I was not ill-natured because I had friends wherever I went. When I was 24 or 25 I began to lose interest in parties.

Sometime later, one of my buddies and I stopped in at one of my neighbor's house. This neighbor had been married several months and there were 2 or 3 girls there. One of them was about my age and I had been to her house because she only lived about 2 miles from me. We had grown up together. But I had never dated her before or hardly noticed her. It was as if I saw her for the first time. As a friend, I asked her for a date. I filled that date and asked her for another one. She said, "sure". She also said that she would tell her other boyfriend not to come back. Her boyfriend was a man of society, he was quiet and had a good job. They had been going together for over a year and why she left him for this idiot I never knew. In about a year we were married. I named her my "baby" (she weighed less than a hundred pounds) and she was the joy of my life for 50 odd years.

When we were married I took my girl to a preacher's house in a buggy, and some of the family went along. The preacher came out and performed the ceremony. I took her to my home where I had one room furnished. A few months later I bought a 6-acre field that joined the road. It had a log cabin on it with a lean-to porch and a kitchen on one end. This was some let down from her father's 8-room house and his 3 or 4 hundred acres of land, but we were happy. Later we started a new house and before we got it finished she joined the Primitive Baptist Church. We later sold about everything we could spare and bought a farm down in the valley. We were in sight of a Primitive Baptist Church. A little farther on the other side

of us was another church. I am proud to say that the whole community approved of us as neighbors and friends. I hope we did not let them down.

Dear friends, no one ever knew the deep misery that I went through. My friends and family knew that there was something bothering me that they could not help. At times, to forget the horror of the life that I was living, I would promise myself that I would quit swearing and do better. I had then got to the point where I began to feel proud of myself for I had quit swearing and was doing better. Then shortly after we had returned from church, there was a minor incident near the house, and my temper had never flown so high as it did then. I rushed out of the house swearing vengeance. When I got to the yard gate I was struck speechless, and instead of opening the gate, I shut my mouth. A voice spoke in my soul and said, "You have been promising your Creator that you were going to quit swearing. I turned and went back in the house. After that, I became a beggar instead of making promises.

One day my two sons and I were on the farm cleaning up a fence row. I had been in a horrible shape. I told the boys to take the cows in and that I would be on in a few minutes. As soon as they had got out of sight, I got down on my knees to beg my Creator to have mercy on me, but I could not open my mouth. A voice said, "Get thee hence." A horrible fear came over me and I grabbed up my tools and left in a hurry. There was still no relief; so I got down on my knees to beg again, and could not speak. The voice said, "Who art thou to call on the Savior?" The same fear came and I grabbed up my tools and tried to get away again. After some relief I began to look forward to our association meeting that was coming up.

(Concluded next month)

SOUTH OUACHITA ASSOCIATION

The next session of the South Ouachita Association will convene, the Lord willing,

with Rehobeth Church commencing on Friday before the 4th Sunday in September, 1975. (September 26, 27, 28) Rehoboth Church is located north of El Dorado, Ark. From El Dorado take 167 north for 4½ miles. Get on Hwy. 7 north for 3 miles and take 335 south for ½ mile to Rehoboth Church on your left.

Lovers of the truth are welcome to attend our meeting.

C. C. Barron, Clerk

THREE DAY MEETING AT
MOSSYROCK, WASH.

The Bethel Primitive Baptist Church of Mossyrock, Wash. will hold their annual three day meeting the third Sunday and Friday and Saturday before in August, with Elder W. W. Taylor of Tinsman, Arkansas being with us. Our pastor is Elder Ben F. Preston of The Dalles, Oregon.

Directions: Leave Interstate 5 at the road signs which say Mossyrock and Yakima, and travel east about fifteen miles to the first caution light, turn right and go to first stop sign, and make another right turn, and then a left at the Texaco Station on Isabella Road. Meeting House is a short distance on the left.

All brethren and friends are welcome.

Opal Hunting, Church Clerk

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The next session of the above Union is to be held, the Lord willing, with Mt. Ararat Church the 5th Sunday and Saturday before in August. All lovers of the truth are invited to visit with us.

Eld. H. W. Wray, Mod.
Doris Hamilton, Clerk

BLACK CREEK UNION

The next session of the *Black Creek Union* will be held, the Lord willing, at Wilson Church the 5th Sunday and Saturday before

in August, 1975. Everyone is cordially invited to come and worship with us.

Harold H. Pittman, Clerk
Box 744,
Bennettsville, S. C. 29512

PLEASANT VALLEY ASSOCIATION

The *Pleasant Valley Association* has changed its meeting time this year from the 3rd Sunday week-end in August, to the 2nd Sunday week-end in August. It will meet with Mt. Zion Church (D.V.) in the Rio Grande Valley August 8, 9 and 10, 1975. Lovers of the truth are invited.

Elder Jerry Evers

BICENTENNIAL OBSERVANCE
TOWN CREEK CHURCH

The brethren at *Towne Creek Church* of the Pigg River Primitive Baptist Association, in Henry County, Virginia, will hold an all-day meeting, the Lord willing, the fifth Sunday in August.

This meeting is held in commemoration of our two hundredth anniversary, and we invite all persons interested to visit us at this time.

The church is located on State Road No. 605 off of U. S. Highway 220, west on road leading to Henry, Virginia.

Elder P. E. Ingram, Mod.
Tommy Lovell, Clerk

CORRECTION OF ERROR

In our July issue it was stated that the All-Day Meeting at Slate Hill, N. Y. would be held July 5, 1975. This was an error since the correct date is Saturday, August 2nd.

We hope that this notice will appear in time for those interested to note the correction. — J.D.W.

Danville, Virginia August, 1975

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R. F. D. 1, Box 539 Beechwood Lane
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EDITORIAL

EPHESIANS 2

In our last our space was allotted to God's eternal act towards us. In this feeble effort, it is my design to pay attention to His work in time in our behalf. I will do this as best I can. Although I have been reading and studying this sacred volume longer than many, I have been a poor student, and feel that I have barely touched the surface of the things that God has done for us, and the things that are still in His agenda to do for us. I am as poor today in spiritual things as I was nearly fifty years ago on the plains of

southeast Missouri when He said to me, "Soul, this night thy soul shall be required of thee, and what are these goods going to be to you?" Since that time, I have not been anything in my relationship with the earth save a poor wretched sinner. Yet, I am not belittling myself in my relationship with Him that visited me at that time. I do not appear before you in my relationship with the earth, but if called of God, as was Aaron, I appear before you in the strength of the Redeemer God. I remember so vividly the singing of dear Brother Gladding in Baltimore,

"Afflicted saint, to Christ draw near;

Thy Saviour's gracious promise hear;

His faithful word declares to thee

That as thy days, thy strength shall be,

When ghastly death appears in view,

Christ's presence shall thy fears subdue,

He comes to set thy spirit free;

And as thy days, thy strength shall be."

and I think and believe that my soul has found out right well that all of our fleshly strength is as water poured out; unless I have been deceived, not by God, but by Satan, I have since had a new source of Strength, as well as a new strength, given me.

In His work of reducing my strength to a nonentity (as far as salvation is concerned), He then, as I humbly hope, gave me something that I had not known before, yea, something which I had not believed could be before. I had known strength yes, but going up against the yoke caused fatigue and running out of strength. Now that order of business was reversed. It was take the yoke and learn of me, and find rest, and find lightness in the tasks assigned to you, and no galling effects from the burden of the yoke. (Mat. II:28, 30)

It is my hope that I have learned at His feet. If so, I do not have a compromise to make about what I write and preach; I do not have any apologies to make for what God has done, is doing, or will do in the future; what He has said, is law and gospel to me, even though the most (and I sometimes fear all) is shrouded in mystery to where I

do not understand anything. But it is not always thus, for there are times when I am emboldened to say that I know Him whom to know is life eternal. Based upon this promise, I write and I preach. I do not have an open mind about what has been, as I hope, taught me at His feet. I am not subject to change about it; I do not want (and do not intend to engage in) argument and fault finding with any man, nor do I want any private interpretations of the Scriptures nor do I want Elder John Doe nor his contemporary, Elder Tom Roe, telling me what God means.

With this preface, which is meant to be to you, the readers, I venture to expound to you the unfolding of what God has done for sinners in time. Since hidden things belong to God, and revealed things to us and our children, it behooves us to remember that what God determined or purposed in eternity would not be worth one thing to us *unless* He reveals it to us in time. The wisdom of God in a mystery was hidden until revealed. God ordained this hidden wisdom before the world unto our glory. The world could not know this hidden mystery anymore than it can receive the Comforter, and if they could have known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. Had God not left them in ignorance, His ignorance in it would have surpassed them in their ignorance.

The beginning of this work with the chosen vessels in a manifest sense is in quickening them into life. In the talk between the Saviour and Nicedemus it was spoken of as being born again. Yet, there is, to me, a difference in the two. The begetting is not the birth. In the begetting life is impregnated, but the birth is afterwards. However, the quickening into life is always done where previously a state of death reigned. These Ephesians were dead and we well know that the dead can not act in order to be alive. This begetting or quickening was the work of God. That which is begotten can never be the means of its begetting; that which is born is never

the cause of its having life. Dead things must wait in a dormant state until a living something acts upon them. Those that were quickened into life were as living in nature as those that had been quickened and born again even though years before. They were not any more dead corporeally than were the living in the flesh in all the world. Up until the quickening they were dead in sin, and this death is as extensive and thorough and complete as are corporeally dead. In corporeal death the body dies; in the death in trespasses and sin, the faculties are all dead.

This Adamic man does not know that he is dead in sin. If he knew the difference between life and death he would be well aware of his condition, but not knowing anything because of death (Eccl. 9:5) he thinks that he is as much alive as anyone. This he will never know as long as he is dead, but thinking that he is alive, he will be as active as anyone, not knowing that his actions are those of one dead in sin. The most useless and frustrating thing that a citizen of Zion can do is to try to show a dead man that he is dead. He will make a lot of noise in showing you that he is much alive.

In the midst of this deadliness, the Lord quickens the chosen vessels into everlasting life. This is not done because of any difference whatever between them and those not chosen. All of them were acting exactly alike. This action continued right up until the quickening. One great (?) theologian said that Paul heard Stephen praying and that he was giving heed to what he said, turning it over in his mind and concluded that it was better for him to turn over a new leaf. This does not have any semblance to the truth. Saul was still breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the people of God when the light shone around him, and surely he was qualified, both from experience and by inspiration, to give a truthful account of how that the Lord deals with sinners in the beginning. Before these Ephesians were made alive,

they were living just exactly like the course of this world; they were talking just like the people around them; they were fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were *by nature the children of wrath, even as others.*

Before one knows this, he or she will have to come under the quickening of God. This truth can not be taught by any man or set of men or by all men working in unison, for one that has been quickened by the Lord knows better than to join in such an affair; and all others are as dead and as blind as the ones whom they would quicken (Eccl. 9:5; Mat. 15:14). False doctrine must be denied; the mouth of a gainsaying world must be challenged, but never with the thought that they will see the light and come to the truth. Therefore, it behoves me to be sparing with our arrows into the camp of Babylon.

Let us look back to that illustrious day. It has been said that the children of Israel will remember the way that they have been led. As far as experimental knowledge goes, we have today as much to remember as did the ancient brethren on their forty year journey. Do you remember your days before trouble came. Have you, when your trials have been so trying, been guilty of upbraiding the Lord because you left the fleshpots of Egypt and came out into the wilderness road to starve? We did not have soul trouble, and if any trouble came our way we were so sold (dead) on ourselves that we verily thought that we could handle it if we but put our hand to it; and if the ways of life denied us something we turned from it as the fox turned from jumping after grapes, saying that it was not worth us expending our talents to get it. Our barns were full and we had our eyes set on building larger facilities to store our goods that had so grown in volume that our reservation had grown into a vast surplus. We had revelled in watching our conduct and enjoyed comparing it with the ones that professed to be following the Lord. We did not know anything about not being able to handle

any situation that arose about religion, nor could we visualize anything coming up in our lives like unto that. But the day did come. It is etched in my memory with an indelible writing from God. The day came as all before it, but about middle of the day I became disturbed. As far as my memory goes (and I am reasonably sure) religion had not been mentioned; in fact, that was a subject that the men folks disapproved of for themselves and their wives; I had not received any meloncholy letters or messages. It is still, after almost fifty years, a great mystery as to what did happen. I do not say that it was the Lord, but I do say that it was a brand new thing; that I did not bring it about; and I go further and say that the sorrow and anxiety that stemmed from it was beyond my ability to cross out of my mind. Instead of it vanishing or lessening, the power of it became the ruling principle in my life. I am sure that a word has not fell from my lips nor a word crossed my typewriter in the last fifty years that would say that I am a fit subject to be compared with Paul except in my sins. I shudder now to think how profane that I was, and even today it throws a pall over me to hear that kind of talk. Verily, it is easy to see by the record how vile that Saul was, but only I and my one witness (the Lord) knows how sinful I was. I would beg for saving grace to be counted worthy to join with and follow along with that eminent apostle in telling this travel of how God deals with sinners in the beginning. I want to reiterate once again that not a man had done anything to get Saul started heavenward. He was "yet" doing the same thing that he had been doing for years. If any difference could be noticed, it would seem that his malicious spirit was more intensely absorbed in persecution than ever before. As he was engaged in this nefarious persecution; *while* he was "yet" doing as he had previously been doing, something took place that had never been done before. Isn't that the way that it was with you? He was stopped still and knocked to the ground.

I am sure that it says that he fell, but as you look back over life, how many times have you volunteered to fall? We fall because of a power that comes upon us.

It is easy to find this experience catalogued in religious publications. So many are able to tell a beautiful deliverance like unto this. Oh, I am well aware that but few of us have a spectacular experience as did our dear brother, but I am equally sure that we all came to a day that we had never seen nor felt before. This day we will never forget. As we look at Paul's description of us all, it is with astonishment that we listen at what men preach and write. We were dead in sin, and, according to his description, *and our experience*, we are well aware that it is true. All religionist will tell you that you must change your way before God will love you or let you into His kingdom. It was not that way with these Ephesians; it was not that way with Paul; it was not that way with you and me. God loved us with an everlasting love, and this love was manifested by His quickening us into life. "But God." Notice that, dear reader. Not that we did, but God did. He loved us because that He was rich in mercy, and while we were still dead, He quickened us together with Christ (by grace ye are saved), and hath raised us up together and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. Now that rich mercy and that saving grace had to do with our dead condition. "But God" who is rich in mercy quickened us. That is step One. Step two is like unto it. "But God" raised us up. He that thought he was doing God's will was destitute of all knowledge of God as Saviour. When this light and voice came, he died still again. He was utterly dead to himself as doing the will of God, for he did not know the Lord, and, although a busy man in religious affairs, he did not know the least thing about the religion of the Lord Jesus Christ; thus his religion died then and there. This is salvation by grace in changing Saul from a persecutor to a praying child of God; this is

salvation by grace in the quickening of a natural man into life eternal, this saving grace does not stop there. It raises him up (for we all fell when it was made manifest that the life that we had been living was in death), and it is effectual grace. He had been a roving, railing persecutor on the go, zealous and energetic to keep the law and punish all that oppressed the way of the fathers, but grace has made him sit down in the same company with the persecuted. What a wonder! Behold the wonders of God! Extol in the highest strains the saving grace of God. Sinners quickened, sinners loved, sinners saved, sinners raised up, and sinners made to sit down in the assembly of the persecuted. This is rich grace indeed, this is tender mercy indeed. This is the most miraculous doctrine that ever fell from heaven or that has ever been proclaimed by mortal man. It is from God. You may talk all you please about repetition and triteness among the Old Baptist ministers, but this is something that we desire to hear again and again. God moves into the lives of men and women and deals with them in such a way that they are sent to the very people that they had persecuted, and they are made to preach and to believe that which they were determined never to believe.

God has saved us by His grace and His mercy when we were dead in sin. Now that is the way it came about with the Ephesians. If we are on the right road that is the way that it came about with us. As you watch the continuity of this grace salvation it raises up characters that fell from their former trust in the law and in themselves (like unto Saul) and makes them sit down in heavenly places with Christ Jesus. He does this that in the ages to come, that is, in future days, He might show the exceeding riches of His grace *in* His kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. Now who is it that is coming forward and tell us that this grace which raises them up from their fallen state is a different variety of grace than that which brought them down? Who is coming forward to

tell us that this grace which is shown them in the ages after the first dealing with them is a different kind than that which is shown them in the outset. We must insist that it was mercy and grace that quickened them (v. 4, 5), and we must insist that it was the exceeding riches of His grace that was to be shown in the ages to come (v. 7.) Have I got a reader that would attempt to differentiate between the grace in verses four and five, and the grace in verse seven? I am writing with the thought in mind of finding out the work of the Lord Jesus Christ in saving sinners. I am not trying to trick you, nor to ridicule you. I do not intend to be dry and rigid. Evidently, God intended to show in the ages to come the riches of His grace, for in verse eight we are told that by grace ye are saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: *it is the gift of God*. The grace in this verse which is through faith, is *after* the saving in verses four and five. I am reaching after the simple truth, but I do not desire to reach unfairly. Will it be wrong for me to ask again for someone to explain the difference between the grace that quickened us and the grace that raised us up, the grace that made us sit down, the grace that is to be shown in the ages to come, the grace that saves us through faith? Paul tells us (v. 5) that we are saved by grace. This is present sense and it was applicable to the quickening. Now all of the other actions of God towards us were *after* the quickening. Now we all agree, do we not, that it was grace this first time. What kind of reasoning is it that would say that the saving grace in our time state after this quickening is a different grace? What have we got that will prove that by the written word? When was grace ever spoken about that was not saving grace? When did grace ever fail to save? If the grace that quickened (saved) us was saving grace, what kind of grace was it that Paul was speaking about later (that is, after the quickening came raising us up, making us sit down in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, and by

which we see and enjoy in the later ages) when he declared that "by grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God?" That is present tense, it is grace that saves presently.

W.D.G.

VOICES OF THE PAST
"He being dead yet speaketh"

ROMANS 5:18, 19

"Therefore, as by the offence of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation; even so by the righteousness of one, the free gift came upon all men unto justification of life. For as by one man's disobedience, many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one, shall many be made righteous."

The great doctrine of redemption by grace, is the theme of the inspired apostle in our text, and indeed of the gospel ministry. The consideration of this subject, involves the fall, guilt and just condemnation of God's people, in the earthly Adam, and their deliverance in the second Adam, which is the Lord from heaven. Treating on this subject in our text and its connections, the apostle alludes to the federal relationship of the two Adam's, and their respective posterities. The first Adam, being of the earth, earthly, is unable to develop or produce a posterity of a different character or quality from himself; his offspring are consequently like himself, of the earth earthy. The second Adam, being the Lord from heaven, is spiritual, and the seminal, or progenitive head of his spiritual posterity. Hence the earthy Adam is the figure of the spiritual Adam which was to come, (see verse 14) "And so it is written, the first man Adam was made a living soul; the last Adam was made a quickening spirit. Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but natural; and afterward that which is spiritual; the first man is of the earth,

earthy, the second man is the Lord from heaven. As is the earthy, such, are they also that are earthy; and as is the heavenly, such are they also that are heavenly," (1 Cor. 15:44-88)

The guilt and condemnation of the posterity of the first Adam bears even date with the first transgression of Adam in the garden, before the first of all his numerous progeny were born. They were all created in Adam, and they were Adam, and were therefore righteously included in the guilt of Adam's transgression, for they all being in him, were at the same time in the transgression. For such is and unavoidably must be the nature and effect of federal relationship. Therefore, the apostle tells us in our text, "as by the offence of one." That one was an entire race, imbodyed in one man, but to be developed by multiplication into all the tribes of mankind. "By the offence of (this) one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation." This argument Paul makes conclusive and indisputable, by the fact that by one man's offence, death reigned by one. None can deny this, that from Adam to Moses, death reigned over all the children of Adam, and that death still continues to reign over all the sons of men. Death cannot reign but by sin, for the sting of death is sin, and the wages of sin is death. Therefore it is evident that the sting infused the poison which results in death, when all were embodied in the one undeveloped man.

This judgment which has already come upon all men, is the decision of God the Judge of all; it cannot be reversed or annulled. It is in strict accordance with his holy law, and its execution is demanded by eternal Justice. It has come upon all men; not to come, if they do not repent or reform, for it has come upon all men to condemnation. All men are therefore condemned already, and have been, ever since the judgement came, which is nearly six thousand years ago; and it has come upon us who were not then born, and equally on all who are not yet born; for

all have sinned in Adam. Every mouth is stopped by the law, and the whole world of mankind is guilty before God.

Now as the nature and effect of the federal relationship of Adam and his posterity, has involved all alike in sin, judgment and condemnation, "even so," exactly so; or in the same manner; the federal relationship of Christ and his spiritual posterity secures to all the people of God, the righteousness of justification of life. On legal principles, if the relation subsisting between Christ and his members was such, that Christ could bear their sins in his own body, or that Justice could inflict the penalties of the divine law on him, which were due to our transgression; then the same relationship must make Christ's obedience to the law, and sufferings under the law, the ground of our justification to life. The law condemned us to death, but the righteousness of Christ's active and passive obedience to the law, on our behalf takes away our guilt, and death as the consequence of guilt, and justifies us to life, as the opposite of death.

In further illustration of this, our apostle continued, "For as by one man's disobedience many were made sinners, so by the obedience of one shall many be made righteous." We have shown that by the offense of Adam, all Adam's posterity are made sinners, judgment has come upon them all to condemnation, now taking this as a divinely authorized figure, we must unavoidably conclude that the justification unto life, of the seed of the second Adam, is by virtue of his obedience to the law on their behalf; and the analogy of the figure shows that the same law and divine justice of God, which could behold all the human family in the first Adam, and being in him, partakers of the guilt of his disobedience, must with equal clearness behold all the spiritual seed in the second Adam, when he obeyed the law and bore its penalties, as partakers, in him of his righteousness unto justification of life. We all sinned in Adam, and

in Adam we all die. So in Christ all whom God has chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world, when he was delivered up for our offenses, and bore our sins in his own body on the cross, met the utmost of the penal demands of the law; and when Christ was raised from the dead, we were raised up with him to justification of life. Our perfect justification is therefore not predicated partly on what Christ has done, and partly on what his people are to do; but it is by the obedience of One, that is of Christ, exclusively of anything and everything else, that the saints are made righteous, this is prospective, of what shall be by the obedience of one. But if Christ did not fully, effectively and forever purge away all our guilt legally when he died and arose from the dead, this prospect, assurance and certainty that all his children shall be made righteous, experimentally, would be forever cut off. The atonement was perfect and complete, in Jesus Christ our Lord, and in him we were reconciled to God, while we were yet sinners in ourselves.—But all that was legally fulfilled for us in Christ, shall most certainly be experimentally fulfilled in us, individually at the appointed time. But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were sinners, Christ died for us. Much more then, being justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him. For if while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.” Rom. v. 8-11.

Much confusion and jargon arises with arminians and universalists, in consequence of their confounding the type with the anti-type, the figure with the thing signified, the shadow with the substance.—General or universal atonement is inferred by them, from such declarations as those in our text, because they do not perceive that the earthly Adam, as the type, is connected with his own earthly posterity, prefiguring the anti-typical Adam, and his chosen generation, royal priesthood, and

holy nation. The type is the natural progenitor of his own race which includes all his natural offspring; and Christ is the head over all things to his Church; which, if we admit that by the disobedience of one many were made sinners, we must admit that many sinned in that one man. A man is made up of a body, head, and many members. When we say a man breathes, we do not affirm that his hand, feet and all the members of the man respectively inhales and exhales the atmosphere; it is enough that the proper organs convey the vital air into and from the lungs, to justify the declaration that the man breathes. Personally, as the respective members of Adam, not one of his posterity was born when we were made sinners by his disobedience to God; and as none are sinners but those who have sinned, the declaration of *our text proves that although unborn, we did sin, in the disobedience of Adam. So in the application which the apostle makes of the figures to Christ and his seed, as anti-typical of Adam and his seed, when Christ obeyed the law his people were so embodied in him, that his obedience was our obedience, his death was the very death which the law consigned us to; and when he died for all his people, then were they all dead, and when he arose for their justification, they were all quickened together with him; and raised up together, and made to sit together in the heavenly places in him. Legally this was all accomplished when Christ, and all his people in him, died and arose again from the dead, they were legally all made righteous then and there; but our text reads, “So by the obedience of one SHALL many be made righteous,” in his body, who is the fulness of him that filleth all in all.*

The righteousness of Christ unto justification of life, is not held up as a commodity in the market, offered to the highest bidder, nor is it offered conditionally to any; but, it is the *free gift*. It is not offered to, but *comes upon* all men; that is all the seed of the anti-typical Adam. Free because it is uncon-

ditionally, without money, without price. "The gift of God, is eternal life; and that gift is free, sovereign, and effectual, and where God has sent it, it comes, and where it comes, and on whom it comes, it comes to justification of life. And it is God that justifies, while by the deeds or works of the law we are positively informed, there shall no flesh be justified in the sight of God.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe, August 15, 1861)

PRAYER AND PREDESTINATION

"Fourth question. *Does predestination destroy the idea of prayer?* We answer that, on the contrary, it assures the value of prayer. The objection supposed in this question, cuts like a two-edged sword. If it be said to be of no use to pray against evil, which is embraced in the predestination of God, then it can be said with equal force, that it is no use to pray for the good that he has predestinated. It may be said that the evil will come anyway, whether we pray for deliverance or not, but so may it be said that the good will come anyhow, whether we pray or not. This argument pursued to its conclusion, would drive all predestination out of the universe, or else it would drive all prayer out of the universe. It says that prayer and predestination cannot occupy the same ground. We are told that Elijah prayed for the very thing that God had determined should come upon the land, and which had been revealed to the prophet. The fact that it was in the predetermination of God, acted as an incentive for prayer, rather than as a deterrent, and it will ever be found to be so. We are sure that our God has never bestowed upon us any but predetermined blessings, and yet we have not felt restrained in prayer.

Fifth question. *Would not the foreknowledge of God, and the doctrine of his immutability, destroy all accountability, and all prayer, as well as his predestination?* It seems clear to our

mind, that if one will do this, then the others will also. But we do not believe that either, or all these principles of truth, have any such result. Perhaps the best test of any doctrine, is the results in the lives of men; and we know that in the circle of our acquaintance, the brethren who have held most strongly to the doctrine of God's foreknowledge and predestination, and immutability, have been at the same time most jealous and careful of their lives and conduct. *We have never met one yet who would say, when convinced of sin, I could not help it, for it was predestinated to be so; and, as said before, this has never entered our mind, that we could excuse ourself for sin, because we have believed so firmly the universal predestination of God, as well as his foreknowledge and immutability.* But we repeat, that it is sure that according to all known principles of human reason, foreknowledge, and the immutability of God, would do away with prayer and human accountability, as certain as would predestination. But neither of these principles of truth are fraught with such results in the case of any who love the doctrine."

Elder F. A. Chick

(The above were among some questions answered by Elder Chick in the December 1, 1897, issue of the *Signs*. We republish this by request)

THE EXPERIENCE AND OBITUARY OF SISTER REPSEY PHILLIPS

In loving memory of sister Repsey Phillips who passed from this life November 10th, 1974. She will be sadly missed by her four children and friends. She dearly loved her church and its members.

While going through her few precious possessions her daughter found some folded yellow pages that Sister Phillips had written forty-five years ago on January 5, 1930 before becoming a member of Otter Creek Primitive Baptist Church.

The following is a copy of sister Repsey's notes.

EXPERIENCE

I feel like writing a few words. If I leave this world before I can have a home with you (Primitive Baptist Members) I shall not be satisfied. I feel like the Lord has shown me a better home hereafter. This fall and winter has been a terrible time for me.

I sit and cry most of the time and feel like I'm losing my mind. The sun shines but it looks like a ball of fire. My mama visits me and I tell her how red the sun is, and begin to cry. She goes home and tells my sisters that I really am losing my mind and they would have to take care of my small children.

When I had carried my burden as long as I thought I could I began to think about where I might get some help. I had always gone to the Doctor before and had never given the Lord any credit. But now from my heart I asked, "Oh Lord what have I done to suffer like this." "Well it wasn't long before I had what I must call a dream, yet it was much plainer than a dream to me. I was told to go and join the Primitive Baptist Church and you shall be healed.

Within the next few weeks there was a revival at a church near my home. I thought I would go and join the church and get rid of my burden, but after I joined my burden was worse than ever. I would look up at the red sun and beg the Lord to help me.

When I had suffered as long as I felt I could, I heard a voice saying, "Your name is in the wrong church." Still I didn't know what to do. I couldn't eat or sleep and my family couldn't understand me any more. I wouldn't tell anyone about my dreams I had begun to have, but I couldn't get them off my mind. I dreamed there was a war going on and guns firing. Jesus was hovering over the guns, but not a shot or smoke reached him.

Later in the week I dreamed there was an old lady here at home with me and the world was coming to an end.

I saw a cross covering the whole world toward the sunset. The lady climbed on a block of wood, and I climbed up with her and reached for my family. I knew she was a Christian and would be saved, and I wanted to be saved too. The flame went on, but we were saved. This bothered me so much I finally told my family that the world was coming to the end.

I am still burdened and having dreams. I heard a voice one night telling me that my blood would turn to water and you shall leave this world. "Oh Lord", I begged, "I am a lost sinner and shall die and go to torment, please have mercy on me." I knew I must die and leave my children in the hands of someone else. I cried day and night knowing I had to die.

In a few nights I had gone to bed and there was the prettiest light around me on the bed, and a voice said, "The same one is here to care for your children that took care of you." Then I could realize how helpless I was and could see how God had taken care of me. After this my burden seemed lighter.

The next dream was a week later. I dreamed that I knew when my crown was filled with blessings I would reach the everlasting home. I knew for sure now that I had to die because I was such a sinner. I feel there is no forgiveness for me. "Oh Lord I have got to leave my children."

Sister Phillips did leave her old world. She joined the Primitive Baptist Church shortly after she wrote this experience.

OBITUARY

Sister Repsey was born in Wilson County, May 22, 1899. It was January 5, 1915 when Sister Repsey was married to Amos Phillips. The good Lord blessed them with four lovely children, one daughter and three sons, Mildred, Willis, Bennie C. and Russell.

She loved the Doctrine of Electing Grace and she seemed to enjoy the fellowship of the church as long as she was able to attend. I would like to tell her children, family and friends who were so devoted to her, to grieve not over Sister Repsey, for deep down in my

heart I feel that God loved best and that our loss is her eternal gain.

Her funeral was preached at her home by her Pastor Elder Joe Sawyers. Her body was laid to rest in the Macclesfield Cemetery beneath a mound of beautiful flowers, to await the Resurrection Morning.

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Experience and Obituary be sent to the *Zions Landmark*, one to *Signs of Times* for publishing, and one to be put on Church Records.

Done by order of Otters Creek Primitive Baptist Church the first Saturday in December, 1974. Written by a brother and sister who loved her, Brother Joe B. Coker and Sister Lina Gardner.

Elder Joe Sawyers,
Moderator
Joe B. Coker,
Clerk

OBITUARIES

MARGARET BAGGETT MURPHY

The Lord, at his appointed time has called our own dear and beloved Sister, from this earthly life to that "One" eternal sabbath day, a sweet day of rest, where we feel, she is now resting from all her labours, and her works do follow her.

Sister Margaret was born June the 6th, 1908, her parents were the late Marion Baggett, and the late Carrie Philips Baggett, of Dunn, N. C.

Sister Margaret passed from this life December 15th, 1974. She united with Black River Primitive Baptist Church at the age of 26 years, was at that time disabled to go to church, and a meeting was called at her home, and she related her experience, and was received into the fellowship of the church on the third Sunday afternoon, May 19th, 1934, was baptized the following Tuesday p.m. by the late Elder E. C. Jones.

Sister Margaret was married to the late Raymond Murphy in 1928 and only two children to this union, which survive her. One son, Kenneth Murphy, of Wilmington, N. C., and a daughter, Darlene McLaurin of Fayetteville, N. C.

Sister Margaret was a very faithful member of Black River Primitive Baptist Church, fulfilling the many duties in her life, being a nurse, and possessed such a sweet personality she was a comfort to the many patients she nursed in the different hospitals she worked in from a young girl up to the last few months before her death. She loved her church, a place she found great consolation and rest for her soul, and was very prompt to lend a helpful hand for the needs of the church, when she was privileged to do so. She also stood strictly

for the doctrine, Salvation by the grace of God.

She experienced many trials and disappointments in life, but by the grace of God, through faith, she was given sufficient strength to withstand the many storms of life, ever looking unto Jesus, who was the author and finisher of her faith, by which she was able to endure even to the end.

This dear sister acknowledged to her pastor, in her last few weeks of her illness that she did not expect to recover, so the writer feels that she was saying as one of old her departure was soon at hand, she had kept the faith she had finished her course, therefore there was a crown of righteousness laid up for her, that the Lord, the righteous judge shall give to her in that day.

We the Black River Church, do greatly miss her occupying a certain seat in our church at meeting time, just to the right from the pulpit.

Her funeral was conducted at Black River Primitive Baptist Church at 2 p.m. Tuesday December 17th by her pastor, Elder C. D. Turner, assisted by Elder W. D. Godwin. Her body was laid to rest in Greenwood Cemetery, at Dunn, N. C. There to wait the final resurrection, when Jesus shall come and call and her spiritual body shall rise with the great host of Gods elect, and the angels shall gather them from the four winds of the earth, to be caught up in that cloud of eternal glory, to be in the likeness of Jesus, and be satisfied for evermore.

We bow in humble submission to the will of the Heavenly Father, who doeth all things well, and knowest the best for us all.

Elder C. D. Turner, Moderator
Sister Nettie Turlington, Clerk

SISTER LIZZIE DALTON VASSER

In loving memory of a dear Sister in Christ, Sister Lizzie Vasser was born on December 19, 1876 to the late David and Lucy Hines Dalton and died on January 20, 1975 in the Medical Care Center, Lynchburg, Virginia, having spent 98 years, 1 month, and 1 day here on this earth.

It is with a mixture of joy and sorrow that I attempt to write this memorial of one that I esteem so highly. We are saddened at her death, but we rejoice that she had a beautiful hope in the Lord Jesus Christ.

From my earliest memory of Sister Lizzie, when I was a little girl, she was one of my favorite people, always wearing a smile on her face and a kind word for everyone. I can never remember her saying anything bad about anyone. She was always concerned about the welfare of others. Just to know her was to love

her.

She attended Weatherford Church all her life and was always faithful to her church before and after her joining, and was a firm believer of Salvation by Grace. She united with Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church on August 23, 1964 and was baptized by her beloved pastor on the same day.

Sister Lizzie was married to Willie N. Vasser and to this union five children were born. Surviving her are one daughter, Mrs. Ruth Brumfield of Hurt, Virginia, two sons, Bradley and Willie both of Gretna, Virginia, one sister, Mrs. Lessie Bybee of Richmond, Virginia, 20 grandchildren, 47 great-grandchildren and 24 great great grandchildren.

Our dear sister, by an eye of faith, waited patiently and faithfully upon her God, trusting in his promise to his little ones to the end. She was blessed to manifest much love for her church and the brethren. I was blessed to visit her in the hospital and nursing home when she called upon her God and said she wanted to go home.

Her funeral was conducted at Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church on January 22, 1975 at 2:00 p.m. by her pastor, Elder O. K. Tench and Elder Raymond Goad. Her body was laid to rest in the church cemetery beneath a beautiful mound of flowers to await the call of her Heavenly Father.

We, the members of Weatherford Church will greatly miss Sister Lizzie, but we feel that our loss is her eternal gain. May God's richest blessings rest upon all that mourn, and may we be blest to say, "The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away, blessed by the name of the Lord."

Written by: Phyllis Goad at the request of Brother Marvin Brumfield.

Elder O. K. Tench, Moderator
L. H. Doss, Clerk

HOWELL T. HORNE

God in His loving mercy has seen fit to remove from our midst another dear brother, Howell T. Horne. He was the oldest member of Cypress Creek church, being born Feb. 3, 1882, died Dec. 28, 1974, making his stay on earth almost 93 years.

He was afflicted and spent the last several years in a nursing home. Sometimes his nephews and niece would bring him to quarterly meetings when he was able to attend. One of his greatest pleasures was for the dear Elder that conducted his funeral to hold meetings for him at the nursing home. In one of my last conversation with him at one of those meetings, he said he wished he could go to sleep and never wake up. So I'm sure his feel-

ings were "Come welcome death, I'll gladly go with thee." But I feel sure he was given the faith to run the race set before him as his favorite hymn was "Cast down, but not destroyed."

He united with the church April 13th, 1969 and was baptized by Elders L. L. Yopp and Harmon Brown.

He was married when a young man to Katie Simpson, who died, and later married Hattie Manning, who also preceded him in death. No children were born to either union. His survivors are one brother, one sister, and a host of nephews and nieces.

His funeral was conducted at Cypress Creek church by Elder D. B. Stokes and he was laid to rest in the family cemetery at the foot of his father's grave, which was his request.

Done by order of conference that I write this obituary and that a copy be given the family; one sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication, and one put in the church records. February, 1975.

Velma H. Horne, Clerk
Elder Harmon Brown, Moderator

SAINTS REST PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH Dallas, Texas

WHEREAS, it has pleased our Heavenly Father, in His wisdom and holiness, on July 14, 1973, to remove from this life our dear Brother Thomas H. (T. H.) Graham, bringing sorrow to our hearts.

AND WHEREAS. We believe that our loss is his gain, and that he has been removed from this life to Realms of Glory, and from a world of trouble to a land of delight. We sorrow not as though we have no hope, but because we shall see his face no more. Nevertheless we believe what the Lord does is best.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, by Saints Rest Church, that we bow in submission to His will, believing that when Christ shall appear, all those who are asleep in Christ shall be gathered up by Him in righteousness.

AND BE IT RESOLVED, That we extend sympathy to his family and friends, in that we have lost a true friend. The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away. Blessed be the name of the Lord.

ALSO BE IT RESOLVED, That a copy of this resolution be sent his family, a copy sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication, and a copy written in our church records.

Written by order of Saints Rest Church while in regular conference September 2, 1973.

Elder Carey C. Morris, Mod.
Deacon Dean G. Connell, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 143

DANVILLE, VA., SEPTEMBER, 1975

NO. 9

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 9/75
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

(concluded from last month)

My family and I always looked forward to the company that these meetings brought. They came on Saturday and some would spend the night with us. Elders and others came. My baby would sometimes say that she wondered what was wrong because we had not had company for two or three days. One day my baby, one of my daughters, and I went to an association meeting. We got lost so we got back on the highway. We saw two cars turn up ahead onto a side road. My daughter said, "Daddy, follow those cars." She was right. I began to get cold, I lost interest and never got a crumb that day. The next day I saw few friends and did not get a crumb again. The next day was no better. It began to look like my dream castle of the association that I had built, had crumbled. But not so!

Sometime in the dark of the night I was lying in my bed without a pain or a worry in this world. I heard a singing in the air above me, and as it became louder I recognized it as "Amazing Grace." There was a circle or beam of light that came down from above that circled the stand and seats above the brightness of the sun, not a shadow of a tree or anything to be seen. It seemed that I was in the trash that they had raked off of the church ground just outside the circle, as the light disappear-

ed. How many times since, when I was down in the valley, I have seen it! But the hymn, "Mixtures of joy and sorrow," tells it better than I.

Sometime later the relief that I had received began to get dim. Back into the valley of doubts and fears. Again I began to wonder if it was only my imagination in the first place, and my doom was that terrible pit. If it is my Creator's will I will try to hint at what I heard and saw, for the half has never been told:

After many fears one night, I fell asleep and dreamed that I was about to be overtaken by a fire while I was in the mountains. And when I got to the top I could not go another step, and there was nothing to hold on to so I could drag myself further. I was on the edge of a valley which was only light enough for me to see across. I heard a voice say, "Hey". It was like one of my neighbors shouting to another. "Look back," he said. And when I did that horrible fire gradually faded out and a silver-like ball appeared in the eastern horizon. It was about the size of a baseball and, as it approached, it increased in size to about one foot. Inside it was a star which never increased in brightness as it passed over. But a light from somewhere did, as if it was the sun. In the morning I awoke without a care in the world to a perfect day. I went out to inspect some hay we had mowed and it was perfect. We rushed to begin it and I thought that I never heard the birds sing so lovely. I had never seen the sun shine brighter. When the boys started raking the hay, I began forking the windrow in. I had not got far when I heard somebody say, "Hey". I looked and no one was there so I closed my eyes, rest-

ed my head on the fork handle and saw that dream haven. The hay was in a valley similar to the one I saw and when it passed out of sight, I forgot it. I went to forking hay as hard as I could, and when I had gotten about half way across the field it happened again. How many times throughout the day I heard this same call I have no idea. Each time not quite as loud. Later along life's road of worry, I have a dim hope that I might be one of the many called but few chosen. But like the few words of a hymn I have heard many times: "The few lucid mornings that dawn on us here are followed by gloom or beclouded with fear".

(This was not signed by the writer, but since it bears the marks of an experience of grace, we publish it.—J.D.W.)

A COMFORTING LETTER
BY HER SON

807 Pope Street,
Memphis, Tenn. 38112
May 4, 1974

Dear Editors:

This letter fell into my hands in 1972, and was laid away and forgotten. We lost our dear companion and their father who was buried April 27, 1974. While looking through some papers I found this letter. In my deep sorrow I read it. It contained doctrine and experience, and caused me to rejoice even in my grief.

I decided to send it to you for your consideration.

What a blessed Saviour believers have.

Mrs. James E. Young

ELDER SWAYNE YOUNG
TO HIS SISTER

Sunday, March 5, 1972

To my Sister Mrs. Carrie Jo. Williams:

Dearly beloved Sister in hope of eternal life in Jesus Christ our Lord, and

my Sister in the flesh in our relationship and kinship to our worldly Father and Mother.

It may seem and appear, and you may feel, that I am not sympathetic or understanding in your feelings of wretchedness, unworthiness, and seeming deadness of life. Whether the writing that is to follow be prompted of the Spirit or of fleshly vanity, God knows and will judge.

As we were discussing after meeting today, we often tend, in our weakness, to want to have our faith rest in someone near and dear to us in this world. We often tend to think that we see in those we esteem a steadfastness, a strength of character and abiding faith that causes us to want or desire to be like them. We have seasons of feeling that if I could only be like them, I could rest more easily — I would be more assured that God has dealt with and taught me. As carnal creatures, so filled and subject to vanity, we often strive to attain and appear as a solid example before others without letting them know that we are too weak and frail, and constantly questioning our own belief and faith. This is our natural instinct and pride in our own work and accomplishments. This is the natural man (or creature) that was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope. (Romans 8:20)

When we are acting or speaking subject to vanity, we are a constant thorn and a sore, adding affliction to those already sorely afflicted and burdened souls who are seeking comfort. Only when we are stripped of our vanity and made to confess our own unworthiness, our own faults, our own weakness and inability to even think to do good, let alone perform it, that we can comfort one who is made to feel that they alone are the vilest of sinners. We are comforted when those we have esteemed as the pillar of faith, confess their lack of it, and express their fears that they too are not worthy of our esteem, let alone the mercy and blessings of God.

At this writing I seem to be assured and persuaded that not just some men, but all men are subject to these vanities, these doubts, these fears and failings. Those with whom God deals and teaches, are the only ones who know it and will confess it. Even they don't confess it until they are made to feel they must, and are made to do so. In our weakness we often say this ought not to be, that we should always be willing to confess our faults one to another, knowing it will be of comfort to some. This however is not the case, we have to be made willing, and this is not a voluntary act of the creature so filled with vanity. Some of the time something seems to swell up within us, and we begin to search and look for something to do to help the cause of Christ — to work out a more perfect way of doing things: to go out into the hedges, the highways and byways, and compel all to come and hear the truth, the gospel that is so comforting to us. This, in my opinion, is the very height of vanity, phariseeism, workism, etc., for those who do not feel the need of Christ, do not see themselves as lost and undone sinners, do not see themselves in distress, in debt and discontented (Elder Griffin's text today 1 Samuel 22:1,2) will not and cannot hear the good news of the gospel that Christ had done all for the salvation of His people. As Elder Griffin was so blessed to proclaim in his discourse today, those who are not in distress, in debt and discontented would not feel secure and safe (only restless and uncomfortable) in the place where those so afflicted found rest.

I hope you do not think you are alone in these feelings of jealousy. I am persuaded that all of those who have been exercised of God, who have been made to feel after the mercies of God, who are made thankful for God's divine blessings and their hope of God's forgiveness, are from time to time filled with a desire to see more and more and larger numbers of Primitive Baptists and those who believe "Salvation by the grace of God and that alone." We tend to

want more and more evidence that what we believe is the truth. Numbers we feel is a measure and evidence that we are on the right track. However, this is not the case: there are all around us churches with thousands even millions of members who teach a worldly-wise doctrine that is pleasing to the vanity of men's minds. Numbers have never been, and I seriously doubt will ever be, any evidence to the true seeker of the truth. To be one of many neither denotes that one is either in the right or wrong. There could be millions all of the same mind not having all the facts, and firmly convinced of a thing, yet be completely wrong about it. The reverse could also be the case as well. By whom one is taught does make a difference. If one is taught by Christ who is the way, the truth and the life, they are sure to have the truth — One of my continued questions is, am I and have I been taught of and by Christ. Has the Comforter (the Holy Spirit) come to me and taken the things of Christ and shown them to me.

Sister, I am truly sympathetic and do understand what you say and mean when you speak of being dead, and feeling to be less than nothing, a dead dog. It seems that most of my goings and my way is filled with such feelings. It seems that I am constantly in doubt, and very fearful that I am not only not a child of Grace but a deceiver and a perpetrator of all that is directly opposite. Some of the time, as meeting day approaches, it seems to be the height of hypocrisy for me to get up before the congregation and speak or profess to speak in the name of God. Sometimes it seems that I can hardly wait for meeting as I want to tell something that seems would be comforting to God's little ones, —often I am stripped completely by meeting time and unable to say anything. At other times there seems to be a lot on my mind and I so filled that I cannot stop talking, but have an awful feeling afterwards that I spoke in my own strength and not by, through and of the power of God. I have some of

the most vain thoughts sometimes and am so puffed up as to think that I have some terribly important something or news to relate, and find myself jealous of the time taken by Elder Campbell and Elder Prince because I have something that is worth something to say — I am dreadfully ashamed of this, and have confessed this to them — but it seems that this is surely not the way of a God called minister — it is out of place and shamefully vain. What shall I do? shall I ignore it and pretend that I did not have such thoughts, or shall I confess them and beseech their forgiveness, and God's forgiveness? I am persuaded as stated earlier, that we should confess these things one to another, and not pretend and appear that we are a pillar of strength and above such thoughts and acts. This false pretense or appearance of staunchness will only tend to lead others to a false conclusion about you and make them feel that surely they are not one of the recipients of God's grace as they know themselves to be so much weaker and more faithless than you appear to be.

It is felt that this very thing was under consideration and voiced by the Apostle Paul in the 2nd chapter of his letter to the church of God at Corinth. In verses 3, 4 and 5 I quote, "And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling. And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God." He is saying that had he come appearing to be a pillar of strength, a wonderful and eloquent speaker filled with enticing and desirable wisdom, their faith might tend to be in Paul and not in the power of God, which was able to make him fearful, able to make him tremble and weak, but in spite of this speak of God's power, God's dealings with his people, God's wonderful love and mercy. Do we not feel comforted when we read Paul's confession here. Do we not feel strengthened by

the knowledge that Paul (surely a called man of God) felt to be weak, fearful and hopeless by himself to speak comfortably to them. I am comforted when I read that Paul was made to confess that when he would do good, evil was present with him. That which he did, he allowed not and what he would do, he did not. But what he hated, that he did. He confessed that the will was present with him but how to perform that which was good he found not. Oh! this fits my case, my own pitiful case. I seem to ever be doing the very thing that I hate — I seem to think of good to do, but never get around to doing it. I seem to do the very things I shouldn't do and leave undone all of the things I know to do. It is comforting to me to read where Paul confesses of the warfare within him, and that he delighted in the law of God after the inward men: but saw another law in his members warring against the law of his mind, and making him a captive of the law of sin in his members. He was given to feel wretched (as you do and I hope I have felt) and ask who shall deliver me from the body of this death? He was also given to give thanks to God that things were as they were, to thank God that he was with the mind given to serve the law of God, but recognizing that with his flesh he served the law of sin.

Dear Carrie Jo, so often I have the feeling that I wish you and I could be together often and could talk about these things. I get to feeling so ashamed when I know that we are so close together yet so far apart because of our daily duties and our need to fulfill our family duties. Often I think it is only vanity that causes me to be so needed by Chuck and Jeff. I have tried to teach them the things they should know, I have tried to provide and make them feel they are loved and that I am ever ready to help them (if they knew how frail, how helpless and undecided I am at times, they wouldn't want my help) and try to understand their needs. We are ever confronted with a way of life that contradicts everything we hope to believe

and trust in. I am fully persuaded and profess to believe that God has set things in order, done everything that is needful, determined all events and is eminently able to perform all that he has determined, and able to bring to pass all he has thought to do. Yet I find feeble, frail, weak me constantly trying to *help him get it done*.

How shameful and doubting I prove to be!

As I said in the beginning, whether all I have written is prompted of God in love for you and Him — God knows I hope it is not vanity. I hope it is with charity and you will be able to receive it in like manner. I love you very much — something, I hope it is love, causes me to want to let you know and to thank you for being kind toward me and displaying love my way.

Swayne (Young)

(The above was sent to us by Elder Young's mother, Sister Lucille Young who was much comforted by it after the passing of her husband, James E. Young in 1974. It was written to his sister)

MEETING AT HOUSTON

7942 Longridge,
Houston, Texas 77055

Dear Editors:

The brethren of Shepherd Fold Church in Houston, Texas, have permitted me to share the following glad tidings with the Signs:

The Church was blessed to host a special 5th Sunday meeting in March. Visitors from the sister churches of the Pleasant Valley, Sulphur Fork and South Ouachita Associations, and from the Saints Rest Church of Dallas met with us.

During the course of this meeting a presbytery was formed to ordain Brother Earl Hall as Deacon for Shepherd Fold Church. The minutes of this meeting are inclosed should you deem them of interest to your readers.

Elder Jerry Evers

Route 4, Box 157
Quitman, Ms. 39355

Dear Brother Spangler,

Recently, my thoughts have been upon the subject of God's judgments, and there appears to be many avenues of this subject in the New Testament. Since there are eleven different Greek words which are translated into the two words "judgment" and "judgments", the subject has a much broader meaning than commonly understood today. There are some sound and eminent brethren who render the word always to the future judgment when God shall gather all nations together and divide the sheep from the goats as the tares are separated from the wheat in the harvest. There are other eminent and sound brethren that assign the judgments exclusive to the heart during the gospel dispensation. There are still others who hold to both aspects of the judgment. I do not wish to get involved in those close hair-splitting views, but rather to pursue the different meanings as applied in the New Testament.

One interesting thing is that the word "judgment" connected with the word "seat" in "judgment-seat" carries a broad meaning which is a sentence, for or against, and can be understood of "justification, pardon, condemnation, damnation, or carried to law." It is the same as most often used in the Old Testament.

The JUDGMENT SEAT

The "judgment-seat" is most often used relative to the rostrum, pedestal, or throne, in the "judgment-hall" of the governors in the Roman provinces. Pilot sat on the "judgment-seat" when his wife told him not to have anything to do with "this just man" (Christ), and this was in the Judgment Hall in Jerusalem. Again, he sat on the Judgment-seat when he told the Jews to "behold your king". This word "judgment-seat" literally means a "foot's breath" or step, which was a raised platform, and was used exclusively when the governor made sentence "for or against" a per-

son under accusation before him.

Luke used the same word in recording the incidences involving Paul's arrest.

While Paul was in Achaia, he was arrested by Jews of Corinth and brought before Gallio the Roman governor of Achaia at his "judgment seat". He refused to hear the case, and certain Greeks seized Sosthenes, the chief ruler of the synagogue, and beat him before the "judgment seat". It was here that the Romans drove the accusing Jews from "before the judgment seat". (Acts 18)

Later Paul was arrested, Felix kept him bound for two years to please the Jews. However, when Festus, the Roman governor, took Felix's office, the Jews informed him against Paul. So after ten days, Festus "sitting on the judgment seat commanded Paul to be called." It was here that Paul appealed his case at "Caesar's judgment seat". (Acts 25).

Only twice does Paul use this word-combination "judgment seat". In Romans 14:10-12, he writes: "But why doest thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? For *we* shall (future tense) all stand before the JUDGMENT SEAT of Christ. For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God. So then every one OF US SHALL give account of himself before God." It is well here to keep in mind that the word "judgment" connected with "judgment seat" also carries the sentence both "for or against" one. Justification and righteousness is pronounced as well as condemnation or damnation.

Again, in 2nd Cor. 5:10, Paul uses this same word combination. His subject centers upon "if our earthly house of this tabernacle be dissolved, we have a building of God, an house not made with hands, ETERNAL IN THE HEAVENS" (verse 1). In this context, he discusses our "confidence" knowing "whilst we are at home in the BODY, we are ABSENT FROM THE LORD" (verse 6). He states his "willing rather to be absent from the BODY, and be

PRESENT with the Lord. Wherefore we labour, that, whether present or absent, we may be accepted of Him." (verse 9). In its context, surely the word must speak of a sentence of forgiveness, righteousness, and justification, for he says "For WE MUST ALL (personal pronoun, future tense) appear BEFORE the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things in body, according to that he hath done, whether good or bad." (verse 10).

All the force of this context makes it certain and personal as well as future. In this sense of the meaning, this judgment can not be the judgments that are in the heart. It isn't that this judgment "appears to us", but rather we must "appear before" it. Here we have a reference to a pedestal, rostrum, or throne, from whence for the election of grace the sentence is righteousness and pardon. In fact, what greater confidence can one have who has a hope in Christ, that before Him who loved us, and gave His life for us, we will appear. Surely it is merciful that we appear before a judgment seat upon which our own Advocate is the Judge! For rather would I appear before a Friend, than an enemy for this judgment. Paul fared very well before the Greek governor's judgment seat, but not before the Jews' or Caesar's!

It is noteworthy that in all our Articles of faith, and especially in the Old London Confession of 1680 "Of The General Judgment", Old Baptists in stating that they "believed in a resurrection of the dead and general JUDGMENT" always cited Romans 14:10-12 and II Cor. 5:10 as proof texts.

INTERNAL JUDGMENTS

God's judgments, for and against, is often manifest within a regenerate believer's heart. "If OUR hearts CONDEMN (judges) us, God is greater." Judgment in the heart is often positive. Whenever we are spiritually lifted and God manifests His gracious care of us to revive our hope and faith, this is a judgment FOR US. The sentence is pronounced that we are RIGHTEOUS.

This judgment is always discriminating, or "distinguishing", and therefore has multiple effects in the heart. It distinguishes between truth and error; it distinguishes between that which is carnal and that which is spiritual; it distinguishes between those things which are approved, disapproved, or indifferent in nature and grace.

A case in Scriptures is that of the unjust steward who while forgiven by his lord, seized his own debtors by the throat saying "pay me what thou owest." The lord's judgment of him was "turn him over to the tormentors until he has paid every wit". He was forgiven, yet was tormented for his mercilessness. So it often is with the children of grace. Doctrinally, God has forgiven the trespasses of all His children by virtue of Christ's atoning sacrifice and forgiveness, yet they are all taught to cry out "Father, forgive me for my sins I've committed." No one takes the abstract doctrine contrary to what experience of God's internal judgment has wrought within the heart. Regardless of the doctrinal truth of Christ's completed work of salvation, including forgiveness of sins, sinners still beg for His mercies in forgiveness of sins. The specific work of the Spirit is not only to lead the believers into all truth, but also to convince the world of "righteousness, sin, and judgment" and doctrinal truth will not prevent His work within the child of grace. Rather, the doctrinal truth taught the believer is such that when the Holy Ghost convinces them of sin, righteousness, judgment, it has its fruit in them for their comfort and confirmation that "If we sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the Righteous." In fact, the head knowledge of the doctrine is merely the "letter" if the experimental judgment of the Spirit is lacking. But if the experimental judgments be present, the doctrine is of the greatest comfort when a broken and contrite heart is brought to beg before the throne of grace and receives a revelation of the forgiveness which is in Christ Jesus.

EXTERNAL JUDGMENTS

Within the Scriptures, external judgments abound more numerous. God's judgments against Israel is for our admonition and instruction. A good case in point is mentioned in I Peter, chapters 3 and 4. Peter tells the scattered flock not to think it "strange" concerning "the fiery trials" which was to come against them, and admonishes them to be patient in suffering for righteousness sake. He points to the suffering of Christ to illustrate that patience. They once "worked the will of the Gentiles" such as fornication, lasciviousness, lust, excess of wine, banqueting, riot, etc. Those with whom they had their conversations in times past thought it strange that they no longer ran with them in the same manner. He explicitly stated that the past time in the way of the Gentiles should SUFFICE . . . they had been under lasciviousness for long enough and more than enough. But the time was at hand, when "judgment must begin AT the house of God". He does not say "IN the house of God" for this type of judgment can never be IN His house. The "fiery trials" they were about to suffer was to first begin at the house of God . . . but it would certainly not end there. For he adds: "and if it begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God. And if the righteous SCARCELY BE SAVED, where shall the ungodly and sinners appear?" (verse 17-18)

Now it is evident to a child of grace that the righteous are not "scarcely" regenerated nor "scarcely" sanctified, or "scarcely" redeemed, etc. In the persecution against the Jewish nation, however, the church was first under attack by the ungod who obeyed not the gospel of God. Even in the days of Herod, whom God's angel killed, the apostles were "scarcely" delivered or saved. Under Saul of Tarsus, many were delivered up to prison and death. But, while the church was scattered abroad and went everywhere preaching the word, the time of the ungod was even then at hand.

The Hebrew nation saw destruction, and the Romans were destroyed. But strangely enough, according to prophesy (Rev. 16:9; 18:4 Psa. 89:23), every persecution of the elect has resulted in national judgments of plague. Even so, the Roman world suffered following the destruction of Jerusalem a plague during the days of the emperor Hadrian. The same followed the persecution of the primitive Anabaptists during the Inquisition when the Black Plague claimed one-fifth of Europe's population. The experiences of believers in all ages testify to this fact, that judgment always begins AT the house of God, and the righteous are scarcely delivered, but the ungodly reap the force of this judgment and have no place to appear for deliverance or mercy. There is no hiding place from the wrath of God, save in the person of Christ, and only the righteous are found there.

JUDGMENT and DISCERNMENT

Another "judgment" is strictly the "discerning, or preceiving" of something or someone. In this sense, it is surely internal within the heart of a believer. "For this cause was the gospel preached to the dead (in trespasses and sins) that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the Spirit." (I Peter 4:6). This applies, this writer believes, to the election of grace who only receive the end or effect of the gospel . . . to "live according to God in the Spirit" after their regeneration. The effect is such, that they are "judged according to men in the flesh" who think it strange that they no longer enjoy the former lasciviousness they shared with others who wrought the will of the Gentiles. They are judged internally by the Holy Spirit who causes them to distinguish between the works of the flesh and the "grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching US to deny ungodliness and worldly lust, and live righteously and soberly in this present evil world."

This judgment is used in I Cor. 2:15 after the state of the natural man is declared that "the natural man receiveth

not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually DISCERNED. But he that is spiritual JUDGETH (discern) all things, yet he himself is JUDGED (discerned) of no man." The spiritual man does indeed discern all things internally in his heart, for the unction he has received teaches him all things, and is truth. He needs no man to teach him to know the Lord, for the Spirit of God has written the law in his mind and heart. Yet he can not be discerned by those who find it strange that he can no longer find pleasure in lasciviousness, lust, and worldliness. The word "lascivious" is a broad word, much broader than other similar words. It has been experienced by all the righteous and they are yet plagued by it. To illustrate: "adultery" is fornication and lasciviousness, but fornication and lasciviousness is not just "adultery." Adultery is a single type of act involving married persons breaking the bonds of marriage and defiling its bed. "Fornication" extends out wider still. It is all immorality and unchastity. The man at Corinth who had taken his father's wife, whether he be married or not, had committed incest which is fornication. Whoredom, incest, sodomy, and adultery is fornication. However, lasciviousness includes all of adultery, fornication, and more. It is the unbridled wantonness seeking the fulfillment of all carnal pleasures. The greatest sin of this present world is "lasciviousness" . . . the unbridled pursuit of "happiness", the "good life" and personal "fulfillment" which are today's words for the drive after pleasure according to nature. The election of grace finds no lasting joys in these things they once enjoyed even as all men by nature enjoy. They have been given "judgment" within which bridles, restrains, and mortifies the deeds of the body by the Spirit of God. Yet they are "judged of no man" who can in no way understand or preceive the new principles of the new creature created in the elect.

A student recently asked me: "What do YOU do for "fun"? My sincere answer was: "Go to church". "Wow!" was her reply. She "judged me according to men in the flesh". How strange this must appear to those who seek for carnal pleasures and "doing their own thing"! Yet, the end result to a child of grace is that they might so be judged of men in the flesh, that they might live unto God in the Spirit. They have been given this type of judgment which means to "distinguish, discern, perceive, condemn, condemnation, and damnation".

Yours in hope,
Stanley C. Phillips

KEHUKEE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST
ASSOCIATION 1975

The 210th session of the *Kehukee Association* is to convene, God willing, with Great Swamp Church located at the intersection of 10th Street (U.S. 264 business) and Forbes Street in Greenville, N. C. the 1st Sunday, Saturday before and Monday following in October (4, 5, 6) The Saturday and Sunday services will be held at the school house located in Stokes, N. C., and on Monday at the meeting house in Greenville, N. C.

Coming from the north and east travel U.S. 13 or U.S. 17 to Williamston, N. C. Take U.S. 17 south 2 miles to Highway 1001, turn right to Stokes, N. C. From the south and southwest come to Greenville, take U.S. 13 north 2 miles and turn right on 903 to Stokes. Coming from the north and west travel to Wilson, N. C., take U.S. 264 to Greenville, then travel U.S. 13 north 2 miles, turn right on 903 to Stokes, N. C.

We invite all brethren of the same faith and order and are at peace at home, to come and visit with us.

Marvin E. Garner, Clerk

ORIGINAL SOUTH ARKANSAS PRIMI-
TIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The *Original South Arkansas Primitive Baptist Association* convenes, the Lord willing, with Chapel Hill Church, located nine miles north of Holly Springs, six miles south of Sparkman, Arkansas, Friday before the third Sunday in September, 1975.

Ross Watson, Clerk
Florence Watson, Ass't. Clerk

THE SMITH RIVER ASSOCIATION

The 1975 session of the *Smith River Association* is to be held, the Lord willing, at Long Branch Meeting House in Franklin County, Virginia, the 1st Sunday in September, and Friday and Saturday before. (September 5, 6, 7)

Long Branch Meeting House is located approximately 19 miles west of Rocky Mount, Va. on Road No. 40.

We look forward to meeting our brethren, sisters and friends at the meeting.

Amos I. Hash, Clerk

SEVEN MILE ASSOCIATION

The 1975 session of the *Seven Mile Association* will, the Lord willing, be held with the church at Liberty Meeting House in Harnett County, N. C. the third Sunday, Friday and Saturday before, in September, 1975. (September 19, 20, 21)

Liberty Meeting House is located 3 miles north of Dunn, N. C. at the junction of State Roads 1822 and 1705, west of 301 Highway.

We invite the Elders, brethren and sisters of our faith to visit with us.

James G. Young, Clerk

BLACK RIVER UNION

The next session of the *Black River Union* will, the Lord willing, be held with the church at Liberty Meeting House, Harnett County, N. C. the fifth Sunday and Saturday before in August, 1975.

Liberty Meeting House is located 3 miles north of Dunn, N. C. at the junction of state roads 1822 and 1705 west of 301 Highway.

We would be happy if blessed of the Lord, to have visiting Elders, brethren and sisters to meet with us.

Eld. W. D. Godwin, Clerk

MINUTES OF THE PRESBYTERY

Pursuant to the request of Belview Primitive Baptist Church, Roanoke County, Va., a presbytery met June 14, 1975 at Belview for the examination of brother William Lane Carter, if found qualified in accordance with the written word of God, at the satisfaction and discretion of their judgment, ordain the above mentioned to the full work of the office of the Gospel Ministry.

The solemnity was begun with prayer by Elder Hale Terry. All Elders of our faith and order present constituted the presbytery. Those present were as follows: William Hol-

land, J. R. Hollandsworth, Posey Plybon, W. H. Terry, and Noel S. Conner, L. J. Brammer and Wallis A. Smith.

The Presbytery was organized by electing Elder L. J. Brammer as moderator and Elder Wallis A. Smith as Clerk, Elders W. M. Holland and Noel Conner to perform the examination of the condidate. Deacon G. W. Conner having been duly appointed by Belview Church in conference June 14, 1975, spokesman for the church, delivered brother William Lane Carter to the Presbytery. Examination was made by Elders William Holland and Noel Conner using scripture reference 1st. Timothy, Chap. 3. 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 J. R. Hollandsworth. Elder Hale Terry delivered the charge to the candidate.

The Moderator asked Deacon G. W. Conner if the church approved the work of the presbytery, which was answered in the affirmative.

A Certificate of Ordination was presented to brother William Lane Carter and the right hand of fellowship and brotherhood given. The ordained was delivered back to the church as an ordained minister of the Old School, Primitive Baptist Church at Belview Church, Roanoke County, Virginia.

The minutes consisting of the work of the presbytery were read and adopted. The presbytery was dismissed with prayer by Elder Wallis A. Smith.

Elder L. J. Brammer, Moderator
Elder Wallis A. Smith, Clerk

MINUTES OF PRESBYTERY

Shepherd Fold Church
Houston, Texas
March 29, 1975

The following Elders E. J. Lambert, J. A. Evers, G. D. Shipman, H. L. Ballard, E. B. Ault, and C. M. Haygood, and Deacons Barney Evers and D. G. Connell, met and organized themselves into a presbytery by electing Elder C. M. Haygood as Moderator, and Deacon D. G. Connell as Clerk.

The Moderator called the spokesman for the church, Deacon McCorkle to present the candidate Brother Earl Hall to the Presbytery. The Presbytery proceeded by examination of the candidate by questioning Spokesman Deacon McCorkle and the candidate as to the qualifications of the candidate for the office of Deacon. Motion and second to continue the ordination, the motion carried.

Elder E. J. Lambert was appointed to word the prayer, and Elder C. M. Haygood to give the charge. The Presbytery proceeded with laying on of hands and prayer, followed by

Elder C. M. Haygood giving charge to Brother Earl Hall and the church.

After the Presbytery bid Brother Hall God-speed, he was delivered back to the church as a properly ordained deacon. Motion and second by the church to receive Brother Hall as a deacon of Shepherd Fold Church, and extending to him the right hand of fellowship.

Minutes of the Presbytery read and adopted. Motion with second that the presbytery be dissolved, with prayer by Elder G. D. Shipman.

Elder C. M. Haygood, Moderator
Deacon D. G. Connell, Clerk
Eld. E. J. Lambert, Eld. G. D. Shipman
Eld. H. J. Ballard, Eld. E. B. Ault,
Eld. Jerry Evers, Deacon W. R. McCorkle
Deacon Barney Evers

CORRECTION OF ERROR

On page 137 of the June issue of the Signs, the 4th line of the second paragraph, of the 2nd column reads, "Because it is born of incorruptible seed . . ." It should read "Because it is born of corruptible seed . . ." Please make this correction in your copy. J. D. W.

SOLDIER CREEK ASSOCIATION

It is again time to send you a notice for publication of our annual association.

The *Soldier Creek Association* will convene the 2nd Sunday and Saturday before in October (October 11 and 12, 1975) with Salem Church, Benton, Ill.

Salem Church is located on Sequion Street about three miles east of Benton, Ill. — just off I-57 and Ill. 14.

We invite all lovers of the truth to come and worship with us. Those wanting further information write Wm. Vantrease, 408 South Commercial Street, Benton, Ill. 62812. Phone I-618-435-3576, or James Cunningham, 5921 W. Park Ave., St. Louis, Mo. 63110. Phone 1-314-647-1021.

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2 CORINTHIANS 4:1-5

Therefore, seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not. But have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the word of God deceitfully, but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man's conscience in the sight of God. But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost: in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them. For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake.

Danville, Va. September, 1975

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

R. F. D. 1, Box 539 Beechwood Lane
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EDITORIAL

JACOB'S BLESSING

“And Jacob called unto his sons, and said, Gather yourselves together, that I may tell you that which shall befall you in the last days.

Gather yourselves together, and hear, ye sons of Jacob; and hearken unto Israel your father.” (Gen. 49:1, 2)

This article is prompted by the request of a very precious brother and yoke-fellow in Christ and is undertaken with great fear and hesitancy lest I should fail in rightly dividing the word of truth.

Nevertheless, nowhere in the scripture is the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God made more indelibly clear than in Jacob's blessing of his sons and its subsequent fulfillment on the pages of time. Indeed many of its pronouncements are yet being unfolded before our very eyes as ample evidence of the fact that, "Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world." (Acts 15:18) His eternal purpose long antedated His works in time and His prophecies are history written in minute detail before the events transpire.

Access to a map of Palestine showing its division among the twelve tribes of Israel in the time of Joshua and the Judges would be of considerable help to the reader in following the editorial.

"Reuben, thou art my firstborn, my might, and the beginning of my strength, the excellency of dignity, and the excellency of power:

Unstable as water, thou shalt not excel; because thou wentest up to thy father's bed; then defiledst thou it: he went up to my couch." (Gen. 49:3, 4)

Ordinarily the firstborn son in a family of Israel entertained certain rights and privileges which younger brothers knew not. Generally, he succeeded to his father's rank and position, as head of the family or tribe and as representative of its prerogatives. He also inherited a double portion of his father's property. During the tenth and last plague of Egypt, the firstborn of the Israelites were preserved by the sprinkling of blood on the lintels and door posts of the houses within which they resided. Precious though the birthright of the firstborn was; however, it could be sold to a younger brother as Esau sold his to Jacob or it could be forfeited on account of misconduct.

Reuben as the firstborn of Jacob ordinarily would have been Jacob's might and the beginning of his strength, the excellency of dignity, and the excellency of power. This position of excellency was forfeited; however, as Jacob prophesied because Reuben "went and lay

with Bilhah his father's concubine," (Gen. 35:22) thereby defiling his father's bed.

Hundreds of years later in 1 Chronicles 5:1, 2 it is recorded, "Now the sons of Reuben the firstborn of Israel, (for he was the firstborn; but, forasmuch as he defiled his father's bed, his birthright was given unto the sons of Joseph the son of Israel: and the genealogy is not to be reckoned after the birthright. For Judah prevailed above his brethren, and of him came the chief ruler; but the birthright was Joseph's:)"

From this striking passage, it can be seen that Joseph rather than Reuben received the birthright and the double portion in having two tribes (Ephraim and Manasseh) descend from him: Judah became the royal tribe from which Christ came, and later as we shall see the tribe of Levi was given the priesthood.

In addition, Reuben became "unstable as water" or if you will, began to evaporate as a pool in the heat of summer as the subsequent numbering of the tribes begins to reveal, for the men of Reuben became fewer and fewer. (Num. 1:21 and 26:7) Neither did Reuben "excel" since no persons of note or eminence came from his lineage. Neither wealth nor riches was his portion and when the land was divided the allotment to Reuben was insignificant, for a firstborn, being a small portion to the south and east of Jordan.

This tribe settled down in a land of cattle on the wildreness side of Jordan saying, "Bring us not over Jordan." (Num. 32:5) as if in echo of Jacob's prophecy "thou shalt not excel."

Nevertheless the mercy of God is ever sure as the words Moses was given in blessing this tribe testify when he said, "Let Reuben live, and not die; and let not his men be few." (Deut. 33:6)

"Simeon and Levi are brethren; instruments of cruelty are in their habitations.

O my soul, come not thou into their secret; unto their assembly, mine hon-

our, be not thou united: for in their anger they slew a man, and in their selfwill they digged down a wall.

Cursed be their anger, for it was fierce, and their wrath, for it was cruel: I will divide them in Jacob, and scatter them in Israel." (Gen. 49:5-7)

Instruments of cruelty were certainly in the habitations of Simeon and Levi on numerous occasions. As Jacob came to the city of Shalim in the land of Canaan, Shechem the son of Hamor, prince of the country, saw Dinah the daughter of Leah, which she bear unto Jacob, took her, and lay with her, and defiled her. Shechem's soul clave unto Dinah and he begged his father to seek her for his wife. Later a covenant was made between Jacob and Hamor that the sons and daughters of both their peoples might dwell together that they might become one people providing the men of Hamor would become circumcised. Thus it was done. In spite of this covenant, however, on the third day, ". . . Simeon and Levi, Dinah's brethren, took each man his sword, and came upon the city boldly, and slew all the males. And they slew Hamor and Shechem his son with the edge of the sword, and took Dinah out of Shechem's house, and went out." (Gen. 34:25, 26)

Later, "Jacob said to Simeon and Levi, Ye have troubled me to make me to stink among the inhabitants of the land, . . ." (Gen. 34:30) for he feared reprisal at the hand of the Canaanites.

During the period of the seven-year famine, when Jacob's sons went into Egypt to obtain corn from Joseph, it was Simeon whom Joseph bound before the eyes of his brethren, indicative perhaps of the role he played on an earlier occasion in the conspiracy to get rid of Joseph, first by casting him into a pit and later by selling him to the Ishmaelites for twenty pieces of silver.

It is interesting to note that years later the character of the tribe of Simeon remained true to form for following the death of Joshua, when Judah must needs go up against the Canaanites, it was Simeon he chose to go with him

from among all his brethren. "And Judah said unto Simeon his brother, Come up with me into my lot, that we may fight against the Canaanites; and I likewise will go with thee into thy lot. So Simeon went with him." (Judges 1:3).

Levi proved to be a true brother to Simeon in temperament, disposition and manner for when Moses came from the mount and found Israel worshipping the golden calf and said, "Who is on the Lord's side?" we find, ". . . All the sons of Levi gathered themselves together unto him. And he said unto them, Thus saith the Lord God of Israel, Put every man his sword by his side, and go in and out from gate to gate throughout the camp, and slay every man his brother, and every man his companion, and every man his neighbor. And the children of Levi did according to the word of Moses: and there fell of the people that day about three thousand men." (Ex. 32:26-28)

Fierceness in cruelty became fierceness in devotion when Phinehas the grandson of Aaron the priest, who was of the tribe of Levi, upon beholding a man of Israel bring unto his brethren a Midianitish woman in the sight of Moses and the congregation, took his javelin and thrust them both through. Israel had been committing whoredom with the people of Moab and the devotion shown by Phinehas was so pleasing in the sight of God the plague which He intended was stayed from the children of Israel. Wherefore God said unto Moses concerning Phinehas, "Behold I give unto him my covenant of peace: And he shall have it, and his seed after him, even the covenant of an everlasting priesthood; because he was zealous for his God, and made an atonement for the children of Israel." (Num. 25:12,13)

In their anger they (Simeon and Levi as the priesthood) slew a man. How this prophecy echoed throughout more than twenty-two centuries until Christ was betrayed and crucified. Judas covenanted with the chief priests to deliver Christ unto them for thirty pieces of

silver. Then a great multitude with swords and staves, from the chief priests and elders came to Gethsemane, laid hands on Him and took Him. Subsequently, they sought false witnesses, finally finding two to accuse Him to death. Hereinafter, they delivered Him to Pontius Pilate the governor. Since it was the time of the feast of the pass-over, Pilate would have released unto the people one of the prisoners, in this case Jesus or Barabbas. The chief priests and elders, however, persuaded the multitude that they ask for the release of Barabbas. When Pilate asked of the disposition of Jesus they all cried "Let him be crucified." (Math. 27:22) and "His blood be on us, and on our children." (Math. 27:25) In their anger they slew a man.

In their selfwill they digged down a wall or as it is rendered in the margin they "houghed oxen." This means literally they would hamstring an ox or a horse as described in Josh. 11:6,9 or 2 Sam. 8:4. How descriptive this is of the chief priests' attempt to maim Jesus permanently as the great ox or beast of burden which in type carried the sins of His people. No wonder Jacob cried, "O my soul, come not thou into their secret; unto their assembly, mine honour, be not thou united: . . ." (Gen. 49:6)

The anger of Simeon and Levi was of a sinful nature and their wrath was cruel; therefore, by Jacob was their wrath and anger cursed. In addition Jacob prophesied, "I will divide them in Jacob, and scatter them in Israel." How literally was this prophecy fulfilled! When the land was apportioned decades later in the days of Joshua, the inheritance of Simeon was within the inheritance of the children of Judah, and they were literally "divided" among the cities and villages of that tribe. (Josh. 19:1-8) Levi, too, was "scattered" among the forty-eight cities of the remaining tribes of Israel. (Num. 35:8; Josh. 14:4, 21) Thus the map reveals no separate territory for Levi. How can any discount the decrees of a just and sovereign God?

"Judah thou art he whom thy brethren

shall praise: thy hand shall be in the neck of thine enemies; thy Father's children shall bow down before thee.

Judah is a lion's whelp: from the prey, my son, thou art gone up: he stooped down, he couched as a lion, and as an old lion; who shall rouse him up?

The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come; and unto him shall the gathering of the people be.

Binding his foal unto the vine, and his ass's colt unto the choice vine; he washed his garments in wine, and his clothes in the blood of grapes:

His eyes shall be red with wine, and his teeth white with milk. (Gen. 49:8-12)

"For Judah prevailed above his brethren, and of him came the chief ruler; . . ." (1 Ch. 5:2) The ultimate fulfillment of this prophecy culminated in the birth of Christ. He is the chief ruler of His people and the reason why Judah is to be praised of his brethren. Christ is to be given the preeminence in all things and although He was despised and rejected of men, a man of sorrows and well acquainted with grief; although He came to His own and His own received Him not, yet shall He come again to judge the nations and every eye shall see Him and every knee shall bow.

When He comes again, all things shall be put under His feet, and the dominance of the tribe of Judah begun in the days of David "whose hand was in the neck of his enemies" shall literally culminate in the second coming of Christ. At that time the redeemed shall glorify and praise Him, the literal Israel or as prophesied, "thy father's children shall bow down before thee," and Christ will reveal the full significance of Ps. 18:40 which says, "Thou hast also given me the necks of mine enemies; that I might destroy them that hate me." How solemn!

The comparison of the tribe of Judah to a lion's whelp, then to a full grown lion, and finally to an old lion in verse nine is not only beautifully descriptive of the gradual rise to power of this

tribe; but also of the complete and unwavering authority of Christ in all things as He is portrayed in Rev. 5:5 as the "Lion of the tribe of Juda."

A lion's whelp is descriptive of the tribe of Judah during its infant state in the times of the judges when it first went up against the Canaanites and prevailed against them during the period from Joshua to Saul. Then "from the prey, my son, thou art gone up:" alludes to the young lion or Judah going up to the mountains after it had found its prey and had satisfied itself with it. Later we see a likeness of the mature lion in the period of David's reign, who was the first king over Judah, and was successful in subduing his enemies. His courage, valour and conquests were none short of lion like. Beginning with Solomon's reign which followed Judah and Israel dwelt safely under their vines and fig trees and were indeed like the old lion resting from its enemies. Subsequently of course the people of Israel were scattered to the ends of the earth and we feel if not deceived, that since 1948 when the separate state of Israel was created and the Jewish families once again began returning home an answer concerning the question of the "old lion, who shall rouse him up? is soon forthcoming.

But even more precious in this allusion to the lion is the revelation of Christ as the word incarnate first of all as a young lion or boy in the temple "sitting in the midst of the doctors, both hearing them, and asking them questions. And all that heard him were astonished at his understanding and answers." (Luke 2:46-47) Later as the mature lion, Christ entered the temple and "began to cast them out them that sold therein and them that bought; Saying unto them, It is written, My house is the house of prayer: but ye have made it a den of theieves." (Luke 19:45, 46) Finally as Christ finished His work on the cross, and was transfigured to sit on the right hand of the Majesty on high expecting until His enemies be made His footstool He appears as an old

lion and "who shall rouse him up?" How long O Lord will it be before He comes again?

"The sceptre shall not depart from Judah, nor a lawgiver from between his feet, until Shiloh come." This portion of Jacob's prophecy intimates that the tribal rod or staff of authority would not depart from Judah until the Messiah would appear. How completely this was fulfilled! The tribe of Judah was intact at the time of Christ, even though many of the other tribes were dispersed beyond recognition during the captivity. Those remaining of the other tribes went under the name of Judah as well.

The sanhedrim or court of justice still existed although after the Roman conquest it had no control over the death sentence. Thus while Christ was accused of blasphemy and treason by the Jews, He had to be sentenced to death by Rome as John 18:31 clearly states, "Then said Pilate unto them, Take ye him, and judge him according to your law. The Jews therefore said unto him, It is not lawful for us to put any man to death:" Now that Shiloh had come the legal authority of Judah was diminished. By the admission of the leaders of Judah themselves Genesis 49:10 had come to pass.

"Unto him shall the gathering of the people be," undoubtedly refers to Christ as He walked on earth surrounded by so many who sought Him and loved Him, but even more fully to His second coming when the graves and sea shall give up their dead and those who are alive and remain will be caught up together with Him forever.

The reference of vines and grapes in verses eleven and twelve obviously refers to the fertile vine-growing district in the South of Palestine which was Judah's portion including the vineyards of Engedi and Carmel. In reference to the ass being bound to the vine; however, we cannot help but point out a more spiritual application for as Christ approached Jerusalem, He sent two disciples to Bethphage to secure an ass and a colt with her that the scripture might

be fulfilled, "Tell ye the daughter of Sion, Behold, thy King cometh unto thee, meek, and sitting upon an ass, and a colt the foal of an ass." (Math. 21:5) The ass is a clear type of the servant of God and a careful reading of Christ's triumphal entry into Jerusalem according to Luke 19:30 reveals that the colt was one "whereon yet never man sat." The true servant of God is not ridden by the philosophies of men but carries Christ and he will be reminded from time to time that His yoke is easy and His burden is light.

Furthermore, in fulfilling the prophecy concerning Judah, his foal was to be bound unto the vine and his ass's colt unto the choice vine. Although types are never perfect, the "vine" and "choice vine" seem to typify the Lord's people among both the Jews and the Gentiles. Isaiah 5:2 tells us that although God had planted the choicest vine in his vineyard and fenced it, and built a tower in the midst of it, that instead of bringing forth grapes, it brought forth wild grapes. Indeed, Hosea 10:1 declares that "Israel is an empty vine." We know that "blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in." (Rom. 11:25) However as Paul asks, "Have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid: but rather through their fall salvation is come unto the Gentiles, for to provoke them to jealousy." (Rom. 11:11) Does this give cause for the Gentiles to boast? No! but rather exhorts them to greater thankfulness for being grafted in among the Jews and being able to partake of the root and fatness of the olive tree.

The "foal" and the "ass's colt" which are bound to the "vine" and the "choice vine" respectively, remind us of Peter and Paul as well as the other disciples who as servants of the Living God laboured in the vineyard of our Lord. The characteristics of the ass in that it is strong, easily fed, forgiving and, yes, obstinate or stubborn when it comes to matters of doctrine are not only easily observable in Peter and Paul, but also in

His servants today. Peter is like the "foal" bound to the Jews in his apostleship, and Paul, a vessel of mercy to the Gentiles, is much like the ass's colt who being headstrong and untamed as he hurried to Damascus "breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord" (Acts 9:1) was fully broken and made willing to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ among the same people. No less effective today, is the power of God to bind the servants of our Lord Jesus Christ to the vine that they should go and bring forth fruit unto Him.

"He washed his garments in wine, and his clothes in the blood of grapes: His eyes shall be red with wine, and his teeth white with milk" is beautifully descriptive of Christ as He tread the winepress alone. How striking is the similarity of this description of Christ and the one penned hundreds of years later by Isaiah who asked, "Who is this that cometh from Edom, with dyed garments from Bozrah? this that is glorious in his apparel, traveling in the greatness of his strength?" (Is. 63:1) And then in answer, "I have trodden the winepress alone; and of the people there was none with me: for I will tread them in mine anger, and trample them in my fury; and their blood shall be sprinkled upon my garments, and I will stain all my raiment." (Is. 63:3) What a clear declaration of the vengeance of Christ upon the enemies of his church in the latter day!

"Zebulun shall dwell at the haven of the sea; and he shall be for an haven of ships; and his border shall be unto Zidon." (Gen. 49:13)

Ample proof of the spirit of prophecy in which Jacob must have spoken is the fulfillment of his prediction two hundred years later when Zebulun's portion, decided by *lot*, under the leadership of Joshua fell between the Sea of Galilee and the Mediterranean Sea, bordering the latter at the Bay of Acre including the modern seaport of Haifa. Haifa is a natural harbour, in fact, the only deep water harbour in modern Israel and its

chief port, and the city itself is known for its manufacture of machinery, building materials, electrical equipment and the refining of oil. In addition there are seamanship and technical schools in Haifa; all positive proof of the fact Zebulun was to be an haven of the sea. The border of Zebulun was to reach even unto Zidon which was the chief city of Phoenicia that later became the great seafaring nation of the near east. How explicitly the word of God describes this part of Israel in Deut. 33:18 when it says, "Rejoice, Zebulun, in thy going out;" as one views the port of Haifa sending forth its ships of commerce into the open seas.

But this prophecy concerning Zebulun refers not only to its position among the other tribes in the promised land, but also to the character and disposition of many of its people. The portion allotted to Zebulun along with Naphtali became known in the New Testament as the "Galilee of the Gentiles." (Math 4:15) It is no less than remarkable that eleven of the twelve apostles of Christ were men of Galilee—Judas being the only exception. What manner of men these were whom Moses described when he said, "They shall call the people unto the mountain; there they shall offer sacrifices of righteousness: for they shall suck of the abundance of the seas, and of treasures hid in the sand." (Deut. 33:19) How Peter, Andrew, James, John and all the others were gifted in bringing forth the treasures new and old.

Zebulun is referred to with honour in numerous references throughout the scripture. In Judges 5, when Deborah and Barak celebrate in song the victory of Israel over Jabin and Sisera the people of Zebulun and Naphtali were heralded as those who "jeoparded their lives unto the death in the high places of the field." (Judges 5:18) Later when those were enumerated who gathered to David to help turn the kingdom of Saul to him, the people of Zebulun were "such as went forth to battle, expert in war, with all instruments of war, fifty

thousand, which could keep rank: they were not of double heart." (1 Ch. 12:33) Not only were they skilled in the arts of war, but carried food for the hungry as 1 Ch. 12:40 tells us, "Moreover they that were nigh them, even unto Issachar and Zebulun and Naphtali; brought bread on asses, and on camels, and on mules, and on oxen, and meat, meal, cakes and figs, and bunches of raisins, and wine and oil, and oxen, and sheep abundantly: for there was joy in Israel." Is not this descriptive in itself of the men of Galilee who were not only skilled in the arts of spiritual warfare but also were exceedingly generous in feeding the hungry and giving a cup of cold water in the name of the Lord?

The foregoing endorses so clearly the fact that Zebulun was to prove a genuine "haven for ships" both naturally and spiritually. Galilee, as the homeland of the apostles, still is a haven for the Lord's people as they shelter in the writings of the New Testament and receive comfort from their promises and assurances. As if to endorse more fully His capacity to be touched with the feelings of our infirmities, however, Christ, too, found in Galilee or Zebulun, a "haven" for it was here that Joseph and Mary brought Jesus after their return from Egypt. Here it was He spent the greater part of His life and ministry. How comforting it is to feel the presence of Jesus as our elder brother in the land of Galilee, for He is the real "haven" of His people. Wesley captured the essence of this feeling when he wrote.

"Jesus! lover of my soul,
Let me to thy bosom fly,
While the raging billows roll,
While the tempest still is nigh!
Hide me, O my Saviour! hide
Till the storm of life is past;
Safe into the *haven* guide;
Oh, receive my soul at last!

Nothing in the scripture is out of order. In blessing his sons, Jacob proceeds from his fourth son Judah to his tenth son Zebulun. At first glance this might seem inconsequential, but is it? In

blessing his fourth son, Jacob's prophecy embraced the advent on earth of our Lord Jesus Christ through the lineage of Judah. In blessing his tenth son, Zebulun, next, he describes the territory in which Jesus lived most of the first thirty years of His life on earth. The great Jehovah dots every "i" and crosses every "t" of prophecy as He does of salvation. May God be praised!

"Issachar is a strong ass couching down between two burdens:

And he saw that rest was good and the land that it was pleasant; and bowed his shoulder to bear, and became a servant unto tribute." (Gen. 49:14, 15)

Issachar proved indeed to be a "strong ass" as Numbers 26 reveals, for only Judah and Dan out of the twelve tribes were numerically stronger than he. Later by the days of the Kings, the men of Issachar had increased further, for in 1 Chronicles 7:5 we are told "their brethren among all the families of Issachar were valiant men of might, reckoned in all by their genealogies fourscore and seven thousand." Even the position of Issachar on the map among the other tribes west of Jordan and directly south of Zebulun and Naphtali makes him appear a "strong ass" carrying the weight of the two tribes immediately to the north.

To compare someone to an ass today might prove offensive to not a few, but in Jacob's time this was not looked upon with contempt. The ass was an honourable animal, useful for carrying people of rank as well as being a beast of burden. In fact, until the days of Solomon, Israel had no horses, being forbidden to ride them by Deut. 17:16. The ass in some ways was a gentle reminder to Israel that they were a peculiar people, a people reserved unto God who should trust neither in horses nor in chariots nor in any of the other shadows of Egypt.

Herein lies the key to the real meaning of the prophecy concerning Issachar, for in being likened unto an ass, this son of Jacob exemplifies the humility of Christ as He came "meek and

sitting upon an ass" to serve His people. As a servant of tribute, Issachar reveals to us how Christ paid the full price of redemption for His people.

Two instances of the payment of tribute money are worthy of note at this time. One is recorded in Matt. 22 when the Pharisees asked Christ whether it were lawful to give tribute unto Caesar, or not. Tribute money is that which is exacted by a nation or king from foreign subjects. Christ is perceiving the craftiness of the question, asked His inquirers to show Him some tribute money and they brought unto Him a penny. When he asked whose image was upon the coin, they said "Caesar's". "Then saith he unto them, Render, therefore, unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's: and unto God the things that are God's." (Matt. 22:21)

On another occasion as recorded in Matt. 17, Christ was approached concerning the matter of paying tribute money for the upkeep of the temple. How absolutely preposterous it seems that Christ, the very son of God, would be asked to pay tribute to an earthly temple. Nevertheless, He said to Peter, "go thou to the sea and cast an hook, and take up the fish that first cometh up; and when thou hast opened his mouth, thou shalt find a piece of money: that take, and give unto them for me and thee." (Matt. 17:27) The tribute money for every Jew, twenty years old and upwards was at one time one-third shekel, but later was raised to one-half shekel.

Now these two examples of tribute money reveal in type, how first of all the wilderness of this world is constantly exacting tribute in one form or another from the people of God, who are aliens in it and, second, how our bodies, which are the temples of the Holy Ghost, if we are Christ's, (1 Cor. 6:19 and 1 Cor. 3:16) are a burden to the Spirit which dwells within us. "The spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." (Matt. 26:41)

Thus, we bear two great burdens, namely to live in the wilderness of this

world when we have no continuing city here, and further, because we are brought unto a knowledge of sin due to the application of the law in our hearts. In both instances, we realize a spirit of bondage from which we are helpless to set ourselves free. The payment of tribute on both counts is utterly beyond us. "But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us." (2 Cor. 4:7)

God sent His only begotten Son who paid the price in full for our redemption and who said, "I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly." (John 10:10) Not only has Christ redeemed us from our sins; but also, has given us a hope of dwelling someday in a better country, even a heavenly. This is why Isaiah was to speak comfortably unto Jerusalem and tell her that her warfare was accomplished and that she had received *double* for all her sins.

Issachar had to bow "his shoulder to bear" to show us Christ bowing his shoulders to bear the cross carrying the iniquity of us all. But Issachar, too, saw that "rest was good, and the land that it was pleasant," to also show us Christ high and lifted up and "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." (Hebrews 12:2) Because of the finished work of Christ, His people are from time to time given a foretaste of that heavenly country to come, and can say as David, "My flesh also shall rest in hope." (Ps. 16:9)

Issachar, as a strong ass couched between two burdens gives a realistic preview of Christ as our Redeemer.

Thus far, we have examined the prophecies of Jacob concerning his first six sons listed in Gen. 49, all of whom were born to Leah. Each son in turn was a separate identity, with unique characteristics and lived to fulfill the predictions of his father. But each, too, revealed a certain attribute of Jesus. Reuben identifies Christ as the firstborn

among many brethren, Simeon and Levi, His Priesthood and Judah His Kingship, Zebulun portrays Him as a Refuge or Haven and Issachar reveals His Un-speakable Gift of redemption. The half has never been told.

(continued next issue)

Humbly,
Stewart McColl

VOICES OF THE PAST "He being dead yet speaketh"

"The like figure whereunto, even baptism, doth also now save us, (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ." (1 Peter 3:21)

Baptism, according to this text, has a figurative import, and as a figure of our salvation, Peter classifies it with the figure of the temporal salvation of Noah and his family in the Ark; the former figure is *like* the latter figure. Hence, we understand that both figures refer to and set forth a spiritual reality in reference to the manner of the everlasting salvation of the church of God. The spirit of Christ was in Noah as in other patriarchs and prophets of the Lord. And Noah, as a patriarch, a preacher of righteousness, the representative of a family and progeny to be saved from the deluge, and as a builder of the Ark which was to contain all that God had ordained to that temporal salvation, was an eminent type of Christ. Christ is the builder of the spiritual Ark, the church, which contains all that God has, from the beginning, chosen to salvation through sanctification of the spirit and belief of the truth. He is also their spiritual progenitor, and they are accounted to him for a generation. And with him, in the church, they shall outride all the storms and floods, which shall sweep away the ungodly, and rest forever on the Mount of God. Salvation by grace was clearly

set forth in the figure of Noah's deliverance. And as also is the ordinance of christian baptism an expressive figure of the same salvation of the people of God. It is not, like the Jewish purifications, designed for the putting away the filth of the flesh, but is the answer of a good conscience towards God, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ. Christian baptism, as instituted by our Lord, and practised by the primitive saints, sets forth a death, burial and resurrection, and is applicable to, first, the death, burial and resurrection of Christ; second, to the experience of saints, who are slain by the law and raised up from condemnation and wrath, by the application of the blood and righteousness of the now risen and glorified Redeemer; and, third, it sets forth the dissolution, burial and ultimate resurrection of the bodies of all saints of God.

1. The death, burial and resurrection of Christ is called a baptism. "I have," said he, "a baptism to be baptised with, and how I am straitened until it be accomplished." The sons of Zebudee were to be baptized also with that baptism wherewith Christ was to be baptized. And Paul says the saints addressed in his epistle to the Romans, were also buried with him by baptism into death, that like as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so they should walk in newness of life. Hence, it is our understanding that the whole church of God was represented in Christ, as to her spiritual identity, when he died on the cross, slumbered in the tomb, and when he arose from the dead and ascended up on high. When he died for all, then were all dead, and they were quickened together with him, raised up together, and made to sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus. In this baptism we are truly saved: "The law has dominion over a man as long as he liveth." Rom. viii. 1. Christ as the embodiment of the church takes our law place, and that lawfully, not making void the law, but establishing it; for in him the law finds the

church, and makes its stern demand. He asks for no abatement of the demand, but promptly meets and completely cancels it. The Sword awakes against the fellow of the Lord of Hosts. Deep waters come into his soul, and all the billows pass over him. Immersed in death, the law can ask no more—the dreadful debt is paid. The yawning grave receives the slaughtered body, and closes its doors upon him, recognizing in his person all for whom he died. This is baptism, but it is not all. His flesh must see no corruption. The pains of death cannot hold him long. As in baptism, the body is immersed but also raised up to make the figure complete, so Christ must arise from the dead, and bring immortality into light in his resurrection. Under the law he dies, but quickened by the Spirit he rises, and brings up from the dead all his sheaves with him. As except a corn of wheat falleth into the earth and dies, it abideth alone, and the germ of its production remaineth undeveloped, but if it die it will bring forth much fruit, simply by developing that which was in it,—so in the death and resurrection of Christ, his people are buried with him by baptism into death, wherein the extreme penalty of the law being executed, the law can henceforth have no more dominion over them. Now quickened by the Spirit they arise, not to a legal bondage state again; but they arise to walk in newness of life, and are married to, and become one with him who is raised from the dead, and are no more under the law but under grace. "Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law, by the body of Christ, that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God." Romans viii. 4.

2. Christian baptism, sets forth the experience of the saints. When the commandment comes, sin revives and they die. They are slain, and all their legal hopes are cast off, and they are buried from their former elements, and raised up from the horrible pit and out of the

miry clay, and translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son. Dead to and buried from the rudiments of the law, and the beggarly elements of the world, they are crucified to the world and the world is crucified to them,— they are raised up to participate in all the privileges of the church of God.

3. The ultimate resurrection of our bodies from their graves and ascension to glory, is also embraced in the figurative import of Gospel baptism. One of the strong arguments of Paul, in proving the final resurrection of the bodies of the saints, is presented in these words: "Else what shall they do which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? Why are they then baptized for the dead?" 1 Cor. xv. 29. Baptism was evidently designed to signify a resurrection, and would be divested of its doctrinal import if there is to be no final resurrection of the bodies of the saints from the dead.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe April 1, 1856)

OBITUARIES

ETHEL ESTHER COCKERHAM MILLER
SIDNEY ABNER MILLER

Many brethren and friends were greatly saddened at the passing of Brother and Sister Sidney A. Miller, who died when their car was hit head-on by a car crossing the white line, the driver of the other car was also killed. This was November 21, 1974.

Brother Sidney Abner Miller was born in North Carolina, as was Sister Ethel Esther Cockerham Miller. They were united in marriage June 12, 1920, and moved to Maryland in 1937, living at the time of their death near Darlington, Maryland. To this union three children were born: Beryl Stuart Miller, Churchville, Md. and Mrs. Boyd Barbara Powers, both of whom survive. One son, Ray Vaughn Curtis Miller died January 25, 1969. Surviving also are 5 grandchildren and 5 great grandchildren. Sister Miller is survived also by two sisters: Mrs. Lessie Lidden Craven and Mrs. Anna Perry — she had four brothers, all deceased. Brother Miller is survived also by four sisters: Ida Miller, Hazel Hurley, Jean May and Etta Lee Wright. One sister is deceased, as are four brothers.

Brother Miller was a member of Welsh

Tract Church, and Sister Miller was a member of Rock Springs Church. They attended both churches, and others when they had opportunity. They had the love and fellowship of all the brethren who knew them. They loved to entertain the brethren and friends in their home, and their home was one of our stopping places, among others, on our way to the Rock Springs meetings. Our usual conversations were concerning the wonderful works of God in His dealings with his people.

While we miss Brother and Sister Miller greatly, we do not question but that it was God's time and way for them to be taken from the scenes of this life — nor would we ask the reason why, but rather give thanks to the Lord that we were blessed to know them for a number of years, and enjoyed their love and fellowship.

Their funerals were conducted from the Foster Funeral Home in Bel Air, Maryland, by the writer, and they were laid to rest in the Bel Air Memorial Gardens. Many were the friends who attended the funeral services, and their many flowers gave evidence of the esteem in which they were held.

Those who give evidence of their love of the doctrine of God our Saviour while they live, cause us to weep not as those who have no hope, when they finish their course in this life, for we are assured that they are at rest, awaiting the glorious resurrection, when they, together with all the redeemed of the Lord, shall come forth in the resurrection in the image of their Saviour, fully fitted for their eternal home.

May God give grace to all the survivors that they may be reconciled to the Lord's will in removing their loved ones from all troubles and sorrows.

John D. Wood

WESLEY BYNUM

Out of great love for my brother-in-law, I will attempt to write a few words in remembrance of him.

Brother Wesley was born September 14, 1903, and died March 5, 1975. He was the son of the late Thadaus and Emma Bynum. His wife, Sister Julia Bynum, is a member of North East Primitive Baptist Church. They had two children, Gordon Bynum and Helen Spangenberg and five grandchildren from a marriage of 52 years.

Brother Wesley was sick for several months with cancer and suffered much pain, but he was never one to complain about his illness.

As a young man he was a member of the Methodist Church, but for many years he had not attended any one church. Several months

before he was called from this life by the Lord his mind seemed to be on God and his blessed works of grace, he never went to school but just a little and his wife would read to him from the Bible. I went almost every day to see him for he was like a father to me and I could see he was burdened and we would talk of the things God had so blessed us with.

During his illness the Elders visited him time after time and he always received a great blessings from their visits.

During his last stay at the hospital before his death I visited him on Sunday morning and he at that time asked me what time Elder Bob Lyliston would be back from church and I told him around the middle of the afternoon, and he began to watch the door for the remainder of the day until Brother Lyliston came in, and as Brother Lyliston entered his room he opened his arms and put them around Brother Lyliston's neck and with much love and humility asked for a home with the church. He then looked at us and said he was now happy and at peace.

Brother Bynum passed away the following Wednesday morning, his son said he went out of this world in a peaceful sleep. May God be with his wife and family and may they one day join him, is my prayer.

Respectfully submitted in love
Muriel Lee Marshburn

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

It has pleased God to call from our midst Brother Levy Adkins.

Brother Adkins was born April 18, 1904, and died April 8, 1975, making his stay on earth nearly 71 years.

Brother Levy came to Tarboro Church by letter on August fourth, 1974, from Lawrence Primitive Baptist Church. He was a member at Lawrence Church for 34 years and the clerk there for several years before it was disbanded. He was humble and believed in "Salvation by the Grace of God." He loved his church and was always willing to do his part in anyway he could.

To know Brother Adkins was to love him. We feel he is at rest with our Saviour, awaiting the Resurrection.

Therefore, we the church at Tarboro resolve:

1. That God will bless his family to whom we send our sincere sympathy. We trust they will be blessed to follow the path that Brother Levy tried to lead them.
2. That three copies of this Resolution be made: one for the family, one for the church records, one to be sent to the *Signs*

of the *Times* for publication.

This done in order of conference at our May meeting.

Elder D. B. Stokes, Moderator
John H. Coker, Clerk

JULIA RUTH SMITH

6/3/1910 — 5/26/1975

In accordance with the will of God in Jesus Christ, it pleased Him to take our beloved Sister Julia Ruth Smith, wife of Deacon Brother Noble E. Smith, Sr., from the earthly scene on May 26, 1975. She was born June 10, 1910, the eldest daughter of Mr. and Mrs. O. S. Cruskshank in Sizemore, W. Va. She was married to Brother Smith on March 30, 1929, and from this union were born six children, who survive her: two sons, Elder B. K. Smith and Noble E. Smith, Jr. of South Gate, Cal., four daughters: Sisters Lila Ann Osborne and Nancy Jane Clay, of Bell, Cal., Lois Jean Thaxton, of South Gate, Cal. and Linda Lou Milam, of Garden Grave, Cal. surviving also are 25 grandchildren (16 grandsons and 9 granddaughters) 2 brothers, O. S. Cruikshank of Charleston, W. Va. and John W. Cruikshank of Dixie, W. Va., 2 sisters: Ruby C. Baker of Florida, and Iris Cruikshank of Bell, Cal.

Sister Smith was a faithful member of the Old School Primitive (Predestinarian) Baptist Church for more than thirty-five years, having been baptized by Elder Harvey J. Bird into our faith and order.

She was more than just a loving mother and sister in the church. She was a loving person, being enabled to live, as it were, her belief. When she spoke of anyone she never had less than a kind word. The Lord blessed her to have a deep concern for the church and the welfare of its members. She was always considerate and caring for all regardless of who they were or what they had to profess. She was enabled to see that they were what they were by the grace of God.

As long as I can remember I've heard her go about singing the hymns held so dear by our brethren. She was an able gift to the church and will long be remembered therein. She professed a hope in the belief that God is sovereign. She preferred to be known as one of the absoluters of the Old School. These last few years she was nearly blind, and did finally lose her sight in the left eye, she never complained of her ailments, and it was only on the Saturday night before she was stricken, while on the way to our regular meeting that she told the writer of losing her sight. She was my mother in nature for forty-two years and one day.

She was laid to rest in Rose Hill Memorial Park, Whittier, Cal. after church services and preaching by Elder T. R. Jefferson, Austin Tipton, Walter B. Wilson and B. K. Smith. Brethren believe what you may but we have no funeral service, but rather a meeting, for we find no scriptural evidence for a funeral. "This is the day the Lord hath made, be glad and rejoice in it."

Written by her son and brother in Christ, I hope.

Elder B. K. Smith

Resolved by the church in conference, that a copy for the foregoing be sent to *Zion's Landmark* and the *Signs of the Times* for publication, if so be the Lord's will. Copy furnished for Church Records, 6/21/75.

Elder B. K. Smith, Mod.

Deacon N. E. Smith, Sr., Clerk

LULA B. WATKINS

For as much as the Almighty God has seen fit to call from our midst at the church at Cypress Creek in Duplin County, our dear sister, Lula Watkins. We feel our loss is her eternal gain. I feel that she is now sleeping in the arms of our Saviour, Jesus Christ, until the day of Resurrection when she will enter the final resting place. Sister Lula was baptized into the fellowship of the church by Elder R. P. Batchelor on Aug. 19, 1934.

Sister Lula was born Dec. 5, 1909, and died April 29, 1975, which made her stay on earth 65 years and 6 months. She was married January, 1935 to Lawrence Watkins. To this union were born eight children, three daughters and five sons of whom all survive her passing. She was afflicted for many years which she bore with much patience. I feel her life here on earth proved in whom she put her trust and belief. She was a strong believer in Jesus Christ and before her affliction wrote several beautiful pieces for the church paper.

Done by order of conference, May 10, 1975.

Elder Harmon Brown, Pastor

Written by a sister, I hope

Anna Simpson

SISTER BEADIE GRAY MANRING

A precious Sister has been taken from us. Indeed she is a precious sister to me, having gone to church together for such a long time. I feel in my heart to know what a faithful, loving and dutiful member she was.

Sunday morning April 13, 1975, I intended taking Sister Beadie Gray Manring to meeting as I had so many times. I was informed our dear sister had passed this life about 7 a.m.

I felt such a deep sense of loss, so hurtful to know we will not have her again in our midst in this time world, yet feel the desire to thank our Heavenly Father for having given us such a sweet sister for awhile.

Sister Manring joined us, the church at New Hope Primitive Baptist Meeting House, Rockingham County, N. C. in June 1968. May we be made to know, while we miss her presence so very much, the God of all Grace and Mercy, and forever Righteous, has done and ever will do His will among the inhabitants of the earth, and will reign in a Heaven of immortal glory eternally.

May the good Lord bless her three daughters, Mrs. Ruth Howell, Eden, N. C., Mrs. Pauline Stephens, Greensboro, N. C., and Mrs. Peggy Paschal, Rt. 5, Reidsville, N. C.; her three sons, Dewey A., Raymond and Clay, all of Reidsville; one sister, Mrs. Pearl Flinchum, of Danbury, N. C., and her brother, a precious brother in Christ to us in hope, Brother Cain Gray of Ashboro, N. C.

Written as requested in our Conference Meeting May 3, 1975, by the Church Clerk, approved and granted permission to send one copy to the *Signs of the Times* for publication, one copy be given to the family, and one to be spread on our Church Book.

Elder D. A. O'Bryant, Mod.

Sister Louise Cobb, Clerk

CHARLES HENRY GREATHOUSE

Charles Henry Greathouse was born in Webster County near Louisville, Kentucky, on March 17, 1883. He passed peacefully from this life April 26, 1975, in Grants Pass, Oregon.

There was no dread of death and he often mentioned he wanted no one to grieve when he was released from this earth for he'd lived a long and full life, having sojourned here 92 years, 1 month and 9 days.

He was one of eleven children of Elder Isaac R. and Sabina J. Greathouse. On Sept. 11, 1907, at age 24, he married Sadie M. Steddom, 18. Shortly after, they moved to New Mexico and homesteaded. Through a period of great hardships this pioneering effort developed into a large cattle ranch. This union truly was blessed of God, having lasted more than 67 years. They reared five children and one grandson. Besides ranching he was a taxidermist in his spare time and loved hunting and fishing in the great outdoors. He was always active, and possessed a firm conviction of right and wrong — yet lending a helping hand at every opportunity. He was loved and respected by all who knew him.

His life on earth was during the period of

greatest changes — from the horse and buggy days to freeway traffic. He witnessed one of the first flights of Wilbur and Orville Wright and also witnessed the landing of the first man on the moon by way of television.

He was baptized in the Primitive Baptist church on the 5th Sunday and 29th day of February, 1948, by Elder J. B. Hardy in Muleshoe, Texas. His pioneering spirit was again evident after moving to Grants Pass, Oregon, in 1958 at age 75. At that time there was no Primitive Baptist Church in the area. With the blessings of God, this soon changed and he was a charter member of the church of his belief. He loved to hear the gospel of our Lord, Jesus Christ, and was a faithful member in attendance as well as a strong supporter. He continued to set the example in Christian service.

He was a very strong and independent individual, insisting on driving his own vehicle to worship services until about a month before passing to a better home in Glory.

One daughter, Fern Russell, preceded him in death in 1935. He is survived by his loving wife; three daughters, Lucile Lukits, Margaret Wagner, Frances Erickson and his son, Charles, Jr., 12 grandchildren and 20 great grandchildren. Also a sister, two brothers and two half brothers.

Charles Greathouse has departed the earthly body, his spirit has been carried away by the angels, and his body to its temporary resting place to await the hour of resurrection. "As in Adam we all die, so in Christ we shall live again."

"Thanks be to God which giveth us the Victory through our Lord Jesus Christ" (1st Cor. 15:57) who also said, "Lo, I am with you always" (Math. 28:20).

Funeral services were conducted April 30th at 11 a.m. at the Hull and Hull Chapel by Elder Herbert Morris to the Glory of God and consolation of all our hearts, with interment at Hillcrest Memorial Park, Grants Pass, Oregon.

Submitted in love on behalf of the family by daughter,

Lucile J. Lukits.

IN MEMORIAM

BE IT RESOLVED, That we, The Dan River Primitive Baptist Church at Ruffin, N. C. hold sacred the memory of our dear brethren who have departed this life and unfriendly world into paradise where there is perfect peace and rest, where God wipes away all tears, where the bride the Lamb's wife can praise him more perfectly, and that forever.

THEREFORE, we should not grieve for them as for those who have no hope.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the names of those deceased be listed under this

Memoriam.

Deceased

Brother Ernest Curry December 16, 1974

Brother Thomas Strader May 12, 1975

Elder D. V. Spangler, Moderator
W. C. Vipperman, Clerk

SISTER SALLIE LOVELACE SAMUELS

Our Heavenly Father was pleased to remove our much loved sister, Sallie Lovelace Samuels, from the earthly scenes March 28, 1975. She was born January 1, 1878 in Pittsylvania County, Va. She was the daughter of John Lovelace and Elizabeth Crane Lovelace. Sister Samuels united in marriage to Archie Samuels November 24, 1897. To this union 2 sons and 2 daughters survive: John Thomas and William Clyde, and Miss Lillian Samuels of Danville, and Mrs. Christine Henderson of Keeling, Va.

She united with Mt. Ararat Church and was baptized by the late Elder W. R. Dodd, and remained a faithful member. There were a few years that she was unable to attend church, The Lord blessed her to reach a ripe age. Later she was confined to a Nursing Home.

May the Lord bless the family and reconcile them to His will. She is awaiting that glorious resurrection when the elect family will be raised from the dead. Then they will behold Him and be satisfied. The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh: blessed by His Holy Name.

The funeral service was conducted at Wrenn & Yeatts Funeral Home by Elder R. S. Payne.

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.

Newton

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 143

DANVILLE, VA., OCTOBER, 1975

NO. 10

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 10/75
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

BOUGHT WITH A PRICE

In a little group sometime ago, a young sister asked just what the apostle meant by his statement "And ye are not your own. For ye are bought with a price," stating she knew we are bought with the blood of Jesus, but what, exactly did it mean in *her* life? Several comments were made, one being that she thought of it as in the days of slavery, when a plantation owner bought a slave, although the slave lived a fairly normal life, he belonged to his master, to serve him in whatever manner pleased him. Someone remarked "But I am not a slave."

This morning, confined to the house because of illness, I've been blest to meditate at some length on "the unsearchable riches of Christ" and the verse "Ye are not your own, etc" has kept coming back to me with a sweetness I am unable to describe. My mortal life is mostly spent and my natural vision is largely gone and at this moment, before it is too late, I would like to leave on record, providing the editors care to publish it, a little something of what this precious verse means to me.

I do not, I cannot know how others feel, but as for me, let me be a slave to Christ, let me be His servant, His prisoner, His anything or His nothing, only let me be His—His to command,

His to direct my every step, my every thought, my every breath, His to shower with benefits or His to humble and afflict, according as it is good in His sight. How delightful it is when blest to "cast all our care upon Him" and then to see that according to His riches in glory, He has supplied, He does supply and we trust He will yet supply our every need as promised in Philippians 4:19.

It means to me that my life and my body are not my own, therefore if I abuse or misuse these gifts, I am not abusing or misusing my own property, but the property of Him who paid so dearly for my redemption and preservation.

It means to me that I am not faced with the responsibility of making my own decisions. My Blessed Owner made them for me before time began and I have only to walk in the path which my Master lays before me. Unbelievers would say what a terrible way to live, but not so with the Lord's people to whom it is a sweet servitude and a blessed privilege.

It means to me that although violence pervades the land and satanic forces are rampant; that although satan "goes about like a roaring lion seeking whom he may devour," I do not need to fear what men or satan can do to me because my dear Owner's eye is ever upon me to protect me. I am convinced that no harm or no evil can befall me apart from His direct, eternal decree. "He shall give His angels charge over thee to keep thee in all thy ways; they shall bear thee up in their hands lest thou dash thy foot against a stone," is the promise of Him whose promises are, like Himself, immutable.

It means to me, as the apostle stated, that "I am crucified with Christ": that I "bear about in my body the dying of the Lord Jesus, "that though I walk in the flesh, I do not war after the flesh," therefore, sinful as I am, and I'm more aware of my sinfulness as time passes, "sin shall not have dominion over me," "The cross of Christ crucifies the world unto me and me unto the world," I do realize I am speaking with much boldness—I hope not with presumption, but "in the liberty whereunto Christ hath made us free."

It means to me that fear of death and the grave, probably the most universal of all human emotions, has been removed, because my dear Master went before me into death; He lay in the grave, but came forth in triumph, thus robbing death of its sting and the grave of its victory.

"I would not live away, oh welcome the tomb
Since Jesus has laid there, I dread not its
gloom."

It means to me that my faithful Master has provided for me "an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled WHICH FADETH NOT AWAY, RESERVED IN HEAVEN", an inheritance which I can never assign, mortgage, sell or waste. Although this inheritance is reserved in heaven for me, He sends me supplies of it every day of my life, which neither detract from nor add to that which is reserved in heaven. Moreover, the testator of this inheritance will not have to die in order for me to receive it, for in His own words He assures me "I am He who liveth and was dead. Behold, I am alive forevermore" and He holds the key to my inheritance in His hands.

But I think the pinnacle of what this precious truth means to me lies in the last part: "for ye are bought with a price." It lies in the matchless love which motivated the payment of such a price. Love is the strongest of all motivating forces. I am told that demonstrations of love are just as important, indeed just as necessary for the proper growth and development of a baby as is

food itself. This crumbling, sin-cursed world has been spared to this moment because its creator loves and protects the members of His elect who remain. It was wondrous love that formed the covenant among the members of the Godhead to pay this unspeakable price. Even in the affairs of men, the purchase price of an object is determined largely by the intensity of someone's desire to possess it. No such price was ever paid as that paid for our salvation.

As Jesus approached John the Baptist, he exclaimed "Behold the lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world." Oh, that by faith we may behold Him as He unveiled His deity in humanity, leaving for a while "the glory which He had with the Father before the world was," taking the form of a servant humbling Himself, making Himself of no reputation and became obedient unto death, even death by crucifixion, the most shameful of all deaths. May we behold Him going forth to meet those who would crucify Him. May we behold His agony of soul as He hung on the cross, and beholding Him, be crucified with Him. May we behold Him as He drank the bitter cup, containing every particle of the loathsome, putrid filth of sin which each of His chosen ones were and are guilty of. Even His holy person must be "made to be sin" that sin might be condemned in the flesh. He was mocked, ridiculed and smitten of men, He was bruised and forsaken of the Father, but He bore it all without a murmur; "He opened not His mouth." He knew He was paying the price that God's holiness demanded for the remission of sin. He could have come down from the cross but the purchase price must be paid and it could be paid by no other. This is the awful price with which we are bought. "Ye are bought with a price." I do not think the human mind is capable of conceiving the magnitude of this price. It "passeth understanding." But when we are blest to meditate upon His determination to obtain and possess us, it brings us to His feet in adoration and praise. It

creates within my very soul a depth of gratitude which I cannot describe, that He is the potter and I am the clay. May I ever be clay in His hands to mould as it pleases Him. Apart from my dear Redeemer, I'm nothing but clay anyhow. I was formed of the dust of the earth and dust is simply dry clay. "He knoweth our frame and remembereth that we are dust." But when it pleases God to implant even a little faith within this dust, we are sometimes given a glimpse of our Lord "as He looketh forth at the windows, showing Himself through the lattice." (S. of S. 2:0). At such times, there wells up within my heart a surging wave of response to "His great love wherewith He loved us" and with humble heart and flowing tears, I thank my God that before I was conceived in my mother's body, I was "bought with a price", which divine love alone could afford.

With fellowship for everyone, everywhere who love His dear Name.

Mildred V. Dykes
1114 Mt. Hermon Road
Salisbury, Maryland 21801

BAPTISTS FIRST MET IN 1715

by Mary L. Hellings

The trustees of the first Baptist Church of Hopewell was organized at the residence of Joseph Stout, April 23, 1715, which comprised of 12 members, five of whom were Stouts.

Until 1721 the church had only visiting ministers, when Thomas Simmonds came and settled here and preached to the brethren from private homes, but by 1728 Elder Joseph Eaton came from Montgomery, Pa. once a month for 15 years, during which time many members were added to the church.

By August 1747 Benjamin Drake and Henry Oxley were chosen to build a meeting house for worship on a lot of ground given by John Hart, and sometime the following winter had it ready to hold meetings. (This was not the

house as we see it today.) It was added to at a later date.

In 1748 Isaac Eaton came from Southampton, Pa. and joined the Hopewell church and was ordained to preach.

In 1749 a parsonage (farm) was purchased for the minister. In 1753 John Gano came to Hopewell. He was one of the many ministers in those days who has always been remembered in our church history.

Then in October 1769 a petition was forwarded to the then governor, William Franklin of New Jersey to obtain a charter for the church from George the Third, King of England. Isaac Eaton and Zebulon Stout were appointed messengers to wait on His Excellency with this petition. Through this act it received the name of "The Trustees of the Baptist Congregation of Hopewell."

The church then met according to the appointment of the Charter and proceeded to choose a trustee board of whom Isaac Eaton was named president.

Down through the years, Elder John Boggs was pastor 39 years. Elder Philander Hartwell 25 years. In this time there were well over 350 members. (His picture among others is in the meeting house.) Next came Elder William Purrington, 27 years, followed by the beloved Elder F. A. Chick who served until his death, 18 years. I remember him.

In April 1940 the church held its 200th anniversary with its pastor of then 25 years, Elder Charles W. Vaughn. Because of lack of space, I must come down through all these many years to the present. In all these years the church has stood firm on the fundamental principles of doctrine and practice of the apostolic church on which it was founded.

On the present Trustee Board is Samual K. Hunt, Joseph B. Hill, III, David L. Smith, Ruth A. Blackwell (filling the unexpired term of J. Russell Riley), and the last remaining active member of the church, Mary L. Hell-

ings. Mrs. Samuel K. Hunt is secretary-treasurer.

A wreath is placed by the John Hart monument in his memory every July 4 and little flags mark the graves of Revolutionary war soldiers.

When reviewing history to date since the organizing of the first Baptist Church in Hopewell, time has taken its toll on the Christian way of life lived by those first settlers in a new land, so different in fact that after the death of the last male member, Charles E. Hellings in 1973, the old charter could no longer function and the beautiful wide doors were closed to church services.

Within the frame of this wonderful house of worship there yet lives an abiding peace and glory that will remain so long as it is God's will; it shall stand as a monument to all who contend for the faith once delivered to the Saints, which could embrace a reviving of a new church body.

Such things are not given us to know.

(From Hopewell Valley News, Hopewell, N.J.)

EXPERIENCE

2305 Meadow Drive
Salisbury, Maryland 21801
July 2, 1975

Dear Elder and Sister Spangler,

This past weekend has meant so much to me. It had seemed like such a long time since I had seen you both. I guess it had only been about a year, but so much had happened. Brother and Sister Lambeth and Sister Gulden were such wonderful people. I told Mother this morning, when you arrived Saturday, I had never seen either of them. But by Sunday night, I felt like I'd always known and loved them.

Elder Spangler, I feel so ashamed. You asked me to tell you my experience and I couldn't seem to tell you my innermost thoughts. It sounded like a foreign language to me, as I talked.

If I have had an experience, it has been one of the most trying and most

difficult times of my life, which I thank God for.

I feel it really did start the night Mother, Daddy and I heard about Brother and Sister Hastings' baptism for the next day. We were in Hopewell, staying at Aunt Letha's for the weekend when we received the joyful news. Right away, Mother and Daddy decided to go home for it. What joy I felt! That night, I went to bed and shed tears of happiness for them. The next day, I saw one of the most beautiful sights I believe I'd ever seen in my 13 years of life: their baptism. It seemed like the tears wouldn't stop coming. I was so afraid. I didn't know what was wrong with me. I could feel people staring at me and I wanted to go and hide somewhere. Such embarrassment and to not even understand what was happening. The years passed. If I had any sign of that feeling coming back I'd fight it. Satan became my constant companion for a while. The sins I committed, will haunt me for the rest of my life.

David and I started going to church together, 3 years ago in January. Dave and Kim were 1 and 2 years of age. David and I thought we should go to church so the kids would know how to act. He being a Methodist and I claiming to be an Old School Baptist, we divided our Sundays up and managed to go to both churches. Elder Spangler, before I knew it, I had tasted something very sweet and I hoped I would be blessed to taste more.

That following August, I was scheduled for surgery which could either be minor or major. After the initial shock wore off, a feeling of calm came over me. You see, I knew I wouldn't be alone when I was taken to surgery. Praise His holy name! To know where my strength was coming from, was a wonderful blessing. My surgery was minor and I thank God for it. The months passed. I seemed to have contracted a disease that couldn't be cured - churchitis. I wasn't happy unless in church, listening to the gospel or looking forward to the next meeting.

One night in May, I woke up to have the words, "Do not I love thee oh my Lord" going around in my head. It was something I couldn't answer, at that time. The next morning after sleeping very little that night, I opened the Bible to Jeremiah 31:3, "The Lord hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee." My heart filled with joy for an instant. Could the precious Lord have drawn me? No, being the worthless sinner that I am, it didn't seem possible. That night, I went to Elder and Sister Poole's home. By the time the evening was over, I felt sure where I'd been led. If it was the Lord's will, I was going to ask for a home in Nassawango Church. Well, it wasn't the right time. The next Sunday that they had services, Elder Poole talked from Jeremiah. What a beautiful sermon! You could feel the Lord's presence. At the close of the service, I knew that I was too unfit and the door seemed to close in my face. I left with a heavy heart. I was so ashamed. I was afraid that all of my feelings had been imagined. That it was only what I wanted, but not what God wanted.

After that Sunday, a very cold, empty feeling came into my soul and stayed with me. That summer I learned that we were going to have another child. David was very happy. I didn't experience the happiness that I had felt with the other children. I felt weighted down with my sinfulness. This continued until the 1st Sunday in February. Sister Frances Jarvis was to be baptized that Sunday and I felt that Linda would be with her. She was! How wonderful it was. Linda had been burdened for so long. And it was wonderful for another reason. My coldness began to leave. I began to feel again. My desire for baptism returned—yes, *my* desire. As of yet, I didn't feel that it was the Lord's will. Then on the 2nd Sunday in March, my brother Francis, asked for a home in the Welsh Tract Church. We were so happy for him. He was to be baptized

the next Sunday at Snow Hill Church.

That whole week, I prayed that by the grace of God that I could be baptized with him. Each night was filled with torment. I waited for some sign to show me the way. By Friday, I'd decided to definitely take my clothes. Even though, I knew that medically, I shouldn't be baptized, I felt to be in the Lord's hands. Saturday night, I prayed most of the night that I would be given the strength the next day. But it just wasn't to be. It was my time, but not the Lord's. That afternoon I went to Nassawango, hoping and praying that I would be shown the way. I felt like I was torn apart. When I got home, I went to bed weak and burdened. All night I tossed and turned. It just didn't seem like I could take much more without knowing in which direction I was heading. The next morning Mother and Daddy came over, I managed to talk to them some. They were so wonderful. Mother mentioned that if I had the desire to talk to the church before Sunday, that a special meeting could be called. I dismissed that thought at the time, because I felt there was no hope for me. Dave went to school in the afternoon and Kim laid down. So I thought I'd try to rest too. The baby was due at the end of March. Sleep came that afternoon, a restful sleep. When I woke up, I had to talk to Elder Poole, if given the strength to call him. I picked up the receiver, staring at it. I prayed, "Please help me, dear God." I put the phone down. I tried to wash some baby bottles. Again, I picked up the receiver, unable to dial. Before I hung up the phone, I heard someone knocking at the door. When I opened the door, I knew my prayer had been answered. My precious Lord had sent Elder and Sister Poole. My prayers were answered. I felt that I could now ask for a home in the church. After we had talked, and the church had accepted me, I felt as though the sun was shining in every part of my soul. As undeserving as I am, how could the Lord be so good to me? Elder Poole wanted to know if I wanted to be bap-

tized the following Sunday. But if the Lord's will, I wanted it as soon as possible. That Wednesday night, Brother Russell Jennings and I were baptized together. What wondrous love! I had never felt such peace. I felt the Lord's presence that night in church. It was wonderful.

Five days later David and I were blessed with a beautiful, healthy baby. It was a wonderful birth. You see, I wasn't alone. Isn't it a blessing to know where your strength comes from?

Since my baptism, I have been blessed to have a sweeter communion with my Lord. I feel as though my life is in His Hands.

Please forgive me if this hasn't sounded right. I've never been able to express myself very well. I hope and pray that it's the Lord's will that I will see you again soon. You both have a special place in my heart.

In bonds of love,

Ethel Bailey

PLEASE NOTE THE FOLLOWING
IN CONNECTION WITH
THE ABOVE

Recently we published a letter from Mrs. Richard Adkins, of Salisbury, Md. who was lately baptized into the fellowship of the Snow Hill Old School Baptist Church, Snow Hill, Md. by Elder James Poole, the pastor. Sister Adkins is the daughter of our deceased Brother and Sister Bill Davis, of New Church, Va. Her husband is the son of Deacon William S. Adkins, of Mardela, Md.

The above letter and experience is from Brother Adkins' daughter, Ethel Bailey, who recently was baptized into the Nassawango Church by Elder Poole. A short time ago Elder Poole baptized Brother Francis Adkins, a son of Brother William Adkins, into the Welsh Tract Old School Baptist Church at Newark, Delaware. I hope he will feel inclined to send us an account of his spiritual journey.

Our dear Elder Poole has been blest with a goodly number of baptizings in the vicinity of the Eastern Shore of Maryland. I served three churches, (the same ones he serves,) for many years.

May our God be praised!

D. V. Spangler

UPPER COUNTRY LINE PRIMITIVE
BAPTIST ASSOCIATION,
JULY, 1975
CIRCULAR LETTER

To our correspondence, brethren and friends, we would desire to welcome you to the Upper Country Line Primitive Baptist Association being held with Pleasant Grove Church.

It is our desire to render thanks and praise to our Almighty God who spoke the world into existence and created the heavens and earth and the fullness thereof. He rules and has control over all things, in which we have no right to question His ways for they are right, whether we are given to understand them or not.

May we be given to pray that the Lord may lead, guide, direct and keep us in love and fellowship with each other, not only in this association, but as long as we journey here in this world. May we be given to strive for the things that would be pleasing in His sight and would be honoring and glorifying to His holy name. We want to thank our God that He has sent our ministering brethren, sisters and friends from the various parts of the country. We would also wish to thank everyone who has helped in caring for this association.

I feel to be such a poor excuse for such a task as writing this what is suppose to be a circular letter. May Almighty God keep us in the unity of His spirit and bonds of love and peace until we meet again.

Submitted by Earl S. Rudd
Elder D. V. Spangler, Moderator
Elder Donald E. Smith, Clerk

CIRCULAR LETTER
OF
PIGG RIVER ASSOCIATION
1975

Dear Brethren:

As it has fallen my lot to greet the Messengers and Elders who may compose the one hundred and fiftieth session of the Pigg River District Primitive Baptist Association, I do so confident that He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.

It is Jesus who redeemed us by His blood, justified us by His Righteousness, and sanctified us by His Spirit, and has not given us men and laws for leaders but has taken up His abode in our hearts so as to be our Lord, our God, and our Saviour, our All.

The honour of our Almighty God is engaged to keep His Church which is His workmanship and His own peculiar treasure, and is established by Him in holiness, mercy, and pity.

It is the life in the words of our gracious Redeemer which makes them a blessing to us named "faith".

And Jesus Christ Himself the sum and substance, or the Life itself, realized by faith in the heart, and revealed by the Holy Ghost.

Dear Brethren, it is only after He is revealed that He can be known.

And it is by this grace and truth which came by Jesus Christ which prevents us from taking man made laws and rules to be our guide, and blesses us to know that the law which came by Moses was only types and shadows of better things which are bestowed upon us freely by our glorious Redeemer who said, "Fear not little flock it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom."

Dear Brethren, no doubt the Lord will continue to take care of you. It is, therefore, in view of the fact that His kingdom cannot fail, that I bid you all Godspeed. I feel thankful for you dear brethren because God has chosen you

from the beginning. Therefore, though I feel to be the least of all, if one at all, I'm not ashamed to write and say, "Salvation is of the Lord."

Your brother in unfailing bonds.

Elder Rufus Brown

EXPERIENCE

Pigg River, Va.
December, 1901

Elder F. P. Branscome:

Dear Brother: I will make the attempt to write some of my thoughts and feelings from boyhood to the present day. I was born in Patrick County, Va., Dec. 2, 1871. I had no thought of death, as I remember, until I was about ten years old, then I had some serious thoughts about eternal punishment. I thought when I was a little older I would quit all my bad habits and get religion, but I continued in sin and vanity. When about seventeen I had a great desire to read the Bible to see if I could find a way that I might attain eternal life. I read the Bible through, but it condemned me. I tried to quit my habits and do better, but, seemingly, got worse all the time.

I dreamed that I saw a company of soldiers, and a servant of God went up to them to battle without any earthly weapons, and slew and put to flight the whole army. The battle seemed to be above the earth. I then began to feel the weakness of men and the power of the Lord. About the same time I dreamed that one of my brothers and I were a little way from the house, and I heard the sweetest music up over us I ever heard, and I heard a voice cry out in praise and adoration to the Lord. I was given a message for every one of the family. I went back to the house and delivered the messages. I could almost recollect them when I awoke. At times I was greatly troubled about my condition, and would seek some lonely and secluded place to beg the Lord for

mercy. Again, at times, my troubles would wear off and I would enjoy myself with playmates, but as soon as we were parted I would be troubled about my sins worse than ever, and would beg the Lord to pardon me of my sins, and made many promises to do better, but all my promises were broken.

I was in this condition until in 1895, when my troubles grew worse. I was often begging the Lord for mercy. I had tried every way I could think of to quit sin and do better, but all was a failure. I saw I was a poor and helpless, lost, ruined and undone sinner, and without the mercies of God would be eternally lost: and I could not see how He could forgive such a sinner as I was. I had many visions and dreams in the fall of 1895 that gave me some comfort for a short time, and then my burden would be as heavy as ever. I dreamed of being with nearly all of the Primitive Baptist preachers there were in our section of the country, talking to them and hearing them preach. One time I thought I was at a neighbor's house, and started out of the house, and two Baptist preachers came to me and took hold of my arms, and we commenced leaving the earth. I thought we had started to heaven. I awoke and was comforted at the time, but my burden came back.

I was teaching in a public school, but the burden was so heavy it (the school) was no enjoyment to me. I said nothing about my troubles and tried to keep others from finding out that there was anything the matter with me. On Saturday before the second Sunday in Nov. I was on my way to Charity Church to preaching. I was walking along with a member of the church and he said, "It is expected that several will talk to the church today, and you may be one of them." This surprised me very much, more than anything that had ever been spoken to me before. I could not see how anybody could have such thoughts. I had not told anybody my feelings. He told me some of my feelings plainer than I could tell them. I could not understand how it was he knew my

thoughts. I was weighted down with my burden until on Saturday night before the fourth Sunday in November I went to bed: all I could say was, "Lord have mercy on me a poor sinner." It seemed that I shut my eyes and I heard something say, God's faith is able to make the snow smooth before your door. I saw the snow around the house, it was as smooth as ice, and as clear as crystal. My eyes flashed open, my burden was gone and I felt happy. I could hardly keep from shouting the praises of the Lord aloud.

The next day everything seemed lovely. Some of my friends came to spend the day with me: they looked lovelier than I had ever seen them. This was one of the happiest days of my life. Monday morning, I went back to my school and everything still seemed lovely. I loved all my scholars more than usual, and could teach with more ease and comfort. I soon began to doubt and fear that this was not of the Lord. I tried to pray to the Lord many times that if I was deceived to undeceive me. Christmas came. I dismissed my school for the holidays. Some young people came to my school with their musical instruments and asked permission for a frolic. I objected at first, but after much persuasion, and as it had been the custom at that place, I consented. That night I heard music at the head of my bed and Jesus appeared in the form of a little child, and said, "If you allow frolicking in a house that is in your possession you cannot enter the kingdom of heaven."

I soon had impressions to join the church and to be baptized. The members of the church all looked so lovely and happy. It made me desire to be with them, but I felt too unworthy. I did not wish to deceive them. Occasionally some of the members would ask me about my hope, but I would deny it. In the early summer of 1896, I told a member of the church some of my feelings, and I was greatly relieved for a few days. Then I was sorry that I had said anything about it. I feared that I

had deceived some one. During that summer, I would often go off by myself and study over my condition to see if I could take what I had for a hope. I would often think, Perhaps it is only an imagination. But I could not put the matter from my mind. My health failed and I was the lightest that I had been since I was grown.

On Saturday before the 4th Sunday in September, I went before the church at County Line and told a part of what is here written, and, to my surprise I was received, and was baptized on Saturday before the third Sunday in October, by Elder W. A. Via. I received much comfort after talking to the church and being baptized. I rejoiced just one month from the time I talked with the church. At our next meeting at County Line I was cast down in feelings both days. This was the first time I had got so low down in feelings since I had been a member. I believe it hurt me the worst. This did not last long, and I was enabled to rejoice again. I have had these feelings at times ever since, but occasionally I trust I have been made to rejoice in Christ the hope of Glory. I have never regretted the step I made when I joined the church.

Soon after my baptism, one evening after I dismissed school, I was walking along with several of my scholars. I had a vision of the saints of God rising up. I thought it resembled the resurrection. I did not say anything about it to the children, and they seemed not to know anything had happened unusual. That must not have been seen with the natural eyes, or the children would have seen it too. This greatly confirmed me in my hope. I will relate one more dream or vision, as it is on my mind. I thought that one of my younger playmates and I were riding on bicycles and came to a crowd that were drinking liquor, all drank but my friend and I: One asked me to go home with them, and we said we were afraid we could not get back that night. We were told that as tomorrow would be Sunday, to go and stay all night. We consented, and the next

thing I remembered we were at home preparing to go. Then the next thing I remembered we were about ten miles from home near the bend of a river,—though there is no natural river at the place. It seemed that we were hunting. There were several along, but we did not know any of them. Then the next thing I remembered, we had come back about three miles, and there was a large crowd present. I looked out a few steps from the path and saw some kind of a large fowl beside a tree. Someone pointed a gun at it, and it raised up taller than a man. I heard a voice say, "It is by this power the gospel is preached." I saw the saints and sinners divided. In the division one was brought in that was not a member of any church, and one church member that I knew was left out; and I heard a voice say, "All that is of Israel is not Israel." Then I remembered we were at the school house where I was teaching at that time. I saw a large crowd of children, and they were divided in like manner as in the first division. This same object that I saw at first went with us all the time. The next thing I remembered we were in a neighbor's yard, and started to the next neighbor's house to get peaches, and the object left us. That was the last I remembered of our travel. I cannot tell what it meant, it still bears on my mind.

Lest I weary the readers with dreams and visions, I will drop them. I have been a member of the church nearly five years and have been greatly blessed and comforted during these years...

Yours in hope of eternal life,
M. A. Thomas

(This is taken from The Messenger of Truth of December, 1901 and is published by request along with Sister Thomas' obituary in this issue. We remember Brother Thomas quite well. He died in 1965—J.D.W.)

BLACK CREEK ASSOCIATION

The 1975 session of the *Black Creek Primitive Baptist Association* will, the Lord willing, convene with the Church at Sand Hill, N. C., beginning on Friday before the 4th Sunday in

October at the church. The Saturday and Sunday meetings are to be held in the Beulahville Elementary School building, beginning at 10:30 A.M. on Saturday and at 10:00 A. M. on Sunday.

To reach the Sand Hill Church take Highway 70 east out of Goldsboro. Turn right on Highway 111 about three miles out of Goldsboro, and proceed on to Beulahville and turn left on Highway 41, and follow on 4 or 5 miles to the church.

A cordial invitation is extended to all lovers of the truth.

W. E. Turner, Clerk

THE SALISBURY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The *Salisbury Old School Baptist Association* will be held with the Snow Hill Church in Snow Hill, Maryland, on Washington Street, on October 22 and 23, 1975.

Those coming from the north on Tuesday can contact Elder James Poole on Route 13 in Salisbury, telephone 301 742-6406. Those coming from the south contact Bro. Billy Davis near New Church, Virginia, telephone 804 824-3137, or Bro. Harry Ward at Snow Hill, telephone 301 632-1816. Those coming on Wednesday go directly to the meeting house.

We cordially invite all ministers, brethren, and friends of our faith and order to be with us.

Maude Truitt, Church Clerk

CONTENTNEA ASSOCIATION

The next session of the *Contentnea Association* is to be held, the Lord willing, with Muddy Creek Church, Duplin County, N. C. the 10th, 11th and 12th of October, 1975. The church is located about 5 miles south of Beaulaville, N. C. The association will be held on Saturday and Sunday in the Chinquapin School.

Those coming from the north going south on #258 Highway, turn on #41 Highway going to Beaulaville, keep #41 through Beaulaville about 7 miles to school.

All lovers of the truth are invited to visit us.

W. W. Stallings, Clerk

CONTENTNEA UNION

The next session of the *Contentnea Union* is to be held, the Lord willing, with Pleasant Hill Church, the fifth Sunday and Saturday before in November, 1975.

The church is located in Edgecombe County

just off Highway #43 between Pinetops and Rocky Mount, N. C.

All lovers of the truth are invited to visit us.

W. W. Stallings, Clerk

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NOTICE OF OMISSION

In the August, 1975 issue of the *Signs* there is a line omitted on Page 176 in the last paragraph of the second column (9 lines from the bottom of page) in quoting 1 Corinthians 2:4-5. The printing is, ". . . that your faith should not stand in the power of God, when it should read, "That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God." This is in Elder Hudson's article.

We regret the omission. —J.D.W.

"Hold fast the form of sound words, thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus." (2 Timothy 1:13)

Danville, Va. October, 1975

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

R. F. D. 1, Box 539 Beechwood Lane
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EDITORIAL

MASTER

In the Old and New Testaments Jesus is referred to either by title or name over one hundred and twenty-five times. Every title or name given him, was suitable to either His person or His work. What a wonderful thing it would be to trace out the true import of each name or title!

The title of *Master* was one used many times by both the followers of Jesus, and others who approached Him. Webster defines the meaning of the word as follows, "A male person having another

living being so far subject to his will, that he can, in the main, control his or its actions."

Jesus tells his disciples in John 13:13 that He is their Master. "Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well, for so I am." Again, in Matthew 23:8 Jesus said, "But be ye not called Rabbi, for one is your Master, even Christ, and all ye are brethren." And again in Matthew 26:18 He said, "Go ye into the city of such a man, and say unto him, The Master saith, My time is at hand, I will keep the passover at thy house with my disciples." And in Luke 6:40, He said, "The disciple is not above his Master, but everyone that is perfect shall be as his Master."

Then we find his disciples approaching Jesus using the title Master on a number of times, especially when they were in need of help, or filled with joy: When the disciples were on the ship, being tossed to and fro with the storm and filled with fear, "And they came to him, and awoke him, saying, Master, Master, we perish. Then He arose, and rebuked the wind and the raging water, and they ceased, and there was a calm." (Luke 8:24)

In the 7th chapter of Luke we read of Jesus eating with a Pharisee, and a woman, described as a sinner, came to where He was, bringing an alabaster box of ointment, and stood at his feet behind him weeping, and began to wash His feet with her tears, and wipe them with the hairs of her head, and kissed His feet, and anointed them with the ointment. The Pharisee questioned in his mind, whether Jesus was a prophet or not, for if he were a prophet, He would have known that the woman was a sinner. "And Jesus answering said unto him, Simon I have somewhat to say to thee, and he said, Master say on." Then Jesus drew the line between the critic, who is forever sitting in judgment of others, and the poor woman described as a sinner, who had so many sins to be forgiven.

After the resurrection of Jesus from the dead and His ascending into heav-

en, we find the Apostles referring to Jesus as the Master. Paul in his epistle to the church at Ephesus, in exhorting the brethren as to their dealings with servants, has said this, "And, ye masters, do the same things unto them, forbearing threatening: knowing that your Master also is in heaven, neither is there respect of persons with Him." (Ephesians 6:9)

In Colossians we read, "Masters, give unto your servants that which is just and equal, knowing that ye also have a Master in Heaven. In Timothy 2:21-23, Paul wrote, "But in a great house there are not only vessels of gold and silver, but also of wood and of earth, and some to honor, and some to dishonor. If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honor, sanctified, and meet for the Master's use, and prepared unto every good work."

In Matthew 26:49 we find Judas, the one who betrayed Jesus, using the term Master, "And forthwith he came to Jesus, and said, Hail, Master, (not spelled with a capital) and kissed Him."

It is possible that Judas had no choice in the matter, as to the title he gave him, even as Pilate had no choice in placing the inscription over Jesus on the cross. "And a superscription also was written over Him in letters of Greek, and Latin, and in Hebrew. This is the king of the Jews."

In conclusion, How I would be thankful if I could use all of the over one hundred and twenty-five names and titles given Jesus in the Old and New Testaments, in deed and in truth. What a joy it would be! But most of the time I am fearful of using even the title, MASTER.

D. V. Spangler

EDITORIAL

JACOB'S BLESSING (concluded)

"And Jacob called unto his sons, and said, Gather yourselves together, that I

may tell you that which shall befall you in the last days.

Gather yourselves together, and hear, ye sons of Jacob; and hearken unto Israel your father." (Gen. 49:1, 2)

Thus far we have examined the blessing of Jacob concerning his six sons born to Leah namely Reuben, Simeon, Levi, Judah, Zebulun and Issachar. The prophecy concerning each is distinctive and articulate and reveals in addition some attribute of Jesus. The shadow of Reuben shows Christ as the firstborn among many brethren, Simeon and Levi His Priesthood forever after the order of Melchizedek, Judah His Kingship, Zebulun His Refuge and Issachar His Redemption. Truly, "the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy." (Rev. 19:10)

Let us now proceed to examine the blessing and prophecy of Jacob concerning each of the rest of his sons.

"Dan shall judge his people, as one of the tribes of Israel.

Dan shall be a serpent by the way, an adder in the path, that biteth the horse heels, so that his rider shall fall backward.

I have waited for thy salvation, O Lord." (Gen. 49:16, 17, 18)

The word Dan means judge and his portion of land was to the west of Ephraim and Benjamin reaching to the Mediterranean Sea and containing the city and seaport of Joppa or modern day Jaffa which, in turn, merged with Tel Aviv in 1948 to become Tel Aviv-Yafo. Currently, this is the largest city of Israel and one of the most modern in the Middle East.

To begin with, the prophecy concerning Dan was exemplified in the life of Samson who was one of the most eminent of Hebrew judges and was a Danite, being born to Manoah at Zorah. From his birth no razor touched his head nor strong drink touched his mouth. As long as he submitted to these restrictions, he was capable of heroic achievements against the Philistines. However, since he was a slave to passion, Delilah was able to induce him to

tell her the secret of his great strength, which lay in the length of his flowing hair. At once, the Philistines shaved him and subsequently his strength departed. Then they put out his eyes and made him grind in the prison house at Gaza. Gradually, however, his hair grew again causing him to regain his strength. Not long after he was in the great temple, and knowing the structure of the building, he was able to move the two middle pillars, which caused the entire structure to come crashing down on a host of Philistines and himself. His judgment upon the Philistines was swift and vengeful, nevertheless his name appears among the Hebrews whose animating principle was faith. (Heb. 11:32)

Above all else, Solomon, the son of David, asked for an understanding heart that he might be able to judge justly, the people of God. His request was granted and, soon after, his gift of judgment was revealed in the skillful manner in which he discerned truth from falsehood when he decided between the two women, each of whom claimed to be the *true* mother of the surviving child in Kings 3:16-28. Solomon made his decision by asking for a sword to divide the child. The alleged mother said "divide it", while the true mother cried, "O my Lord, give her the living child, and in no wise slay it." Thus Solomon demonstrated his wisdom in judgment.

The reader might well ask at this point why this description of Solomon's wisdom is included here under the account of Dan because he was not of this tribe. The explanation is not difficult. Solomon's wisdom is a type of that judgment which comes from the great throne of God. Solomon determined to build the temple. To do so, he needed timber which under the covenant he made with Hiram, King of Tyre, was to come from the cedars of Lebanon in the north and be floated down along the shore of the Mediterranean Sea to enter the promised land through the seaport of Joppa situated within the portion al-

lotted to Dan which means *judge*. For there were none "that can skill to hew timber like unto Sidonians." (1 Kg. 5:6)

These cedars of Lebanon are beautiful types of the Lord's people as described in Psalm 104:16, "The trees of the Lord are full of sap; the cedars of Lebanon, which he hath planted." The same are referred to in Isaiah as the "trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord." (Is. 61:3) The servants of God are "the hewers that cut timber" (2 Ch. 2:10) and Solomon promised to give them measures of beaten wheat, barley, wine and oil for their work. Just as the natural cedars must be cut from the mountain tops of Lebanon and floated through the sea to Joppa and thereby transported to the site of Solomon's temple to be used in its building. A similar route in antitype must be followed by the Lord's people. They, too, must be felled from the mountain tops of self-righteousness, floated on the great sea of experience, pass through Dan meaning judgment and be assembled in the temple or the church of the living God. As they travel this route, servants along the way are given, for their comfort and edification, the beaten wheat or flour representing Christ, the measure of barley signifying judgments under the law, the baths of wine denoting the good news of the gospel and the baths of oil representing the outpouring of the holy spirit. Finally, being made willing in the day of His power, the children of God are brought before the One who is greater than Solomon exclaiming, "Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" (Gen. 18:25)

A further example of the judgment that came from Dan is illustrated in the ministry of Jonah who fled from *Joppa* after having been sent to cry against the city of Nineveh for its wickedness. Eventually Jonah's preaching brought Nineveh to judgment as he cried, "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown." (Jonah 3:4) Then the king of Nineveh decreed, "Let man

and beast be covered with sackcloth, and cry mightily unto God: yea, let them turn every one from his evil way, and from the violence that is in their hands." (Jonah 3:8) When God saw their works, He spared Nineveh, both man and beast and destroyed them not.

"Dan shall be a serpent by the way, an adder in the path," and from Deut. 33:22 "Dan is a lion's whelp: he shall leap from Bashan." These are all prophecies literally fulfilled in Judges 18 when the tribe of Dan attacked Laish, the attack being serpentine in its cunning and lionlike in its cruelty. The image of the serpent; however, brings to mind an earlier scene of the fiery serpents in the wilderness which bit many of the Israelites, causing their death. Then Moses, according to God's directions, made a serpent of brass and raised it upon a pole. When an Israelite was bitten by a fiery serpent and he beheld the serpent of brass, he lived. Thus, the brazen serpent not only judged but redeemed the people of Israel from death. John 3:14 reveals to us the significance of the brazen serpent as a type of Christ, for, "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."

By nature, our flesh is a cunning serpent. To redeem us, Christ, who knew no sin, had to come in the likeness of sinful flesh to counteract the poisonous venom of the fiery serpent within us. Christ had to come as a serpent of brass, as one who had come through the fire of divine wrath so that His people might not perish. *To behold* the brazen serpent was sufficient to preserve the Israelite as *to behold* Christ is sufficient to preserve a wretched sinner. No wonder Jacob exclaimed, "I have waited for thy salvation, O Lord."

"Gad, a troop shall overcome him: but he shall overcome at the last." (Gen. 49:19)

Gad, Reuben and one-half the tribe of Manasseh received their inheritance east of Jordan. This area was known

as the land of Gilead and was won before the land of Canaan was divided among the remaining tribes. Along with Reuben, the tribe of Gad had a multitude of cattle. Although Gad in number was not among the largest tribe, it became very warlike, for being east of Jordan it was continually harassed by the Ammonites, Midianites and others. In fact this tribe was in a continual state of warfare.

In 2 Kings 10:32, 33 we find that Hazael, a Syrian king, overran Gad along with Reuben and Manasseh as herein described. "In those days the Lord began to cut Israel short: and Hazael smote them in all the coasts of Israel; from Jordan eastward, all the land of Gilead, the Gadites, and the Reubenites, and the Manassites, from Aroer, which is by the river Arnon, even Gilead and Bashan." Later the people of Gad were actually carried away captive by Pul and Tilgath-pilneser both kings of Assyria.

Still further, however, Jeremiah foretells of Gad eventually overcoming the Ammonites in these words. "Concerning the Ammonites, thus saith the Lord; Hath Israel no sons? hath he no heir? why then doth their king inherit Gad, and his people dwell in his cities? Therefore, behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will cause an alarm of war to be heard in Babbah of the Ammonites; and it shall be a desolate heap, and her daughters shall be burned with fire: then shall Israel be heir unto them that were his heirs, saith the Lord." (Jer. 49:1, 2)

All this illustrates the truth of Jacob's prophecy in which he said of Gad, "a troop shall overcome him: but he shall overcome at the last." Spiritually, Gad reveals to us the resurrection of Christ as he was crucified, conquering the last enemy death, and rose again victorious to sit on the right hand of the Majesty on High. Further it illustrates the second coming of Christ when He shall put all enemies under His feet and reign eternally with His people. May God be praised!

"Out of Asher his bread shall be fat, and he shall yield royal dainties." (Gen. 49:20)

Asher along with Zebulun, Naphtali and Issachar were apportioned areas in the northern part of Palestine which became known as the "Galilee of the Gentiles." In particular, Asher lay between Mount Lebanon and the Mediterranean Sea, and included the strong city of Tyre. Its name means happiness and this land was preeminently rich and beautiful. Luxuriant palms grew in abundance there. Moses prophesied in Deut. 33:24 that this son would dip his foot in oil. The natural abundance of the area alone, is manifold evidence of the truth of Jacob's prediction that Asher's bread would be fat and that it would yield royal dainties.

Spiritually, Jacob's prediction was no less fulfilled for "Hiram king of Tyre sent messengers to David, and cedar trees, and carpenters, and masons: and they built David an house." (2 Sam. 5:11) This city of Tyre was, as already stated, within the boundaries of Asher. Asher was yielding the "royal dainties" as out of the abundance of the heart His people speak good things.

Solomon benefited no less than David from this land of plenty as we learn from 1 Kings 5:1-10. "And Hiram king of Tyre sent his servants unto Solomon; for he had heard that they had anointed him king in the room of his father: for Hiram was ever a lover of David. And Solomon sent to Hiram, saying, Thou knowest how that David my father could not build an house unto the name of the Lord his God for the wars which were about him on every side, until the Lord put them under the soles of his feet. But now the Lord my God hath given me rest on every side, so that there is neither adversary nor evil occurrent. And, behold, I purpose to build an house unto the name of the Lord my God, as the Lord spake unto David my father, saying, Thy son, whom I will set upon thy throne in thy room, he shall build an house unto my name. Now therefore command thou that they hew

me cedar trees out of Lebanon; and my servants shall be with thy servants: and unto thee will I give hire for thy servants according to all that thou shalt appoint: for thou knowest that there is not among us any that can skill to hew timber like unto the Sidonians. And it came to pass, when Hiram heard the words of Solomon, that he rejoiced greatly, and said, Blessed be the Lord this day which hath given unto David a wise son over this great people. And Hiram sent to Solomon, saying, I have considered the things which thou sentest to me for: and I will do all thy desire concerning timber of cedar, and concerning timber of fir. My servants shall bring them down from Lebanon unto the sea: and I will convey them by sea in floats unto the place that thou shalt appoint me, and will cause them to be discharged there, and thou shalt receive them: and thou shalt accomplish my desire, in giving food for my household. So Hiram gave Solomon cedar trees and fir trees according to all his desire."

A further example in the Old Testament of Asher's abundance is evident in the life of Elijah who for sustenance was sent by God to the widow in Zarephath, which according to Luke 4:26 was in Sidon, and Sidon, as listed in Joshua 19:28, was within Asher's boundaries. There Elijah asked the widow to make him a little cake and similiary one for herself and her son. Although she had left only a little meal in the barrel and a little oil in the cruse, she followed his instructions and they did eat many days. Just as Elijah declared God had promised, the barrel of meal did not waste nor the cruse of oil fail. How significant this is spiritually! For the people of God are constantly sustained by the meal (Christ) and the oil (Holy Spirit) and neither shall fail until rain cometh upon the earth or Jesus comes the second time. Asher, indeed, does yield its "royal dainties".

The New Testament is beset with examples, too, of the truth of Jacob's prophecy concerning Asher, but space

will permit but one illustration here. When the days of Mary's purification according to the law of Moses were accomplished, Joseph and Mary brought Jesus to Jerusalem to present Him to the Lord and to offer the sacrifice of two turtledoves or young pigeons. "And there was one Anna, a prophetess, the daughter of Phanuel, the tribe of Aser: she was of a great age, . . . which departed not from the temple, but served God with fastings and prayers night and day. And she coming in that instant gave thanks likewise unto the Lord, and spake of him to all them that looked for redemption in Jerusalem." (Luke 2:36-38) Often the "royal dainties" are the "golden vials full of odours which are the prayers of the saints." (Rev. 5:8)

The neverending wealth of Asher is a striking type of Jesus as the bread of life. It serves well to remind us of how the five loaves multiplied in the hands of Christ as He fed the five thousand and they took up the fragments that remained twelve baskets full. We can only say, "And they did all eat, and were filled." (Matt. 14:20)

"Naphtali is a hind let loose: he giveth goodly words." (Gen. 49:21)

Naphtali was apportioned the land bounded by the river Jordan and the Sea of Galilee on the east, Asher on the west, Zebulun and Issachar on the south. It was mostly mountains yet quite fertile. Naphtali along with Zebulun and Issachar formed what has been mentioned earlier as the "Galilee of the Gentiles". The word Naphtali means "wrestling" and the prophecy of Jacob likening the tribe to "a hind let loose" suggests a deer being freed from a trap and giving forth "goodly words" to vent its feelings of release and freedom.

How much this analogy typifies the children of God when as poor sinners, they are trapped within the law, tormented by Satan, then set free by the grace of a covenant keeping God. How they give forth the "goodly words" of praise and thanksgiving!

The hind is a beautiful animal as it

romps through the forest and over the open fields untamed and free, but caught in the toils of the hunter it looks so anguished and pitiful as it labours to be released. A glimpse of such a scene causes us to hear the words of Jacob as he wrestled with the angel until the breaking of the day exclaiming "I will not let thee go, except thou bless me." (Gen. 32:26) In the 29th Psalm we find that the voice of the Lord is powerful, full of majesty and *maketh the hinds to calve* or, as the marginal reference denotes it, causes pain and therefore makes the hinds bring forth. Bringing forth a new birth is descriptive of the sinner being born again or of being great with child in Christ. The first evidence of a new birth is a cry and the second is a desire to move, or to run and be free. Psalm 18:31-33 sums it up in saying, "For who is God save the Lord? or who is a rock save our God? It is God that girdeth me with strength, and maketh my way perfect. He maketh my feet like hinds' feet, and setteth me upon my high places." Surely the poet has caught the essence of the feeling when he said:

He to my tardy feet shall lend
The swiftness of the roe;
'Till rais'd on high, I safely dwell
Beyond the reach of woe.

But in every pang that rends the heart, the Man of Sorrows had a part. Christ, too, was caught in the net of divine justice as He carried the sins of His people. Nevertheless, the strength of sin which is the law could not hold Him for He rose victorious from the grave and sits on the right hand of the Majesty on High expecting 'till His enemies be made His footstool. Indeed He could say, "He maketh my feet like hinds' feet, and setteth me upon my high places."

Naphtali giveth "goodly words". As the sinner is freed how beautiful are the "goodly words" which pour forth. Can we not hear Jonah saying, "Salvation is of the Lord" or Paul asking "What wilt thou have me to do?" or Peter declaring "Thou art the Christ,

the Son of the living God" But Naphtali giving the "goodly words" is even more descriptive of Christ who spent His ministry and, yes, nearly all His life in the areas of Naphtali, Zebulun and Issachar known as the "Galilee of Gentiles". Through the prophecy of Isaiah, Christ foretold as having a learned tongue as chapter fifty, verse four declares, "The Lord hath given me the tongue of the learned, that I should know how to speak a word in season to him that is weary." What more could He say to the man sick of the palsy than, "Son be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee." Or to the woman with the issue of blood, "Daughter be of good comfort; thy faith hath made thee whole"? Indeed Naphtali giveth the "goodly words"—the good news of the gospel dispensation.

"Joseph is a fruitful bough, even a fruitful bough by a well, whose branches run over the wall: The archers have sorely grieved him, and shot at him and hated him: But his bow abode in strength, and the arms of his hands were made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob, (from thence is the Shepherd, the stone of Israel:)

Even by the God of thy father, who shall help thee, and by the Almighty, who shall bless thee with blessings of heaven above, blessings of the deep that lieth under, blessings of the breasts and of the womb:

The blessings of thy father have prevailed above the blessings of my progenitors unto the utmost bounds of the everlasting hills: they shall be on the head of Joseph, and on the crown of the head of him that was separate from his brethren." (Gen. 49:22-26)

As a young man among his brethren, Joseph was a fruitful bough being so greatly loved by his father, having had a coat of many colours made for him, dreaming prophetic dreams which were fulfilled many years later, going down into Egypt as a preserver of life, and eventually riding in the second chariot to Pharaoh. In addition, he received the birthright of his father Jacob in the

place of Ruben since, the double portion or two tribes, namely Ephraim and Manasseh, descended from his loins. It is worthy of note that the meaning of Ephraim is "doubly fruitful" and the allotment of land to Manasseh included a portion on "both" sides of the river Jordan. In addition the fruitfulness proved to be by a well, whose branches ran over the wall, for Joseph went down into Egypt and by revelation was guided into storing up the plenty of that foreign nation which later was made available even to brethren from home.

How typical all this is of Christ who came as a fruitful bough even a Branch out of the roots of Jesse being a double portion: really in the form of two staves, one called *Beauty* and the other called *Bands* to feed the poor of the flock. This fruitful bough, even Jesus, grew by a well, yes, a well of living water, and not only broke down the middle wall of partition between the Jew and Gentile, but also bridged the wall of separation between God and His people as He interceded and continues to intercede on their behalf.

The church among the Jews and the Gentiles, respectively, is spoken of clearly as a wall in the Songs of Solomon. Speaking of the remnant among the Jews, we find, "We have a little sister, and she hath no breasts: what shall we do for our sister in the day when she will be spoken for? If she be a wall, we will build upon her a palace of silver: and if she be a door, we will inclose her with boards of cedar." (S. of S. 8:8, 9) Going on to read of the believers among the Gentiles, we note, "I am a wall and my breasts like towers (ordinances of Baptism and the Lord's Supper): then was I in his eyes as one that found favour." (S. of S. 8:-10) Christ, as THE BRANCH, went over the wall to make the believers among both the Jews and the Gentiles ONE in Him.

In the case of Joseph, the archers certainly did grieve him, shoot at him and hate him. Not the least of which were his own brothers who cast him

into a pit and sold him into Egypt. Even the wife of Joseph's master turned on him and had him cast into prison when he refused to consort to her wickedness. As a type of Jesus, the cruelty to Joseph foreshadowed the later and more vindictive cruelty to Christ who came unto His own and His own received Him not, who was taken by wicked hands, scourged, ridiculed, falsely accused, beaten and crucified; but just as is in the case of Joseph, the bow of Jesus "abode in strength, and the arms of his hands were made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob."

Although Jesus, actually, was born of the lineage of Judah, nevertheless, Joseph foreshadowed His earthly walk in so many wonderful ways that Jacob concluded his remarks concerning Joseph by saying that his blessings upon him would exceed those of his progenitors, namely Abraham and Isaac, and would sit upon the crown of him that was separate from his brethren. To trace all the ways in which Joseph was blessed to be a type of Jesus would occupy an editorial in itself, but suffice it here to conclude that Joseph reveals Christ as the true preserver of life, who came into the Egypt of this world that His people might have life and have it more abundantly.

"Benjamin shall ravin as a wolf: in the morning he shall devour the prey, and at night he shall divide the spoil." (Gen. 49:27)

A wolf is noted for its swiftness, cunning and ferocity and the tribe of Benjamin exemplified these characteristics in every respect. In fact, it was the most warlike of all the tribes of Israel.

Two outstanding examples of individual Benjaminites who, in turn, displayed the characteristics of the tribe just mentioned, were King Saul and Saul of Tarsus. The vengeance of King Saul upon the priests of Nob was ferocious and without feeling as 1 Samuel 22:18 recalls. "And the king said to Doeg, Turn thou and fall upon the priests. And Doeg the Edomite turned, and he fell upon the priests, and slew on that

day fourscore and five persons that did wear a linen ephod." Paul, too, or Saul of Tarsus, breathed out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord as he hurried to Damascus to bring those who followed Christ bound to Jerusalem. In a few moments, however, surrounded by a light from heaven, the same Paul was made to say, "Who art thou, Lord?" and "What wilt thou have me to do?" (Acts 9:5, 6) A few words of rebuke from the King of Kings and the wolf was ready to dwell with the lamb.

"All these are the twelve tribes of Israel: and this is it that their father spake unto them, and blessed them; every one according to his blessing he blessed them. . . . And when Jacob had made an end of commanding his sons, he gathered up his feet into the bed, and yielded up the ghost, and was gathered unto his people." (Gen. 49:28, 33)

A great deal more could be said concerning the subject at hand. However, instead of trying to exhaust the topic, we have chosen rather to highlight each prophecy with a few examples of its fulfillment in order to keep the main theme intact. Uppermost in our mind is the desire to give Christ the preeminence in all things, and, as each son's prophecy unfolds, the various attributes of Jesus become more apparent.

We see Christ through Ruben as the Firstborn among many brethren, through Simeon and Levi as the High Priest, Through Judah as the King of Kings, through Zebulun as our Refuge, and through Issachar as our Redeemer.

In addition, Dan reveals Jesus as the Judge of all the Earth, Gad as the Victor over Death, Asher as the Bread of Life, Naphtali as the Preacher of Righteousness, Joseph as the Preserver of Life, and Benjamin as the One who will ravin His enemies when He comes the second time. Christ is in every line!

Humbly submitted,
Stewart McColl.

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

Brunswick, Maine, Oct. 31, 1861

Dear Brother Beebe:

Will you gratify me, your unworthy brother, by giving your views on Rev. 22:14 "Blessed are they that do his commandments, that they may have right to the tree of life, and may enter in through the gates into the holy city." More particular on *the city*. What city? Where is it? And when do we enter it? yours, as ever,

HIRAM CAMPBELL.

Reply—The names and description of the city as given in the connection, leave no room to doubt that the city mentioned in our text, is the Holy City, New Jerusalem—which descended from God out of heaven, and is a presentation of the Church of the living God, which is also called the Bride, the Lamb's Wife. It is also called the tabernacle of God, with men, in which God dwells, owning the citizens as his people, and manifesting himself to them as their God; wiping away the tears from their eyes, and shielding them from sorrow, crying, pain and death. In this case we have a singular combination and blending of figures. A city, a Bride, a Wife, a tabernacle, &c., all of which are elsewhere in the scriptures used to represent the Church of God in her union with and subjection to our Lord Jesus Christ. We should not forget that figures familiar to us, are employed by the Spirit, to set forth and illustrate to us things of a spiritual and heavenly character. The figure of a city, presents the subjects of grace, as a congregation of the Lord, in their congregation capacity, as fellow citizens, in the Church or City of God, and of the household of faith, and all under the regulations of a well disciplined community, under the same government, protected by the same walls and bulwarks which fortify and defend all who have the privilege of citizenship.

And in this City, are the common provisions which are so amply provided, for meat and drink, for light and comfort; for protection and safety. In this

City the laws of naturalization exclude dogs, sorcerers, whoremongers and idolators, and whosoever loveth and maketh a lie; admitting only those who are blessed of the Lord, and who as a manifest evidence that they are blessed, cheerfully take Christ's yoke on them, and show their allegiance to him by doing his commandments. As he has said, "Then are ye my disciples indeed, if ye do whatsoever I command you:" and for a more manifest token to all, if they obey his new commandment: for, "By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye love one another." As Citizens they all have certain rights of citizenship; such as the right to the tree of life, which is in the midst of the street of the City, and on either side, which bears twelve manner of fruits, and yields her fruits every month; the leaves of which are for the healing of the nations. Instead of being forbidden, and kept back from the tree of life, by the cherubim and flaming sword, which turneth every way to keep the way of the tree of life, as under the legal dispensation, in the earthly paradise, or in the Jerusalem which is in bondage with her children in this New Jerusalem, all who are written among the living in Jerusalem, whose names are registered in the book of life, have a right to the tree of life, and to the pure river of water of life, which is clear as crystal, which proceedeth out of the throne of God and the Lamb. For unto all such the Spirit and the Bride saith, Come: and they have the privilege of taking of the water of life freely.

While as citizens, they are a multitude which no man can number, as the Bride, the Lamb's Wife they all make but one Bride, one Church, one Body. For ye are all one in Christ Jesus. There is one Body and one Spirit, even as ye are all called in one hope of your calling. Here then, is identity, Christ himself is the Head of the Body, the Church, and the Church is his body and the fulness of him that filleth all in all. As the Bride of Christ, her creation was in him, as the creation of Eve, in the fig-

ure, was in Adam. She is one with him, They twain shall be one. Bone of his bones, and flesh of his flesh; and she shall be called woman, because she was taken out of man. She is not merely the bride, but the married wife of the Lamb. For thy Maker is thy Husband, the Lord of Hosts is his name, and thy Redeemer is the Holy One of Israel; the God of the whole earth shall he be called. The testimony of John the Baptist, when he identified and pointed out the Husband, saying, Behold the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world, was, He that hath the bride is the bridegroom: but the friend of the bridegroom standeth without and rejoiceth because of the bridegroom's voice; thus my joy is fulfilled. This City is the City of God, and Ezekiel says (xlvi. 35) The name of the City shall be, THE LORD IS THERE. And God has said, by Isaiah, And they shall call them the Holy People, the Redeemed of the Lord. And thou shalt be called Sought Out, A City not forsaken, Isaiah 62:12.

From this last mentioned passage, we learn that the city is composed of the the Redeemed of the Lord, whom the Lord has not only redeemed, but whom he has sought out; he found this people as he did Jacob, is a waste howling wilderness, and led him about and instructed him, and kept him as the apple of his eye. These are redeemed from among men, out of every kindred and tribe of mankind; and they are redeemed into God, and made priests and kings, and they shall reign with Christ in immortal glory. They shall all of them come with singing to Zion, the Holy City, and they shall sit down in the kingdom of God, with Abraham and Isaac and Jacob, and they shall sing this song. We have a strong City; Salvation will God appoint for walls and for bulwarks. God himself is a wall of fire round about; and the glory in her midst. This is the city of which God has said, Here will I dwell forever; for I have desired it for an habitation. He will abundantly bless her provisions, and fill her poor with bread. The Lord God is her Sun and her

Shield; He will give grace and glory, and no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly. God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved. God will help her, and that right early. Truly, glorious things are spoken of thee, O, City of God: Not one of her stakes shall ever be removed, not one of her cords shall ever be broken.

Much more might be written in answer to the first enquiry of brother Campbell, What City? But we trust enough has been said to show that we understand the City mentioned (Rev. 22:14) to be the Holy City, New Jerusalem, which John saw in his vision, coming down from God out of heaven, and which he describes in and throughout the last two chapters of the New Testament; and which is designed to describe her in her gospel organization, and primitive purity, as the spiritual kingdom of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Second. Where is it? We reply, it is where two or three are gathered to gather in Christ's name. It is in all places where God has recorded his name. It is in the holy place of the tabernacles of the Most High. Of her locality the Psalmist has said, Beautiful for situation, the joy of the whole earth, is Mount Zion, on the sides of the North. Her locality is marked by stakes that shall never be removed, and confined by cords that shall never be broken. The sacred records of eternity show that God has been her dwelling place in all generations. She dwells in the secret place of the Most High, and abides under the shadow of the Almighty. Her life is hid with Christ in God. Her place of defence is the munitions of rocks. The Eternal God is her refuge, and underneath her are the everlasting arms. We find her in the Eternal, Immutable love of God; she is found in his decrees; wrapped up in the bundle of Eternal life, which is in his Son. She has her place in the Eternal purpose of God, which he purposed in himself before the world began; which purpose shall unshaken remain, when the world shall be no more. She is found in the Election of

grace, chosen of God in Christ before the foundation of the world. She has her standing in the redemption which is in Christ Jesus, and in his justifying righteousness she outshines the Sun, is more fair than the moon, and terrible as an army with banners. She inhabits the Rock, is in the secret places of the stairs, and she sits in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus.

But in regard to the house of her pilgrimage, God has chosen her in a furnace of afflictions. In this world she has tribulations, but in Christ she has peace. The place assigned her by the world, is as the off-scourings of all things, unto this day. Hated by the world, tried and tempted by the devil, opposed by the flesh, a jest and a by-word to all the children of the bond woman. But her home is in Jesus Christ, and in the earth she has no abiding place nor continuing city. As to her sorrows, trials, persecutions and her triumphs and victories, she is sometimes encompassed about by the armies of Gog and Magog; but some times she is seen upon Mount Zion, with the seal of God indelibly marked in her forehead, or on the sea of glass, which is mingled with fire, singing a song which none but the redeemed can learn or sing. She has had a place prepared for her in the wilderness, to be nourished and protected from the serpent, for twelve hundred three score and six days; and if the writer of this article is not mistaken, that period is about to run out, and to be succeeded by three days and an half, in which the witnesses shall be slain and be trodden under foot in the streets of the Great City which is spiritually Sodom and Egypt, where also our Lord was crucified. But whatever of sorrow, affliction, persecution or tribulation may be appointed for her here below, she has the assurance that she shall ultimately triumph through the blood of the Lamb and the word of her testimony. 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.

Third. When do we enter the city? As we view the whole church of God, existing in Christ, and chosen in him before the foundation of the world, according to Eph. 1:4, we regard the citizens as natives of the holy city. Sanctified by God the Father, preserved in Christ Jesus and called. Jude 1, 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. Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all. Gal. 4:26. And of Zion it shall be said, This and that man was born in her; and the Highest himself shall establish her. The Lord shall count, when he writeth up the people that this man was born there. Psa. 87:5, 6. Judicially the saints entered when they were quickened together with Christ, in his resurrection, when they were raised up together, and made to sit together in the heavenly places. For they are risen with Christ—and are come unto Mount Zion, and unto the city of the living God. the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the general assembly and church of the First Born, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men, made perfect, and to Jesus the Mediator of the New Covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than the blood of Abel.—Heb. 11:24-26.

But in what we regard as the immediate sense of the text proposed, (Rev. xxii. 14.) the saints come when they do his commandments; and thereby manifest that they are blessed of the Lord. This coming in through the gates, is an experimental matter. Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God; and Except a man be born of the water and of the spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.—John 3:3, 5. The city in which the tree of life yields her fruit is a spiritual city, and can only be entered by the gates which are called *Praise*.—Isa. lx, 18. The Lord

loveth the gates of Zion more than all the dwellings of Jacob.—Psa. 87:2. David says, “I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord, Our feet shall stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem. Jerusalem is builded as a city that is compact together; whither the tribes go up, the tribes of the Lord unto the testimony of Israel, to give thanks unto the name of the Lord.”—Psa. 122:1-4.

As the tribes of *Israel* went up to the Old Jerusalem to worship, and entered the city by the gates of that city, so the tribes of *the Lord* go through the gates of the New Jerusalem, experimentally in their devotion, to worship the Lord in his holy temple in the spiritual Jerusalem. As the names of the tribes of Israel, are written on the angels of the gates—Rev. 21:12.—we learn that the ministry of praise—embracing gospel experience, gospel doctrine and ordinances, and all gospel privileges—belongs to the tribes of the Lord, to the children of God, and to them exclusively. The gates of Zion, which are called Praise, are used to signify wisdom, honor, power, counsel, and peculiar privileges. And when the hearts of God’s people are led by the Spirit in their heavenly exercises, of worship and praise, they enter into the spiritual privileges of the kingdom into the counsels of wisdom, and contemplate the glory of their Redeemer’s kingdom, and talk of his power. “In that day shall this song be sung in the land of Judah: We have a strong city, Salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks. Open ye the gates that the righteous nation which keepeth the truth may enter in.” Isaiah 26:12. The gates of the Holy City are only open to the *righteous nation*, for who else can enter by the gates of Praise? They are not accessible to those who love and make a lie, but to the righteous nation that keepeth the truth.

“Those holy gates forever bar
Pollution, sin, and shame,
None shall obtain admittance there,
But followers of the Lamb.”

“Blessed are they that do his commandments.” The commandments of him who

says in the preceding verse, “I am Alpha and Omega, the Beginning and the End, the First and the Last.” Who also says, in verse sixteen, “I, Jesus, have sent mine angel to testify unto you, these things in the Churches, I am the Root and the Offspring of David, and the bright morning Star.” He is the King of Righteousness, the King Eternal, and our only wise God and Savior. His commands are proclaimed from his throne in the Holy City, and are applicable to all who are under the law to Christ. Their faith and obedience are the evidences that they are his disciples, and that they have a right to the tree of life, and to enter in to their peculiar privileges through the gates of the city; for the gates are open to the righteous continually, and his blessed people who know the joyful sound of his voice, shall go in and out and find pasture. They have right to the tree of life, and may eat of its fruits freely, and live forever; for their right is a birthright—it is their inheritance, and it is their Father’s good pleasure that they shall inherit the kingdom.

There is a manifest entering into the holy city, by the gate of christian recognition and fellowship; not only when the new born babes in Christ declare in Zion what God has done for them; and when they publicly espouse his cause and take on them a profession of his name, and by the gate of baptism, declare their allegiance to Jesus as their King, but throughout their whole course it is by their obedience to the Lord Jesus that their feet are to stand within the gates of christian fellowship.

Should any of the citizens walk disorderly, and neglect to observe and to obey the commandments of Christ, the order and discipline which he has instituted, will dispute their right to the privilege of Church fellowship, until God shall give them repentance; and while shut out from communion and fellowship of their fellow citizens of Zion, they will be associated with dogs, and sorcerers, whoremongers, murderers and idolaters, and whosoever loveth and maketh

a lie. And they shall weep when they remember Zion; for how can they sing the Lord's songs when in a strange land?

Finally, whenever the saints are enabled to worship God in the spirit, to rejoice in Christ Jesus, having no confidence in the flesh, in their social songs of praise, their prayers and supplications, in their love of fellowship, union and communion, in walking in the ordinances and order, the doctrine, discipline of the house of God, then we conclude they enter in through the gates, and enjoy their right to the tree of life.

We have been somewhat lengthy in our remarks, and perhaps have failed to meet the wishes of brother Campbell; but if any of our readers are edified or comforted in what we have written, our labor will not be in vain.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe Nov. 1, 1861)

OBITUARIES

SISTER ANNIE PETERS THOMAS

In loving memory of our dear Sister Annie Peters Thomas, daughter of the late Jack Peters and Maltide Vest Thomas, and widow of the late Brother Deacon Michael A. Thomas. Survived by two daughters, three sons, seven grandchildren, fourteen great grandchildren, and a sister-in-law. For fifty-eight years a gracious and exercised member of the Primitive Baptists, and for the last twenty-eight years a member of County Line Church, passed to her eternal rest at her home November 21, 1974 at the age of ninety-four years and sixteen days.

While visiting in her home she related how she was tried about uniting with the Primitive Baptists, having had a good hope of eternal life raised up in her breast. While under conviction of her sins, the quotation, "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow, though they be red like crimson they shall be as wool," dropped into her soul with such power and comfort that she felt it must be scripture, but searched the Bible without finding it, until she feared she was mistaken in the deliverance she had been comforted in, and felt she couldn't ask for a home among such gracious people without the Lord would restore again these precious things. And she related, too, how as she came into the house from milking this certain evening, it came to her mind to look into the Bible this last time: so doing, it opened at the first of Isaiah, and her eyes fell on the 18th verse, and

such assurance filled her heart that she was constrained by love to tell what great things the Lord had done for her soul to those assembled at their home that evening, and was received for baptism. She was baptised the 4th Sunday in September, 1917, into the fellowship of Long Branch Church by Elder J. D. Cockram.

Sister Thomas was greatly depressed after Brother Thomas' death in 1965, but was greatly comforted by being awakened in the night singing, "There is a land of pure delight." Before this time she was unable to sing, but after that she would make selections and help sing the hymns of Zion in the little meetings we held at her home. As long as she was able to express her feelings she asked of the welfare of the church and brethren, and would make such expressions that you could feel the Lord was still carrying on the work He had begun in her soul long ago. Through her long illness all was done for her to make her last days comfortable that the loving hands of her children could. The Church at County Line bows in humble submission to God's will. May He comfort the family in their great felt loss, for, "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the deaths of His saints."

Funeral services were conducted at the Chapel in Wood Funeral Home, Floyd, Va., by Elders B. O. Thompson and N. F. Conner November 23, 1974 and her body was laid beside her husband's body in the family plot in Restvale Cemetery, Copper Hill, Va. in sure and certain hope of a glorious resurrection.

N. F. Conner

BROTHER TOM WITTY

As requested by our church in our last conference meeting, I will try to write a few words concerning the life and death of our dear brother Tom Witty. Brother Witty was born August 1, 1902 and departed this life October 14, 1974, making his stay here seventy two years, two months and thirteen days. Left to mourn his departing is his dear wife Mary B. Davenport Witty, two sons Thomas and William, three grandsons and a host of friends.

Brother Witty united with the Greensboro Primitive Baptist Church in May 1961. It was not long until the church recognized his gift as deacon and set him apart to this office. He served the church faithful and loyal until his death. Brother Witty was a meek and humble person and was loved by those who knew him. He was steadfast in the doctrine and traveled many miles to attend the meetings, sometimes going when he was physically unable to go. John said, "we know we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren". Brother Witty demonstrated this love and often spoke of his love for the brethren. He was meek and humble in life and

was meek and humble to the end. These are the marks of Grace. He suffered in his sickness long, but with no complaint. Only a spirit of submission and expressed many times his desire to be called home.

Brother Witty believed there was a time to be born and a time to die and that all things worked together to the good for those who love God, those who are called according to His purpose.

May God bless his dear wife to face life ever looking unto Him for her help and guidance, to think not so much on what she has lost but on that which she has had. We truly feel that what has been his loved ones loss has been Heaven's gain.

Brother Wittys funeral was conducted in the Greensboro Church by his pastors, Elder Kenneth and Leonard Key along with Elder Donald Smith. His body was laid to rest in the Hillside Church cemetery, there to await the coming of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ with a sweet and precious hope that on the morning of the resurrection he will awake to hear the summons; come ye blessed of my father, inherit the Kingdom prepared for you from and before the foundation of the world.

Submitted in love

Elder Kenneth R. Key, Moderator

Brother Wayne Edwards, Clerk

SISTER ALMA ELY

In memory of Sister Alma Ely who passed away May 18, 1975. She was born June 26, 1903 at Troup, Texas. She married C. L. Ely, Post, Texas, November 19, 1922. God blessed them with a very lovely bond for over 50 years. She was surely a faithful wife, a dear mother and a lovely sister in Christ.

She asked for a home with Pilgrim Rest Church, Lawn, Texas, in July, 1962, and was baptized in August. She was a faithful member until ill health about five years ago.

She surely mourned the passing of her dear husband just less than two months before her death. She wanted the Lord to take her home. Surely we believe the Lord was good to take her suddenly from this old world of sin and sorrow. We feel she is sweetly resting by the side of her husband, to await the call of Jesus in the glorious resurrection.

May God reconcile her loved ones to their loss, and be given to say, "Our loss is her gain."

Written by request of the children.

Elder C. M. Haygood

ELDER CORTEZ L. ELY

God in his infinite mercy saw fit to call our beloved Brother Cortez L. Ely from our midst March 29, 1975. He was born March 11, 1901, in Comanche County, Texas. He was married to Miss Alma Haynes November 19, 1922, at

Post, Texas. To this union one son and two daughters were born.

Brother Ely was baptized by Elder R. W. Rhodes during the South Ouachita Association in September, 1965. In April, 1958, he joined Pilgrim Rest Church, Lawn, Texas, by letter. He was ordained to the full work of the ministry in December, 1962. He loved the good old doctrine of free and sovereign grace and was blessed with the gift to speak of the wonderful work of God.

I thank God for having given me this man to walk with for over twenty years, and labor as yoke fellows in the ministry until his death.

He leaves to mourn his passing his beloved companion, one son and two daughters, and a host of other relatives and friends, but we trust and believe our loss is his eternal gain.

He was laid to rest in the Victor Cemetery near DeLeon, Texas, to await the call of his dear Saviour.

Written by request of his children.

Elder C. M. Haygood

SISTER CORA WORLEY SHELTON

Our hearts are saddened by the passing of Sister Cora Shelton on May 27, 1975 at the age of 79. She died at her home in Hurt, Virginia. She was born on December 21, 1895 in Pittsylvania County, the daughter of the late James Anderson Worley and Mary Ella Updike Worley.

She was married to the late Walter C. Shelton. Surviving are seven sons, Boyd, Sidney, Wesley, Edwin, Anderson, and Lincoln Shelton, all of Hurt and Osby Shelton of Altavista; three daughters, Mrs. Ella Priddy of Asheboro, N. C., Mrs. Vivian Keese and Mrs. Catherine Chapman, both of Altavista; six sisters; 35 grandchildren; and 52 great-grandchildren.

Sister Cora united with Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church on August 27, 1933 and was faithful to attend her church as long as she was able and had transportation. She was left a widow for 43 years to raise ten children. I am sure the road was rough for her at times and feel she was made to call upon her God many times, but feel she was reconciled with the promise to his children that He would go with them all the way, even to the end.

Her funeral was conducted at Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church by her dear pastor, Elder O. K. Tench and her body was laid to rest in the church cemetery.

Sister Cora will be greatly missed by the family, her church and her friends. May all that mourn be reconciled to the will of our Heavenly Father he does all things well.

Written by: Marvin Brumfield.

Elder O. K. Tench, Moderator
L. H. Doss, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 143

DANVILLE, VA., NOVEMBER, 1975

NO. 11

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 11/75
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

THE REDEEMING BLOOD

217 Bastrop Dr.
Monroe, La.

Dear Brethren and Sisters:

It has been on my mind for some time, and if the Lord be willing I will attempt to write a few of my feeble thoughts concerning the redeeming blood of our Savior Jesus Christ.

Election and predestination are wonderful parts of the doctrine of salvation by grace; and there are some who seem to be content hearing and talking of these parts only: but what would our position be under God's just and holy laws if it were not for the redeeming blood of Jesus Christ?—"And without shedding of blood there is no remission." (Heb. 9:20). When Adam transgressed the law of God in the Garden of Eden he and all his posterity fell under condemnation of the law; and the only sentence is death. Adam and Eve attempted to cover their nakedness (hide their sins) with fig leaves (self-righteousness), but God clothed them with coats of skins; thereby was the first shedding of blood. Cain's offering was of the first fruit of the ground (his own self-works), but was rejected of God. Abel's offering of the firstling of the flock (blood) was accepted of God. In the old covenant of the law the high

priest entered the holy place once each year with blood; but the sprinkling of blood of animals made nothing perfect. It took the blood of Jesus Christ, the perfect sacrifice, who stood as a lamb slain from the foundation of the world, to do that. Yes, Jesus made us perfect thru death that he might present us holy and unblamable and unreprouvable to the Father. He washed away our sins with his blood and redeemed us from the curse of the law. "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is everyone that hangeth on a tree." (Gal. 3:13). "—for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people and nation." (Rev. 5:9).

As Jesus hung on the cruel tree of the cross a soldier pierced his side with a spear and forthwith came out blood and water. If that blood did not literally flow over his fleshly body I am persuaded to believe that it did so figuratively; for we are members of his body, flesh of his flesh, and bone of his bone. We, (I have a hope that I am included), the church, the Lamb's bride, are his body and he is the head. His blood flows over us, washing away our sins, making us as white as snow and covering us with a robe of righteousness. And the water that came forth is symbolic of the well of water springing up within us to eternal life that Jesus told the woman of Samaria about.

The law of God is perfect and demands perfect obedience. Christ obeyed the law; fulfilling it to a jot and title: but the elect, the church, the children chosen in him from the foundation of the world, could not keep the law and

fell under its penalty. God knew that Adam would fall, for He said, "But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." There are those who say Adam could have kept the commandment: but God said he would eat and die. Therefore he did eat and he did die. I have heard it said that he did not die but was made very sick; by others that he only began to die. Both statements, if true, would make God a liar: for He said, "—for in the day thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." Adam did not die a corporal death at that time but he surely did die spiritually in trespasses and sin.

But God, who hath loved us with an everlasting love, had, in eternity, provided the way of redemption for His children "—with the blood of Jesus Christ, as a lamb without blemish and without spot: who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you." (I Pet. 19:20) Although we are His children, chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world and predestined to be conformed to the glorious image of His Son, the debt for our sins had to be paid.

Jesus said, "I am the good Shepherd, the good Shepherd giveth his life for the Sheep." The good Shepherd was to lay down his life for his sheep, and the people were gathered together to crucify him. They did not know that they were carrying out the determinate counsel of a sovereign God; neither did they know that their determination to kill him could not have been executed had it not been determined afore of God. "No man taketh it from me, but I have power to lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it up again. This commandment have I received of my Father."

Yes, it behooved Christ to be made like unto his brethren, but without sin, to take part of the flesh and blood that he might suffer and die, the just for the unjust, who are flesh of his flesh and

bone of his bone, that he might redeem them from under the curse of the law. But to suffer and die was not enough: for he must also conquer death and the grave: he must be raised again that we might be justified. And that he did: for the angel said to the woman who sought him at the tomb, "Fear not ye: for I know that ye seek Jesus, which was crucified. He is not here: for he is risen, as he said. Come see the place where the Lord lay."

I realize that I have barely touched upon this tremendous subject; for it seems that I can see the blood of Jesus throughout every scripture of the holy word: but it is my prayer, if I be not deceived, that God has directed my hand that it might be to His praise and glory and to the comfort and edification of His children. Now may it be the will of the Holy Father that you remember this poor sinner in your prayers.

Clifford Wilbanks

ATTENDED UPPER COUNTRY LINE ASSOCIATION

5921 West Park Avenue,
St. Louis, Mo. 63110

Dear Elders Spangler, Donald Smith, Wallace Smith, Leonard Key, Kenneth Key, and all other elders and other brothers and sisters of the Upper Country Line Association, and all other Old Baptists who attended your association:

We feel to be the most privileged of all mortals to have been able to attend your association in July. It was hard for us to believe there were as many Primitive Baptists in one area until we were shown — we are few in our area.

We were royally treated by all, and we know that we don't deserve it, but we thank God for all you lovely brethren. You opened your homes and hearts to us. We had never been in your area before—such beautiful country and people, and we will never forget you as long as we have minds to remember. The miles were many but your hospital-

ity made the trip short. Your singing was most beautiful, and we never heard so many beautiful voices before. We don't have words to describe our feelings, but we would praise Almighty God for the wonderful blessings.

May God shower His saving grace on all.

We would like to extend an invitation for you to come and worship with us when you have a mind to. Our association is October 11th and 12th, 1975 at Salem Church.

Your unworthy brother in Christ, I hope,

James Cunningham

COMMEMORATING 200th
ANNIVERSARY
TOWN CREEK CHURCH

Henry, Virginia
August 31, 1975

This day was set aside in commemoration of our 200th Anniversary. An all-day meeting was planned and people started coming early and continued until an estimated crowd of 500 or more arrived. Singing began at 10:00 a.m. There were 16 Elders present and all preached or acknowledged their acceptance and belief of the preaching up to that point. We feel it was a good day and a respectful tribute to the occasion. Dinner was served from 12:00 until 1:30 p.m.

Associational Districts represented were: Upper County Line, Staunton River, Smith River and Pigg River. The following Elders were there: Raymond Goad, Leonard Brammer, Wallis Smith, Rufus Brown, Julius Bocoock, William Holland, Amos Hash, R. A. May, D. L. Simpson, Lane Carter, P. L. Plybon, F. L. Clark, O. K. Tench, H. W. Wray, J. T. Turner and P. E. Ingram (who is pastor of Town Creek Church.)

Tommy G. Lovell, Clerk
Town Creek Church

TOWN CREEK PRIMITIVE
BAPTIST CHURCH
1775 - 1975

During our long history, we can say we have lived and worshiped together in peace. There have been snags at times which were smoothed out by much prayer and much tolerance and christian love. Just enough to keep us humble, we believe.

Our church has not grown in membership, but they come as the Lord brings them. The important part of any church is the love and devotion to it's precepts, and the fellowship of it's members. Only can we go forward in peace if we agree and work together.

Our church was here long before the land was given in 1844 by William Turner. In the early days the "Meeting House" was used for church, school, public meetings, etc. The first two churches were built of logs, the third was weatherboard. The fourth, and present one was built in 1951, and our friend Virgil Goode, Sr. gave the cornerstone. Later we built the picnic shelter, and this year our "preaching stand" for our bicentennial meeting. Also, this year A. L. Philpott gave the church about one-quarter acre of land behind the church to give us some much needed space. We are thankful for all of this, especially our good friends of the church, and we have many - too many to list, but Robert Prillaman and Bill English are our dependables. Also, Harold Thompson has befriended us many times in many ways.

Our present church consists of the following:

Pastor: Elder P. E. Ingram.

Deacons: George W. Turner, J. Charlie Stone, Tommy G. Lovell.

Clerk: Tommy G. Lovell.

Members: 17.

We are glad to have all ministers and members of our faith and order worship with us, and our many friends visit and be with us in our services.

July 15, 1975

ACCEPTABLE WORDS

"The preacher sought to find out acceptable words; and that which was written was upright, even words of truth." (Ecc. 12:10)

I believe this has reference to the ministers that God calls and qualifies. The Scriptures speak of Noah as a "preacher of righteousness." (see 2 Peter 2:5) Paul was ordained a preacher and an apostle. (1 Tim. 2:7) In 2 Tim. 1:11 Paul said: "Whereunto I am appointed a preacher and an apostle and a teacher of the Gentiles."

May God bless us to rightly divide the word of truth and not forget that Jesus Christ is our only Preacher. The ministers that the Lord calls and qualifies are as the mouth of God. (see Jer. 15:19) "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!" (Isaiah 52:7) All expressions in this verse point to Jesus. Let the reader notice the connection with Rom. 10:14-15: "How then shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how *shall they hear without a preacher?* And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!" To be brief, no one can hear unless the Spirit of Jesus dwells in him. It is the Spirit of Jesus who preaches to you whether it is in private meditation or thru the mouth of a minister sent by God.

"The preacher sought to find our acceptable words." I believe this means words that become sound doctrine. (see Titus 2:1) It is good for the minister to be careful of his expressions. He should seek to speak the words that are easy to be understood. His theme should be: Do the hearers understand me? Do they understand what I am trying to say? He should not have "pet ideas" and expect the hearers to understand them if he does not explain what

he means.

Consider this expression: "God made Adam able to stand but liable to fall." I do not believe that is an acceptable expression, and do not believe these are the words that become sound doctrine. "Speak the words which become sound doctrine." (Titus 2:1) I believe that in the providence, decree, predestination, etc. of God that it was certain that man would fall. God was not surprised at that event. "Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world." (Acts 15:18) God is not surprised at the events that are taking place today, nor for those which shall take place in the future, because God has purposed or declared them from the beginning. "God declared the end from the beginning—" (Isaiah 46:10) Now, this covers all things, does it not? All events, both small and great, are included in the providence, decree, predestination, etc. of God. "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? and one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father. But the very hairs of your head are all numbered." (Math. 10:29-30) I am glad to know that Almighty God is able to take care of these poor sinners. "Who are kept by the power of God." (1 Peter 1:5)

"For the creature was made subject to vanity, not willingly, but by reason of him who hath subjected the same in hope." (Rom. 8:20) Why did God create man subject to vanity? That is not for man to question. My answer is that God had a purpose in it, which is God's business and not mine. We are getting on dangerous ground if we attempt to question God. Why did God raise Pharaoh up to afflict the Children of Israel? "For the Scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth." (Rom. 9:17) Why did God have mercy upon the children of Israel and destroy the Egyptians? Who is man to charge God for being unfair, unjust? "Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have

mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth." (God hardened the heart of Pharaoh because it pleased him to do so.) "Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will." If God's will was that certain events would take place in the future, do you believe that man can devise certain means to hinder those events from taking place? If so, then man, the creature, would be stronger than God, would he not? A chain is just as strong as the weakest link. If there are 100 links in a chain, and one link is weak, then the whole chain is weak. A poor helpless sinner would not have any confidence in a weak God. I am glad to know that God works all things according to his purpose. He works all things after the counsel of his own will. (see Eph. 1:11) "Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?" I believe this Scripture is enough to silence man who attempts to question God. "Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour?"

Let me get back to the subject of "Acceptable Words." "Lo, this only have I found, that *God hath made man upright*; but they have sought out many inventions." (Ecc. 7:29) I believe this Scripture is enough to show that God did not create man a sinner. God created man upright, yet man was created subject to vanity. I do not believe that God forced man to sin, do you? Some say that sin comes from God as water that flows thru a pipe. I do not see how those who are swallowed up in that error ever mourn over this sins. "Who-soever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law." (1 John 3:4) A transgression is an act which man did. Please consider this thought carefully: A transgression is an act of man and not a created thing. God did not break the law. Jesus kept the law in the room and stead of his people. Breaking the law is the action of man. **THEREFORE, IT IS NOT AN**

ACCEPTABLE EXPRESSION TO SAY THAT GOD CREATED SIN. It is true that God **CREATED ALL THINGS** —**BUT SIN IS NOT A CREATED THING.** "For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by him, and for him: And he is before all things, and by him all things consist." (Col. 1:16-17)

God gave the law to man, and man broke the law. "Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned." (Rom. 5:12) This Scripture proves that sin entered into the world by man. To sum it up, I believe that sin came from man and not from God. **GOD IS NOT THE AUTHOR OF SIN.** God is just and holy. "There is no unrighteousness in God." (see John 7:18) If God is unrighteousness, then we do not have anything to base our hope upon, and we are just deceived in the whole matter.

Clear expressions and acceptable words. Expressions that are hard to understand are not acceptable words. Let the reader consider these expressions: "God predestinated sin and wickedness." One may get the idea from this expression that sin comes from God. In my opinion, acceptable expressions would be like these: "God has a purpose in sin and wickedness." "It was in the providence of God that there would be sin and wickedness in this world. God has decreed the entrance of sin into the world. It was by the counsel of God that there would be sin and wickedness in this world, etc."

To sum it up, I believe it is the minister's duty before God to speak words that become sound doctrine, to speak words that are easy to be understood (1 Cor. 14:19), to use the Scriptures as his guide, to plead to God for his presence, and pray that God will bless us to hold to the truth during these evil times. "Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall de-

part from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils." (1 Tim. 4:1) 'For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine—" (2 Tim. 4:3) "I exhort you that you should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered to the saints." (Jude 3)

May God bless the truth in honor and praise and glory to His Holy Name. Please excuse any errors of this writer.

W. W. Hudson, Jr.
208 Frederick St.
Bastrop, La. 71220

THE SIGNS IS DEAR TO HER

4 Maple Lane,
Pennington, N. J. 08534

Dear Elder and Sister Wood:

Now that I do not have any way of attending church meetings, the *Signs* is more than ever very dear to me. I look forward to that one sermon a month, and the precious words from the *Voices of the Past*.

I seem so far away from you all, yet I am blessed to feel not forgotten when the *Signs* come into my home each month.

In these troubled times when seemingly being surrounded with increasing problems, it is comforting to know that, while time has a way of changing many things it cannot change the preordained power of God in any age, nor can the unfortunate conditions that arise with time make common a true thanksgiving in a Christian's heart: and for such one can be thankful for God's mercy.

"I being in the way, the Lord led me to the house of my master's brethren." (Genesis 24:27) Indeed no greater blessing could come to anyone, no greater thing to be thankful for than that — come good times or bad in this troubled world.

Since our brother passed away almost two years ago, we have gathered about our bountiful table to offer thanks for material things, for health to carry on

and God's mercy, but to sit beside his empty chair at the family table and pray for needed courage, strength and faith to continue to live one's life each day in the plan of God's purpose, one just has to experience "being in the way", to know sorrow in life can be a blessing too, that will be revealed in God's appointed time.

Sing unto the Lord with thanksgiving who made heaven and earth, and the fulness thereof, and they that dwell therein. (see Psalms 24:10; 147:7)

I send love to all of like precious faith.

Sister Mary Hellingss

(Another year's subscription is enclosed, and balance to the fund to help distribute the *Signs*.)

Ruffin, N. C.

Dear Elder Wood:

It has been requested that these lines enclosed, given as I hope from the giver of every good and perfect gift, be published in the *Signs*, though I wish no name be published as to who penned the writing.

My one desire is to praise the God who feeds his people in every land, kindred, tongue and people. He causes and moves us to the place he has foreseen and foreordained we be, to receive the pure food he gives his servants that they feed his hungry little ones. It may come in a song, or even one sentence one of His ministers speak, or in a complete discourse — even more than one discourse: whatever the need it shall be met and given in his time and way. Oft times a handshake so warm has meant so much to a sorrowing soul, and a kind word — we praise our God for it all, and on bended knees and humbled heart, we thank Him for what He has done for us.

We thank Him for the many rich sermons that were preached at the association, and we beg that we never be one that falls out by the way. Let us be found with voices lifted to praise, honor

and glorify His great name ever more.

In a precious hope,
A Little Sister

In memory of the 1975 sitting of the Upper Country Line Association held with Pleasant Grove Church, Caswell County, N. C.

Through shades of darkness, or smoothest plain
Our Lord gives us our need:
His presence a very present help,
His smile so dear, indeed!

We would lift up our voices clear:
We'd call from every land.
He lifts the helpless souls to heights
And holds them in his hand.

Oh, why such doubt, Oh, why such fear!
We oft in prison feel.
When we can't feel he hears our cries,
Or our affliction heal.

The gospel to our souls apply:
Oh haste and bring it nigh.
We're destitute, the valley here,
Low at thy feet we lie.

Thy blood we plead to cleanse our guilt:
Thy pardoning love reveal
With healing in thy wings, Oh Lord.
On bended knees we kneel.

Our hearts are breaking when we view,
Such sinful creatures we.
Our Jesus hung on Calvary's Cross:
Our righteousness is He.

This truth we hold in Holy Zeal,
We beg we are your chosen race.
The food we crave: a morsel sweet
Of free and ever reigning grace.

AN EXPERIENCE IN THE LIFE OF BROTHER DALON EVANS

On the first Sunday in May 1963, I attended Scotts Church near Wilson. After services, my youngest brother offered to the church for membership. At that time a heavy burden came upon me, and an honest desire to go home to the precious saint's. My brother's baptism was set for the first Sunday in June, 1963. He recognized my burden and asked me to go with him, but I was not given that liberty. On that same Sunday night the Lord called my father from this world. The following week was a trying one. In my weak way I tried to

beg the Lord for his mercies.

On the second Saturday morning in June, 1963, I walked outside of my house and looked toward the east to the rising of the sun, A voice seemed to speak saying, "This is the day." This feeling went with me all day. That afternoon we attended a wedding. That night my wife and I went to church at Wilson. Elder Boykin was serving the church that night due to the absence of Elder Stokes. During his preaching the same voice that spoke to me in the morning was telling me to go home. After the preaching, they began to sing a hymn without announcing an open door for reception of members. In the middle of the song, Elder Boykin stopped the singing and announced an open door. It seemed that I could not get to the front of the church fast enough. By God's providence the sweet deliverance of being received in the Church was given to me that night by the Wilson Church. The baptising was set for the next day after the preaching service.

On Sunday when the pastor announced an open door to the Church, my wife went forward and asked for a home with the Church also. We were baptized together that afternoon by Elder Stokes. The Lord's delivering mercies that day were greater than I can express.

After being baptized, there were times that I was given a desire to tell the brethren of the great things that the Lord had wrought in my heart. I wondered how one would know if the Lord had called him to preach. There were times when I wanted to talk with the Elders and tell them of the things that the Lord had told me in a vision. I realized that these things seemed silly to the flesh, but I believed that the spiritual man would understand. At times when Elder Stokes would ask me to dismiss service with prayer, I would become so weak that all strength would leave my body.

One night in a vision, I met a man with very plain clothes on. He asked me if I was prepared to meet Jesus. For a

moment, I could not answer him. Then I asked him where his clothes came from, he answered, "nature". When I became aware of myself I was telling him that I could not prepare myself to meet Jesus, but the preparation of a man's heart and life was in God's hand; that nature, even its best clothes could not prepare us. We must be clothed with the righteousness of Jesus Christ.

One morning, I awoke and I was aching all over. I prayed to the Lord to remove the pain which was followed by a fever. I continued to pray and about 3 o'clock that afternoon the pain left me. Remembering my pain, I was made to consider the day that Jesus hung on the cross. Somehow in my weak way, I tried to thank God for giving me relief that day, and for the many times that he has given relief to this sinner during his lifetime.

These are a few of the things that Jesus Christ has shown this sinner.

In Love
Brother Dalon Evans

A TRIBUTE TO BROTHER EVANS FROM HIS PASTOR

It was indeed a privilege to baptize Brother Evans and serve him as pastor at Wilson Church. He was a poor man by nature, but God blessed him with great riches in heavenly and divine things. He served the church as deacon, but at times he felt his burden was more than for a deacon. Often he would attempt to speak in church and was given no liberty. The second Saturday night conference in February, 1973, the church at Wilson was delayed because of a snow storm, and therefore was held second Saturday night in March, 1973. In conference Brother Evans asked to speak. For about fifteen minutes he was wonderfully blessed to relate his belief in Jesus Christ and what the Lord had done for him. As he turned to be seated he started to fall. I caught him and laid him in the pew. Mouth to mouth respiration was administered by a registered nurse but to no avail. The Rescue Squad was called but Brother Evans was al-

ready gone. It was indeed a beautiful experience for one to testify so strongly of his belief in his eternal God and then to be called home.

Elder D. B. Stokes
Pastor

Rt. 4, Box 21A
Winnsboro, Tex. 75494

" . . . we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God."
(Acts 14:22.)

We are all born into a sinful world, with a sinful nature. Our sinful nature is so prone to go after the things of the world, to go after its idols and to hew out cisterns for ourselves, broken cisterns that hold no water, forsaking the Fountain of living waters. Dear ones, can we not see how this world would become our paradise with our every thought and mind centered upon it if God did not cause it to become a wilderness, a desert land to us, through suffering, trials, and tribulations? Our afflictions may be great or small, but afflictions we must have. We are traveling on a stormy sea, tempted and harrassed by Satan, by the many idols of this world, sometimes by family troubles, temporal afflictions, and bodily afflictions. Many more may fall on those traveling to Zion, yea, sometimes troubles among churches and brethren, and the hiding of God's countenance. May we be given to proclaim this world is not our home, we are only passing through to that far greater and better home that God hath prepared for them that love him.

When it pleases God through the power of his Holy Spirit to bring one of his elect from the walks of fulfilling the desires of his flesh and of his mind, who was by nature a child of wrath even as others, God doesn't place him in the broad and easy pathway that leads to destruction, but through the strait and narrow way that leads unto life. But it is also a pathway that leads into a desert land. Why didn't the children of

Israel take the broad and easy way that would have led them into Canaan in less than three weeks time in place of entering into the desert? Christ leads his people. He was leading the children of Israel in a pillar of a cloud by day, and in a pillar of fire by night. Christ says concerning his people "And I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not, I will lead them in paths that they have not known." Isa. 42:15.

Christ suffered untold sufferings for his people while here upon earth and is now sitting in glory at the right hand of the Father. If we have a hope of entering into that future glory then we must expect much suffering along our pathway of life here on earth, for there is no entering into glory except through suffering, nor a growth in the experience of grace without trials and afflictions. If we be in union with Christ (and there can be no communion with him without union), we must suffer to some degree with him, for how can the Head suffer without the body being affected? Our time here on earth regardless of age is only a drop in the ocean compared to eternity. If we should suffer each hour we live on earth for Christ's sake, what would it be compared to eternal glory if we be his children and heirs. "And if children, then heirs: heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ, if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together. For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." (Rom. 8:17, 18.)

Dear ones, consider it a wonderful gift from God if we be among those afflicted with an inward, an experimental suffering. "For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him but also to suffer for his sake." (Phil. 1:29.)

Excuse me for using a personal experience. I was given a wonderful vision one night that occupied my mind much of the time for a long while, and still enters my mind quite often. I saw myself riding in a passenger train which

had three coaches and a small coal burning engine pulling it. The three coaches had only a few scattered people in each. I was riding in the last coach sitting on the rear seat next to a window. We were moving along and came to a long steep hill that went straight up. As we started up the hill I was sure the train would tumble over backward and we would all be destroyed. As we reached the halfway point the little engine gathered renewed power and on up we went. I couldn't understand how this could happen. As we were going on we came to a wide body of water. The track ran on across the water on an ill constructed platform with no railings on the sides. When I saw how uneven the tracks were, I felt for sure the train would fall into the water and we would all be drowned. The little train wobbled on across in spite of my inability to understand how. I looked out of the window once more and saw where the track made a 90 degree turn which I felt would be impossible to make. When the little engine made the turn, I saw a form sitting at the controls and a voice came to me saying, no wonder, Jesus Christ is at the controls!

Dear ones, our pathway of life may have many ups and downs, many obstacles to encounter which seem far too great for our strength, and so they would be, but Jesus who is drawing and leading says, "My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness., (2 Cor. 12:9.) Isn't it wonderful indeed to have a precious Savior who watches over his people giving them peace and rest along with their trials and tribulations? "These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer I have overcome the world." (John 16:33.)

If we be the children of God, and God through His Holy Spirit has begun a good work in us, we have the sweet assurance from his precious word that none of these little ones will ever be

lost or perish along the way. "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." (John 10:27-29.)

In hope of mercy,
(Elder) Joe L. Hamrick

UPPER COUNTRY LINE UNION

The next *Upper Country Line Union Meeting* will be held, the Lord willing, with Bush Arbor Church the 5th Sunday in November, starting time 10:30 a.m.

The church is located just off Highway 62 about 16 miles north of Burlington, N. C. — about 9 miles south of Yanceyville, N. C. The building can be seen from Highway 62. All lovers of the truth are invited.

Earl S. Rudd, Church Clerk

BLACK CREEK UNION

The next session of the *Black Creek Union* will be held, the Lord willing, at Healthy Plains Church the 5th Sunday and Saturday before in November, 1975.

Everyone is cordially invited to come and worship with us.

Harold H. Pittman, Clerk
Box 744,
Bennettsville, S.C. 29512

CONTRIBUTIONS TO HELP DISTRIBUTE THE SIGNS

(To September 1, 1975)

Mr. and Mrs. William Adkins, Md.....	\$ 3.00
G. M. Lockey, N.C.....	3.00
A Friend, Va.....	25.00
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The next session of the *Staunton River Union* is to be held, the Lord willing, with Malmaison Church the 5th Sunday and Saturday before in November.

A cordial invitation is extended to our ministers, brethren and friends.

Elder O. K. Tench, Mod.
Peggy Wells, Clerk

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Danville, Va.

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R. F. D. 1, Box 539 Beechwood Lane
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EDITORIAL

**THE PASSOVER—
THE MEMORIAL SUPPER**

While they were eating the Passover feast, the Lord's Supper was instituted. Dealing in technicalities can sometimes seem to be rather dull and rigid, but I do not know any other way to arrive at the truth of a matter than to follow exactly what is said.

"As they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take eat; this is my body. And he took the cup (Something not mentioned either

in the exodus out of Egypt or in the Old Testament), and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it, for this is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins." (Mat. 26:26).

There is not anything noteworthy said by the three other gospel writers nor by the apostles to change what Matthew says about the Lord's Supper. Let it be noted that they ate together the last approved Passover Supper, and as they were eating that which had already been prepared, He took (not the same bread), but, other bread and the wine and instituted something that had never been done before. Remember that this all took place in the year thirty-three, both the Passover Supper and the Lord's Supper — one bringing to an end the law dispensation, the other ushering in the gospel. It would seem wise to say that the Passover Supper was for a type of the Memorial Supper; likewise it would seem wise to say that the Memorial is in place of the Passover Supper. Each of them were and are in their own place. It is true that the Passover lamb was a type of Christ and His shed blood. This type was fulfilled in the death of Christ, who has become a new and living way, even our Passover who was sacrificed for us.

Theologians of the scholastic learning type have been at loggerheads about how often that the Lord's Supper should be observed. If the simple brethren that subscribe to the Bible as our man of counsel have differed about a certain time to observe this noted example of our Lord, I am not aware of it. Some have advocated that it must be carried out on the Sabbath, and, say they, that is the first day of the week. But the Sabbath is not the first day of the week (Mat. 28:1; Mark 16:1, 2). The fact of the business, we do not consider ourselves as being bound to one day above another. One day is as good for service to the Lord as another. (Rom. 14). No man has authority to judge another in regard to meat, or drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new

moon, or of the sabbath days (Gal. 2:16). Therefore, the church of the Lord Jesus Christ has a God-given right to have the Lord's Supper any time in the week. As far as can be found out, there is not the least hint about carrying it out every week. That is not anything but binding people with burdens which are not authorized by the Saviour nor by the judges in Israel.

There is a binding rule about the Lord's Supper or, as the most of us call it, the Communion Supper. As oft as you do it, carries with it not only a commandment, but a strict obligation that it be carried out. As Israel followed zealously the Passover Supper in remembrance of the blood that caused the destroying angel to pass over their house, even so are we to have the Lord's Supper and to do it in remembrance of Him. (Luke 22:19; I Cor. 11:24, 25). If language means anything (and it certainly does), the Saviour did not set the number of times that we observe His supper, but it is absolute and unconditional that we observe it. Moreover, the reason for doing it. This is the only reason for doing it. The New Testament does not imply that it is done for us to show love for one another, respect for one another, or to show our humility. If we show what is in us by what we do, whether by observing the Lord's Supper, or by being baptized in a pool of water, or by walking on spikes driven in planks or by walking on coals of fire in naked feet, then salvation is by what we do, and Paul did not tell the truth in Ephesians 2:5, 8 and in a number of other places.

What then is the reason that the Saviour assigned for our keeping it? Whatever the reason for doing that, the same reason is assigned in all that we do. All service rendered unto Him, and unto His brethren, is to be for His sake, and in His name. That child of grace that would dare to say or do anything in his own name or for his own sake, is not following the Lord. What greater incentive could be had than that? As we eat the bread, we see in it His body.

"Take, eat; this is my body," can never be improved on by any writing or any utterance of any one, be he or she whatever they may say they are. "Drink ye all of it" is sublime to the humble follower of the Master. Too, each one will be looking in holy wonder at the hidden nuggets of gospel truth in the accounts of this lovely meal. Twice He says, "This is my blood of the new testament." (Mat. 26:28; Mark 14:24) Twice He says, "This cup is the new testament in my blood." (Luke 22:20; I Cor. 11:25) Unbelievers will hurl it in your face that this shows the Bible to be a myth or fabrication of imaginary writers; but to the contrary I would present it as work of men under the leadership of the Holy Spirit; that each of them was moved to hear the testimony of Him that administered the Supper in language that would give every meaning that we would ever need while traveling below. Let us, as led by divine grace, not be swept into the delusory and desultory Romish doctrine or transubstantiation (only recently I heard an Old Baptist make that ridiculous claim), for we well know that the bread which He ministered was not the minister of the bread. We well know, (if we do know) that the bread which we minister is not the bread that ministered the first bread. If it is treason to say that this is religious foolishness, then let me be guilty of the treason rather than to say that as I break the bread in communion that I am actually handling and breaking Him anew, from year to year, and many times a year, the real body of my risen Lord. Let it ever be said that we are in a symbolical manner picturing the salvation that is in His broken body, even as we picture the same salvation when we baptize one of the Lord's people. As we bury them beneath the liquid grave and raise them up out of it, we show forth in a symbolical manner His being buried beneath the fury of His Father's vengeance against sin and His raising Him out of it.

These two expressions, to wit, "This

is my blood of the new testament," and, "This cup is the new testament in my blood," cover a glowing gospel field for meditation and exploration. Without the cup we would not have a communion. There can not be an atonement without the shedding of blood, therefore the will of God in the salvation of sinners is impregnated with the glorious presentation of the shed blood of He who is our atonement. (Heb. 13:20) Without this blood the testament (will) could never be in effect, because without it, no remission could ever be. Thus saying it in that way forever shows us that being involved in His will, is the one thing necessary to the cleansing. Then to reverse it and say that the ingredient in the cup is the new testament in His blood, carries the same thought forward at all times in doing this in His remembrance. How lovely! His blood in the new testament, is presented to us in every communion, and the essential blood cleansing and enforcing power of the will is likewise presented.

This Supper with its two things, eating His body and drinking His blood, is kept alive when it is ministered under the auspices of heaven. It will thus be kept alive for the whole gospel dispensation. As often as it is done the work of Jesus Christ is presented to us. His whole life's work is brought to view again and again, even as often as the Supper is finished. Here is a great mystery to me, for it is appalling how neglectful or dilitary we have been, and still are, in regard to this sacred matter. "As oft as you do it, do it in remembrance of me," has been one of the most challenging matters of all His commandments to usward. Ah, what it means to see the bread being broken; to see the wine being poured. The bread being broken means something vital; it means everything to those that are exercised by faith, for they remember again the suffering, the sorrow, the loneliness, the sweat, the broken and crucified and crushed body of our precious Lord. Each time that I break this

bread in communion my heart is made to stand in awe at the remembrance of Golgotha's Hill. I am made to see the place of skulls, (place of dying, of crucifixion), as He approaches it being pressed by the Jews and Gentiles, by the kings and the peasants, all gathered together by the determinate counsel of Him that gave us His Son, and with Him all things. Emotion stirs me (I do trust not human, but spiritual); my mind is carried forward to His glorious return and it is carried backward to Calvary. Ah, my dear brethren and sisters, may God give us grace to be punctual in commemorating His life, His crucifixion, His resurrection, and His glorious ascension; and may it be until He comes again.

I for one need this remembrance year by year, even each time as it comes around. I need to see Him weltering in His blood; I need to see Him being bruised and torn and crucified, for I am a sinner vile and needy, and I have not wherewith to pay. This being a part of the way wherein I have travelled (Deut. 8:2), my faith is increased, my courage for needy days is brightened. As the Passover brought to mind the door post saturated with blood, even so the Supper brings to mind the Deliverer on the cross, and His parting word, "I will never leave thee." The assignment of this perpetual eating and drinking at the table of the Lord is a gospel day boon for he and she that could not atone for sin, and is our earnest (interest) that He will return again and receive us to Himself in glory.

As it is with the other ordinance (baptism), also it is always for His glory and exaltation, always in His name. As baptism pictures the death, burial and resurrection of Christ, even so this Memorial Supper pictures the broken body and shed blood of our Lord, which is the death of Christ for our sins. These things are the very heart of the gospel, yea, without these two ordinances being instituted by divine power, and kept alive in His sub-

jects by the implantation of keeping grace and faith and love, no gospel news would ever be proclaimed. These ordinances are not, as one said, "vehicles of salvation" but they picture everything that is essential to salvation. These ordinances (and they are so close and vital that I have very little time or inclination to deal with them separately,) do not save anyone, but they both tell us who it is that saves us. Some poor deluded souls think that if we do not take the mass or the cup that we can not in any way be saved. Their theory is, No ordinance, no salvation. The keeping of either ordinance does not bestow grace, but the keeping of either shows the bestowal of grace. We do not keep either in order to have grace, but we keep them because that we have grace. The elements (emblems) used in the Supper are symbols and they symbolize the true meaning of Christianity. As we think upon this in its pristine beauty, we see the broken body of our Lord. The bread symbolizes His broken body; the bread, having its life crushed out, before becoming palatable to us, sets forth in symbol the body of our blessed Lord as His life was crushed out; and in our eating and partaking of its strengthening savor unto life, we are made to realize in amazement that He, too, became everything to us as a result of His having His life crushed out. So it is with the wine: the grapes, as with the bread, show that they were crushed and the juice flowed out, and we are blessed to see in this wine what was, and is, in reality in His blood: to wit, it has all of the soul cleansing faculties that are effectual or that are necessary. The bread and the wine are what they are because of what they have undergone, and equally so, the Lord Jesus Christ is to us what He is because of what He has undergone.

In the last thirty-eight years many poor tried pilgrims have said to me, I am afraid to commune. I have inquired the reason for this fear, and have had the words of our Lord quoted to me. "Wherefore whosoever shall eat this

bread, and drink this cup of the Lord, unworthily, shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord. For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body." (I Cor. 11:27, 29) I feel sure that this has caused much deep concern to many poor pilgrims, but I am not able to see why it should. I am able (as I hope) to understand that there is much room in our experience for doubts and fears, even for us to think of ourselves as being vile (Job 40:4), wretched (Rom. 7:24), and as the chief of sinners (I Tim. 1:15), but to apply those feelings and experiences to this statement of our Lord is wrong. It seems that this has been applied wrongfully to the hurt and disconsolation of many poor sinners. Too many times we have thought of the "unworthily" as being an adjective describing the condition of the communicants, but it is an adverb describing the manner in which the ordinance had been observed. *Unworthy* is an adjective and means, "not worthy or not deserving, but the word does not appear in this passage.

Let us look at the true situation as pictured in our Lord's testimony. The Corinthians had been making an ordinary feast of the ordinance, and had not eaten with the thought in mind that His death was the end of their sins. They had not rightly discerned the Lord's body. They had not seen in the bread the broken body of their Lord, nor in the cup His shed blood for their sins. Thus Paul was writing to correct their error in celebrating the ordinance unworthily. He said to them, "What? have ye not houses to eat and drink in? or despise the church of God? What shall I say unto you? shall I praise you in this? I praise you not. And if any man hunger, let him eat at home; that ye come not together unto condemnation." Paul's words make clear that they had celebrated the Lord's Supper in a very unworthy manner. He further said, "Let a man examine himself, and so let him eat," etc. Now let us ask, What is the

reason for this examination? We surely do not think upon it as a discerning our own worthiness. If we took that view of it, all would be found lacking. (Dan. 5:27). No orthodox body of Christians would expect nor receive one to communion that was drunk yesterday, but even one like unto that would be nearer right in his approach to the table than would one that thought he was worthy to eat by what he found in examination of himself. The poor sinner that sees himself as unworthy for communion, yet sees Christ as dying for his sins is taking the communion worthily in discerning the Lord's body. If I eat it (the bread), and drink it (the wine) to satisfy hunger or as a love feast, or as a place for showing my own humility, I am taking it unworthily, but if I take it in obedience to His commandment, and to show forth His praise and His worthiness, and to do it in remembrance of Him, and to continue doing it in His name until He comes again, then I am taking the Communion Supper in a worthy manner.

W.D.G.

VOICES OF THE PAST
"He being dead yet speaketh"

THE JUDGMENT SEAT OF CHRIST

Falcon, Ark., April 28, 1877

Elder G. Beebe:—Will you be so kind as to give me your views through the *Signs of the Times* on 2 Cor. 5:10? and oblige yours,
 W. D.

R E P L Y

Such views as we have we do not feel at liberty to withhold from any who are seriously inquiring after the truth; for we have no secrets in religious matters. Our views on this text, however, may conflict with the cherished views of some learned and popular commentators, and possibly fail to accord with those of some of our brethren, with whom we would be sorry to differ.

The text proposed for elucidation reads thus: "For we must all appear

before the judgment seat of Christ: that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad."

Three important points are presented for our consideration. First, the judgment seat of Christ — what and where is it? Second, who must appear before it? Third, for what purpose must they so appear? By the judgment seat of Christ we understand the throne on which he as the sovereign and righteous Judge is seated. This is not spoken of as a seat or place of judgment in a far distant world, or in some other state of being than the present. God has already seated his King upon his holy hill of Zion.—Psa. 2:6. And unto his Son God has said, "Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever."—Psa. 45:6, 7; Heb. 1:8. Firmly established upon his Mediatorial throne in Zion, all judgment is committed to his hands as the Son of God. "For the Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son; that all should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father."—John 5:22, 23. When in the days of his flesh, as the Son of man, he humbled himself; and "Though he were a Son," and "thought it not robbery to be equal with God, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered."—Heb. 5:8, and Phil. 2:6-11. "Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God; but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. Wherefore God hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father," in the triumphant resurrection of Christ from the dead. "Therefore let all the house of Israel

know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.”— Acts 2:36.

It is for the joy that was set before him, he endured the cross. He has risen from under the power and dominion of the law, and is now exalted to that glory which he had with the Father before the world began, and is now set down on the right hand of God. He has ascended his Mediatorial throne, the place of his power and dominion, where he sits in judgment. “Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with JUDGMENT and with justice from henceforth, even forever.”—Isa. 9:7. In the regeneration of his church which was buried with him into death, when he in their flesh died for them all, and being buried with him by baptism into death, were reproduced from the dead in his resurrection when he by the exceeding greatness of God’s mighty power, which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand, in the heavenly (spiritual, in distinction from the legal) places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: and hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the Head over all things to the church, which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.—Ephesians 1:20-23. From these, with many other scriptures, we think it not difficult to perceive that the judgment seat of Christ is his church—his holy hill Zion, where he is forever set down, until all enemies are or shall be put under his feet, and then the kingdom shall be delivered up to the Father, and the Son shall also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all.—1 Cor. 15:24-28.

That the throne of God in Zion is the judgment seat of Christ is clearly established by the words and works of

Christ, as declared by himself in his reply to Peter, Matt. 19:28, compared with the parable Matt. 25:31-46. “In the regeneration, when the Son of Man shall *sit* in the throne of his glory, ye (the apostles who had forsaken all and followed him) also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.” And, “When the Son of Man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels (or ministers, apostles, princes, &c.) with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory.” And then should he proceed to judge the world in righteousness; “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.” We are aware that many suppose that this judgment has not yet begun, and that it will never take place in this world. But could the Son of Man empower the apostles to sit with him to rule in judgment, before he himself exercised that power? Did he not enter into his glory, and the joy that was set before him, immediately after he had endured the cross, and when he was made both Lord and Christ? Did he not in breaking down the middle wall of partition which had excluded the Gentile nations from the Jews, assemble before him all the nations of mankind? Was he not invested then with power over all flesh, to give eternal life to as many as the Father had given him? And has he not been separating his sheep from the goats, from his ascension to his throne till now? Is he not now setting his sheep on his right hand, and calling them by his Spirit, and saying to them, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world? And is he not now saying to those on his left hand, Depart from me, ye cursed?

Many of the dear children of God have been greatly worried by the traditional impressions made by those who teach that Christ now occupies only his mercy-seat, and that he will vacate that seat and ascend his seat of judgment

after the resurrection of the last day, and then, but not till then, it shall be finally decided who are and who are not his people. They have been taught to believe that all mankind are in this life in a state of probation, and they look for a judgment day, when the great Judge shall hold a court of investigation, when every one of Adam's race shall be accepted or rejected, as their merits or demerits shall be found. In support of this heart-sickening theory no scripture can be found. All the judgments that will ever be executed on saints or sinners are already adjudicated and pronounced by the eternal Judge, and every sentence which he has pronounced is irrevokable. The foundation of God already stands fast, and has this seal, "The Lord knoweth them that are his." Enoch, Elijah, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob are now in heaven, and all the saints who have finished their course on earth. Nor are they prematurely there, with a liability to be cast out. The sins of all the sons of God have already been weighed in a righteous balance, and the crushing weight has been exacted at the hands of our precious Savior; and God has solemnly said, covenanted and sworn, that their sins and iniquities he will remember no more. How then can they be called up again for investigation or for judgment, when like a thick cloud God himself has blotted them out?

There is indeed a day that God has appointed in which he will judge the world, by that man whom he hath appointed; but that will be the execution of all the judgments already entered and recorded in the book of Moses and the prophets, when all whose names are not in the book of life of the Lamb shall be consigned to that condemnation which already rests upon them.

Finally we give, as our understanding, that the judgment day began with the coronation of our risen Savior, that it is now progressing, and that our exalted Savior now sits upon the seat and throne of judgment. He is now dividing the nations, and bringing the

heirs of God into the inheritance of that kingdom which was prepared for them from the foundation of the world. He is himself the monarch of that kingdom, and the glory of it.

Secondly, Who are they that must appear before this judgment seat? While all the power of heaven and earth is given into his hands, and he has a name written upon his vesture and upon his thigh, King of kings and Lord of lords, with authority to judge among the heathen, and to rebuke strong nations for the sake of his saints, his seat of judgment in Zion we understand to be especially devoted to the judgment of the spiritual subjects of his power and grace. While in his universal providential government he is the Prince over all the kings of the earth, for he is exalted far above all principality and power, over all thrones and dominions, and above every name that is named in this world or in the world to come, there is a peculiar sense in which it is said, "he shall judge his people," which applies to them exclusively, and not to the world at large.

In our text the words, "For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ," are applicable alone to those whom the apostle identifies with himself, who know that they have a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. A people who in the earthly house of their tabernacle do groan, and earnestly desire to be clothed upon with their house which is from heaven, and who have an assurance that God has wrought them for this self-same thing, and who are always confident, knowing that whilst they are at home in the body, they are absent from the Lord. They are a people who walk by faith, not by sight, and who are willing rather to be absent from the body, and present with the Lord. These are in a special, peculiar and exclusive sense under the discipline of their blessed Lord and Master. As their Lawgiver and their Judge, their Shepherd and their Bishop, their Prophet, Priest and King, they are under

his Mediatorial charge, and they must all, every one of them, appear before his judgment seat. To the people of God who are led and taught by the Spirit, a consciousness that the Lord is their Judge, and that all the things which are done in the body, the church, over which he is all things the Head, is manifest to him, as expressed in the next verse, and subject to his judgment and decision, will lead them to invoke the scrutiny of his all-seeing eye, "Search me, O God, and know my heart, try me, and know my thoughts: and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting." — Psalm 139:23, 24.

Aliens may flatter themselves that they may do what seems good in their own eyes, and that their sincerity of purpose will be as acceptable to God as an exact conformity to his word; but those who know the terror of the Lord, that "Our God is a consuming fire," will desire to "have grace whereby they may serve God acceptably, with reverence and godly fear." They know that for every idle word they are held to a strict account at the judgment seat of their Lord and Master. And they love his judgments; for his *rod* as well as his *staff* is a comfort to them.

The reason why *every one* of the members of *the body must* appear before the judgment seat of Christ, is that all that is done in the body by the several members, whether good or bad, may be submitted to him who is alone competent to judge righteously, and that each may receive at the hand of the righteous Judge according to that he hath done, (as a member of the body, in the body,) whether good or bad. All that is done in the body, the church, is approved or condemned by him: whether in doctrine or practice, in words, thoughts or deeds. He is the Judge, the church is his judgment seat, and to his laws and ordinances all his members must submit. They who have transgressed his laws will be revoked, rebuked, and chastised according to the nature and magnitude of their offenses.

He that knoweth his Master's will, and doeth it not, shall be beaten with many stripes; but he who has erred through ignorance, without any design to disobey, shall be more tenderly dealt with. But all shall from the righteous Judge receive according to that he hath done, whether it be good or bad. None but Christ is competent to judge the things done in the body, the church, or in the bodies of the individual members, who are included in his body. He alone is able to discriminate between what God has wrought in the body, and what has been wrought by the church or her members. All that is good, and approved by the Judge, is what God has wrought; for "it is God that worketh in us, both to will and to do of his good pleasure." But all in us that God has not wrought will be detected, and all the saints shall, at his judgment seat, receive the things wrought in the body, according to that they have done. For what God has wrought in them shall be made to appear by their godly walk and conversation; while all their own imperfect works shall be reprov'd.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe July 15, 1877.)

CIRCULAR LETTER

Written by Elder Arnold H. Bellows

The Lexington-Roxbury Old School Baptist Association, in session with the Olive and Hurley Old School Baptist Church, at Shokan, New York, September 16th and 17th, 1936, to the churches composing the same, sends greeting.

Dear Brethren: — Pursuant to a commendable custom, we are assuming the task of writing a Circular Letter, not so much to conform to precedent, but more to edify the brethren, confirm them in their holy faith, present experimental truth encompassed by sound and enduring doctrine. In this age, when darkness has covered the land and gross darkness the people, when there have been many divisions among brethren and many perversions of the faith delivered unto the saints as

men have followed human reason or blind tradition, a Circular Letter is of greater relevant worth.

Feeling our dependence upon God, who giveth liberally and upbraideth not, who is the fountain head of all wisdom, power, understanding and grace, we would present a few thoughts from the sixth verse of the twenty-fifth chapter of Isaiah, which reads as follows: "And in this mountain shall the Lord of hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined." The prophet Isaiah in preceding verses had referred to the glorious majesty of the kingdom of God. Whatever literal meaning these verses may have to the destruction of Babylon and the overthrow of the enemies of Israel and the deliverance of the Jews from their long captivity, they are pregnant with an experimental application to the children of God in this present church dispensation, and in this light we choose to present our views, being fully aware that many Scriptures have a literal historical significance, a future prophetic fulfillment, and an experimental realization by those that constitute the bride of Jesus Christ.

The words chosen for our subject follow expressions of praise rendered unto God for the performance of wonderful things, assuring those to whom they were written that in a certain mountain the Lord would make unto all people a feast of fat things and a feast of wines on the lees well refined. The word "shall" denotes power, certainty, purpose, predestination, foreknowledge and unconditionalism, all centering around the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ which saves for time and eternity. The word "mountain" doubtless refers to Mount Zion in figure, which was the stronghold of the ancient city of Jerusalem, and has been often used to symbolize the church of God. Mount Zion is spoken of as the perfection of beauty out of which God hath shined, and the church is truly beautiful and

glorious in the matchless comeliness of her Redeemer. Sometimes the church is spoken of as the mountain of God's holiness, for those that comprise the church have the imputed righteousness of Christ and are unto him a holy nation and a peculiar people. The expression "this mountain" denotes a special mountain, singled out from all others, hence implying choice, electing love, reigning grace, continued mercies and divine favor, since it is the Lord who makes this feast in this mountain. Man has no part in that which the Lord does, for He will not divide his honor with sinful, fallen, helpless man. Therefore an unconditional salvation is encompassed in the expression "unto all people," Jew and Gentile believers taught of God constituting the spiritual seed of Abraham.

Because of the Adam transgression death has entered the world, and sin reigned unto death with all its pitiless penalty until Jesus Christ by his stainless birth, his sinless life, his holy offering of his prepared body on the cross, his ignominious death, glorious resurrection, triumphant ascension and Melchisedec priesthood brought life and immortality to light through the gospel. Even the decalogue delivered unto Moses, and all the legal ceremonies, which were just and good, could give no life, nor make the comer thereunto perfect, for man is by nature a sinner, being united to his fleshly head Adam, and having the nature of sin will act out his nature, being of the earth earthy, filled with foolish thoughts, and in and of himself cannot rise higher than his source in being born of sinful parents with the curse of God upon him and the sentence of death in him. Even the thought of foolishness is declared to be sin. Before the bar of divine justice transgressing man is indicted under a holy law. Justice and judgment are ever executed by a changeless God before his throne before mercy and truth can be realized comfortingly by the guilty sinner. The demands of the inflexible righteousness of God require

a holy offering, and a holy offerer. The earth and its fruits being under the curse with fallen man, and sin separating the sinner from a thrice holy God, man could not offer himself as an acceptable sacrifice nor anything acceptable unto Deity from a sin-cursed earth.

But in the councils of eternal wisdom before man was formed of the dust of the earth God found a way and ordained it whereby his inexorable justice would be satisfied, judgment executed, sin expiated, an intercessor provided in the person of his only beloved Son, who in the fullness of time was to be born of a woman and made under the law, with a holy human nature because God was his Father, and therefore he would have the life, power, holiness and wisdom of God. Under the law mercy could not be shown else God's justice would be set at naught, and God would thereby cease to be God. The law must be enforced, satisfied, fulfilled. This was done by Jesus Christ, who is the end of the law unto all believers. The law given by God through Moses embraced Israel primarily as a nation, yet when the Gentiles, who have not the law, do by nature the things contained in the law, these having not the law, are a law unto themselves, showing forth the works of the law written in their hearts as God judges the secrets of men by the gospel. The decalogue manifests the wound of sin, and the ceremonial law with its numerous ordinances points to Christ, the law being a schoolmaster unto Christ. The Israelites had the covenants and the oracles of God directly and were of the circumcision in the flesh as a nation and unto them as a nation Christ came after the flesh, was rejected by them, condemned and crucified on false charges.

The believing Gentiles were embraced spiritually in the promises of God as well as the believing Jews, but the handwriting of ordinances which was against the believing Gentiles had to be removed and nailed to the cross, as the crucifixion of Christ abolished all that was written against believing Jew and be-

lieving Gentile, making of the twain one new man in Christ. In this sense all people, that is, all believers, being chosen in Christ are justified by his blood, receive pardon, which is release from punishment, and also justification, which is release from guilt, and stand in Christ before God as a holy nation and a peculiar people. Therefore in the expression "unto all people" in the subject taken for this article all the members of the family of God are included, whether Jew or Gentile, as the veil of darkness and legalism that has been spread over all nations is taken away as God shines in the heart and gives the light of the knowledge of his glory in the face of Jesus Christ.

The poor guilty sinner who has felt within his soul the fiery wrath of God because of his sins, which reach up to heaven and cast him down to hell, leaving him in himself justly without hope of eternal life and consigned by the righteous judgment of God to endless woe, finds a feast of fat things for him when Jesus is revealed to him by the Holy Ghost. He has felt the sighs and groans of the cross, realized the exceeding sinfulness of sin, hated it, loathed himself as the one in whom sin dwells, and tried in vain all human means to relieve his distressed condition. But when in his experience ready to perish, and already perishing, he was raised unto a comfortable Hope, as he discerned with the anointed eye of faith Jesus Christ on the cross between him and his sins, between him and the judgment of an offended God. A new life a new love, and the spirit of prayer and supplication have been given unto him with the revelation of the Christ of God. No longer does he trust his own filthy fleshly righteousness as before. No longer does he depend as before upon creature effort and the wisdom of man, but feeds upon the precious promises of the gospel, fellowship the saints of old testament times and new testament times in his experience. He realizes, as never before, warfare between flesh and Spirit, finds himself unable to

do the good that he would, and so leans upon Jesus. He finds himself crucified with Christ, yet living, and as he mortifies the deeds of the flesh as he daily sins, he finds a daily Savior as he washes his hands and feet in the laver of the word of God. He feels with unspeakable joy the cleansing power and merit of atoning blood. In all this there is a feast of fat things. It is also a feast of fat things full of marrow. In the natural human body the bone marrow plays an important part in making blood that provides tissue for the body. Spiritually speaking, in the Old Testament it was said that in the blood is the life of the soul. So in new testament times there is marrow spiritually in this feast of fat things, providing nourishment for the saved sinner who is renewed day by day. What a feast of fat things in redeeming love, in pardoning love, in justifying love as the streams of that river which makes glad the city of our God, flow into the soul! The partaker of this feast realizes new beauties in the types and shadows setting forth Jesus in suffering as well as in his dispensation of glory.

There were three great feasts that the Jews held among others, known as the feast of the Passover, the feast of Pentecost and the feast of Tabernacles. All of these three feasts set forth in type of work of the Trinity, God the Son, God the Holy Ghost and God the Father. The feast of Passover particularly emblemizes the death of Jesus Christ as the believer's passover, for God, witnessing the efficacy of the blood of the Lamb of God, passes over the sins of the redeemed sinner and abolishes them forever in the realm of eternal forgetfulness. The feast of Pentecost refers to the descent of the Holy Ghost and the establishment of the church of God, as the saved sinner realizes his joint heirship with Christ. The feast of Tabernacles typifies God tabernacling with man as the Holy Spirit makes him alive from the dead. The last mentioned feast was the last one of the three great feasts of the Is-

raelites, and so God tabernacles in man as a result of the work of the Son and of the Holy Ghost.

It is also a feast of wines on the lees when the believer discerns no life in the Old Testament wine and that it has been exhausted, and that the water of the word fills the empty vessel to the brim, is made into gospel wine, and is kept until now, refreshing and supplying and satisfying the new born child of God who thirsts after righteousness, is often made to feel sad and heavy-hearted because of the adversary Satan. Jesus turned water into wine at the wedding feast at Cana, the first of his many miracles. This occurred on the third day, signifying the gospel day, as well as life from the dead, for Jesus rose from the dead the third day. The church is espoused as a chaste virgin unto Christ, and it is appropriate that this wedding was graced by Christ's presence. It is the church that tastes of the wine that Wisdom (Jesus the wisdom of God in a mystery) has mingled, and it is good wine, kept until now. It is never exhausted. The subject of grace has felt the lifenessness of the old testament wine with its condemnation, and has longed for that sparkling, invigorating, soul-cheering wine of the gospel dispensation. One must feel lost before realizing salvation, must feel the need of Christ before comprehending his mercy, so there is in the mingling of the wine in the mountain of God's holiness a sense of need supplied and grace provided. The first miracle that a child of God knows anything about is when he is made to sip gospel wine and finds his heavy-heartedness gone and hope renewed and faith strengthened. This wine is well refined, being on the lees, with strength and virtue in it. As the poor sinner experiences many trials and is refined by them and conformed to the image of God, he is made often to partake of this wine, of wines well refined. As the wine made from the water at Cana's wedding feast filled the vessels to the brim, so there is fullness of joy and

glory for the believer as he feasts in the fellowship of the saints in this mountain upon the precious things prepared by the Lord of hosts.

OBITUARIES

BROTHER O. Y. CLAYTON

It has pleased our Dear Heavenly Father to remove from our midst our Deacon, Brother O. Y. Clayton. He was born September 20, 1888. He was the son of Solomon D. and Susan Frances Morton Clayton. He passed away May 21, 1975, making his stay on earth 87 years.

On May 18, 1912, he was married to Ruth Jones. They lived together 63 years and to this union was born six children: four boys and two girls; leaving his wife and five children to mourn his loss, Mrs. Eulyn Bridges, Mrs. Frances McKay, O. Y., Jr., Meredith and Dan Clayton. Harold passed away several years ago.

Brother Clayton united with J. H. Gooch Memorial Primitive Baptist Church March 21, 1953, together with his wife, Sister Ruth Clayton. The brethren and sisters were dear to him and he loved his church. Though his health was not good for many years, he was always present when he was not providentially hindered. We will miss him, but want to be submissive to the good Lord's Will. The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away; blessed be His holy will. His funeral was conducted at the Shiloh Primitive Baptist Church May 22, 1975, by Elder C. B. Davis, Jr., and was laid to rest in the cemetery at Roxboro.

This done by order of our conference at J. H. Gooch Memorial Primitive Baptist Church June 7, 1975.

Elder Donald Smith, Moderator
Humbly Submitted
Nancy B. Allen

IN MEMORY OF DEACON JONAH S. BLALOCK

Our Heavenly Father in His wisdom and mercy saw fit to call our beloved and highly esteemed Brother Jonah Blalock from the walk of life and give him peaceful rest, until He comes again and gathers His jewels who have been redeemed in the Saviour's blood.

Brother Blalock was born in Caswell County on February 6, 1899, and died January 29, 1975. He was the son of the late Brother Mack and Sister Anna McKinney Blalock. He leaves his dear companion, Mrs. Lester Rascoe Blalock of the home; one daughter, Mrs. Helen Rippy of Elon, N. C.; two sons, H. S. Blalock of Hickory, N. C., and Clarence Blalock of Graham, N. C.; one brother, Harvey Blalock

of Gibsonville, N. C.; and seven grandchildren.

During the session of the Upper Country Line Association at Lick Fork Church in July, 1930, Brother Blalock asked for a home, to be with Gilliams Church. He was received into its fellowship and was baptized by the late Elder John Gilliam at the fourth Sunday meeting. In the year 1932 he was appointed assistant clerk. Later the church felt Brother Blalock had a gift as a Deacon and he was ordained September 23, 1945. He served Gilliams Church until May 18, 1952, when he asked for a home with McCray. By a letter of transfer he was received into the fellowship as a Brother member and Deacon.

He was blessed to serve well, always desiring peace and unity in the church, believing in Salvation by grace and mercy of the Lord, telling of the great things the Saviour had done for him and giving Christ the praise. He came to meetings when it seemed to our human eyes that he was physically unable to attend. I remember the third Sunday in January, only a few days before his death, he came to McCray and was almost carried inside by his loving family and seated on the front pew where he rejoiced during the preaching. I believe he heard the True Gospel from Heaven delivered by our beloved pastor Elder Wallis Smith. He enjoyed being with loved ones of like faith and traveled many miles to visit other churches and associations.

His funeral was held at McCray Church, conducted by his pastor Elder Wallis Smith. His body was laid to rest in the church cemetery beneath a beautiful mound of flowers — resting in peace, awaiting the coming of Christ.

May God bless and keep his loved ones. We at McCray miss him, but our loss is his eternal gain. May we all be reconciled to the will of the Heavenly Father, feeling that our Brother has gone home to be with his Lord.

Written by: Thelma Allison at the request of McCray Primitive Baptist Church.

Elder Wallis A. Smith, Moderator
Ruth Jeffreys, Clerk

LAWRENCE ADKINS

Lawrence Adkins was born July 18, 1893, to Jacob and Emma Adkins who were members of Indiantown Church. He died December 31, 1974. He was married to Maude Bethards, and to this union three children were born. His wife and children survive, besides several grandchildren, also a brother, Paul Adkins.

He was an upstanding citizen of the community. He was not a visible member of the Old School Baptist Church, but he was a faithful friend, a great supporter whenever expenses were incurred, and a staunch believer

in the doctrine of Salvation by Grace. He attended services all his life, and we at Indian-town Church will miss him greatly, but we feel our loss is his gain.

Funeral services were held by Elder James Poole, and burial was in the Parsons Cemetery, Salisbury, Maryland.

William S. Adkins, Clerk
Indiantown Church

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

We, the members of Skewarky Primitive Baptist Church, bow in humble submission to the will of our Heavenly Father in removing by death our beloved sister, Sister Mizzie Wil-
lor B. Clark.

Sister Clark was born in Martin County, N. C. on March 8, 1912 and died May 29, 1975, thus making her stay 63 years. She was the daughter of the late John Dennis and Ella Allen Bonds. She was married in 1934 to Jesse Clark who survives. She united with the church of Skewarky in May 23, 1971. She was a faithful member and believed in the doctrine and practiced it daily. She was a faithful wife and mother. She attended the meetings at Skewarky when her health permitted her. She was loved by all and will be missed greatly, but our loss is her gain for eternal and peaceful rest with our Heavenly Father.

Surviving besides her husband are one son Samuel Lewis Clark of Tarboro; two daughters, Mrs. Pauline Cherry and Mrs. Sallie Mae Wobbleton both of Williamston; three brothers, Fenner, Mervin, and U. A. Bonds; one sister Mrs. Virginia Dare B. Donaldson; six grandchildren and one grandchild.

Funeral services were held Sunday afternoon at 4:30 at Skewarky Primitive Baptist Church by her pastor Elder E. C. Harrison assisted by Elder I. S. Conner. Interment was in Woodlawn Cemetery.

Our deepest sympathy go to her family and loved ones.

RESOLVED, That a copy be placed on church record, a copy be sent to the family and a copy be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Done by order of conference the Saturday before the second Sunday in June, 1975.

Elder E. C. Harrison, Moderator
Judy D. Raynor, Clerk

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

It has been God's will to call from our midst, Brother Roy Madra. He was blessed to live on earth 77 years before his death on June 23, 1975. Brother Roy was blessed to join

Tarboro Church, along with his wife, first Sunday in June, 1969. He was faithful to his church until he was taken sick about two years ago and was never able to attend again.

Brother Madra was a believer in Salvation by Grace, and to know Brother Roy was to love him. He was humble to his brethren and he was a great supporter to his church.

Therefore we resolve:

(1) That three copies be made and one to be sent to the *Times* for publication; one to be sent to the family; and one to be put in the church records.

(2) We send our sympathy to his family, and trust that he is resting in peace with our Saviour.

This done by order of conference at our July meeting.

Elder D. B. Stokes, Moderator
John H. Coker, Clerk

MRS. BERTHA HARRIS CHAMBERLAINE

Mrs. Bertha Harris Chamberlaine was born March 1, 1877 in Reidsville, N. C. She was the daughter of Elder James Martin Harris and Annie Robertson Harris. She was united in wedlock in 1903 to Alfred Cookman Chamberlaine by Elder L. H. Hardy. To this union three sons were born: Alfred, Richard and Harris. All preceded her in death, and her husband passed away in 1950.

She was educated in the public schools and State Normal School, and taught in the public schools for many years.

Sister Chamberlaine was a charter member of the Reidsville Primitive Baptist Church. After moving to Winston Salem, N. C. she was a charter member of that church, but in her later years she moved her membership back to the Reidsville Church, and died a devoted and beloved member.

It was my privilege to serve as her pastor a number of years: and to know her was to love her. She was as well established in the doctrine of God our Saviour as any one I ever knew. She analyzed everything she heard or read, and compared it with God's Word. I well remember visiting with her after she was past ninety years of age, and one of the first things she said when I entered her house, "There is an article in the *Signs of the Times* that I want to talk to you about." Whatever it was that raised questions in her mind, was settled or explained to her satisfaction. It was a great pleasure to me to know that God had given her that probing mind, even after ninety years of age, to compare what she read with the Word of God. She was as well established in the doctrine of Predestination, Election, and the cardinal principles of Doctrine as any one I ever knew.

Her funeral was conducted by the writer in Vogler's Chapel, Winston Salem, N. C., as she requested.

She had written her requests for her funeral, and also left a request that flowers be white.

Our loss is her eternal gain, we believe.

D. V. Spangler

DENNIS BAILEY

It has pleased our Heavenly Father to remove from our midst our very dear Brother Dennis Bailey. He was the son of Asa Warner and Melinda Bailey, and was born in Martin County, North Carolina, October 7, 1891. He was united in marriage January 13, 1923, to Elsie Harris, who survives, with one son, Dennis Marion Bailey, a grandson and four brothers; Seth, Ophus, Lester and Warner Bailey of Bear Grass. A sister, Mrs. Martha Tice of Williamston, North Carolina.

Brother Dennis Bailey and wife were received into the fellowship of Bear Grass Primitive Baptist Church in June 1958 and baptized by Elder A. B. Ayers. He was ordained Deacon of the church in February, 1973.

He was a faithful and loving member and attended services as long as his health permitted him to do so. May the Lord bless his faithful and devoted wife, the family and all those that mourn, to feel that all is well with our loved one and that our loss is his eternal gain.

The funeral services were conducted by his pastor, Elder E. C. Harrison and Elder J. T. Prescott. Burial was in Pinewood Memorial Cemetery in Greenville, North Carolina.

E. C. Harrison, Moderator
Theresa R. Ayers, Committee

BEULAH PEELE MOBLEY

Our Heavenly Father in his infinite wisdom, love and mercy called away our beloved sister Beulah Peele Mobley on March 13, 1975.

She was born in Martin County, North Carolina April 5, 1888. Her parents were John Henry Dawson and Nellie Clark Peele.

Sister Mobley was received into the church Saturday before the third Sunday in October, 1917, and was baptized on Sunday at Bear Trap Mill by Elder John N. Rogerson. She had been a loyal and faithful member these many years and it is sad to part with those we love.

Her husband, Samuel H. Mobley preceded her in death fifteen years ago. She is survived by four sons and one daughter; Hildreth P., Ralph C., W. Worth, Haywood C. and Mrs. Evelyn Howell.

Her funeral was conducted by her beloved pastor, Elder E. C. Harrison at Bear Grass Primitive Baptist Church, Williamston, North Carolina. Burial was in Martin Memorial Cemetery to await the glorious resurrection.

Done by order of conference Saturday before the third Sunday in March 1975.

E. C. Harrison, Moderator
Theresa R. Ayers, Committee

BROTHER CHARLIE R. ALLEN

We at New Bay Primitive Baptist Church bow in humble submission to the will of our Heavenly Father, as it has pleased Him to remove from our midst, Brother Charlie R. Allen. Brother Allen was born October 31, 1898, near Verona. After his marriage to Sister Emma Rhodes Allen in October 1923, he made his home in Sneads Ferry, where he resided until his death, May 5, 1974.

He united with New Bay Church in February 1962, a strong believer in the doctrine of Salvation by the Grace of God. His love and fellowship for the brethren and the church was always manifest with a beautiful smile and a warm handshake. His qualification for deacon was recognized and he was ordained to the office of deacon in October, 1962. He served the church well, in love and humbleness, always being submissive to the good of the church.

The last few months of his life, his afflictions were many, but he seemed to be reconciled to the will of God, as he never complained because of his suffering. He was a true and faithful brother to the end. We miss our beloved Brother, but we feel our loss is his eternal gain. The love and fellowship we shared with him lives on in our hearts.

He is survived by his wife, Sister Emma Allen of Sneads Ferry, N. C., five daughters, Virginia Lawen of California, Doris Laumann of Jacksonville, N. C., Vila Rae Swaney of Sneads Ferry, N. C., Hazel Enck of Collinsville, Va., Mary Thompson of Jacksonville, N. C.: two sons, R. C. Allen of Sneads Ferry, N. C., and Carlton Allen of Winston Salem, N. C.: seventeen grandchildren and eight great grandchildren: two sisters and three brothers.

Funeral services were conducted in New Bay Primitive Baptist Church by Elder D. B. Stokes and Elder S. P. Jones. He was laid to rest in a Sneads Ferry cemetery, beneath a beautiful mound of flowers, where his sleeping body awaits the resurrection when Jesus shall come again to gather all his children home.

Written by order of conference at New Bay Church.

Elder D. B. Stokes, Moderator
Brother Norman Jenkins, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 143

DANVILLE, VA., DECEMBER, 1975

NO. 12

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 12/75
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

GETS TO MEETINGS WHEN
SOMEONE TAKES HER

Route 1, Box 127C
Glade Hill, Va. 24092

Dear Elders Spangler and Wood:

I am sending check to pay for the *Signs of the Times* two more years, and the balance for whatever it is needed. I don't want to miss any for I enjoy reading so many good writings. I do not get to go to church as I would like, for since my husband passed away eleven years ago, I just go when someone comes by and takes me. My Daddy was a Primitive Baptist preacher, his name was W. Lester Perdue, he passed away November 12, 1917.

I don't belong to any church, and don't know if I ever will, for I feel unworthy, but I wish I were worthy for I love the Primitive Baptists and go to hear them all I can, which is not as much as I would like to. I read so many good writings in the *Signs* by so many different ones, and I enjoy it so much. I re-read my older ones over and over, and I usually read mine through the same day I get them.

I read my Bible a great deal, and I believe the Primitive Baptists preach it just as it is. I don't believe in this save your self doctrine as some preach it. I believe if we are saved it is by the

Grace of God, and not by works we do. I feel we are just helpless sinners, and that Almighty God does the saving — if left to us we are lost, for we are not saved by our works.

I beg your prayers if you feel to pray, for I am one of the poor, helpless sinners but love you all and do believe the doctrine you preach. I have heard you both, and many others too, and I also read the good writings of you both, and many others that tell my feelings so much better than I can, and hope to hear more of it.

Nannie Gracie (Perdue) Arrington

CHRIST THE GOOD SHEPHERD

Do not the Lord's people, the elect, acknowledge today that the Lord, as David said, is their shepherd. His people are the sheep of His pasture. They go in and out by Him and find pasture, being fed as David said, and they shall not want, because the Lord leads them. "I will bring the blind by a way they know not, I will lead them in paths that they have not known: I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight. These things will I do unto them, and not forsake them." (Isaiah 42:16)

The Shepherd laid his life down for the sheep. The sheepfold represents the whole Church of God. The sheep are those that know the voice of the Good Shepherd, — and of every true shepherd, and the sheep know not the voice of a stranger — they will flee from him. The thief comes to steal and kill and destroy: he that is an hireling, and not the Shepherd whose own the sheep are, seeth the wolf coming, and leaveth the sheep and fleeth, and the wolf catcheth

them and scattereth the sheep. (John 10:12) The Thief is a false teacher, proving himself to be such by their selfishness and rapacity. (Read the 34 chapter of Ezekiel) A Hireling is one that serves merely for gain, without any personal interest in the flock. Such a person may seem to be better than a thief or a robber, but the sheep are not safe in his care, for he will risk nothing for them — he is no true shepherd, for he lacks the essential characteristic of personal intimacy which exists between Jesus and every one of His sheep, resembling that which subsists between Father and Son.

Jesus said on one occasion to some, that you believe not because you are not my sheep. Jesus said, "My sheep hear my voice and I know them, and they follow me." And in Isaiah 40:11, we read, "He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young."

Brethren, isn't it wonderful that God still feeds His flock? Oh, how we do get hungry and crave to be fed, and drink from the drippings that come from above! How wonderful it is to meet together and hear the Gospel expounded: the good news given by the Great Shepherd of the sheep. There is no truth in anything else, and if the truth makes us free, we shall be free indeed. The Truth as it is in Christ Jesus is put in the hearts of His Elect, because Jesus is the way, the truth and the life to each of His Elect: the ones his Father gave him before the world was, because the elect of God were chosen in Christ before there were any of them in the world, that they should be holy and without blemish before Him in love.

Jesus taught his Apostles to pray for food in this manner, "Give us this day our daily bread." They have to be fed daily because these are blessed people, "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness for they shall be filled," not going to be blessed, but already blessed. God has never chang-

ed: He is the same today as always. We think of the Prophets in olden times, how the Lord took care of them: Elijah was fed by the ravens that brought him bread and flesh in the mornings and evenings, and he drank of the brook of Cherith — and the brook dried up. And the Lord sent him to Zarephath, to a widow woman to sustain him. She had only a handful of meal in a barrel, and a little oil in a cruise, just for her and her son. But the Lord multiplied the meal oil, and they ate many days.

So when the good Lord of earth and heaven gives those that hunger and thirst as Elijah did, they rejoice in being filled, because they are already a blessed people. (Please read the 17th chapter of Kings) The sheep have always been fed by the hand of God. Do we have anything that we haven't received from God, either natural or spiritual? All good and perfect gifts come down from the Father of lights to the Sheep of His pasture. "A man's gift maketh room for him, and bringeth him before great men." (Prov. 8:16) This gift that men have causes him to study to show himself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." (2 Timothy 2:15)

There are many gifts but all of the same Spirit, "For God hath not given us the Spirit of fear but of power and love, and of a sound mind." (2 Timothy 1:7), to worship him in spirit and truth. And we look unto Him who is the author and finisher of our faith, who works all things after the counsel of His sovereign will. I believe there is no event that has ever taken place, or takes place now, or will in the future, that is not according to God's sovereign will. "The lot is cast in the lap and the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord." (Proverbs 6:33) "Fear not little flock for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom." (Luke 12:32) Jesus calls them a little flock. So we read in Deuteronomy 7:7, "The Lord did not set his love upon you, nor choose

you, because you were more in number than any people, for ye were the fewest of all people."

So the Lord's people is his portion of his creation: they were elected in Christ before the foundation of the world. Here is the little flock, the Sheep of his pasture that follow the Great Shepherd. "As many as are led by the Spirit of God are the sons of God." "God is a Spirit, and they that worship God must worship Him in Spirit and in truth," because these people are taught of the Lord. Jesus said, "It is written in the prophets, And they shall all be taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me." (John 6:45)

"For God hath not given us the spirit of fear, but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind. Be not therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God: who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." (2 Timothy 1:7-9)

"Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends." (John 15:13)

"Love is the sweetest bud that blows,
Its beauty never dies,
On earth among the saints it grows
And ripens in the skies.

His purpose will ripen fast,
Unfolding every hour.
The bud may have a bitter taste,
But sweet will be the flower."

Written in love to all.

Your brother in Christ, I hope,
Elder Herbert R. Prince,
4307 Manor Haven Drive,
Memphis, Tenn. 38128

GIVEN COURAGE TO GO ON

404 Spruce Street,
Rayville, La. 71269

Dear Brothers in Hope:

Enclosed you will find four dollars, for which please extend our subscription for another year. We do not want to miss a single copy.

Sometimes it is like a friendly ship to a drowning man at sea: it lifts us up and renews our weak hope, and gives us courage to go on, hoping and trusting in an all powerful God.

Yours in hope,
Mr. and Mrs. Earl Wilson

ENJOYED THE OCTOBER SIGNS

Dearly Beloved of the Lord:

I have been taking the *Signs* since 1953, and enjoyed this one (October, 1975) more than any, and that is saying a lot.

It was good to see Elder Spangler's writing again — it has been a long time. Sister Dykes is a very gifted writer and writes frequently. Sister Bailey's experience is extra good, and others — I can't remember them all as I have already sent this copy to a sister.

Elder Stewart McColl's editorial is very spiritually enlightening, as well as educational, on Jacob blessing the sons. He may be blest to write an editorial on Joseph, as he said one could be written on him. . . . Elder Beebe's article on Revelation 22:14 is one of the best — there is none better.

If you have an extra October *Signs*, please send one to the name and address shown, for which I enclose \$2.00.

May the Lord bless you in your labor of love for the saints.

In brotherly love and fellowship,
Harry T. Vories

EXPERIENCE

Rt. 2, Box 148,
Pink Hill, N. C. 28572

Dear Loved Ones In Christ:

By God's grace it has been on my mind for some time to write to the *Signs of the Times*, but I don't feel worthy to

tell how my life has been in this vain world. It has been a rock bed, but by God's grace he has kept me this far. All I can say is, "Father I stretch my hand to thee, no other help I know. Nothing in my hand I bring, simply to thy cross I cling."

I have always been sickly, and when 32 years old I took rheumatic fever and had to stay in bed almost a year. It left my heart enlarged, my people and the doctor thought I was going to die, but I am glad it is not left up to man. I have two daughters, one is married with three children, and my baby is eighteen years old and in her last year of high school.

I fell and broke my hip April 7, 1974. The doctors put a pin in it, and for six months I could put no weight on it. Later they took the pin out, and since then I can walk only with my walker. I have a good husband and he has been so good to me in all my trials, troubles and afflictions. He and the friends brothers and sisters, have done all they could for me. All I can say is, praise the Lord forever. I feel as little as an ant, and I know I can do nothing without God's help. I pray that His will is to let me walk again, and if it isn't, to reconcile me to His will. Sometimes it seems He has forsaken me, then again, I can rejoice a few precious moments. . .

Quite a few Elders have been to see me. How I would praise the good Lord for sending them. They and others would pray for me. The Lord has been good to me and my family. My mother was a Primitive Baptist. She was a good mother to us seven children. She loved the church, and so do I. I joined the church in 1963, I know I am not worthy to be there, but I trust the good Lord has done something for me that I could not do for myself. I am just as helpless as any vile sinner can be.

After many fears, I dreamed that I was alone in the darkness. It seemed when I started to go some place, I went up on a high hill and when I started to go through a gate there was someone to go with me. It was Elder Mitchell and others, and my sister came and took

my hand. It was such a beautiful place. Everything in that place was gold and silver. I awoke and laid there wondering if I would ever see it again. It seems it has given me a better hope. Sometimes it seems I have to hope for hope, and I beg the Lord to please have mercy on me. Much of my time I am in pain, and I know God has had mercy or I couldn't stand it. Sometimes I can praise His holy name for the pain I have had. I hope some day it will be worth every pain I have had, and I will be with Him and be satisfied. That is the day I am looking forward to. How many times since, when I was down in the valley, I have seen it. But the hymn "Mixtures of Joy and Sorrow" tells it better than I can. Then sometimes I begin to wonder if it is my imagination, and my doom is that terrible pit.

I have been receiving the *Signs of the Times* for ten years, and I dearly love this paper. I have something to look forward to every month. I know I have been scattering and hard to follow. It is hard for me to understand myself. "What I am 'tis hard to know." It is so wonderful to be with God's wonderful family. They could live without me, but I just couldn't live without them. All I want in this world is a sweet home in heaven when I die. I know I love the people, and the doctrine Saved by Grace, for I know that without the grace of God I am lost. I cannot foresee what He has prepared for me. I do not question this, because He has led me to believe He will go with me to the end.

When given a mind to pray, please remember me. I am very low at times, but thank the good Lord at other times I feel singularly blessed. May He keep me humble at the feet of the precious saints, that I may never offend one of them. O Lord that I may spend the rest of my days in praise to thee!

A little sister in hope,
Mrs. Addie Kennedy

ROMANS 10:1, 2

"Brethren, my heart's desire and prayer to God for Israel, is that they might be saved. For I bear them record that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge."

There is a nation of Israel and there is an elect Israel. The Elect Israel includes both Jews and Gentiles that were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world. Romans 9:6: "Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect. For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel." There is a question as to how one learns of God and is saved. Romans 10:13: "For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." Now there are some plain questions here in Romans and the answer also when we are blessed to see and hear. Romans 10:14: "How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher?" Romans 10:15: "And how shall they preach, except they be sent?"

Now these are some of the questions. We haven't come to the answer yet. Romans 10:15: "As it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!" This is not a question. One may shout with joy, "How beautiful!" There is a beauty in the feet of the Elders and the path they have been blessed to walk. There is a beauty in washing the feet of the Children of God. Romans 10:16: "But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord who hast believed our report?" Romans 10:17: "So then faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the word of God." The Bible is the written word of God. And Jesus is the Word. John 1:1: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." John 1:14: "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, and we beheld His glory as of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth." There is also the

gospel or the preached word. In the text, hearing and faith cometh by the word of God. God does speak directly to all the elect. One dead in sin can not savingly hear any man. One must be born again before he can believe and rejoice in the gospel. John 10:27: "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me." Romans 10:18: "But I say, Have they not heard? Yes verily, their sound went into all the earth, and their words unto the ends of the world."

It is plain to see that there was plenty of preaching all over the world. Did the dead receive it or not? Romans 10:19: "But I say, Did not Israel know? First Moses saith, I will provoke you to jealousy by them that are no people, and by a foolish nation I will anger you." Romans 10:20: "But Esaias is very bold, and saith, I was found of them that sought me not; I was made manifest unto them that asked not after me." Here is the answer we have been waiting for. He was made manifest unto them that asked not after him. Doesn't that sound just like one dead in sin? Dead and doesn't know it, and wouldn't know it if you told him all day long. Thank God! He does make himself manifest to all his children. Now, how did the preacher make out then and now unless God first healed the sinner. Romans 10:21: "But to Israel he saith, All day long I have stretched forth my hand unto a disobedient and gainsaying people." The scripture does not say in I Corinthians 1:21, it pleased God by the *usual way* of preaching to save them that believe. I Corinthians 1:21 says, "For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe." The word foolishness was not put there to fill up space. The preacher doesn't save anyone. The preaching doesn't save anyone. The ones here were by or under the sound of preaching when it pleased God to save them. After one is born again they rejoice when blessed to hear the Truth preached. Proverbs 16:1: "The preparation of the heart in man, and

the answer of the tongue, is from the Lord." It could be said that it pleased God by the foolishness of the mother's womb to save John. It could be said that it pleased God by the foolishness of the journey to Damascus to save Paul.

Jesus is the only perfect preacher. He preached with power that no other man can equal. His message was this, John 6:44: "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me, draw him and I will raise him up at the last day." Ephesians 2:8, 9: "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." If saving faith came by preaching, man would boast. This verse has been misquoted to say "it is a gift from God," however, "it is *the* gift of God." God the Father gave His only begotten Son. Romans 8:7,8: "Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God neither indeed can be. So then, they that are in the flesh cannot please God." I Corinthians 2:14: "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto Him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." Hebrews 8:11: "And they shall not teach every man his brother, saying, know the Lord: for all shall know Me from the least to the greatest." John 6:45: "It is written in the prophets, and they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, Cometh unto me." 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." Romans 1:16-17: "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth; to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, the just shall live by faith." The gospel is the power of God to those already blessed to believe. It reveals the righteousness of God from faith to faith.

One must be given faith to hear and understand it, and one must be given faith to preach it. Where there is no faith there is no revelation or understanding.

We would want to view Israel, who She represents, and her condition. Romans 9:27: "Esaias also cried concerning Israel, though the number of children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved:" this describes the number of all of Israel, also a remnant which is all that were the elect, both Jew and Gentile. Now we want to view Israel the elect people. Romans 10:26: "And so *all Israel* shall be saved: as it is written, there shall come out of Zion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob:" 11:27: "For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins." 11:28: "As concerning the gospel, they are enemies for your sakes: but as touching the election they are beloved for the Father's sake." 11:29: "For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance."

One does not repent in order to receive spiritual life. Repentance is evidence that one already has spiritual life. It is not my desire to quote a lot of church history or to prove a point by brother so and so. I will quote one article of faith of our association. "We believe that the Scriptures comprising the Old and New Testaments, are the words of God, and the only infallible rule of faith and practice; and we prefer the King James translation."

Some think that the preaching of the gospel is used as a *means* to import faith to the unbelievers. I do not have fellowship with that doctrine. My prayer is that we may be blessed with love to live in peace, looking over one another for good and not for evil, that our ministers be given grace to preach sound doctrine in love and power and we may be blessed to hear and rejoice in it.

In hope of Peace,
Earl W. Hall
1131 Pecan
Channelview, Texas 77530

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

R. F. D. 6, Box 270 Beechwood Lane
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EDITORIAL

“HE MUST INCREASE, BUT I MUST DECREASE” (John 3:30)

The writer feels very empty in attempting to write upon this beautiful scripture. Yet, “my heart is inditing a good matter: I speak of the things which I have made touching the King.” I hope my pen will be that of a ready writer. If so, may He have the praise!

In John 3:23-36 we find the baptism and witness of John the Baptist. In Matthew 3 we find that John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea and saying, “Repent ye: for the

kingdom of heaven is at hand." He was the voice of one crying in the wilderness, "Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight." John had his raiment of camel's hair, and a leathern girdle about his loins; and his meat was locusts and wild honey. In John 5 Jesus speaks of the witness of John as being true and that he was a burning and a shining light and that the people were willing for a season to rejoice in his light. John was not the light, the true light, the Sun of righteousness yet he was the forerunner of that light. He had much light that was given to him about the person and office of the Messiah; in the doctrines of faith in Christ, and repentance toward God. He gave great light to others, in the business of salvation, and remission of sins, and guided many into the way of peace.

There arose a question between some of John's disciples and the Jews about purifying. The Jews in common were very careful about ceremonial purifications and ablutions commanded in the law of Moses and as well the traditions of the elders concerning the various washings of persons and vessels. They felt these had been brought into neglect and contempt by the baptism of John. As well the people heard also of the baptism of Christ. Who could tell which was right and safest to follow? Would it not have been better to adhere solely to the purifications required by the law of Moses and by their elders?

John's disciples, who had been disputing with the Jews about purifying obviously did not understand how to answer the questions, so they came to John and said unto him, "Rabbi, he that was with thee beyond Jordan to whom thou barest witness, behold, the same baptizeth, and all men come to him." John 3:26. Note that they spoke very respectfully about John, calling him "Rabbi", but of Jesus they simply said "he that was with thee beyond Jordan, to whom thou barest witness," not willing to call him by name. John's disciples felt that it was the peculiar business of their master, John, to baptize. While we

have no record that Jesus actually baptized himself, yet his disciples baptized people at his command. As well John's disciples were much troubled that large multitudes flocked to hear Christ preach, and great numbers were made disciples by him, and then baptized.

In view of the above disputings between his own disciples and the Jews about purifying and baptism the words of John the Baptist are set down in John 3:27-36, to set things in perspective and give the pre-eminence to Jesus. How beautiful and solemn are these words! Please read them. Are they not surely believed among the Lord's people? It is a blessing that we are able to say with Jesus, "I thank thee, oh Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes, even so, Father: for so it seemed good in thy sight." Matthew 11:25-26. John felt his joy was fulfilled in that he, himself, was a friend of the bridegroom (Jesus) and that he rejoiced greatly because of the bridegroom's voice. John was aware of his own high calling as he said himself "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am unworthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire: whose fan is in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner: but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire." Matthew 3:11-12.

"He must increase, but I must decrease." John 3:30. John felt that "He", meaning Jesus, must increase in fame, credit and reputation among men, as he was to do in Judea, by reason of his miracles and doctrines. As well Jesus must increase among the Gentiles through the spread of the Gospel and will increase more and more in the latter day when he alone will be exalted. Jesus must increase in the ministry which was published by him and his disciples throughout Israel. After the resurrection and ascension of Jesus the

apostles spread the gospel throughout the Gentile world and it will one day cover the earth as the waters do the sea. His kingdom and interest, which at first appeared very small, will one day fill the face of the whole earth for the kingdoms of this world will become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of his Christ and his dominion shall be from sea to sea, and from the river to the ends of the earth. "Of the increase of his government and peace there shall be no end, upon the throne of David, and upon his kingdom, to order it, and to establish it with judgment and with justice from henceforth even for ever. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will perform this." Isaiah 9:7. When John appeared among them, they were very fond of him, and even proud of him. They hoped that he was the light, the Messiah. Even the Pharisees and Sadducees attended his ministry. When they found out that he just bore testimony to Jesus — the true Messiah and this ran counter to their ideas of a temporal kingdom and their own self righteousness, they grew sick of him, rejected the counsel he gave and rejected his baptism. Even John's disciples, who were believers, had to be taught line upon line, precept upon precept, here a little and there a little that, "Neither is there salvation in any other: for there is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved." Acts 4:12. John was to be cast into prison by Herod for Herodias' sake, his brother Philip's wife, for he had married her and John had said unto Herod that it was not lawful for him to have his brother's wife. When the daughter of Herodias danced before Herod she pleased him and he said that he would give her whatsoever she asked unto the half of his kingdom. She asked for the head of John the Baptist. Herod sent an executioner and commanded his head to be brought. Surely, it was so with John the Baptist, "He (meaning Jesus) must increase, but I must decrease."

So it is with each believer, each follower of the Lord Jesus Christ, "He

must increase but I must decrease." The new man must increase, the old man must decrease. He is born in us, the hope of glory. He is the quickening spirit. We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency might be of him. In John 5:25 Jesus said, "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." Who are the dead here? They are the dead in trespass and in sins. They are quickened by His Holy Spirit. They hear His voice and live. He lives in them. They see their own corruption, they see their own dishonour, they see their own weakness, they see that they are altogether natural beings and vanity. They see that they are altogether unclean before God and that flesh and blood cannot enter the kingdom. They see that "Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die it abideth alone: but if it die it bringeth forth much fruit." John 12:24. They see that Jesus is the corn of wheat, that unless he died and shed his precious blood for the remission of sins he would have abided alone with the Father and the Holy Spirit and elect angels because he was the *only* begotten son of the Father, who was fit to dwell in heaven because he was without sin and no guile was found in his mouth. "If thou, Lord, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand? But there is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared." Psalm 130:3-4. David wrote the above showing that it was the work of God that he believed on Him whom God had sent. John the Baptist said, "A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven. He that cometh from above is above all: he that is of earth is earthly, and speaketh of the earth: he that cometh from heaven is above all, and what he hath seen and heard, that he testifieth: and *no man* receiveth his testimony." John 3:27, 31-32.

"How strange is the course a Christian must steer;
How perplexed is the path he must tread!

The hope of his happiness rises from fear,
 And his life he receives from the dead.

His fairest pretensions must wholly be waived,
 And his best resolutions be crossed;
 Nor can he expect to be perfectly saved,
 Till he finds himself utterly lost.

When all this is done, and his heart is assured
 Of the total remission of sins,
 When his pardon is signed and his peace is procured,
 From that moment his conflict begins."

The conflict is between the old man Adam which is of the earth, earthy and the new man which is the Lord from heaven. The conflict then is between flesh and spirit. The conflict is between the "old I" and the "new I". Paul says in Galatians 2:20, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me." I am glad that John said "He *must* increase but I *must* decrease" because in this we see by God-given faith that the new man must ultimately triumph and we shall dwell in His presence without spot, blemish wrinkle or any such thing .

We have the sentence of death in ourselves that we should not trust in ourselves. Paul says in Romans 7:18-25, "For I know that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not; but the evil which I would not, that I do. Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it but sin that dwelleth in me. I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God after the inner man: but I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the

flesh the law of sin."

As we see Jesus we see more of the true light. As we get step by step closer home we see more of the corruption of ourselves, more of the dishonour of ourselves, more of the weakness of ourselves, more of the vanity of ourselves and feel more of the unworthiness of ourselves. We do not feel to grow better and better but we feel to grow worse and worse. Often we feel with Jacob of old who said, "Few and evil have the days of the years of my life been, and have not attained unto the years of the life of my fathers in the days of their pilgrimage." Gen. 47:9.

When we are made conscious of our great sinfulness and wickedness we are made to cry for mercy with the publican as he stood afar off not feeling worthy to so much as lift his eyes unto heaven, but smote his breast saying, "God be merciful to me a sinner." Luke 18:13. Sometimes we are made to say with the hymn writer, "I want that grace that springs from thee, that quickens all things where it flows, And makes a wretched thorn like me, bloom as the myrtle or the rose."

"He must increase, but I must decrease." The old man dies daily, (the old man with his deeds must be put off), the new man is renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created him. "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren." Romans 8:29. Our souls are quickened here by His Holy Spirit, our bodies will be quickened when Jesus comes the second time without sin unto salvation to take his ransomed people home. As Paul writes in Romans 8:11, "But if the spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you." "And as we have borne the image of the earthy, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly." 1 Corinthians 15:49.

At death the body is sown in *cor-*

ruption; 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.

Thanks be unto God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ. He must increase but I must decrease. Every word then (in view of the final victory and in view of our travel here), has a beauty to us. "For we that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened: not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up in life. Now he that wrought us for the selfsame thing is God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit." 2 Corinthians 5:4-5.

May we, then, by the mercies of God present our bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God which is our reasonable service and be not conformed to this world; but be transformed by the renewing of our minds that we may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God.

In everything give thanks: for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you:

(Elder) D. Alex McColl

VOICES OF THE PAST
"He being dead yet speaketh"

PSALM 31:15

"My times are in thy hand."

DEAR BRETHREN:—As a traveler upon a journey often when he reaches a mile-stone will pause and look back over the way his feet have trodden, and then forward, if perchance he may gain some view of what lies before him, so it seems natural that when the yearly mile-stones of our lives are reached we should reflect upon the past, and think of the future, and of what may lie before us in our journey. This is true of all men in every age and clime; but it must be specially true of the christian pil-

grim. He has so much more than unregenerate men to reflect upon in the past, and so much more to anticipate in the future.

But whether he thinks of the past or of the future, the believer sees one thing along every step of the way that no one else sees, and that is the hand of God guiding, and the will of God ordering his steps. His journey has been no uncertain wandering of a blind man groping in the dark, but the ordered pathway of a father safely, wisely and lovingly guiding or bearing his child. The Bible teaches us that no more surely is it true that God appoints and controls all the coming and going and changes of the natural elements of the world, as the seasons, day and night, cold, heat, clouds, storms, sunshine, appointing to all their times and places, that it is true that he is equally sovereign in all the providences of our lives, and what is still more precious to be believed, in all the spiritual mutations through which we pass.

It is sure that the child of God has a providential pathway in which to walk, as well as a spiritual travel. It is equally sure that his God has appointed the one for him as well as the other; and we have but to read the life of David, together with the Psalms, or the life of Paul in connection with his letters, to see how our providential life is bound up with our spiritual life. God has ever made the former subservient to the latter; and in the latter no more than in the former does his sovereign will and eternal purpose appear.

I have felt moved for a few years past to insist upon a "God of providence" as well as a God of grace, because there has seemed to me to be a tendency to ignore this side of the matter, to throw out of the calculation our providential surroundings, doings, willings and sufferings, and to present exclusively our spiritual exercises, wherein God leads us with sovereign wisdom and power. It is sure that holy men of old counted it joy to believe in a God of providence as well as of grace. In their

view his providence entered into and appointed the minutest step of their lives. Naturally as well as spiritually they believe that they lived, moved, and had their being in God. No matter by what channel sorrow or joy came to them, they always said, "It is the Lord." Now it has seemed to me that we are in danger of drifting away from this. Instead of seeing God in all our lives, both providential and spiritual, we are prone to put him far off, and consider him not. Holy men of old rejoiced that the God whom they worshipped had ordained all their paths for them; and why should not we?

At this end of the old year I have been looking back and striving to look forward. I see much that looks dark and devious in the past, and much that seems threatening in the future. Personal trials in the past, personal anxieties for the future; and what is worse, church trials in the past, church trials for the future. Now it has seemed to me that underneath the throne of God I can see nothing to rest in; but by faith beholding the divine ruler I can rest. "The Lord reigneth; let the earth rejoice; let the multitude of isles be glad thereof."—Psalm xcvi. I do not know what may be in all the future of God's providence or grace toward me, but I am sure that he—his will, purpose, love and grace—will be everywhere. Not a sparrow falls to the ground without him;" and surely if, as the Lord said, we are of more value than many sparrows, we cannot take one step without him. Whatever may be unexpected to us, we may be sure that nothing is unexpected to the God whom we serve; for "known unto God are all his works from the foundation of the world." So that from the beginning our God has not done one thing that from the beginning he had not appointed. With him there are no new purposes caused by changing and unforeseen circumstances. In this we may rest. We seem to be tossed by varying winds upon a restless sea; but he holds the winds in his fists, and "the sea is his, and he made it." In the midst

of these various reflections upon the past and present, called up by the advent of this new year, my mind has been led to these words of David, "My times are in thy hands," and they have made me glad; and through these words I have been led into some reflections which I desire to pen down and submit to you.

First, these words of David are not only the expression of his personal faith, but are the words of divine inspiration as well. They are not only the expression of that which David most certainly believed, but are the words of God to us, so that we may count them as being most certainly true. They are the expression of the sovereign, overruling and faithful care of Jehovah for his believing child David every moment of his life. They declare that God has appointed the variety and number of his times, and that they are measured out to him according to the one supreme will. This affirmative implies a full negative also. Our times are not in our hands. It is not ours to bid our seasons come and go at will. We cannot command the darkness nor the light, neither can we influence their coming or going. Who can bind either leviathan or the sweet influences of Pleiades? Let it be borne in mind that I speak here more especially of the providence of our God, but let it also be remembered that this is all true of the spiritual life as well.

Now, secondly, David speaks these words as though he were glad above measure. It seems to be a sort of exultant cry. The words are not the language of one who submits to the inevitable, to which he is opposed, but they express a great joy. David must have learned two things ere he could utter these words as he did. He must have learned that he could not guide his own feet safely, that he could not be trusted to measure out his own times, that he had not to look to blind chance in this matter; and on the other hand, he must have learned some things about the God whose sovereign appointment he con-

fessed and rejoiced in. Many of the heathen believed in a blind fate; but it was David's joy, and it is ours also, to believe in an all-seeing and all-ruling and all-appointing God. In order to rejoice and exult that he—his times—were in the hands of God, David must have learned that here was to be found almighty power, supreme wisdom, infinite love, and unchangeable purposes. Leave out any or all of these things, and there could be no room for rejoicing that "his times" were in the hands of God. The word teaches us that our minds are finite, while all the attributes of Jehovah are infinite. The finite cannot comprehend the infinite, and at best it can but dimly apprehend infinite things. How much we must believe of which we can see but a dim outline or shadow! So omnipotence, omniscience, omnipresence, eternity, holiness, heaven, are all words expressive of truth which we must believe, and yet we do not begin to grasp the meaning of one of them; and yet it is such a Being who reigns, and of whom David could rejoicingly say, "My times are in thy hand." Right here I am reminded that another and greater than David, "he who was David's Lord," also said, "The Son of man indeed goeth as it was written of him" (Mark), or "as it was determined." — Luke. This he said specially of his betrayal. His God had determined the fact, and the time and the way of his betrayal. Jesus confesses this, and declares that all must be as it was written in the prophets. Jehovah had decreed this time for the dear Savior, and that Judas should sell his Lord just then; and yet Jesus said, "Woe to that man by whom he is betrayed. It were good for that man had he never been born." Concerning this I will only remark further that two things meet us in the text, viz., that God had determined beforehand that Judas should betray Jesus, and that Judas was condemned for doing this act.

But Satan may take hold of the natural unbelief of our hearts, and tempt us after this fashion. David was a great

man, and he had a great work to do in the world, and therefore his times were of vast importance, and therefore God held his times in his hand, and measured them out to him; but I am but a worm, a babe; I am of little use in the world; it matters little whether I live or die; and I cannot suppose that what was true of David is true of me. But this is truly a temptation of the evil one, and is met by the testimony of Jeremiah when he said, "O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself; it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." This is true of all men; and so by this testimony we learn that the times of the very least as well as the greatest are in the hands of God.

But now the question comes up in my mind, What does David include in this expression? Does he leave anything out? Does he say that any of his times are not in the hand of God? Who would venture to say that David made any exception? Who could point to any period in David's life and say, That time was not in the hands of God? From the time when he kept the flocks safely from the bear and lion, to the time when God called him home, was there one spot when it could be said, This did not come from God? The words of the text might present to our minds the picture of a child who stands waiting with expectancy the appointments of a father or guardian. All that this child can hope for or dread, that guardian has in his own control; but the child has no fear, and is well content, for he has learned to believe that his guardian is too wise to err, too good to be unkind. So he comes or goes, studies, works or plays, eats such food and wears such apparel as his guardian appoints; and because of his faith in and love to his guardian, he confidingly and joyfully confesses, "All my times are in his hand, He orders all my ways, and I must and do leave it all with him." So our sovereign Guardian and Friend holds our times, of whatever sort they are, in his absolute control. O that we may, like David, have a heart to praise God that

is is so!

If we turn to this Psalm, we learn (verse 4) that men were covertly seeking David's overthrow, (verse 7) that he had been having trials and adversities, (verse 8) that he had been assailed by enemies, and (verses 9 and 10) that he was filled with trouble and grief. Such times as these he had met with, and of them he said, They are in God's hands. Also, all through the Psalm he prays for deliverance and salvation; and these times of deliverance are also in the hands of God. David by this could learn submission under the afflictions, and patience while waiting for relief. Once he said, "I was silent, because thou didst it." And Job said, "Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil?" "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord." So we learn that our times of trial, in whatever garb they appear, are all in the control of the Almighty. He measures them out to us at his will; and so also the joy comes when and how he pleases. Nothing in our lives is left to chance. With Jehovah there can be no contingencies. "Known unto God are all his works from the foundation of the world." He does nothing that he did not purpose to do ere time began. He works "all things after the counsel of his own will;" all things, without exception. Unless David had believed all this he could not have said, "My times are in thy hand."

How exactly similar to this confidence of David is the language of Paul in portions of the eighth chapter of Romans. In verse twenty-eight of that chapter we hear him saying most confidently, "We know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are called according to his purpose." Paul here takes strong ground: "We know." He takes broad ground: "That all things." He takes comforting ground; "Work together for good." He takes discriminating ground: "To them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." I have just

said that Paul takes broad ground. He says, "All things." Down in verse thirty-seven, in this same eighth chapter of Romans, he says precisely the same thing in other words. He enumerates tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, peril, and the sword; and then he says, "In all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us." We are "more than conquerors." That is, we turn even enemies into our service; and thus all things work for our good, as he said in verse twenty-eight. God works secretly, and often we cannot see his hand, and still oftener we cannot trace out how good is to result from many providences; for his word says it all does work for good, and can we not believe his word, and trust him even when we cannot trace him?

To the sick ones this applies. Much is said in these days about health and cure-alls, mind cures and faith cures not excepted. Much is said also about the care of our bodies, and sanitary regulations for houses and cities; but I notice that men suffer and die everywhere alike. After all is said and done, it still is true that our times of sickness are in his hand. If there be sickness, it is from his hand; and the same hand makes us well again. Each in its place and time is fulfilling the purpose of God, and working for good to his loved ones. In this faith, patience and cheerful resignation are to be found; but if sickness does not come from the hand of God, and is not meant for our good, then it is vain to speak of resignation, for we have a right to murmur at what comes from the devil, or grows out of our own folly. May God help each sick one to say, "My times are in thy hand." The faith of Job is the best faith. In his losses and afflictions he saw neither Sabeans, nor Chaldeans, nor wind, nor fire, nor Satan himself, but only God himself. My brother or sister, whatever your afflictions may be, and however long they may endure, "it is of the Lord." All is in his hand.

To those who are passing through the

sorrows of bereavement these words apply. A dear sister whom I know had lost an only child. While the child lay dead in the house she was filled with great bitterness, and would not be comforted, and could not weep. As the hour of burial drew near an uncle came to her as she sat alone in the room, and said to her, "Think who has done it." Her heart responded to this, and all the bitterness gave place to submission at the thought, "The Lord has done it." This time of her trouble was in the hands of God.

This word suits those who are persecuted or slandered, or whose names are cast out as evil; those who are poor and needy and distressed. On the other hand, if we are well and happy and strong, if we have friends and prosperity, if a good name and riches be ours, these words are still just as true as before. Our times are in the hands of God; and if we believe these words we shall not be in despair when sorrow comes, and neither shall we be exalted above measure in the day of our prosperity. We receive either one or the other according to the sovereign will of God.

Our circumstances may change, but there is no change with him. With him there is nothing new. He has no new knowledge, no new purposes, but all was fixed in the infinite mind from vast eternity. He who created the ponderous world also created the mote that we see floating in the sunbeam; and so he who set bounds to nations also ordained the feeble steps of such finite worms as we. Just as carefully and omnipotently as he struck out the track of worlds in space, so accurately and omnipotently has he from the beginning struck out our pathways of joy or sorrow. Our times are in his hand.

I said in the beginning that I had been striving to look into the future, but I am glad that I cannot pierce that veil. I am also glad that all my ways of word or thought or deed, all that I shall do or suffer or enjoy, are in God's hands.

"The steps that I take, and the station I fill, My Father determined and wrote in his will."

My brethren, I send this as a sort of New Year's greeting. I wish for you all, if it be God's will, a Happy New Year.

As ever, I remain your brother in hope of life,

F. A. CHICK

Reisterstown, Md.

(We enjoyed reading the above so much that we felt our brethren would enjoy it too. It was written by Elder Chick and published Feb. 1, 1888, and re-published about 20 years ago.—
J. D. W.

SORROW UNTO DEATH

By

ELDER SILAS H. DURAND

The loneliest thing that can be imagined in all the world was the ark as it went upon the face of the waters. Not another object was to be seen on all that wide and dismal waste of water that covered the earth, not even a mountain top. "The waters prevailed and increased greatly upon the earth, and the ark went upon the face of the waters. And the waters prevailed exceedingly upon the earth, and all the high hills that were under the whole heaven were covered. Fifteen cubits upward did the waters prevail, and the mountains were covered." Alone upon that dark and dreary expanse, tossed upon that heaving, shoreless flood, with the terrible rain still falling from the black and angry heavens, what scene of greater and more awful desolation can be pictured to the mind, what lonelier object can be imagined?

But there is a scene of greater desolation, of more utter hopeless loneliness in sorrow and suffering, as the reality is greater than the type. It is Jesus in the wilderness, in the garden, on the cross. When the great deep of God's judgments was broken up, and the windows of heaven were opened to pour out the just wrath of God against sin, only One felt the full power of that terrible flood. It fell upon Jesus the Son of God, and he was alone in bearing it. He was appointed unto this suffering and pre-

pared for it. The infinite wisdom and power of God in the mystery are "unsearchable and past finding out."

All flesh upon the earth died while the rain was falling, but the ark was prepared to feel the full force and terror of the storm to the end. In that was the salvation of those within the ark. So while death passed upon all men because of sin, Jesus was prepared to feel all the terrors and pains of that death, and to bear all the curse of that law which condemns all flesh to death, until every jot and tittle of it should be fulfilled, until the last drop of the rain of God's wrath had fallen. It must all fall upon him while in our flesh. His sorrow was unto death while he was yet in this mortal life. He must taste all the bitterness of death before he died. Unconsciousness couldn't come to relieve him of one pang.

And he was absolutely alone in that suffering as the ark was alone in the flood. In a wonderful and mysterious sense the life of all his people was in him, and they were "preserved in" him, as all those who were to people the earth after the flood were preserved in the ark. But in his suffering and sorrow while under the curse of the law, he was alone. His disciples could go with him to the garden, but not to the place where extremity of sorrow brought him down to the ground. Three of them, who seemed more closely his companions on special occasions than the rest, could be with him a little farther, but could not yet follow him in his great sorrow. "Then saith he unto them, my soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even unto death: tarry ye here and watch with me." But they could not watch at that time. They slept for sorrow. The sorrow that prevents sleep was not yet upon them. That sorrow was his. He had looked forward to this hour, for he had come into the world for the suffering of this hour, yet now that it had come, "he began to be sore amazed, and to be very heavy." No matter how certain our expectation of any affliction may be, yet we cannot feel it before the time, and then it will

appear almost as though we had not foreseen it. This sorrow of Jesus was the greatest and most bitter sorrow and grief that ever was felt by man. It was by his Spirit, and concerning his suffering, that Jeremiah said, "Behold, and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow, which is done unto me, where-with the Lord hath afflicted me in the day of his fierce anger." And again, "I am the man that hath seen afflictions by the rod of his wrath." (Lam. 1:12,-3:1) Now that the hour has come, his own will as a man, weak before the law because of other's sins, full of terror of soul on account of death under the curse of the law, caused him to cry unto his Father to save him from that hour, and to cause the cup to pass from him, if it were possible. So great was his suffering that "an angel appeared unto him from heaven, strengthening him." And even then, "being in an agony, he prayed more earnestly: and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground." But the strength that the angel brought prevailed. He came down from heaven to do his Father's will, not his own, and his prayer was, "Not as I will, but as thou wilt." He must bear the suffering alone. His people cannot share the burden of sorrow, pain and death, with him. It is their salvation that he, the pure and holy Son of God, a spotless sacrifice, bears the awful suffering alone. If that death that fell on him had touched one of them, that one must have suffered an everlasting death. If any of the water of the flood could have broken through the ark to touch one of those within, then the ark, with all it held, must have sunk forever. But it "was pitched within and without," so that it alone should bear the beating of the storm from the eight souls within are securely shielded.

So Jesus was prepared to suffer to the full alone, and to die, in this sense, as a sacrifice. The part his people have in that suffering and death is not with him, but *in* him.

In the ark the eight souls were saved by water. (1 Peter 3:20) The water

that drowned all flesh upon the earth lifted the ark and those within it above its own destroying power. So the death that Jeseus died raised him and all who were in him above the power of death forever. Death was all that was due for their sins. When he died the wages were fully paid, and when he arose by the power of God, the dominion of death is at an end. Death is abolished, and life and immortality brought to light.

Those who saw the rainbow on Mount Ararat had been in the ark, and had felt the terror and buffeting of the storm which fell upon the ark, though they had not at the time known what it was. So those who are able to see the everlasting covenant of grace are manifest as having been saved in Christ.

This wonderful story of the sufferings of the dear Saviour can never be told to the understanding of anyone who had not been already made to feel it in his own experience. It is not by the application of our mental powers that we come to know what Jesus suffered, but by experience. It is a revelation. The disciples, who loved him, and were near him in the garden, could not then know what he was suffering. How much less is our ability to enter into that awful and solemn mystery by our own efforts. It is one thing to have our natural sympathies stirred by reading the inspired recital of his pains and sorrows, and meditating upon them, and quite another thing to feel a measure of those same pains and sorrows within our own souls. In the later case the poor soul that is experiencing the fellowship of Jesus' suffering never know at the time that it is the fellowship of his sufferings that is felt. Those who were in the ark must have been in great terror and perplexity much of the time while they felt the tossings and the shaking of the ark, not knowing what was to become of them. They could not look out around them, for there was only one window, and that was above. But after the covering was removed from the ark, and they came out on the new earth, then they understood what had been done, and knew the

meaning of their strange experience.

In coming into the knowledge of Jesus' sufferings each one is alone. It is so in the beginning of this necessary knowledge, and that every farther advance into this awful mystery the learner is alone. They are led by a solitary way. "They shall mourn apart, every family apart, and their wives apart." Each one says to himself, "No one can be as vile in heart as I." Each one feels his own to be an especial case of depravity. If he has been kept from outbreaking sins, and has not forfeited the respect of men, yet he sees that evil in his heart and in his thoughts which appears to him to set him apart as especially vile. He has to say with Job, "Behold, I am vile. I abhor myself." Yet he cannot feel that he stands where Job was when he said those words.

It is wonderful how this sense of being alone in all our troubles on account our special sinfulness attend all the Lord's people, and follows them in a measure all the way through. And yet how seldom it is that during the time of the especial tribulation they ever think that in this they are following the dear Saviour. Just what his sufferings were they must know, though only in measure, for it was for them he suffered, and they suffer in him. As soon as the thought comes to them that the great tribulation on account of sin that is pressing them down into the depths, is because Jesus suffered for that very sin, and that they are mourning "for him whom they have pierced," then the trouble is lifted and they rejoice, though still mourning on account of sin, and being in bitterness because their sins caused him such awful sorrow and anguish.

What cries for mercy go up from the poor soul while being tossed as it were on the waves of that desolate, shoreless sea. The cries may be unspoken, silent to the ear of any but the Lord, but O, how bitter, how full of anguish they are! Truly they are "groanings that cannot be uttered." What a tender, quieted feeling takes possession of our

soul when we first feel a hope that peradventure the Lord hears us. And who can tell the deep joy when we first get a glimpse of the beautiful bow of promise in the cloud, the everlasting covenant of grace, and feel in our soul the blessed promise of the Lord that "the waters shall no more go over the earth," and "that the Lord will no more be wroth with us nor rebuke us." How many a time since that blessed experience we have feared his wrath and felt the rebukes of the gospel, yet that promise has held good, and will be good until the end, for it is "yea and amen in Christ Jesus to the glory of God by us."

"As the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ." (2 Cor. 1:5) So we learn that suffering is the experience of the Lord's people all through their pilgrimage. They have consolation, but it is only according to the suffering of Christ in them, and as the result of those sufferings. When they stand before the throne, beholding the power of God with praise, it is as having come out of great tribulation. When the life of Jesus is made manifest in their mortal flesh, it is because they bear about in their body the dying of the Lord Jesus. (2 Cor. 4:10) When they are favored to lean upon their Beloved, it is as they are "coming up out of the wilderness."

Now this suffering is not some exalted, holy feeling, such as you my brother or sister, have imagined belongs only to those who are far above you in purity and goodness, but it is just what you felt of sorrow, shame and self-loathing while you see the evils of your corrupt nature, and the sins and sinfulness of your heart and life. This is sometimes proved to you while in humble contrition and self-abasement before God, you are enabled humbly to confess them, and are given the soul-surprising assurance that these very evils and transgressions in thought and word and deed that have made you hate yourself, are the ones that were laid upon the dear Son of God,—the very sins for which he died. While in the darkness, with

only your sinful flesh in sight, how very much alone you felt, and how your soul was tossed about, and buffeted and almost overwhelmed, like a ship on a stormy sea, but now as your soul gets a sweet view of Jesus, and raised to a blessed hope that you are feeling the fellowship of his sufferings, you feel like singing praises to his name, and telling to all that fear God what he has done for your soul.

At such times his service is very sweet and comforting. We count it a blessing to feel the spirit of obedience, and to be enabled to act out that obedience. But how often we are tempted to doubt our motives in our religion works, and fear that we are prompted by the vanity of the flesh. From first to last the experience of the exercised soul leads him to doubt the movements of the flesh, and to earnestly seek the Lord to be led by his Holy Spirit.

"As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." When the Spirit of the Lord is searching and probing our hearts, what anxiety, what jealousy we feel lest it be the flesh instead of the Spirit which is leading us, even when we are doing what we know it is the privilege of the Lord's people to do. We question sharply our motives, fearing they are selfish, and that we are not doing all to the glory of God. We are sometimes told that we ought to obey in order that we may feel better, but the word of God and his Spirit do not teach us that, but that "whatsoever we do we should do all to the glory of God." The Spirit alone can lead us in that holy way. Every fleshly motive is selfish, and hence our fear and anxiety.

It does not help and encourage a poor soul who is tried in this way to say to him, "You ought to obey in order that you may feel better." The Saviour's obedience did not make him feel better, but brought him into darkness and into the depths, and filled his soul with bitterness. But what he did was for the glory of God. We may say to one in whom we have seen an experience of

grace, "You ought to be baptized, it is your duty. If you obey you will feel better." But his reply may be, "I fear that such a holy privilege is not for such as I. I fear it would not be obedience, but presumption in me to receive that ordinance which belongs to the Lord's people." Now it is not for us to urge such an one forward while his conscience, which is very tender in the fear of the Lord, is filled with such solemn questionings. We can show to him, as we may be enabled, the scriptural marks of those to whom that ordinance belongs, but we must all remember that the assurance in his soul that the sweet command rests upon him must come from the Lord.

Brethren in the ministry, if your obedience to the call which you have felt in your soul to preach the gospel was in order that you might feel better, how many of you would or could go on in that solemn work? Think over your experience in that business which you did not seek, but into which you were thrust. What shrinkings and sinkings of soul you have felt as you have approached the time when you must stand before the people of God, and have tried to begin to try to preach in the name of Jesus, the gospel of his grace. Sometimes your trembling sense of unworthiness, inability and unfitness for that great work have continued through the sermon, and sometimes you have been lifted above yourself, and have been filled with the sweetest, holiest joy a poor mortal can feel as you declare, in the power of the Spirit, the glad tidings of salvation. Sometimes it has been quiet work, and you have felt thankful that you were in any degree enabled to speak a word in season to him that is weary.

But O, the trials, the misgivings, the wretched, wearying doubts after your work for the time is done, and you are alone again. What heart-searchings, what questionings whether you have not been preaching yourself more than Christ, whether your glorying was not more in yourself than in the Lord. How many times you have said to yourself,

"Surely I must never undertake to preach again." Well, the Lord knows how to deal with his servants. You have not quit the work yet, nor will you until you have fulfilled the work unto which He has called you. You are not preaching in order that you may feel better, but for the glory of God. You cannot stop, though you feel as though you could not go on. There is a blessedness in the work, even in the sufferings and sinkings down for in it all Christ is exalted.

And you, poor soul who look with love and longing upon the ordinances and privileges of the church and wish that they might be yours, in the Lord's own time the sweet persuasion will be yours that they belong to all who are exercised in them. In the Lord's good time the power of his word of sweet command as written in the Scriptures will be felt in your heart: "Rejoice ye with Jerusalem, and be glad with her, all ye that love her: rejoice for joy with her, all ye that mourn for her." (Isa. 60:10) We must wait for the Lord, and, blessed be his name, He always comes "right early". All our times are in his hands, and they can neither be hastened or delayed.

We all see in ourselves enough of disobedience, and enough of sin in the best obedience of our hands, to give us daily errands at the throne of grace, and to bring out of our souls the Publican's cry for mercy.

How many of the Lord's dear people go far in disobedience, living after the flesh until they die away from spiritual things. How often we feel that in faithfulness we ought to exhort, reprove or rebuke them, but are held back for fear we are not spiritual, and therefore are not qualified to restore such ones, or thinking that we ourselves need the reproof as much as they, if not more. But we must try to do our duty, yet if it is only as a duty we do anything it is of but little account before God, and if it is only to relieve ourselves of the responsibility, and "to feel better," that we do anything, the motive is only a fleshly one.

When the love of Christ constrains us, then love to the erring or needy one will prompt what we do or say, and while we do our work faithfully, and in the fear of the Lord, we shall remember that the Lord only can give repentance. Scolding never restored a wanderer, nor ever honored the Lord. The fire which the Lord kindles on the altar of the heart will never quite go out. The Lord will brighten it in his own time. He, and not man, gives the stripes which bring back the children who forsake his law. However far they wander, he knows where they are, and is visiting their transgressions with the rod, as he said he would, and they are often feeling that rod most when to us they appear most defiant and stubborn.

The salvation of God which grace brought to us in our first experience of a hope, is the same salvation which that grace bringeth through all our earthly pilgrimage in every time of need. That grace which bringeth this salvation teaches all the various subjects of it all things in their walk and life which become sound doctrine, and in which that salvation is manifested unto them from day to day, in all the various circumstances of their life, and that grace will keep them through faith unto the full and glorious revelation of that salvation in the last time. (1 Peter 1:5) It is that salvation which the Psalmist prays may set him up on high. It is that salvation that appears in all the beautiful order of the church, and which the saints minister to each other while walking in the commands of Jesus. It is the salvation of God of which the Apostle speaks when he says to Timothy, "In so doing thou shalt both save thyself and them that hear thee," and which appears in the faithful ministration of him who converteth a sinning brother from the error of his ways, when he thus "saves a soul from death and hides a multitude of sins." The saints have no salvation of their own to handle, and deal in, and minister, separate from the salvation of God. Jesus is our salvation, and to him the poor soul cries in time of darkness

and distress, "Say unto my soul, I am thy salvation." Without Jesus, our salvation, we can do nothing. He is our sun, and his salvation, like the sun light, reaches "to the ends of the heaven, and there is nothing hid from the heat thereof." That salvation will not fail any of the saints. That salvation, and the grace that brings it, are sufficient for us in all our times of need. They appear in the obedient walk of the faithful people of God, who walking in his fear and in the comfort of the Holy Ghost, are edified and multiplied, (Acts 9:3) and also in the rod and the stripes with which our faithful and loving Saviour visits his erring children, and restores them to the joys of his salvation. All our times are in his hands, and provisions of grace and salvation are made for each of them. The child of God who has gone farthest in rebellion and sin, when, restored to his right mind, feeble and sore broken, humble and contrite, crying bitterly, he feels the sweet and compassionate and loving beams of salvation falling softly into his sorrowing soul, has to say, "Behold, what wonderful grace and mercy that could save such a sinner as I." And the most obedient child of God, as he looks over his life, and contemplates his labors in the Lord, and the love and fellowship which the brethren have manifested to him, and then sees in his own heart and life such evidence of a depraved nature as sink him into the dust, wonders at the mercy which, like Paul, he has obtained of the Lord to be faithful, is astonished that he has been kept in the comfort of obedience while others have been suffered to wander far away, and suffer much for disobedience, and instead of feeling that any praise or reward is due to him, he says "What have I that I did not receive? If God had dealt with me according to my deserts, I should not have stood. To him be all the praise. It was not I that did these works of obedience, but the grace of God which was with me." So the most faithful saint on earth, joins with the worst backslider when restored to the manifest favor of

God, and says, "By the grace of God I am what I am," and there is no one left out of that heavenly choir when they sing in perfect accord, "Not unto us, not unto us, but unto thy name be the glory, for thy mercy and for thy truth's sake."

Silas H. Durand

(Copied from the *Signs* of March 1, 1902. It will be enjoyed by many — J.D.W.)

OBITUARIES

SISTER LETHA A. BLACKWELL

It has pleased our Heavenly Father to call from our midst Sister Letha Blackwell on August 22, 1975, after a long illness. She was born August 18, 1891 to D. W. and Lizzie Hill Sheppard, making her stay on earth 84 years.

She was married in 1913 to R. Lewis Blackwell, and to this union four children were born: one son who died in infancy, and three daughters who survive: Mrs. George Everitt, Mrs. A. Scott Dansberry and Miss Ruth Blackwell, also 3 grandchildren and 4 great grandchildren.

Sister Letha was baptized into the fellowship of the Hopewell Church, Hopewell, N. J. in 1937 by her pastor Elder C. W. Vaughn. She was a firm believer in the doctrine of Salvation by Grace. She loved the Church and all those who believed the same doctrine. Her home was opened to the Old Baptists, and she had entertained the different ministers from many parts of the United States. She was Church Clerk for many years, and Clerk of the Delaware River Association. She was humble in manner and had a wonderful personality, and was loved by many. She will be missed by her family and the brethren, but we feel our loss is her eternal gain, and she is at rest.

Her funeral was conducted in the Hopewell Meeting House by Elder Stewart McColl of Caadan, who spoke very comfortingly and tenderly from Psalm 16: 5 and 6. Her body was laid to rest in the Hopewell Old School Baptist Cemetery.

Written by her niece who loved her as a mother.

Mrs. William S. (Charlotte) Adkins

J. KYLE COLE

AND

MAE SOWERS COLE

It is, indeed, with a sad heart I attempt to write a memoir of two very dear friends, and I hope, by the grace of God, Brother and Sister in Christ: J. Kyle Cole and Mae Sowers Cole.

Many brethren and friends mourn their passing. Should we? Is it not far better that they be taken from this world of sin and sorrow, since we have the assurance that they will ever be with the Lord?

Mr. Cole was born June 27, 1875. He was the son of Harvey and Cynthia Winfrey Cole. Our Heavenly Father called this dear friend January 29, 1975, to await the glorious day when the Lord shall come again without sin unto salvation, to raise the bodies of all who sleep in Him, fashion them like unto His own glorious body, and they shall forever be with the Lord.

Mr. Cole was a good entertainer, having the ability to entertain the aged and the youth. He was a firm believer in salvation by grace. Their's was a home which the church people and friends enjoyed visiting very much.

Mae Sowers Cole was born January 30, 1881, the daughter of Joseph and Abigail Turner Sowers. Sister Cole was a dedicated member of the Laurel Creek Primitive Bapaist Church, with which she united November 27, 1909, and was baptized the following day by Elder H. V. Cole. She was a faithful member.

Their greatest pleasure was attending church, which they did as long as their health permitted. Another of her great pleasures was entertaining the church people and friends in her home. It seemed to her satisfaction she could not do enough for them.

It pleased our gracious Heavenly Father to call her a very short time after the passing of her dear husband, therefore one was not left to mourn the passing of the other, which was, indeed, a great blessing. She fell asleep, blessed sleep from which none ever wake to weep, February 12, 1975. They were united in marriage February 11, 1898, and to this union were born nine children. One died in infancy. Surviving are six daughters: Elva (Mrs. Ed.) Martin, Hester (Mrs. Frank) Hoback, Effie (Mrs. Elmer) Conner, Dorothy (Mrs. Howard) Martin, Nina (Mrs. Doris) Martin, Carlene (Mrs. Rex) Nixon. Two sons: Archie F. and Marvin L. Cole. Surviving also are nineteen grandchildren and twenty-six great grandchildren.

The dear saints under considreation, by an eye of faith waited faithfully and patiently upon their God, trusting in His promises to his little ones to the end. "As for me I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied when I awake with thy likeness." To express themselves they could witness with the Apostle Paul in I Cor. 15:10, "By the grace of God I am what I am." They loved the songs of Zion. This thought reminds me of the following hymn, of which I quote a part:

"Grace! 'tis a charming sound!
Harmonious to the ear,

Heaven with the echo shall resound,
And all the saints shall hear.

Grace taught my soul to pray,
And pardoning love to know,
'Twas grace that kept me to his day
And will not let me go.

Grace all the work shall crown
Through everlasting days:
It lays in heaven the topmost stone,
And well deserves the praise."

Funeral services for Mr. Cole were held at the Wood Funeral Chapel, Floyd, Va. by Elders B. O. Thompson and J. L. Agee, February 9, 1975, at 1:00 p.m.. And for Sister Cole at Wood Funeral Chapel by Elders B. O. Thompson and J. L. Agee, February 18, 1975 at 1:00 p.m.

They were laid to rest in the Cole Family Cemetery, Floyd County, near their home, to await the second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, when the trumpet shall sound, the dead in Christ shall rise first. We have every assurance to believe they will be among that number.

May God's richest blessings rest upon the family, and all who mourn, and may He enable them to say: "Gracious Father, thy will be done."

Submitted in love by request of a daughter.

Gaye A. (Mrs. B. O.) Thompson

DAISY B. SIMMONS

God in his infinite wisdom and mercy called home our dear Sister Daisy B. Simmons on July 19, 1975 at the age of 69. She was a faithful member of Upper Town Creek Church for many years, and moved her membership, along with her husband's to the Falls of Tar River Primitive Baptist Church, by letter in December 1968.

Sister Daisy was a lovely woman and attended her church faithfully, seeking a crumb from the Master's table. She loved the Gospel sound of Salvation by Grace, and stood fast in her faith. She loved the brethren and sisters enjoying the fellowship, always talking of what the Lord had done for her.

A faithful wife and mother, always putting her loved ones first, doing things for them that gave them pleasure.

In my poor weak way I would like to speak of her last few hours. She was blessed, I believe, to hear and see her Saviour Jesus Christ, and was ready and willing to leave this sinful world to be with her Lord. "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his Saints." Our hearts are saddened by her death, but we rejoice in our belief that she is resting in

peace in the arms of our Saviour Jesus Christ. We pray God will comfort her husband, children and grandchildren, and all of us who loved her. May the light of his love shine upon her family now and always.

Surviving are her husband Mack Daniel Simmons; three sons, M. D., Jr.; D. O. and Jack N. Simmons all of Rocky Mount; four daughters, Mrs. Ruth S. Cooke, and Mrs. Jean S. Farmer of Rocky Mount; Mrs. Nell S. Speight of Durham; and Mrs. Judy S. Walston of Tarboro; two brothers, A. B. and Brice Bottoms of Elm City; three sisters, Mrs. Lucille Sharpe; Mrs. Pattie Durham and Mrs. Mattie Ruth Tyson of Elm City; fifteen grandchildren and one great-grandchild.

Her funeral was conducted from Gay-Yost Funeral Home Chapel, by her pastor Elder D. B. Stokes and Elder W. L. Everett. She was laid to rest in Pineview Cemetery, sleeping in the arms of Jesus awaiting the second coming of our Lord. The large display of flowers and host of friends were a tribute to her, and how much she was loved by the brethren and friends.

RESOLVED: A copy of these resolutions be sent to the family; a copy to the *Signs of the Times* and a copy for the church records.

In conference: August 8, 1975.

Elder D. B. Stokes, Moderator
Nina Pearson, Clerk

FRANCIS HALDIN HATCHETT

It has been the will of our Heavenly Father to remove from this earthly life a faithful member and deacon of our church, Little Flock Church, Altus, Oklahoma, Brother Haldin Hatchett passed away in the Mangum City Hospital, Mangum, Okla., December 5, 1974. He was born January 17, 1884 in Limestone County, Alabama, to Jefferson Davis and Lura Mae Hatchett. He was married to Mary Ann Palina Buckner November 12, 1905. They moved to Oklahoma in 1912, and settled near Reed, Okla.

Four children were born to this union, three of whom survive, all living in Mangum, surviving also are 9 grandchildren and 9 great grandchildren, and 2 brothers. His companion and a daughter preceded him in death.

Funeral services were conducted in Greer Funeral Home (Chapel) Mangum, Okla., December 7, 1974 with his pastor, Elder C. M. Haygood officiating. Interment was in Reed Cemetery.

Brother Hatchett joined by experience the Hopewell Church, Reed, Okla., September 17, 1939, and was baptized by the late Elder W. N. Green. He joined Little Flock Church, Altus, Okla., March 12, 1955 in the consolidation

of Hopewell Church with Little Flock Church March 12, 1955.

He was faithful to attend church as long as he was physically able. Through his prolonged illness he was given patience, never complaining of his suffering. He was a firm believer in the Sovereignty of God, salvation by Grace and Grace alone.

Written by request of Little Flock Church, Altus, Okla., by his niece.

Ava Stewart

LALLA PAYNE WELLS

It has pleased our Heavenly Father to call home Sister Lalla Payne Wells. She was born February 7, 1889, and departed this life April 29, 1975. Sister Wells was married to Walker Wells July 27, 1915. Born to this union were three children: Mrs. Ethel Terrell, Mrs. Elsie Walker and Mr. William Wells, ten grandchildren, and twelve great grandchildren.

She united with Mt. Ararat Church or Old Mountain Primitive Baptist Church many years ago. She had been in declining health a year or more. She also attended Moon's Creek Church.

The funeral services were held at Moon's Creek Church by Elders Kenneth Key and Raymond S. Payne May 1, 1975. We feel she is resting peacefully, awaiting that glorious day when Jesus will come for His people, then she will awake in His likeness and be satisfied.

Written by request of Old Mountain Church in conference June 14, 1975.

Elder R. S. Payne

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT
BROTHER JETHRO D. JOYNER

We bow in humble submission to the will of God, who saw fit to call away from this world Brother Jethro D. Joyner, August 25, 1975. He was born October 11, 1894. He joined the Mill Branch Primitive Baptist Church in June, 1918.

Brother Jethro was always faithful in attending his church, and the corresponding churches, with his devoted wife, until his health failed. Then he was confined to his bed for a number of months. In all his sore afflictions his dear companion and children were so wonderfully blessed with strength from God, to care for and comfort him in any way they could.

Poor and afflicted, yet ere long, they'll join the bright celestial throng. And all their sufferings then shall close, and heaven afford them sweet repose.

RESOLVED, First, that we send our sym-

pathy to the family, we feel our loss is his gain. Second, that we record a copy of this on our church book, a copy sent to the family, and a copy sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Done at the request of the Mill Branch Primitive Baptist Church in conference September, 1975. Read and approved in October, 1975.

Elder Harvey Holland, Mod.

Sister Estelle Joyner Cockrell, Clerk

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT
SISTER PEARL P. JOYNER

Whereas, God in His infinite wisdom and power has seen fit to call from our midst our beloved Sister Pearl P. Joyner on July 7, 1973. She was born September 28, 1894. She united with Mill Branch Primitive Baptist Church January 20, 1973 at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Otha Langley. Because of her feeble condition she was not able to go and be baptized, but she had already been baptized in the mind and purpose of God. She was always faithful to go to church before asking for a home with us, and most every meeting bringing flowers. We still hold in our minds she was present with us. But she has gone where there is no more trouble and sorrow. She was blessed to raise a family, and lived most of her life around Mill Branch Church.

BE IT RESOLVED, That we, the Mill Branch Primitive Baptist Church be submissive to God's will, and that a copy of this Resolution be sent to the family, one recorded in our church book, and one sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Done by request of Mill Branch Church in conference Saturday before the first Sunday in September, 1975. Read and approved in conference Saturday before the first Sunday in October, 1975.

Elder Harvey Holland, Mod.

Sister Estelle Joyner Cockrell, Clerk

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT
SISTER ETHEL WHITLEY

It has pleased our Heavenly Father to remove from our midst our beloved Sister Ethel Whitley, March 2, 1975. She was born October 18, 1900. She united with Mill Branch Primitive Baptist Church, March 6, 1949, along with her dear sister, Lillie Shaw.

Sister Ethel loved her church and she was a loving sister to us all. She was always present as long as she could come—along with her devoted husband who helped her in at the door. After she became so feeble she did not try to come any more, but she would always

make you welcome in her home with her family. The morning she was found in her bed we feel that she just went to sleep in Jesus, never to feel any more pain, but just rest in peace.

BE IT RESOLVED, That we, the Mill Branch Primitive Baptist Church be submissive to God's will, and that a copy of this Resolution be sent to the family, one recorded on our church book, and one sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Done at the request of Mill Branch Church in conference Saturday before the first Sunday in September, 1975.

Read and approved in conference Saturday before the first Sunday in October, 1975.

Elder Harvey Holland, Mod.
Sister Estelle Joyner Cockrell, Clerk

ELDER EARLIS PETERSON GERRARD

Brother Gerrard was born January 23, 1897. He was married June 29, 1927, to Elsie Horton Gerrard, who died August 14, 1963. Brother Earlis died May 22, 1975. Surviving are one son, William of Athens, Ga., one brother, Deacon George Gerrard, three sisters, Sister Nellie Gaskel, Mrs. Ethel Wilson, and Mrs. Oppie Jefferson, and four grandchildren.

The Lord brought Elder Gerrard to ask for a home with Blount's Creek Church in 1936. He was baptized in Blount's Creek in 1936 by Elder Tilgman Sawyer, and Elder Gerrard was ordained the same year.

He was unable to attend the meetings for the last several years, but at quarterly meetings there would be a letter to the brethren stating his continued love for them, and his desire to meet with them again. I'll always cherish my visits with him. Our hearts were made glad as we talked of our mutual beliefs in a God that predestinated all things, both good and evil.

Yes, our brother is dead but the love that God gave me and others for him, will never die.

Elder Gerrard is resting in a cemetery in Rocky Mount, N. C. to await the return of his Lord, who will come for those that he died for, and they will be with their Redeemer and eternally satisfied.

Written by request of Blount's Creek Church.

Elder Bob Lyliston

Unto thee, O God, do we give thanks, unto thee do we give thanks: for that thy name is near thy wondrous works declare.

Psalms 75:1

SISTER MABEL BUTCHER

We, the Danville Primitive Baptist Church of Danville, Va. sadly record passing of our devoted member, Sister Mabel Butcher. She was born August 23, 1900 and Mr. and Mrs. James Gilden Parcell, and passed away June 19, 1975. She was married to Howard Adkins in 1916. He died in 1952; and she married Lester Butcher in 1953. He died in 1966.

She leaves a step-daughter, Mrs. Edward Minsoro of Alexandria, Va; two step-granddaughters; two sisters, Mrs. Gladys Draper and Mrs. Hazel Dodson, of Martinsville, Va.; and two brothers, Noland Parcell of Danville and Howard Parcell of Martinsville, Va.

Sister Butcher joined Bannister Springs Church in 1938 and was baptized by Elder J. A. Brooks. She came to Danville Church by letter in 1970. She was a lovely person in her spiritual walk of life. She loved her brethren and sisters and family; and all loved her. We miss her very much, for she attended her, and other meetings, devotedly until the first of the year, when she had to take her bed. She endured her suffering without complaint, and always had some word in praise of her Lord and Saviour. We feel to say, as was said at her burial, "Blessed are those who die in the Lord."

Elders Haywood Wray, Raymond Payne, and Julian Williams spoke in the service held at Barker Funeral Chapel, and she was laid to rest in Highland Burial Park. The service was well attended by family, friends, brethren and sisters; with many flowers. How lovely to be loved here, and gathered home in the Master's love!

Written by request of Danville Church while in conference August 9, 1975.

Elder Haywood Wray

TOM MURPHY

God has called from our midst a very dear friend, Mr. Tom Murphy. He was born May 27, 1902 and died July 19, 1975. On November 26, 1938 he was married to Mary Ethel Meadors, who survives, along with two daughters, Mrs. Linda McDaniel and Mrs. Brenda Pruitte.

Tom never joined the militant church, but we feel his name is recorded in heaven. He was a strong believer in salvation by the grace of God. He attended Danville Primitive Baptist Church and others regularly. We miss him very much.

His funeral was held at Swicegood Funeral Chapel by Elder H. W. Wray, and he was laid to rest in Danville Memorial Gardens.

Written by one who loved him very much,
R. T. Holley.

Elder H. W. Wray, Mod.
R. T. Holley, Church Clerk