

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 133

DANVILLE, VA., JANUARY, 1965

NO. 1

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 1/65
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

CIRCULAR LETTER

(Written by Sister Minerva Dunlap)

The Maine Old School Baptist Association, meeting with the Whitefield Church September 11, 12, 13, 1964, sends greetings and brotherly love to the other Churches and Associations of our faith and order.

One might inquire on what this faith and order is founded and why this brotherly love exists. We believe that the precepts of our religion, defined as the recognition of a Power to whom worship is due, are planted in our hearts and written in our minds by our Heavenly Father. We believe that before we receive that divine revelation and before we are taught from on high, we are dead to knowledge of spiritual substance. We believe that our faith and order depends not at all on what we may read or on what we may hear from neighbors, brother or friend, but on the fact that it is placed in the hearts of those whom God has chosen from the foundation of the world to be his people, to love and worship and adore Him as their Father, and as children of the same Father to love one another. We believe that the Bible was written for those chosen to be His from the beginning, to offer admonition, confirmation and comfort to His people; an inspired work and understood only by revela-

tion. Why this revelation is given to some and not to others, we do not know, as the mind of man cannot comprehend the designs of God. As it is written: "For so it seemed good in His sight." "There shall two be in a field; the one shall be taken, and the other left" — "Two women shall be grinding at the mill; the one shall be taken, and the other left." Those that were taken were to know the love and the glory and the power, the others not.

In Isaiah we read — "For Jacob my servant's sake, and Israel mine elect, I have even called thee by thy name: I have surnamed thee, though thou hast not known me." The one who was taken in the field, the woman who was taken at the mill were of that most blessed family that bears his surname. They did not choose that surname, but it was theirs because they were children of the same Father, and because they are of the same family they have brotherly love for one another. We believe our faith and order embraces those of whom it is said: "I will put my law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people." It is the faith and order of the "chosen generation, the royal priesthood, the holy nation, a peculiar people; to shew forth the praises of Him who has called them out of darkness into His marvellous light." Spoken in Peter 2-9. We believe that this chosen generation may include the most humble person, the most ignorant so far as the knowledge of this world is concerned, and that, irrespective of color or country, he may receive the revelation of his relation to God without council from clergy or layman, and in God's good time, whether alone

or in a crowd, in the desert or on a city street. He will need no other teacher for "God is his own interpreter." We hope that we belong to this chosen generation. We have our seasons of doubt. We falter and when our winters are long, we wonder if we are mistaken and our cry is: "Am I His or am I not?" Our walk in life is so unsuited to a child of God, we feel unworthy of the least of His blessings, we wish for more evidence of our heritage and less of turmoil and worldly interference. Still always our hearts burn within us when we hear others relate a similar experience and walk, and we rejoice to hear the preaching that tells us again the things we have been shown.

"How charming is the place
Where my Redeemer God
Unveils the beauties of his face
And sheds his love abroad."
"Give me, O Lord, a place
Within thy blest abode,
Among the children of thy grace
The servants of my God."

CORRESPONDING LETTER

The Maine Old School Baptist Association in session with the Whitefield Church, at Whitefield, Maine, September 11, 12, 13, 1964.

Dear Brethren:

Again, through the providence and mercy of our God, we have been able to meet in an association. Your correspondence has been gladly received.

Your ministering brethren, Elder John D. Wood and Elder B. O. Thompson, came to us laden with the fruits of the Spirit of him whom to know is life eternal. The preaching was in accord with Christ's teachings and our Christian experience — testifying that there is no falling away from the truth, but, instead, a meeting together in heavenly places when pure minds are stirred up by the way of remembrance.

The Lord chooses his children. He says, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you." He comes to us as

the wind that bloweth where it listeth. We hear the sound thereof, but we cannot tell from whence it cometh, nor whither it goeth. So is every one that is born of the Spirit."

Our association is small, but we hope we are a part of that remnant which the Lord shall gather from all parts of the earth.

The next meeting of the Maine Association will be held, the Lord willing, with the Whitefield Church, Whitefield, Maine, the fourth Sunday in August, 1965, and the Saturday preceding. There will be a notice in the **Signs of the Times**.

Elder John D. Wood, Moderator
Mrs. Sanford Bartlett, Clerk

FELICITATIONS TO NEW BORN SON

Ballinger, Texas
August 10, 1964

Dear Timothy Dean:

We were informed of your advent into this world, 9:34 P. M., 7-9-64, by your parents. We rejoiced to know that a son had been born to Elder and Sister Hudson.

In this birth you came into the world with a cry, and as you grow we pray God's providential blessings to rest upon you.

You have already been blessed in having God fearing parents, and as this birth develops and brings forth into manifestation the nature in which it is generated and born, "that which is born of the flesh is flesh." (John 3:6) Surely you will have the same nature of the first man Adam, and through the same filthy stream of inherited sin down and through your father and mother, — we are all only drops of the same filthy stream. As David said, (Psalm 51:5): "Behold I was shapen in iniquity and in sin did my mother conceive me." In this nature or flesh you can and will only know natural things, and if this is all you have in this life, Oh, how sad.

It is our prayer to God that if it be His will, at the appointed time you may be born from above, as you have the natural nature that you also may have a divine nature whereby you may escape the corruptions that are in the world through lust. (2 Peter 1:4) May you be led on by his spirit to have a saving knowledge of the free and sovereign grace principles that your father has preached, and held precious by both your father and mother.

Dear Timothy, we wish you blessings of every sort in this life; but when this life is over these will be gone. But, as one that shall never be lost, may he give you knowledge of this triune God, God the father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.

If you have this knowledge given you, all other blessings of this life are realized to be only temporal and shall soon come to an end.

Therefore, Paul says that what is vital in our lives is not temporal, but things eternal. (2 Cor. 4:18) If we have an experience of Grace and born from above, we are so wonderfully blessed while in this life, and it shall just take eternity to know the fulness and beauty of his eternal and everlasting love.

From ones who loves you and your dear parents,

C. M. Haygood and Bernice Haygood

Box 267,
Lincolnton, Ga.

Dear Editors:

Enclosed is check for \$5.00 for subscription for one year, and the remainder to go to help someone to receive the good news from a far country who are not able to pay for it. I know it means much to them to receive the **Times**. I take several of the periodicals, but would not want to do without it. I received mine today, and have read it through already.

A quotation came to me a few nights ago that I could not find, "Out of Zion,

the perfection of beauty, God hath shined." [Psalm 50:2, — Ed.] I have heard people preach, and have read articles that mentioned Zion, but I did not have a clear understanding of what and where Zion was. But the good Lord always comes to my rescue, for in this November, 1964, issue is the answer, which I enjoyed very much.

Sincerely,
Gordon H. McGee

WONDERS WHY SOME BRETHREN
DO NOT READ THE PAPER

900 Jordan Street,
Wilson, N. C.

Dear Brother Spangler:

I received my **Signs of the Times** today, and noticed that it is time to renew my subscription; so am enclosing check for two more years.

When I receive the **Signs** each month, I read it as soon as I can, for I am not satisfied until I have read the last word in it. Sometimes I read it through without stopping.

As I read the **Signs**, I am often made to wonder why so many of our people do not seem to care about reading. As I meditate on some of the articles that appear in the **Signs**, I feel to know that the paper should be in every Old Baptist home. To those who have been called from nature's darkness into the light of the glory of God, I believe the reading of the **Signs** would be a real feast at times.

Brother Spangler, we were all glad to have you and Sister Spangler with us at our association. We surely did enjoy the discourses the Lord blessed you to preach; and I feel that He blessed me to hear to the comfort and consolation of my heart and soul. We hope you can visit us again soon.

... Pray for us when you are blessed to pray.

Submitted in love,
(Elder) S. R. Boykin

SOMETHING WORTHWHILE
TO THINK ABOUT

1639 Cowan Drive,
Scottsbluff, Neb. 69361

Dear Editors of the Signs:

I enjoy your paper very much, and feel you deserve a vote of thanks for getting it on its way to subscribers so promptly.

I will be eighty-two years old in November, and live alone, and am able to do all my housework, including canning fruit for Winter use. Am thankful that I can do what my hands find to do, with a willing heart and ready mind.

I received my paper yesterday, and have read "Notes of a Sermon" of Elder Lefferts, which I enjoyed very much. I have read the Bible over and over again, but never knew there could be so much beauty and instruction in righteousness in the study of the arks and coffin mentioned in his sermon. I will have something good and worthwhile to think about for days to come.

. . . In hope of a better life when my life's work is ended.

Dora Greathouse

FROM A YOUNG BROTHER

302 Shannon Avenue,
Huntsville, Ala.

Dear Editors:

I have written a little article concerning, What is the manifestation of the righteousness of God?

First, I believe the righteousness of God is not in thinking and advocating that within himself a man is righteous and good, because it is written that there is none righteous, no not one; and that all have fallen short of the glory of God.

I take the position opposite from the world, for I believe it is when God reveals his Son unto one, and makes him see how wicked and sinful he really is, and to cry for mercy, that one

knows anything of righteousness. He is then no longer as the Pharisee who knew nothing of his inward corruption, or what a wretch he really was, who outwardly appeared religious and righteous and full of goodness, but inwardly was full of corruption.

This pharisaical deceitfulness is still being carried on in the world today as it was then; and will continue until the coming of Christ at the last day. But a regenerated child of God — one who has been born again and made a new creature in Christ, and has tasted of the grace of God — the free grace, has first been made to see himself inwardly, and what a sinful state he is in. The Pharisee was self-righteous, and thought himself to be something, but the publican could not even look toward heaven and pray, for he could only pray, "Lord be merciful to me a sinner." He knew that in his flesh he was nothing, even less than nothing, as the Apostle Paul did.

I trust that these thoughts will be of some comfort to the dear children of God, who are so dear to my heart.

A sinner in need,
Larry Hale

"IT WAS A BLESSING"

218 Shad Point Road,
Salisbury, Maryland

Dear Editors:

I have enjoyed the **Signs of the Times** so very much this Summer that I wanted you to know how much they have meant to me.

So many of the letters and editorials express my feelings and belief, but I cannot find words to express them so well. I enjoyed Brother McCall's letter. The first time I went to a meeting of the Covenanted Baptist Church, I spent two wonderful nights in his mother's home. The boys were such lovely sons, and so kind to their mother's guests. It was heartwarming to read his experience. It was good to read Elder

Griffin's answers to the questions he had been asked; and Elder Lambert's Editorial said so many things I have felt for a long time.

I have been dreadfully tired this Summer, and find that when I am not at work, I must rest more than ever before; but have decided it has been a blessing, as I have spent more time reading and meditating. I have found my mind going back to the dear ones I have been blessed to know and visit with, and how very thankful I am for each one. It seems as they grow older, and nearer the end of their time in this world, their God and Church means more and more to them. This is a great comfort as we travel along.

One morning I awoke with the words of Paul in my mind, and could not rest until I read 2 Timothy 4:7,8: "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith; Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness which the Lord the righteous judge shall give me at that day; and not for me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing." O, may the Lord bless me with that assurance when it comes my time to leave this world.

In the Summer, because of my work, I only get to meetings every other Sunday, but the ones I have attended the preaching has been so good, and the brothers and sisters so dear to me, I have felt it was a taste of Heaven. I know from experience that this condition cannot last, but I am so thankful for this season of rejoicing He has blessed me with.

Pray that I may be kept ever mindful of His goodness and mercy.

Ethel Holloway

A STUDENT OF ELDER CURRY'S

Andalusia, Alabama

Dear Elder Spangler:

I've thought for sometime of writing you about how I enjoy reading the

Signs. The letters are very comforting in this age of so much unrest and corruption. I get very upset at times, but a small voice tells me, "Be still, God is still at the helm, and He makes no mistakes." It is beyond my understanding that God is so long-suffering, to allow the world to be as it is, but in my heart I know it is his will.

I enjoy all the letters from the Elders and other brethren and sisters, but the re-print of Elder H. M. Curry was very precious to me. I had a sister who taught with him for seven years at school near Sellers; and I was a student of his for two years, and I thought he was the most learned man I ever knew, and he was blessed of God in his preaching.

We were disappointed that you were not at our association this year. We were blessed with good preaching, and meeting brethren and sisters from other associations. And there were many who love our faith, but for reasons have not asked for membership. My dear sister, Gladys Van der Honing is one of these. She has been sick for some time and has to be very quiet; so if you find time, I would appreciate your sending her a message . . .

If you ever come our way again, please include Elam Church, Goshen, Alabama in your visits.

Sincerely a sister in hope,
Mrs. Fred A. Horton

HIS BLESSINGS COME
IN MANY WAYS

15514 South Brentwood Street,
Channelview, Texas

Elder E. B. Ault,
Rt. 2, Box 23,
Weslaco, Texas

Dear Brother Ault:

I thought I would try to write you tonight but my mind seems to be blank. I am made to wonder sometimes if there is anyone like me.

I would like to tell you of the joy that

was given my poor soul last first Sunday (November) at the meeting here at Shepherd Fold Church. Your and Brother Fleet's presence was uplifting. I enjoyed your prayer and sermon very much. If you wondered why I requested you to offer prayer at the opening of the services, Well, my mind was carried back to the time when a dear sister of mine was on her death bed with cancer, and you were asked to offer prayer; you were blessed with one of the sweetest prayers I ever heard. And again during visits with us at Shepherd Fold I felt that you were sent to us at the appointed and right time. During one of these visits you were asked to offer prayer. Well, I'll tell you that these prayers are still in this poor sinner's heart. If these things are not a part of the experience of a wayfaring pilgrim in a waste howling wilderness and desert land, then this poor writer is lost.

I read some of your experiences in an old **Signs of the Times** awhile back; it was about your preaching old Brother Bowden's funeral. I was given to greatly rejoice in the way you were taken out of the miry clay, and were given to write in the Spirit and with power from on high. I tell you Brother Ault, we poor sinners are most certainly blessed by an all wise God and the precious blood of our Saviour Jesus Christ, to have you ministering brethren. Brother Haygood, after Brother Fleet and yourself ministered to us of the Great I Am, it made the Saints to march on, or rather to press on towards the mark for the prize of the high calling which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

I hope this finds you and family well; and hope to see you again soon, and that the Lord will be with you in your journeys wherever they may take you. Write me when you have a mind.

In bonds of Christian love,
James T. Lindsey

(We have been singularly drawn to the writings of Elder H. M. Curry ever since we began reading the re-publication of them in the *Advocate of Truth*, (which was published

by the late Elders J. R. Hardy, J. C. Sikes, H. B. Jones, and others at the turn of the century for about fifteen years.) Three bound volumes of these were given us by Sister Hardy two or three years ago, and we have found the reading of them most profitable doctrinally and historically. We find that most of Elder Curry's articles were published in the **Signs of the Times** probably as they were written.

The above reference to Elder Curry by sister Horton was very interesting to us; as was the following contained in a letter from Elder Eldon A. Huchison, of Hamilton, Ohio:

"I read with nostalgic interest the reprint of Elder Hugh H. Curry's article **The City Without A Temple**. At the time of writing this article, Elder Curry was pastor of the Lebanon Old School Baptist Church, and a student and instructor at Lebanon Normal University, a great educational institution, largely patronized by Old School Baptists. Quite a number of our ministers were students at Lebanon.

"Elder Curry was the tutor of a young man from eastern Tennessee, who later became one of our greatest Secretary of State, viz., Cordell Hull. Cordell Hull used to go with Elder Curry to his three other churches in that area, viz., Tapscott, Mt. Pleasant (my home church), and Bethel. The last time I saw Cordell Hull was in 1927 when he came back for a "Normalite" reunion. At that time I was on the faculty of Wilmington College, as the two institutions had merged. I recall the very interesting visit I had with Mr. Hull, as I was at that time, in addition to my duties as Professor of History and Political Science, the pastor of Mt. Pleasant and Lebanon.

"Elder Curry was doubtless one of the most forceful exponents of the gospel of any minister to be found when he was at the peak of his spiritual, physical and mental power. The stamp of Lebanon is to be observed in his writings — of course above all else is the stamp of the Holy Spirit. His membership remained at Lebanon until death."

We were glad to receive these most interesting accounts, for we have not found anything of Elder Curry's life and experience in any of our reading. Elder Curry was a forceful writer, with the ability to express clearly what he saw in the subject he was considering. He was not timid in expressing the truth, and his writing shows that he was firmly established in the doctrine of God our Saviour. We expect to re-publish more of his writings, the Lord willing. — J. D. W.)

SKEWARKEY UNION

The next session of the Skewarkey Union is appointed to be held, the Lord willing, with Williams Church, Edgecombe County, N. C.

the 5th Sunday in January, 1965. The meeting house is located 2 miles north of Leggetts, N. C. Take highway 44 north one mile, turn left on first black top road. Elder W. E. Grimes was chosen to preach the Introductory Sermon, with Elder D. B. Handy, alternate.

We invite all brethren and friends to come and worship with us.

Elmer B. Peele, Clerk

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The next session of the Staunton River Union is to be held, the Lord willing, with Cane Creek Primitive Baptist Church, the 5th Sunday and Saturday before in January, 1965.

The meeting house is located on Highway 726, near Ringgold, Va. All lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

Fannie D. Wiles, Clerk

UPPER COUNTRY LINE UNION

The next session of the Upper Country Line Union is appointed to be held with Bush Arbor Church the fifth Sunday in January, 1965, on Sunday only. The meeting house is located on Highway 62, nine miles South of Yanceyville, N. C.; about sixteen miles North of Burlington, N. C.

All lovers of the truth are invited.

Earl S. Rudd, Clerk

BLACK CREEK UNION

The next session of the Black Creek Union is appointed to be held with the church at Old Beulah, Johnson County, N. C. the fifth Sunday in January and Saturday before.

The meeting house is located about one mile and one-half West of Rt. 301, between Kenly and Micra. Those going south, turn right at Bagley, and those going north, turn left.

All who have a mind to attend are cordially invited.

Eli T. Smith, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE INDIGENT FUND

(To November 1, 1964)

Mrs. James Mason, Va.....	\$ 1.00
Mildred Finigan, Md.....	2.00
Mrs. J. P. Fallen, La.....	2.00
Mrs. John Lingle, Mich.....	5.00
Mrs. Robert Wagner, Pa.....	5.00
Roy S. Thomas, Del.....	20.00
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BUSINESS OFFICE

R. F. D. 1, Box 539, Beechwood Lane
Danville, Va.

EDITORS

Elder David V. Spangler

R. F. D. 1, Box 539, Beechwood Lane
Danville, Virginia

Elder John D. Wood

P. O. Box 186, Manassas, Va.

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Elder W. D. Griffin

39 Welsh Tract Road, Newark, Delaware

Elder E. J. Lambert

306 Richardson St., Winnsboro, Texas

Elder George Ruston

Dutton, Ontario, Canada

All letters for this paper should be addressed and remittances made payable

TO

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

R. F. D. 1, Box 539 Beechwood Lane
Danville, Va.

EDITORIAL

A NEW YEAR AND A NEW VOLUME

It is time again to address our readers at the beginning of another New Year, and of the 133rd volume of the **Signs of the Times**. What the Signs means to each individual is best known unto himself, and his praise and thanks should properly be given unto Him who has sustained its publication for these many years. He that believes and rejoices in the principles upheld in the Signs should thank his God for this unspeakable gift. As for ourselves, your editors trust that they are thankful for the part they have, by the Lord's blessing and enabling grace, in sending "good news from a far country" each month to many who express themselves, with Solomon, that it is "as cold waters to a thirsty soul."

We are concerned that the Signs continues to contend for the same princi-

ples on which it was founded; and especially to emphasize them in these days of apostasy of many concerning these principles. As we mellow with the years, we feel perhaps more firmly settled in these things that they are according to "thus saith the Lord." In our conscience we have no place for half-truths, for we know that to allow a little leaven to work among — not in, for that is impossible — the sacred principles of doctrine of God our Saviour, and pass the resulting muddle off as unspotted, is to approve cunningly devised fables.

In the Scriptures there are many things we are admonished to beware of; and those who are exercised of the Spirit in these things, are deeply concerned about the present state of Zion. No one can deny that many innovations in doctrine and order are current and are being ardently advocated, so that "to us belongeth confusion of faces" now as much as it ever did in Israel. It is quite disturbing to hear it said, and widely publicised, that certain things are Primitive Baptist doctrines, when, as a matter of fact, a portion of it is far from being in line with those who were originally known as Primitive or Old School Baptists. One has only to look at the records of the early days of the **Signs of the Times**, to find what Primitive Baptists then believed; and then to trace the beginnings of strange ideas — ideas foreign to those early Primitives — which from time to time were incubated by some members of the churches who were not indoctrinated, and by whom some things which were hard to be understood were not believed, and who felt that they needed to be improved upon. Here are the beginnings of divergent points of doctrine: originated by some in the churches, and finding a following they either left or were held in non-fellowship for heretical teachings; and their growth is unto the present, and in many cases under the name of Primitive Baptists.

Many have taught that predestination, in all its inclusive meaning, was

the brain-child of Elder Gilbert Beebe and others of his time. This is not true. Elder Beebe believed and bodily wrote and preached this doctrine as being apostolic; but he was not the author of it, for, over the centuries this doctrine has been taught and believed, from the days of the Apostles until this very moment. And in our opinion expresses what should be expressed of the purposes and decrees of God: and this is what the Signs was founded upon.

Again, some just can't be satisfied with the gospel as being the power of God unto salvation, in all its parts, both now and hereafter; with all the blessings we receive at the hand of God being unmerited and unearned. Obedience is often used as a "catch-word" to promote a semblance of creature controlled ability after regeneration. But our understanding is that we are in Christ Jesus, and consequently new creatures in him; yet we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that we may know that the excellency of the power is of God, and not of us. It is the experience of every heir of God that he knows that every good thought, and every act of obedience to the commands of Christ, is by the enabling grace given him; that it is by God working both the will and the to do in him; and that the grace of God that brings salvation teaches his people that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, they should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world. The fact that they are blessed to do these things, is proof that the grace of God has manifested His salvation in them. Were it otherwise, and under the control of the creature, why should we, with the apostle, do the things we would not? and find ourselves unable to do the things we would? Why are we poor and afflicted, and troubled on every side, and have to bear about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus? We ask the reason why, and must leave the answer to every man's conscience.

Then again, there are divisions, often senseless divisions from our viewpoint,

in which some seize a point of difference among brethren and capitalize on it; but which could be settled easily, if the flesh did not get the upper hand. In some cases somebody desiring leadership, does not listen to reason, much less act with brotherly love, and seems to have no remorse of conscience that brethren are torn asunder.

These are two or three things among others which should give spiritually minded brethren much to prayerfully consider at this time when it may be said that we traditionally review the past, and look forward to the future.

If the Lord should be pleased to lay to the hearts of all involved in contradictions, and bring home to them the power of such scriptures as the following, we would see brethren dealing differently with each other; and each would rather be stepped upon, than to see the body of Christ bruised and battered:

"These six things doth the Lord hate: yea, seven are an abomination unto him: A proud look, a lying tongue, and hands that shed innocent blood. An heart that deviseth wicked imaginations, feet that be swift in running into mischief, a false witness that speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren." (Proverbs 6:16-19) And, "Who is a wise man and endued with knowledge among you? let him shew out of a good conversation his works with meekness of wisdom. But if ye have bitter envying and strife in your hearts, glory not, and lie not against the truth. This wisdom descendeth not from above, but is earthly, sensual, devilish. For where envying and strife is, there is confusion and every evil work. But the wisdom which is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace of them that make peace." (James 3:13-18)

We want to express our appreciation to all the brethren and friends who have contributed in any way in helping us to

keep the paper coming to them, and solicit their continued support. We know that the paper reaches many shut-ins, and many who are unable to attend their meetings due to distance, or lack of transportation; to these and all others we desire to say that our prayer is that the Lord may continue to remember them in mercy, and give them all needed grace to continue with patience the race that is set before them, that they may ever look unto Jesus the author and finisher of their faith. And in the vicissitudes of life that they may have grace, as in the language of Paul, to "Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus." (Phillippians 4:6,7)

To our fellow laborers, may the Lord keep us humble in the midst of the many blessings we have in going in and out before the brethren, and in spite of our being lifted up in Spirit, that we may not think of ourselves more highly than we ought to think; and surely not to act as if we were lords over God's people, and arbiters of every question. We know that none of us are qualified by nature for any position in the church, and that we are what we are only by the grace of God. It is good for us if we are sometimes sorely brought to question whether we are in the matter at all. The gifts of our Lord do not exalt one brother above another, but the flesh often does; and this is the origin of most troubles.

To the brethren in general, may we each remember that it is by God's grace that we are what we are; and that we have nothing but what we have received. We are different from nominal professors because He has made the difference. There is no place in the church for elevated ones, for all have the same identical standing in Christ. The most humble one is more Christ-like in his walk and conversation.

As editors, we have more to be con-

cerned with than may appear. As said above, we do not want to publish anything which is, in our judgment, unsound, nor anything of local disturbances; and we have to screen these should we receive them. Sometimes we receive writings which we do not consider to be of enough general interest to our readers for us to publish them; that is, things which have little or no bearing on christian experience. And sometimes we received articles which are entirely too lengthy for a paper such as the Signs; and it is found that articles which have to be continued, are seldom pursued satisfactorily. We would like to publish letters, articles, obituaries, etc., soon after we receive them, but this we cannot often do, and have to hold them for space in the paper, for the opportunity to edit them, and type for the printer. We always give priority to notices of meetings, etc., if we receive them five weeks before publication date in which they should appear. Those who use the typewriter will help us if they double space the lines. We write this paragraph not to discourage any from writing, for the continuation of the Signs depends upon their writings, and the interest the brethren and friends take in the paper; but to mention some of the problems we sometimes have.

Finally brethren, may the Lord continue his grace to all of us in the days and months to come; give us a deeper sense of how great is His mercy towards us; give us to be concerned as to each other's welfare; and bless us to contend only for those things he has delivered to us, and oppose all things contrary, that He may have all the praise forever.

J. D. W.

EDITORIAL

ASSOCIATIONS OF CHURCHES

Two hundred years ago seven churches formed themselves into what is known as the KEHUKKEE ASSOCIATION at a meeting house called "Kehukkee" near Kehukkee Creek, in Halifax

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

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

Paul said, "Be of the same mind one toward another. Mind not high things, but condescend to men of low estate. Be not wise in your own conceits."

(Romans 12:16) "Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord, Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; but that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment." (1 Cor. 1:10) "Fulfill ye my joy, that ye be like-minded, having the same LOVE, being of one accord, of one mind." (Phil. 2:2) David said, "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." (Psalms 133:1) The number TWO has been considered by some as being accursed as it is the first departure from unity. Only God who makes men's hearts can unite them. Whoever God joins together in this divine love can never be separated by the cunning craftiness of men without causing unhappiness and misery because of such separation. United we stand; divided we fall. All who possess the spirit of God's love are as harmless as doves. Doves live, feed, and fly by companies. Doves desire unity; and it was the dove that would not leave Noah's ark. (Gen. 8:9) We must warn against these wolves who have come in among us, as well as the foxes who have crept into our numbers, who care not for the flock. They connive with their plots, schemes, tricks, and "Legal justifiings" to handle churches as if they were the judges, lawgivers, and kings. They will band themselves together to annihilate churches and ministers. A whole psalm was written against this sin. Read the entire 83rd Psalm. The 12th verse is the expression of their central desire. "Who said, Let us take to ourselves the houses of God in possession." Those who plot together to cut off churches from the union of churches "take crafty counsel against thy people, and consulted against thy hidden ones. They have said, COME, AND LET US CUT THEM OFF FROM BEING A NATION."

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

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

Another aim is to encourage inter-communion of churches. Churches formed in such associations write letters to the other churches giving such information as each church may think prudent for the good and welfare of the union. This inter-communication so links the churches together that brethren composing one church feel free to commune with the churches so linked together. We know that all members of the church universal are all the saved, and that Christ is the only Head, and the Church is His Body. (See Eph. 1:22-23 & Collosians 1:18-24) The church militant is composed of all the saints now on earth. The invisible church is all the Elect not yet called. A particular church is a society of believers called out of the world who have bonded themselves together, to be guided and governed by discipline agreeable to the laws of Christ as given in the New Testament.

Another purpose of associational meetings is to bring together the different gifts in the ministry in order that they may preach together and hear one another feeding the children of God with a variety of spiritual food. Many say they enjoy associational meetings because they are privileged to hear dif-

ferent ministers from the different sections of the country in different manners proclaiming the same gospel truth. It is indeed a blessing to be convinced that all these ministers have been brought up in the same School and have had as their teacher; — God, the Father; God, the Son; and, God, the Holy Ghost.

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

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

Interlinking of God's people by the method of associational correspondence is a blessing when we are blessed to extend the chain rather than break any of these links. I will here quote the body of a corresponding letter which I wrote several years ago — which is yet my conscientious convictions and yearning desires relative to associational correspondence: — "Dearly Beloved Brethren: — We are bound to give thanks unto God for you, brethren, because our drooping spirits have been re-

vived by the presence of so many of you who compose the membership of the several associations with whom we correspond. We have been greatly refreshed by the coming of your lovely and friendly correspondence. We appreciate your elders whom God hath endowed with His Holy Spirit to preach unto us salvation by grace through faith in the complete work of God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, in saving His Elect Family. Our aching hearts have been renewed while we are blessed to drink together from the fountain that springs up into everlasting life."

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

All of these objectives heretofore mentioned, together with the practice of the apostles and apostolic churches writing to the churches and brethren, would certainly commend general meetings when we consider their visitations among the churches. Brethren and churches then desired to learn of the welfare of others as well as to inform others of their own welfare. Letters were written then and sent by messengers to each other. This would not be a departure from apostolic practice to have associational meetings regularly scheduled provided that messengers would not attempt any disciplinary action in dealing with any church or member. Associations have no Bible authority to deal in any manner disciplining churches or members. Since the church is the only organized body sanctioned by the Bible, and any other society

or combination of men would be without Scriptural authority; then associations constituted to be **continuous existing bodies** must be un-scriptural. Since we are all forgetful creatures, Old Baptists should be often reminded that there is no Bible authority for any formally organized association of God's people other than the church itself; and because of this, no organized association of churches can be properly considered as a standing organization which is to be held sacred. Churches are continuous bodies; associations are not. When we refer to "Our Moderator" between sessions of associations when speaking of the one who presided over the last associational meeting, we are sanctioning the idea that we do believe there is some other permanent Christian organization other than the church. When the associational meeting ends the duty of the moderator ends. When the churches meet again in an associated capacity, they are obligated to re-organize for that session. We enjoy visiting these associations, not for the sake of these humanly organized bodies, but for the wonderful heavenly privilege they provide, for the general assembling of the Saints of God, for the **sole purpose of worshipping God, and associating with one another.**

Have we departed from the steps of our forefathers in the use of associations? This is a vital question. We should ascertain the answer by examination. The church cannot confer authority to any one or ones to act in its behalf. Christ is its only representative. Question 1, Do you have a copy of the Articles of Faith, Constitution, Rules of Decorum, Church Covenant, and copies of minutes of proceedings of the **church** of your membership? Question 2, Do you have copies of the Constitution, Articles of Faith, Rules of Decorum, and proceedings of the **Association** in which your church is catalogued as a member? If your answer be NO to question 1 and YES to question 2 it will show that a greater regard is shown toward the **association** than to the

church of your membership. Question 3, Has the **church** of your membership by an act of the **church** barred any church or minister from your affiliation in the past several years? Question 4, Has the **association** barred any church or minister within the past several years which has affected the affiliation of the church of your membership? If your answer be NO to question 3 and YES to question 4 it will show that your messengers have acted beyond their authority and that you respect your **association** more than the **church** of your membership. Question 5, Has the **church** of your membership desired to invite certain ministers to preach to you but because of some action of the **association** unauthorized by the church of your membership, you are afraid to invite? If your answer to this question be YES; then, you are allowing the association to infringe on your internal rights and to bring you into its bondage. Question 6, Have you ever had a church to seek affiliation with your church and a host of your membership would say to them, "We all have fellowship for you but you must present the matter to the association when it convenes"; and, you do not take any action upon the matter and make no recommendation to the association in your letter in order that messengers from other churches may present this matter to their churches? If this be the way you handle the matters, you are supporting the idea that messengers making up the association are to be the **executive board** to govern, discipline, and regulate church affiliation and fellowship. I cannot believe that our forefathers who first organized such meetings meant that they should be used in this manner. They were aware of the fact that it could easily lead to this. Therefore, safeguards were well written in their first organizations of associations with the hopes of preventing such unscriptural use. We have before us the **Constitution of the Sulphur Fork Primitive Baptist Association** of churches. We shall quote these safe-

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

It is worse to esteem associations higher than the church than to approve of auxiliaries within the church. Question 7, When you travel abroad and you are questioned by Old School or Primitive Baptists relative to your religious affiliation, What is your answer??? If your answer be that you are a member of a certain association, you either esteem your association higher than your church, or, there has been more effort and expense used to make the actions of your association prominent rather than your church. When you give such answer you are aiding the idea that there is some other Christian organization that is perpetual and continuous in its operations other than the church. Question 8, Do you think it necessary that your church belong to an association?? If your answer be YES you aid the idea that the church of your membership is somewhat dependent upon someone other than Jesus Christ as its Head.

I am convinced that associational meetings are a blessing to God as long as churches are blessed to use them as tools for the promotion of bringing more and more of the Lord's little ones into affiliation of one-another. I am

convinced that associations become a curse when they begin investigating, dropping, disciplining, not receiving, and barring from fellowship, churches who have had membership with them. I am convinced that as wealth is a blessing as long as it serves you and becomes a curse when you become its servant: so is an association a blessing as long as churches use it, but becomes a curse when it uses the churches as its servants.

Associations are without scriptural authority to settle difficulties. If difficulties arise in a particular church let us look to the Scriptures which contains the "ONLY RULE OF FAITH AND PRACTICE." If after much fasting, prayer, meditation, and study of the Scriptures; a satisfactory solution cannot be reached, let us, then, call upon a sister church or churches to come and sit with us to aid us in counsel and advice. If the solution is not reached after all this, WHERE ELSE CAN WE GO BUT TO THE LORD? We must patiently wait for His deliverance. Do not disturb the peace of an associational meeting with problems which you together with the combined efforts of sister churches cannot settle. Do not turn your back upon a sister church who is in trouble. True churches of Christ mourn when they are in trouble. Do not tell them that they are in "disorder," and because of this, you cannot affiliate with them. This is the proper time for you to mourn with those who mourn. Do not leave them to themselves because of this disturbance. They need your helping hand. They need the caresses of your love and the manifestation of your fellowship more than before. When the peace of a particular church is disturbed, it is sick. It is in need of your loving care. If a member of that body is afflicted do not tell the body that we will have nothing more to do with you until you cut this member off. This would be like telling a loved one who has an afflicted arm that you will not come to visit him until he has his arm removed. Associations some-

times quickly cut off affiliation and correspondence even without a due course of labor in order to save in fellowship, just over rumors and mis-understandings. These things ought not to be and are unauthorized in the testimony of the Word of God.

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

E. J. Lambert
306 Richardson
Winnsboro, Texas

VOICES OF THE PAST

“He being dead yet speaketh”

1 PETER III. 21.

“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.”

We have in these words a clear statement of the meaning and design of baptism. It is stated to be a figure of the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, and its design is, not to purify either the body from outward defilement or the conscience from sin, but that a good conscience may thus give answer outwardly to the work of God wrought in the heart. A good conscience is one which has been cleansed through faith by the application of the blood of Christ, which alone can purify from all sin.

We have in this text, first, a refutation and condemnation of the perversion which nearly all professing christendom has made of the ordinance of baptism, viz., that it is essential to salvation, in the sense that by baptism souls are regenerated and made fit to be heirs of glory. When vital godliness dies out of any people there straightway comes in formality and ritualism of various sorts, and salvation comes to be no longer ascribed to the death and resurrection of Christ for justification; the new birth of the Spirit is ignored; and salvation and regeneration are held forth as the result of baptism or of other forms and ceremonies. This is true of Romanists, Episcopalians, Campbellites, and is also largely true of Presbyterians and Methodists. Some teach that baptism is essential to final salvation, as an act of obedience, and others teach that baptism is essential to salvation, not merely as an act of obedience to God, but because in baptism the soul is regenerated; without which regeneration no soul can live

eternally with God. It was the declaration of a Romanist preacher centuries ago that the wailing cry of the souls of unbaptized infants is heard throughout the regions of darkness forever. Such souls it is asserted are not in hell, neither can they enter heaven and dwell in the presence of God, therefore they roam, without rest or peace, forever in the regions of darkness. All who believe in infant baptism feel that they must have this ordinance attended to before their children die, else the children will lack something in that other world to which had they been baptized they would have attained. One many years ago said to us that she had lost one child by death which had not been baptized, and she then made a vow that no other child of hers should die without baptism. In reply to the question, "Why, do you think that your child was lost?" she said, "No, but it lacked something in that world which baptism would have secured to it." We could but say to her, "If your child is suffering through your neglect, instead of your suffering for it, where is the justice?"

Because Baptists have always insisted upon baptism as it is taught in the word of God, and have condemned sprinkling or pouring as superstitions of men, and because they have never received such sprinklings and pourings as baptism when members of other professed bodies of Christians have come to them, it has been for centuries charged against them by haters of truth, and believed by foolish and ignorant men, that they believe that baptism is essential to salvation. It has not mattered that they themselves believe and have always taught the contrary, viz., that salvation is essential to baptism. Evil-minded men continue to urge this charge against them, and foolish men believe it. If indeed we do believe that baptism must be received in order to the justification of the soul and to an entrance into the world of glory, unless Baptists do not possess ordinary human sympathy with their fellow-men, we certainly should

be found urging with all solemnity and persistence upon all men the necessity of being baptized; and did we believe this there would never be any question asked of any one who came to us asking baptism; we should only be too much filled with rejoicing that another had come asking for that which would save the soul. It is not we, as Old School Baptists, who believe and teach that one must be baptized if he would be saved, but those who practice sprinkling of infants, and Campbellites, who practice immersion.

Old School Baptists could not believe and teach salvation by ordinances of any kind, because they do believe and teach with all their hearts that salvation is alone through the atonement upon Calvary. They believe that it is the work of Christ for us that saves, and in which we are to trust; and not our work. Baptism by immersion and emersion (into and from) the watery grave is essential to walking obediently in the commandments of the Lord, just as to follow all other commandments which he has given his people is essential to obedience. But obedience to the commandments of the Lord does not justify the sinner, nor secure his abode in heaven; this is secured to him alone by the finished obedience of the blessed Lord. There is no more salvation in baptism than there is in any other act of obedience which we may gladly render in token of our love to him who loved us and died for us. We have not written here of all this with any expectation of silencing the charges of ignorant men to which we have referred, but that our readers who it may be have been disturbed by these false assertions, may have somewhat to reply when they hear such things said.

In the text the apostle uses the expression, "The like figure whereunto, even baptism." Baptism here is asserted by the apostle to be just such a figure of salvation as was the water of the flood by which he declares that Noah and his family were saved. The waters of the flood then were a figure

of salvation; baptism is also a figure of salvation. Let us note that the apostle here did not say that Noah was saved from the water of the flood, but by the water. The ark, into which he was shut, saved him and all with him from destruction by the flood, but here the assertion is that there was a salvation by the water itself. What was that salvation? It appears to us that it could have been but one thing, viz., that by the flood Noah and his family were separated forever from the wicked antediluvian world, or saved from it. The same flood that saved Noah from the former wicked world, at which he vexed himself and against which he preached while preparing the ark, was the destruction of the world of wicked men. Noah was by the flood forever separated from all his former life, so also were the people said to be "baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea," when they passed over dry shod through the water standing as walls of brass on either side, and under the cloud that hovered over them.

True, the word "baptism" always signifies dipping or immersion and emersion, but here the reference of the apostle is not so much to the form of baptism as to the separating work wrought at the Red Sea, by which all Israel was forever separated from Egypt and their former life there, and were shut up to the leadership of Moses. "Separated from Egypt, and separated to Moses." So Noah was by the water of the flood separated from the old world and separated to the new world that appeared after the flood. All this was a figure of that salvation which God works for his people through the finished work of Christ by his death and resurrection. They are in like manner (not figure, but in reality) separated to the Lord and from their former death in sin and ungodliness. Now baptism is here declared to be just such a figure of this salvation in Christ as was the water of the flood. As the antediluvian world became dead to Noah by the flood, and he to it, so through Christ

believers have become dead to their former life, and hope, and bondage, and have been raised up to newness of life, and now live in a new world, with new hopes and desires and blessings; and by the water of baptism they declare this work to have been wrought in them.

As Noah was saved by the work of God wrought in him, separating him from the ungodly world in spirit and feeling before the flood came, so are believers separated from their former life and love by the work of the Spirit in their hearts before they receive baptism. Indeed, had not this work been wrought in the heart of Noah before the time of the flood, salvation by the water of the flood could not have been his. The water of the flood would not have wrought this righteous principle in him, and he would have been after the flood living the life of wickedness that all the world had been doing before. So also if righteousness has not been wrought in the heart of men before baptism, there has been no real separation from others, and the water of baptism is to them but a solemn mockery.

Let us remember that, after all, the apostle declares that there is a salvation in the figure baptism, but this salvation is not that salvation which puts away sin, the filth of the flesh. The apostle declares that this salvation is now, but the putting away of sin is not now; that was accomplished when Jesus died and rose again; he was put to death for our offenses, and was raised again for our justification. Redemption, in the real sense of the word, was finished when Jesus had finished the work which God gave him to do, and was raised again from the dead. So the apostle here connects baptism with the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. "The like figure whereunto, even baptism, doth also now save us by the resurrection of Jesus Christ."

The apostle Paul sets forth the same great truth which is here declared by Peter, in Romans vi. 3, 4: "Know ye not, that so many of us as were bap-

tized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." Here the meaning of the apostle evidently is that by real heartfelt experience of death to sin, and life to holiness and God, we have been baptized into him, and into his death, and therefore we are in water baptism buried with him, and rise therefrom to walk in newness of life. So Peter in the text connects our water baptism with the resurrection of Christ. The resurrection of Christ is his work for us by which we are saved, while we testify to this work as having been wrought in us by being baptized, and this baptism is the answer of a good conscience toward God; it is our confession of what the Lord has done for us in the resurrection of Christ.

Baptism, then, is a form presenting a reality; it is a form, but not an unmeaning form. The ordinances of the house of God appointed in his word are all of them filled with meaning. In them we do not find redemption, or justification, or eternal life, but they all testify of these things. So the supper tells of Jesus' body and blood, upon which we live and by which we are cleansed from sin. Baptism sets forth three special things, according to the testimony of the word. In the first place, it sets forth our faith in the death, burial and resurrection of Christ for our justification and redemption. By our baptism we declare that our hope is in his work for us, finally finished when he died, and witnessed to us by his resurrection from the dead. In the second place, in baptism we declare that it is our hope that we also have become experimentally dead to sin by the body of Christ and alive unto holiness. Dying we are buried, and living again we rise to walk in this newness of life. And, in the third place, as our bodies are

buried in the watery grave, and rise again from it, we declare that our faith is that our bodies are included in the redemption of the Lord Jesus Christ, and that they shall one day also rise as did his crucified body, and be changed into the likeness of his glorified body, and so live forever with him. In these three things are summed up all the principles of truth contained in the gospel of the Son of God.

Lastly, baptism is itself a salvation to all who believe. It does not indeed put away sin, which is the chief part of salvation, but it does separate us from our former lives in and of the world in the sight of all who love God, and indeed in the sight of all men. We are henceforth known as the professed followers of Christ, as those who henceforth do not live as others live, in the vanity of their minds, but as those who live in union with that which pertains to God and godliness. It is a great help to one who loves the Lord, and who has in heart and desire been separated unto the Lord, to have it known by all that this is his hope, and it will, we think, be the testimony of all believers that they have found a help to resist temptation after worldliness by the very fact that they have been baptized in the name of the Lord. Even the world does not expect those who have made this confession to live as they did before, or as the worldly live. There is gain surely when we know that the world no longer expects us to run in the way that we once did; at least we know that in our early life young friends did not, after we were baptized upon confession of our faith, expect us or ask us to join in many things that they did insist upon our doing before. We did find in this sense a salvation in baptism. We doubt not that many have found it so.

(Editorial by Elder F. A. Chick, December 1, 1912.)

When we read this recently it seemed to open up some things we have often pondered over, but did not understand. Hope our readers will enjoy it as much as we did. — J. D. W.)

OBITUARIES

JOHN ELMUS LEMONDS

Brother Lemonds was born April 15, 1878, in Henry County, Tennessee; and was the son of Jerome and Annis Lemonds. In 1906 he married Verne Weak, who passed away in 1911; then in 1913 he married Julia Toombs. Brother Lemonds passed away January 31, 1964, making his stay on earth nearly 86 years.

He is survived by his wife and four children; and fourteen grandchildren, and eight great grandchildren. Also by one sister, and a host of friends.

In 1921 he united with the Primitive Baptist Church, and was baptized by Elder H. N. Oliver. He was appointed Church Clerk at Beaver Dam in September, 1921, and served as Clerk until death. He was well known among the Baptists in this part of the country; and his home was a gathering place for many brethren. He reared a fine family, and filled a good place in the community where he lived. The writer spent many nights in his home. We all miss him, but we feel that our loss is his gain, for we feel that he fell asleep in Christ, and is waiting the glorious resurrection.

The writer conducted the funeral service at the funeral home in Paris, Tennessee, trying to comfort those that mourned by telling of the wonderful grace of God.

Elder R. L. Biggs

NANNIE LOU STOWE

Sister Nannie Lou Stowe was born December 14, 1871, the daughter of Leroy Payne and Lucinda Redd Fallen Payne. She departed this life May 26, 1964.

The following children survive: Mrs. P. G. Crane, Roy T. Stowe, Clarence and Bernard Stowe. Surviving also are one sister, Ola Payne Collins; and one brother, George Payne.

Sister Stowe united with Mt. Ararat Church in May, 1903, and remained a faithful member until death. She fell and injured her hip, and remained in a hospital until the end.

May the Lord comfort her family and loved ones, and we be blessed to say, "Thy will be done, O Lord." The funeral was held at Swicegood Funeral Home by Elder R. S. Payne and Mr. Don L. Truitt, and she was laid to rest in Highland Burial Park. We feel she is asleep, waiting for that beautiful morning when she will awake in His likeness.

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

Done by order of Mt. Ararat Church.

Elder Wallis Smith, Moderator
Elder R. S. Payne, Clerk

MRS. MARY ELIZABETH BAKER

Mrs. Mary Elizabeth Baker, of Marion, Louisiana, was born August 28, 1869, and passed away at a nursing home October 7, 1964, which made her age more than 95 years. She lived a long and useful life, and reared a large family: four sons, Willie, Marion, La.; John, Marion; Jean, Hamburg, Arkansas; and Whit, Marion; four daughters, Mrs. Alice Johnson, Marion; Mrs. Gertie Farrar, Bastrop, La.; Mrs. Jesse Reppond, Marion; and Mrs. Effie Johnson, Crossett, Arkansas. Surviving also are, three brothers: Willie and Bob Day, of Marion, and Ben Day, of Sacramento, California; and 105 grandchildren; 55 great grandchildren; and 5 great great grandchildren.

Sister Baker joined the Primitive Baptist Church at old Good Hope Church, near Oakland, La., many years ago, to which she was very actively devoted, and attended as long as her health permitted. She was held in high esteem by her dear brethren, and was very humble and lovely in the faith which was gloriously manifested in her actions and countenance at the meetings and among the brethren.

May the Lord bless and comfort her dear family, and all those who mourn her passing. She is now free from her sufferings, griefs and sorrows, which she endured so long.

Her funeral was conducted by the writer and a Missionary Baptist minister, and she was buried at old Good Hope Church, where her membership had been so long. There was a very large congregation of friends present, and many beautiful flowers, which was a token of the great respect in which she was held. Many of the old sacred songs which she loved were sung at the funeral.

Yours in sweet hope,
R. W. Rhodes

VINUS A. BOWDEN

Several months have gone by since the death of Vinus A. Bowden at the age of 77 years. He died December 19, 1963, at a hospital in Fulton, Ky. after a few days of treatment. His health had been failing for several months, but he was up and about his small duties of home. He had been a farmer, and a small town merchant, but retired a few years ago. He was born in Obion County, Tennessee, April 22, 1886, the son of William and Leammie Bowden. He had lived for years in Dukedom, Tenn.

He was a strong believer in the doctrine of God the Father, which embraces God's foreknowledge, predestination, special atonement, election of grace, etc. He never joined the church, but was one who was ever present in the meetings, and had a great interest and

love for the truth. His answer was always "I'm not fit," when asked to go to his friends and tell them what his hope was. We who heard him tell his hopes and fears, knew his lovely experience of hope in Jesus as his Saviour for time and eternity.

Funeral services were held at Dukedom by Elders O. W. Perkins, and Elder Paul Poyner.

Survivors include his wife, Bessie Bowden; two sons, Lorenza, of Detroit, Mich., and Whitsel, of Dukedom; and three grandchildren, and two great grandchildren. Also by one brother, Bonnie Bowden, Dukedom, Tenn., and many other relatives.

I hope I am indeed a sister in truth, as well as a sister-in-law.

Effie Bowden
Benton, Ky.

WILLIAM L. TRIPP

Born in September, 1876, he was called from his earthly existence May 28, 1962, making his age 82 years. He was united in marriage to the late Mary Smith in February, 1898; and of this union surviving him are, one son, William L., Jr.; three daughters: Sister Susie Mae Williams, of the home; Sister Betsy Avery, Winterville, N. C.; and Sister Norvella Jackson, Wilmington, N. C. In 1941 he married Pauline Wilson, and of this union surviving him are two daughters, Patsy and Loretta Tripp. Surviving also are eight grandchildren, and seventeen great grandchildren.

His funeral was conducted in Ayden, N. C. by his pastor, Elder A. P. Mewborn, and Elder D. B. Stokes, Jr.

The Lord gave him an experience of grace, and he was received into the church at Hancocks, and baptized into the faith his hope evidenced. He was given to know the weakness of man, and his inability to perform that which the law requires. He was strong in the knowledge that eternal salvation comes to God's children by His abundant mercy alone. He was blessed to see three of his daughters members of the church he loved, and he expressed his comfort to many of the brethren. His last days were full of pain, but he expressed to his pastor several times, his belief that God is able to subdue pain and destroy it, even as he is able to destroy all enemies of the church.

We miss him, but would not have him back to suffer in his carnal existence. Rather, we join him in the hope he expressed, that he is resting in the paradise of God; and we look with anticipation to the day when Jesus will descend from Heaven and gather his children home into that promised land, in which suffering, sorrows, and heartaches cannot enter, but all shall have peace in the glory of God's

presence forever.

Done by order of Conference.

Elder A. P. Mewborn, Moderator
Nina B. McLawhorn, Clerk

WALTER D. WILLIAMS, SR.

God, in his infinite wisdom, has seen fit to remove from our midst our beloved and highly esteemed brother, Walter D. Williams, Sr. He died April 18, 1963, at the age of 84. He was a man of good report: an honor to his family, his church and his community. He was a loving and devoted husband and father, and a true friend and neighbor; and was held in deep respect by those who knew him.

Brother Williams was a firm and steadfast believer in salvation by grace; and his godly walk and conversation in life was proof of this fact. It was a pleasure to see his beaming face radiate the joy he felt at hearing the gospel proclaimed. He united with the church at Hancocks in May, 1917, and was baptized by Elder George W. Stokes, his pastor. He was a faithful attendant, always filling his seat until failing health prevented. He loved his church dearly, and freely contributed to its welfare and upkeep. He was ordained a deacon of Hancocks Church in May, 1918, an office for which he was well qualified, and he faithfully discharged his duties.

We, the Church, have suffered a great loss, but feel that our loss is his eternal gain. We extend our deepest sympathy to the bereaved family, and pray that God will comfort them. May His richest blessing be theirs.

His funeral was preached by Elder A. P. Mewborn, his beloved pastor, assisted by Elder D. B. Stokes, Jr., and by Elder Joseph Sawyer. He was then laid to rest, to await the resurrection, when Jesus is coming to carry his children home.

Done by order of Conference.

Elder A. P. Mewborn, Moderator
Nina B. McLawhorn, Clerk

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

It has been the will of our dear Heavenly Father to call to her eternal rest Sister Laura Burkhalter. She was born in Queen City, Texas, November 29, 1873, to George and Mary Elizabeth Jarmen Burkhalter; and was married September 11, 1898, to M. F. Burkhalter. She departed this life at Tipton, Oklahoma, May 14, 1964.

Her husband, three daughters, and two sons preceded her in death. Survivors include a son, E. B. Burkhalter, Tipton, Oklahoma; five daughters, Mrs. Herman Thompson, Mrs. Tom Hawley, and Mrs. Huston Russel, of Tipton; and Mrs. J. B. Clark and Mrs. Elmer Philips, both of Braumfield, Texas; and by nineteen

grandchildren, and thirty great grandchildren; also by a brother, John Burkhalter, of Palestine, Texas.

Sister Burkhalter was a beloved member of the church, strong in the faith of a Sovereign God. She attended meetings regularly as long as her health permitted. She had many friends, as evidenced by the lovely floral offerings, and large attendance at her funeral. In sadness we wish to bow in humble submission to God's holy will, ever looking to Him for mercy and guidance. To the family and friends, may God comfort and bless you.

RESOLVED, That a copy of this be filed with Little Flock Church; a copy be given the family; and a copy be sent to *The Signs of the Times* for publication.

Done by order of the church June 28, 1964.

Elder C. M. Haygood, Pastor
Ana Stewart, Church Clerk

CHURCH NOTICES

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

HUBERT R. PRINCE, Pastor
967 Maxey, Memphis, Tenn.
HURTON PITTS, Clerk
Sulligent, Ala.

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

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

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 second Sunday at 11 A. M., ten miles West of Fayette, Alabama.

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

E. R. SORRELLS, Pastor

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

H. C. MOON, Pastor

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

O. G. GARVER, Pastor

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

W. A. WILLIAMS, Pastor

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

W. W. HUDSON, JR., Pastor

REHOBETH OLD SCHOOL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, located five miles North of El Dorado, Arkansas and half-mile West of Highway No. 7, meets second Sunday in each month and Saturday before at 11 A. M.

R. W. RHODES, Pastor
W. A. SPEER, Clerk

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

W. A. SPEER, Pastor

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

T. R. JEFFERSON, PASTOR
Myrtle Tipton, Clerk
733 7th St. Hallister, Calif. 95023

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

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

W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor

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

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

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

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

SALEM OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, located at 5th and East Park Street, Weiser, Idaho, meets each 4th Sunday at 11 o'clock. Address any communications to:

ERNEST J. ATTEBERY, Pastor
FLOSSIE ATTEBERY, Clerk
Rt. 1, Box 202,
Hermiston, Oregon 97838

PLEASANT VALLEY OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Kingman, Kansas. Meets with Mrs. Verda Machesney, 516 E. Avenue C, each second month — January, March, etc. on the first 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 and Denton 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.

R. L. BIGGS, Pastor

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

O. W. PERKINS, Pastor

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

W. D. GRIFFIN, Pastor

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

JOHN D. WOOD, Pastor

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

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

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

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

THE WARWICK OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Warwick, Orange County, New York, holds monthly services on each fourth Sunday, from March to, and including, the fourth Sunday in November. The meetings are at 10:30 A. M. DST.

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

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

A. J. SLAUSON, Pastor

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.

MRS. BETTIE RICHARDSON, Clerk

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. HAGGOOD, Pastor
NINA STALLINGS, Clerk
Rt. 2, Box 54
Altus, Okla.

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 each 5th Sunday from May through September, with all day meeting the 1st Sunday in May; and meets at Needmore, Pa., on 5th Sundays from October through April, with all day meeting the 2nd Sunday in October.

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

THE PREDESTINARIAN BAPTISTS, Memphis, Tennessee, meet in the Primitive Baptist Church, on Andrews Road in Ellendale, about a block from Highway 70, each Sunday at 10:30 A. M.

H. G. BROWN, Pastor
791 Watson Street
H. R. PRINCE, Ass't. Pastor
HAROLD TONEY, 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.
J. B. JONES, Clerk
Rt. 1, Martin, Tenn.

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

R. L. BIGGS, Pastor

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

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

SHEPHERD FOLD CHURCH, Houston,

Texas, meets each first Sunday and Saturday before 10:30 A. M. Church is located at 815 Little York Road between Highway 75 and East Texas Freeway 59.

C. M. HAYGOOD, Pastor
IRENE WISENBAKER, Clerk

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

JOE L. HAMRICK, Pastor
BESSIE CHAMBERS, 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 PREDESTINARIAN BAPTISTS, Rising Star, Texas, meets each second Sunday at 11 A. M. and Saturday before at 2 P. M.

C. Y. OSTEEEN, Pastor

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

LELA CULPEPPER, Clerk

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

SAINTS REST OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Dallas, Texas, meets each first and third Sunday at 11 A. M., at 2710 Engle Street.

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

MT. ZION OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CHURCH, Cash, Texas, meets each fourth Sunday at 11 A. M., and Saturday afternoon before at 2:30. And second Sundays at 11:00.
W. W. TAYLOR, Pastor

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

PARON, meets first Sunday mornings and Saturday night before, F. M. Road 2659, N. E. Hawkins, Texas.

H. H. FAULK, CLERK
Rt. 1, Hawkins, Texas

HOPEWELL, meets first Sunday mornings and Saturday afternoon before, seven miles S. W. of Winnsboro, Texas.

J. J. MILLS, Clerk
Rt. 2, Winnsboro, Texas

BETHEL, meets third Sunday mornings and Saturday morning before, near U. S. 67, seven miles N. E. of El Dorado, Arkansas.

MRS. JEAN BURNS, Clerk
Rt. 3, Box 210B,
El Dorado, Ark.

GOOD HOPE, meets fourth Sunday mornings and Saturday afternoon before, seven miles N. E. of Winnsboro, Texas.

MRS. GERTRUDE JONES, Clerk
905 Y Drive,
Winnsboro, Texas

All lovers of Sovereign Grace Principles especially invited.

ELDER E. J. LAMBERT, Pastor
Phone, Code 214 Dickens 2-6742,
Winnsboro, Texas 75494

The churches composing the Virginia Corresponding Meeting meet as follows:

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

ARTHUR L. CARTER, Clerk
Manassas, Va.

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

and

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

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

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

MRS. DAVID FARNIE, Clerk
Leesburg, Va.

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

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

JOHN D. WOOD, Pastor

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

C. N. BUNN, Pastor

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

R. S. PAYNE, Pastor

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

D. V. SPANGLER, Pastor

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

W. R. DODD, Pastor

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

HOWARD EASON, Pastor

BETHEL PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH, of Predestinarian Faith, of Riffe, Washington, meets each 3rd Sunday and Saturday before at 11 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 10:30 A. M. each second Sunday at the home of one of the members living in Naches. Those interested will please contact the clerk.

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

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

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

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 133

DANVILLE, VA., FEBRUARY, 1965

NO. 2

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 2/65
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

"GOD WORKS BOTH TO WILL
AND TO DO"

"Wherefore, my brethren, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." (Phil. 2:12-13)

I have read the above many times but never saw so much in them as I did a few days ago; and, if it is God's will, I would love to tell the good news, but I feel my weakness so much that I fear to try, and I may just hint at the matter.

The world uses this to urge people to accept Christ, and work so that He will bless them in salvation; and conditional people say it is time salvation which God has left for us to work out so as to receive the blessings He has stored in Christ for us. Both are opposite to the truth: There is no such thing as conditional salvation, or conditional time salvation. All the time salvation we will ever know, is the effect and influence of eternal salvation which we experience in this world.

"Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling." How are weak, sinful beings to work out any kind of salvation? God has saved us with eternal salvation, and there is nothing we

can add or take from it: it is secure and cannot fail. Most people tell us that God has worked it in us, and has left us to work it out. But they do not tell us how to go about it — God has gone with us to a certain "stake", then left us to obey and follow Christ and receive the blessings; or disobey and lose them. This implies that we are able of ourselves to do this work: the blessings are there, just obey and reach out and take them; yet we are not told what these blessings are, nor the benefit we get from them. They forget that Christ said, "Without me ye can do nothing."

It is by the leading and strength of Christ that we do these things. If we had strength of our own to do these things, where would be the fear and trembling? We would go boldly at the work, trusting in ourselves and forgetting God; and never would think of giving Him any glory. But He has arranged that when we work out this salvation in His strength, we realize that it is the work of the Spirit leading us; and we are humbled at his feet and give him the glory. Where does the fear and trembling fit in? When we are led by the Spirit in obedience, we often fear that we are prompted by the flesh, which would not be to God's glory. But when His love reigns in our hearts, and we are led of the Spirit, we want to live for His glory; want to praise Him for what he has, and is doing for us. And this is without the least thought of reward or recompense, *for He has done it*. It is for the great love we have for Him, knowing that we do not deserve his notice, not to mention his love — and deserve nothing for obedience. In James 1:25, he says, ". . . this man shall be blessed in his deed"; in his

deed, not for it.

How many have stopped to think what this blessing is? Not many. He is blessed by the leading and strength of the Spirit to obey and follow Christ, for without this strength and leading, we would never do these things. It is not a blessing to be received for and after obedience, but blessed in being led to do these things.

"For it is God which worketh in you *both to will and to do of his good pleasure.*" How blind can a child be? Some say we do not always do when the will is worked in us. What kind of a God are they worshiping? God's word has never gone out from him void, but always accomplishes that for which it is sent. Take time to think; and notice it is said God works both the will and the do: He works one as effectively as the other; one as sure as the other — they work together and cannot be separated. Please, just why would He work the will, if He did not work the do with it?

The scripture says that He works all things according to his will, and does all his pleasure. Could it be supposed that his pleasure is done in working the will in us, if we failed to do that which He willed? As sure as the will is worked in us, the do follows. Now, what is this will which He works in us, if it is not love? It is brought about by our love for him; and this love begets a desire to do his bidding. This love and desire we cannot and do not want to disobey, for our whole desire is to do all we can to praise and honor Him. Now, if God works the will and do of his good pleasure, can anyone deny that He is going to reap his good pleasure by leading us in obedience for Christ's sake, and His glory?

It is often denied that we will walk in all the good works which God before ordained that we should walk, (Ephesians 2:10) and that we will receive all the spiritual blessings with which He has blessed us with in heavenly

places in Christ. (Ephesians 1:2-4) These good works were before ordained, and we were created unto these good works in the covenant of grace, or election, before the world was created — before we were born. We were not created unto these good works *if we are obedient*; but we were ordained to walk in them. Please, O, please explain how the great holy, sinless Sovereign of all things, could be so weak, ignorant or careless as to ordain anything, and then not bring it to pass? "As I have thought so shall it come to pass, and as I have purposed so shall it stand."

He has blessed us with all spiritual blessings before the foundation of the world. Did He know what he was doing? — He hath blessed us, not will bless with all spiritual blessings. How many are these all? — all that he saw in eternity that we would need; all that He intended for us — not one missing, and none too many. These are given us in time, as he purposed in that covenant. "According as He has chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." Can we be holy and without blame if we should fail in anything He has purposed for us to do?

If this is of the Lord, I hope it may be comforting to some of His little ones who are hungering, and asking the way to Zion with their faces thitherward.

George W. Jackson
1884 Connally Drive,
East Point, Ga. 30044

GREETINGS FROM
ELDER BARNES

Rt. 1, Box 119,
Stantonsburg, N. C. 27883

Greetings to the Household of Faith,
Old School Predestinarian Baptists:

This year is fast coming to a close, and none of us knows what the future holds. All that we know is past, or

present. In my fifty-three years as a member of the Primitive or Predestinarian Baptists, I have enjoyed the happiest, and the saddest days of my life. I am sure that you who have tasted the goodness and mercy of our God, can witness with the testimony of the prophets and the apostles, and our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, that we are pilgrims and strangers in a strange land. This world is not our home; we have no abiding city here, but we seek a city that hath foundations, whose maker and builder is God.

I am made to realize, my dear brethren, that my race is almost at an end. Of course, I do not know when the end will be with me, but according to the average life of men, I cannot expect to remain on earth more than a few more years. God has been good to me; and He still is. Oh! if I could but praise his name forever. But I have fallen so short of living to the Christian standard. I have to go weeping and mourning. When I am blessed to think upon the name of the Lord and his wonderful love and mercy which he has bestowed upon me a hell deserving sinner, it makes me hang my head in shame: to think that the Lord of glory had to suffer on the cross in my room and stead; that is, if I am a vessel of mercy which God afore prepared unto glory.

He took my sins and yours, if we are the children of God. Though I have a precious hope, sometimes I doubt and fear, and often ask myself the question, "Do I love the Lord, or no? am I his or am I not?"; that is a point I long know, with the poet, "Oft it causes anxious thought." I am so imperfect that almost all I do, or think, or say is wrong. "Oh! is there any one like me?"

Dear brethren, I confess I am a poor, unlearned man, but I believe there is a God in heaven, who has by the word of his power created this world, or universe; and inhabited it with people, animals, fowls, insects, and every living thing for his own glory. There was not

a man to help in any way whatsoever, for man was the last thing that God made. I believe that God in the annals of eternity, before the creation, foresaw everything in his infinite wisdom that he would bring to pass in the process of time, from the beginning of the creation to the final consummation of all things. I believe that God chose his people (his church) in Christ before the creation; that He saw the fall of man (Adam); and that he made provision for the redemption of all saints in Christ Jesus long before the first sin was committed. And, inasmuch as the church spiritually was in Christ before the world was, Adam, being a type of Christ, and Eve his bride being in him, was a type of the Church in Christ before the world was.

Some have asked me if God did not have a purpose in sin entering into the world, and my answer is and has been, Yes. Then they ask if God did not make sin. My answer to that is, No. Sin is something that was not made, but was and is the act of the creature. Some say that God made them to sin. But I find that one of the writers in the New Testament said that God cannot be tempted with evil; neither tempteth he any man. But somebody wants to know what is God's purpose in sin. Elder Griffin mentioned in an Editorial some time ago that the wicked are the sword of the Lord. Now the first cause of wickedness is sin. Dear brethren, as I see it, God's purpose in sin entering into the world was that He would make his power known unto the vessels of mercy afore prepared unto glory. (Read Romans ninth chapter.) Had sin not entered the world there would have been no sinners to be saved from sin. So this was God's way of manifesting his power in his love and mercy upon the vessels of mercy. God will have mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth. "Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God."

Man in nature has never been satisfied to do God's will, for in the dead

state of nature he has never known the Lord God of heaven, nor his Son Jesus Christ. Only those know him to whom Christ is revealed; and revelation comes to man by spiritual birth. Jesus in the third chapter of John told Nicodemus that except a man be born again he could not see the kingdom of heaven. And on the occasion when Jesus asked his disciples whom men said that He was, some said one thing and some another. So it is today. But Jesus asked, "Whom do ye say that I am," and Peter answered, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." And Jesus said to him, "Blessed art thou Simon Barjona, for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee but my Father which is in heaven." So we see that the spiritual birth is through and by the revealed power of God in man.

Elder W. B. Barnes

THINGS DIFFICULT TO EXPRESS

924 First Street, S. W.,
Roanoke, Virginia.

Dear Brethren:

This attempt is one of several I have made in ten years or more, and it seems I am less prepared than ever to write, but I have the desire to tell of some of my experiences. From a child I have enjoyed reading the experiences of others in Primitive Baptist publications; and I know it is difficult to express in words the beauty of revelations.

At the age of thirteen while on the way to the milking-gap with a younger sister, we stopped at a mulberry tree and my sister was eating some of the ripe berries; and asked me if I wanted some. I was standing under the tree, and when I looked up the berries had become invisible to me. I heard a voice say, "There are none for you." And I asked, "Why is this?" and a voice answered, "It is to remind you that you are in the deepest of sorrow." I became frightened and did not speak, but went hurriedly across the creek nearby; then I stopped and wondered what

my sister would think. I waited for her, and we walked on, but she had not noticed anything unusual; and I was glad.

My parents were members of Reed Creek Church, Henry County, Virginia, and I enjoyed going with them to the meetings, for I liked to hear the singing, but did not get much out of the preaching. They told me of the Bible, and said to read it and *Pilgrims Progress*, but not to read dime novels. I sometimes heard my older sisters speak of stories they had read in novels, but I could never become interested in them. Often I heard my parents read from *Zion's Landmark*, and I sometimes attempted to read, but I did not have much understanding. I thought the experiences usually expressed that they were most miserable, and I felt I did not want to be a part of those people, but wanted to remain a happy child, as I thought I was. So when the above experience came to me at the age of thirteen, I was grieved because I felt I was giving up something.

I had a vivid dream about this time. I saw a very black cloud which seemed to be as low as the tree tops, and near the same path as the mulberry tree; and Christ was in the cloud robed in a deep red garment. There was just a bust view, and there was a frown on his forehead. I told my mother about these things once when there was a storm which had flattened the corn, and much water was on the ground; and I asked her what we must do. She said, "Look to the Lord." I have always remembered that, and along through life I have felt the need to "look to the Lord."

I had a sister two years older than I, she was epileptic but a very sweet, cheerful person, and very active. She sang hymns and was happy. She told mother once of seeing a light, (you know the type of light she meant); I was away from home when she departed this life at the age of twenty-three, but I had a vision of a bed made up with a white silken bedspread, and there

was a wreath of small flowers around the edge, and I saw these words, "A little flower that blooms; I showeth it here, but not forever." Then I was comforted.

One Sunday afternoon I was lying across my bed asleep; I awoke and heard a noise, and as I looked to see what it was, the wall in front of me was disappearing and Christ was walking through the wall towards me. He was wearing silvery silken robes, and I knew the noise I heard was the rustling of the robes. This was very clear to me. At the side of the room he turned to the right, walking across the room; and a stairway appeared. At the bottom of the stairway he picked up a large book from the post, and slowly walked up the steps, turning, and then disappeared. I thought that by him taking the book away, it meant that he was the Book of Life. When a child I heard my mother speak of the Book of Life, and I would imagine that she meant a large size book; and I had often wondered about that book.

One morning I awoke at five o'clock, (for a reason, I hope); it was a bright, sunny morning, and I went to the window and knelt down and looked out. Never before had everything looked so heavenly and beautiful to me: "Behold all things have become new." The street and walk looked bright and smooth; the rows of small sycamore trees on each side of the street looked exactly alike, and the leaves all the same size, bright and all twittering. This was a happy hour; everything seemed to be praising God. Since then I heard a minister say in his discourse, "Wouldn't you have loved to stayed there?", and I thought back to that glorious day, and my answer to myself was, Yes. "How sweet the name of Jesus sounds in a believer's ear." I believe the morning I looked out the window was the day and time I was born again, or received the spiritual birth. It was fourteen years after I first heard the "still small voice". After all these beautiful things, it seemed I was

pursued by Satan, and was tempted; and for awhile seemed to follow after sinful ways. I was troubled, and prayed for some evidence once again that I had been pardoned; and I found sweet deliverance in a vision of several birds the size of pigeons that were flying with folded wings, for I thought this meant there was a power that made them fly with folded wings. This gave me renewed hope.

While living in Pennsylvania, I came on a visit to Roanoke, Virginia; and my husband, my seventeen months old daughter, and I went to the Roanoke Church. Elder Stegall was the pastor then, and it seemed he preached to me that day. When he announced there was to be a baptizing, I was moved to go and say to him that I wanted to go along and be baptized. After I was asked some questions, and related part of what I have written, I was received. With several others I was baptized by Elder J. P. Helms. He spoke of baptism being a symbol of the resurrection; and it was all so beautiful — the happiest day of my life. After going back to our home in Pennsylvania, it was a long time before we found a church at Clarks Summit, and we enjoyed going there. I am now living in Roanoke, Virginia; my husband passed away in October, 1958.

I feel I could write on an on, for I have had other visions and dreams, and feel the half has not yet been told. I, being the fourteenth of fifteen children, have had many trials, and many blessings.

In precious hope of eternal life,
Myrtle Cahill Gillette

(It was necessary for us to condense the above for publication — we regret the delay in including it in the *Signs*. — J. D. W.)

301 Rives Road, Martinsville, Va.
Mr. Wm. O. Wammack
234 South Park St.
Anchorage, Alaska.
% Signs of the Times

Dear Brother Wammack:

Your much appreciated article appearing in the *Times* has attracted my attention and as you invited anyone to write that felt to, I will endeavor to write a few lines with the thought that you may be comforted. Your Language indicates that you are one of the Blessed to whom Jesus addressed his remarks when on the Mount, saying, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness for they shall be filled."

You addressed your letter to "Friends," you addressed it correctly, for the things of God are hidden from servants but not to the friends of Christ. You speak of being weak and needy, a worm of the dust and a hunger for spiritual things. This is indicative of and experimental of a child of God who has been taught of that "Other Comforter" whom Jesus said he would pray the Father to send.

Therefore I address you as Brother, and anything that I may be blest to say to you will be of equal value to the Household of Faith, as we are all children of the Heavenly King if we possess the Hope of eternal Salvation. There are many Christians, no doubt, that do not belong to an organized Church. There may be many that are church members who have never experienced a change of heart. However it is a duty enjoined upon the Children who have been quickened to "Go home to thy friends and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee." It is also a becoming thing and righteous act to be baptized as Jesus was in Jordan. There is no other way to enter the (church) Kingdom. It requires a new birth (spiritual) to see the Kingdom but you must be born (brought forth) of water and the Spirit (the invisible) to enter into it. "Marvel not . . ." Jesus says at these things. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." What do we poor mortal men know about such marvelous operations of the Spirit of

almighty God? Not a thing as long as we are natural, but must say with Nicodemus, "How can a man be born again when he is old?", but we that are spiritual, who have been born of that incorruptible seed that liveth and abideth forever, see by an eye of faith and feel in our hearts that a mighty work has been wrought, and say with one of old, ". . . one thing I know, that, whereas I was blind, now I see." That one who uttered these words had been a poor blind beggar all his life but now he could say, "If this man (Jesus) were not of God, he could do nothing." He had heard the voice of Jesus. Brother Wammack, we believe that you have heard that small still voice and are alive, for you spoke of the beauty of God's creation. Silas Durand spoke of his "winter's gloom" when void of spirit, but describes the wondrous "change in me" when the voice of his Beloved spake to him. We quote from page 249, Lester & Durand Hymnal:

"The power and sweetness of that voice,
Wrought wondrous change in me:
Made my poor heart rejoice,
And fears and sorrows flee.

In sweet amazement I came forth;
What wonders met my eyes!
Spring's glorious beauty on the earth,
Her radiance in the skies.

Grace fills the garden of the Lord,
With blooming joys from heaven
The warm south wind is in that word,
Which shows my sins forgiven."

Religion, truly, is a revelation from heaven. No wonder Christ could say, "It is the work of God that you believe on him whom he hath sent." God sent his darling Son "in the fulness of time" to redeem "his people" from their sins. His people were the subjects of his choice that he made back in the far distant past before the dust of the highest hills were laid or the morning stars sang together. God the Father and God the Son held a council meeting together and the will of the Father was made known to the Son; that his love was so great for some of Adam's race, yet to be born, that a price of their redemption must be paid. The price of

their redemption was to be the blood of his Son; "For without the shedding of blood there is no remission of sins." Had it not been for the blood of Jesus we would still be in our sins, we would die in our sins and never see God's face in glory. But thanks be unto God who giveth us the victory thru our Lord Jesus Christ, we are free. His blood has cleansed us from all unrighteousness. He said, "If I make you free you are free indeed."

We are free because the blood of Christ satisfied divine justice and set us poor hell-deserving sinners free. Our sins and iniquities shall never rise in the day of Judgment to condemn us, for God can see the finished product and we stand in his sight just as pure, white and clean as we will in the last day.

John, the Revelator, saw a river, "A pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb, in the midst of the street of it and on either side of the river was the tree of life." Someone has said that it was coming from a mighty good place. That is true. But this river is different from any other river that was ever beheld by the natural eye. To me, this pure, clear river represents the stream of time, and as it is the water of life it represents all living. The tree of life in the midst of it represents Jesus Christ. This tree was in the garden of Eden and later declared to be in the Paradise of God, but as God fills the immensity of space, Jesus has ever been with the Father and the Saviour of his people. Being in the midst of the Street of it, and reaching back to righteous Abel on one side, and to the last heir of promise, on the other, this tree bears its fruit every month, which indicates that it is always in season: all our sufficiency is in him. Even the leaves, that which is cast off, is good for something: for the healing of the nations. The nations are sick with a deadly disease. Sin is the deadly disease of the nations and will bring about death to all living, but the gospel speaks of another life that is eternal for the child of God.

This new life is in his Son and he gives it to whomsoever he will. "I give unto them eternal life and they shall never perish." Bless his holy name! There is no other name as sweet as Jesus to the new-born babe in Christ. "It soothes his sorrows, heals his wounds and drives away his fear."

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

With Christian love and fellowship to you, Brother Wammack, and to the Household of Faith, I beg to remain,

Yours in hope of eternal life,
(Elder) P. E. Ingram

CIRCULAR LETTER

The Virginia Corresponding Meeting, in session with the Mt. Zion Church at Mt. Zion Meeting House October 14 and 15, 1964, sends greetings in the Lord to the churches and associations with which we correspond;

Dear Brethren:

With much fear and trembling I endeavor to fulfill the task placed upon me, being fully persuaded that of myself I am nothing, and can do nothing, but only by the grace of God through our Lord Jesus Christ; to whom be glory forever.

In truth the Lord shall supply our needs according to the measure of his most sufficient grace. We do not know what we shall do or say until the appointed hour wherein He makes himself manifest in the hearts of those whom He has chosen from the foundation of the world, according to his purpose which pleased him.

It is our desire to always give all praise, honor, and glory to Him that is most worthy to receive, since He works all things, times, and events, being the creator of all that is created.

We find in Psalms 135:5-6, "For I know that the Lord is great, and that our Lord is above all gods. Whatsoever the Lord pleased that did he in heaven,

and in earth, in the seas, and all deep places." It is then fitting to say that by his own pleasure he has of his own will established all things, to his own glory. Of this we are made confident; and by our own experience are made witnesses one to another, and have that holy love which abounds in our hearts by the Holy Ghost given unto us. We have also been left a testimony of his wondrous and marvelous works as recorded in the Holy Writ, declaring that our witness is not of ourselves, but of him that "doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand." (Daniel 4:35)

We can never walk with, nor share with those that would attempt to limit, conditionalize, or reckon with the purpose and pleasure of the Almighty Creator. It is not for us to question the whys or wherefores of matters, but rather to rejoice in the grace and mercy of the allwise, all powerful, and ever present Creator, being not dismayed by the presence of the tormentor and his evil temptations and delusions, and are fully persuaded that these things must needs be, and that in them we are sorely taught that our deliverance is of the most high God, through Jesus Christ; who was delivered by the will of the Father as the perfect sacrifice for those who were written by name in the Lamb's Book of Life from the foundation of the world.

The chosen vessels are made subject to perfect love by the will of him who called whom he would; and these who are called by grace, are sealed, and "kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time." (1 Peter 1:5) We often have our doubts, yet we know that God knows his own, and that their calling is assured and absolute.

We desire to praise Him because he is God, and wills it so. We commend not ourselves but have hope of love and understanding towards one another, to the glory of God. We find in 2nd Corin-

thians: 3, that we need not commend ourselves one to another by epistles written of men, but we find the epistle of Christ "written not with ink, but with the Spirit of God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshly tables of the heart."

Brethren, our heart's desire is that God's grace, mercy, and love abound towards you all, according to his will, which he purposed in, of, by, for and to himself, because it pleased him. Pray for these things, the Lord willing.

In sincere love,
B. K. Smith

5501 56th Street,
Sacramento, Calif. 95820

Dear Editors:

I see my expiration date was sometime ago, please forgive my negligence. I am sure I haven't missed a copy; but I can't say, as some of your correspondents do, that I read it through the day I get it: there was a time in my earlier years when I did. Nor can I truthfully say that I have agreed with every article of every issue since I have been reading it, but I am thankful that I have been privileged to read it for most of my half-century of life.

Effie Bowden has a wonderful article in the October issue. I remember her letters in the *Signs* over a period of many years.

Enclosed is a money order to bring me up to date, and for two years longer. I would that I had the faith that Whittier had when he penned a beautiful poem, the name of which I have forgotten. Two of the verses I remember strike me as being as sound as anything I have ever read:

"More than your schoolmen teach; alas
Within myself I know
Too dark you cannot paint the sin;
Too small the merit show.

"I know not where His islands lift
Their fronded palms in air:
I only know I cannot drift
Beyond His love and care."

Humbly yours,
Herman W. Buckner

Rt. 1,
Benton, Ky. 42025

Dear Editors:

Enclosed is a check for \$5.00 — three for my renewal and two to use as you desire. I am past eighty-three years old and am living alone. I enjoy reading the *Signs* for it is good news from a far country, and all speak the same language; and give God all the praise, honor and glory. None say that we must accept Christ before he can save us.

Paul said in the Ephesian letter: "To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath *made* us accepted in the beloved." And Christ said, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you." etc. (John 15:16)

My father, Elder J. M. Perkins, took the *Signs* as far back as I can remember; and my husband and I have been subscribers for over thirty years, and we enjoyed it very much. Now that I am alone, though I deeply feel that I am not worthy of such blessing, I hope to be able to read it the remainder of my life.

May God richly bless and enable you to carry on the good work of publishing the *Signs of the Times*. Please remember me in your prayers.

In hope of a better life,
Mrs. C. H. Lock

NOTE OF THANKS

Sister Adline Fertney, of Route 2, Box 344, Vienna, Virginia, desires to express her appreciation of the many letters and cards she has received from brethren and friends during her illness. She is yet quite ill and is grateful that the friends think of her.

— J. D. W.

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BUSINESS OFFICE

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

Elder David V. Spangler

R. F. D. 1, Box 539, Beechwood Lane
Danville, Virginia

Elder John D. Wood

P. O. Box 186, Manassas, Va.

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Elder W. D. Griffin

39 Welsh Tract Road, Newark, Delaware

Elder E. J. Lambert

306 Richardson St., Winnsboro, Texas

Elder George Ruston

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EDITORIAL

MATT. 8:1, 4; LEV. 14:1, 7

"When he was come down from the mountain, great multitudes followed him. And, behold, there came a leper and worshipped him, saying, Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean. And Jesus put forth his hand, and

touched him, saying, I will; be thou clean. And immediately his leprosy was cleansed. And Jesus saith unto him, See thou tell no man; but go thy way, shew thyself to the priest, and offer the gift that Moses commanded, for a testimony unto them."

"And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, This shall be the law of the leper in the day of his cleansing: he shall be brought unto the priest: and the priest shall go forth out of the camp; and the priest shall look, and, behold, if the plague of leprosy be healed in the leper; then shall the priest command to take for him that is to be cleansed two birds alive and clean, and cedar wood, and scarlet, and hyssop: and the priest shall command that one of the birds be killed in an earthen vessel over running water: as for the living bird, he shall take it, and the cedar wood, and the scarlet, and the hyssop, and shall dip them and the living bird in the blood of the bird that was killed over the running water: and he shall sprinkle upon him that is to be cleansed from the leprosy seven times, and shall pronounce him clean, and shall let the living bird loose in the open field."

Even to the carnal mind there is a great fascination in the beauty of the prophetic kingdom of heaven. Oftimes we are enraptured by the allegories, similes, comparisons, that the divine inspiration has used to clothe His language in, and to tell us of what is to come. But this carnal mind can not know Him that has done this gracious work for the benefit of those that love the name of The Lord Our Righteousness. The coordination and the correlation, while fields in which carnal professors excel, will never be seen by them until their mind is illuminated by the light of the Holy Spirit.

Leprosy is more to be dreaded than cancer. Like cancer, if unchecked, it will eat away the human body. It will never be cured from within; in fact, it is doubtful that it has ever been cured

from without, as it is doubtful if cancer has ever been completely cured. When once it gains a foot hold in the body it will get worse until death is the result. The ability to attack and rout it from the body from within is not known in medical science. How fitting is the disease to compare it with sin. As it is with sin, one may have it a long time without any realization of its presence in the body. It is as sneaky as sin, but not as deadly as sin, for, while leprosy may, and, without outside medicine, will, destroy the body, sin will, without outside cure, destroy both soul and body.

It is a good thing when it is discovered in the body. As soon as it is discovered, there is immediately a seeking for outside help. This help is not sought by those that do not have the symptoms of the disease. Just as sure as a sinner finds out that he has leprosy there will be a seeking set in, and it will continue as long as he has the disease, which is as long as he is in the body. The disease may show in a sinner before he becomes aware of its presence, that is, its presence and deadly work may be apparent to those that have already known the disease. As long as they do not know it, there will never be a seeking for cure; as long as they do not know its presence there will never be any anxiety about its devastating work. *There will not be any seeking and anxiety as long as one does not have a knowledge of the presence of sin.* (Rom. 3:11, 16; John 5:40), but when it is revealed unto sinners that they do have sin, there will never be a cessation of seeking, there will never be a time when free from anxiety.

At the time of the opening of the text a leper came to him. How my wretched and sinful heart is made to leap for joy at this news. One who has no communion with Israel because of his uncleanness; one who is an outcast, and that is ready to perish (Isaiah 27:13), by the coming of Jesus, now has access to the dispensary of

grace, there to receive all of that which cleanses. This disease was looked upon as God's displeasure, none had the right to heal it except God (2 Kings 5:7). They had been shut out from all religious and even civil communion from the house of Israel. As only the priest in type could come in contact with leprosy, cure it, and he be immune to its contagion, just so, in the same manner, could Jesus cure sin, and yet be immune to its deadliness fastening itself to him. This world "behold" is not put in the Book to make it larger, but it is put therein to call attention to the precious doctrine that the priest without beginning of days, nor end of life, is at hand to cure his people of all their sicknesses and diseases.

This poor sinner is the fit representative of every sinner that has ever come begging for mercy. He that taught him that he had the disease has also taught him where to go. He has faith to believe in the power of Jesus as the One that cleanses his people. He is one that believes that whatsoever his soul desires that Jesus will do. There is not any doubt in the mind of this sinner about Jesus doing his will, but he also knows that he is not an object to be thus loved. The disease has come to light: it has brought with it the terrible odor of putrifying flesh; it shows the outcast condition of the leper; it brings out the terrible and grotesque features of one who has become a victim of the workings of this deadly disease. "*If thou wilt, thou canst.*" Not any question in the mind of this sinner (as well as those that have been taught at the same source), that whatever His will is concerning him, that He is able to carry it out. Sinner reader, have you found out as much?

I am carried away in sweet meditation as I write to think that the Lord has given sinners the Lord Jesus Christ; that he has opened to them access to this grace, which access is operated by the faith of God's elect, which is wholly given them from the Lord,

and is not predicated upon their exercising the faith, but that all of their enjoyment, and all of their access to it, is by and through them being exercised by the faith. Whatever a sinner asks God in the name of Jesus Christ, that sinner will get. The carnal mind will get impatient and ask, "Has he forgot, has he gone on a journey?" but not so with them that ask in Jesus' name. That which is asked for is received; no more, no less.

He has not asked in vain. As with other characters, his faith has saved him (Matt. 9:22; Mark 5:34; Luke 8:48; 17:19; 7:50; 18:42). Since the faith is the gift of God (Eph. 2:8), this salvation, this coming to Christ, this asking, is all to the praise of his grace. Immediately Jesus put forth his hand, and touched him, saying, "I will; be thou clean." Instantaneous with the reaching forth of his hand, he talked to him; equally so, the cleansing took effect. Unbelief would say what else needs to be done? Unbelief would say, if you are cleansed from sin, it does not matter from here out. Unbelief would say, that nothing more is required of them thus cleansed. Let us see.

If we love God we will keep all of his commandments. The throwing out this or that; ignoring this commandment or that; the substituting of the many chimney corner scriptures for the Bible, all of this shows whether we know much about leprosy (sin) or not. It shows whether we have come to him as the Priest or to a priest that we will have to visit again at the end of a year. The direction is simple but it is rigid and thorough. See that you do not tell a man. You do not have any right to talk to any in Israel until after you see the priest, and he has pronounced you clean.

Why did the Saviour tell him to show himself to the priest? why did He tell him to offer the gift that Moses commanded? We must remember that He honored Him to whom honor was due.

He came from His Father. While He was accused of breaking the law, he did not. The law was just and holy and good; it came from God. He came under the law. He did not come to break that law, but he did come to fulfil it. His sending him to the priest was in full recognition of that law. The commandment of Moses was in full force here, but it is reckoned as a gift. And such it is, if we are blessed of God to meditate upon it.

Have you seen the effects of sin in your members? Have you felt the infiltration of sin through and through every part of your being? If so, it has reduced you to despair, and revealed to you how helpless that you were, and how that you needed somebody to carry you to cure. Let us look in on this case. May it please God that we find ourself and find comfort for ourself. The law of a leper was that he be brought to the priest, not that he decided to come, but that One decide and bring him. This law, whether for leprosy as a disease, or for sin as its anti-type, has never been changed. It will be noted that this interview was outside the camp. The cure for leprosy can not be carried on in the camp of Israel; the cure for sin is not to be carried on in the church, for it is not a reformatory. The priest, whether under the law for leprosy, or under grace for sin, must, and always does, meet the victim outside the camp. There is not anything said about how far he is to go to meet the victim. Christ went far and near; he did not say anything about it being too far.

Precious reader, it attacks first in the hand. Have you found the sign in your palm? As you looked on what you thought was a hand showing good health, did it cause uneasiness to find that spot that betrayed you? Until this did take place you did not go to the priest. Not once did you go. Suppose that you had gone? What would he have thought? What would he have said? But when it showed in the palm

of your hand that you had that dreaded sin, then you did go to the priest. Not one has ever failed to go; not one has ever been failed by the love of God in carrying them to the priest. He examines it. He looks with that keen perception. You feel the scrutiny of those penetrating eyes. You writhe under the gaze. You know what the verdict will be, for you have seen your hands as unclean; you have felt the inward ruination of the silent work. But wait a moment. Is he not going to condemn you? Is he not going to continue the separation? Is he not going to leave you to continue a victim of the dreaded malady? No, no, not that at all.

This cleansing, this cure, these miracles are more than a match for our tongue, our heart, our understanding. Everything is set in motion *by* the priest *for* the victim. The cure can not come from within, but it does come from without. In the offering there are several things. None of them are supplied by the victim. There must be two clean birds. Not one, not three, but two clean birds. O Lord give me grace to declare the predestination of God; to declare that he has declared the end from the beginning, even to the kind and the number of birds that are used in the figurative cleansing of a sinner. The kind of wood that is to be carried is as important as was the wood from which Noah made the ark. Wood is not enough; it must be cedar wood. But why will wood not do? Why cedar wood? Why be so exact? If any way will do in saving a sinner, no way will do just as well. Cedar wood in the church is most useful (S. S. 1:17). It is used in the foundation of this glorious building. But why is this used in the cleansing? To show forth the duration of the cleansing. One of the best characteristics of cedar wood is its ability to last under water. But why bring that up here? we are talking about one Lord, one baptism, one faith, one cleansing.

We are talking about that which

would comfort a poor sinner. The dragon has ever been doing all that he could to engulf the woman in the flood of water that went forth out of his mouth. This water is flooding the earth ere this, but the beams of the church of God are imbedded beneath the earth into the rock. As Jesus was the Building and the Builder while here, he was subjected to all the temptations of his brethren, thus the cedar wood is used to denote the durability of this Building, this cleansing, this forgiveness. But why scarlet? For two reasons. May the Lord give us to drink deeply of each. Though our sins are as scarlet, they shall be white as snow. But how? by blood. That is the only way; no other peddler of just as good will be welcome here in this cleansing. By the blood of Jesus; by the power in his shed blood is a sinner cleansed. The piece of woolen scarlet is the sign of sin, and it is the sign of that which will remove sin. Our sin is as scarlet; his garments are dyed in his blood to remove our uncleanness.

But why hyssop? Why must that be carried? What importance is this? What bearing does such an item have in connection with our cleansing? How precious as I write are my thoughts. I look back and see my three sons as the woman in attendance washed them and anointed them with oil. What a sweet smelling baby they were to their mother and I. How wonderful it is that the fragrant odor of hyssop was to be noticed in this poor sinner after his cleansing.

Arise, poor sinner, and let us view the situation over. A sinner doomed to being outcast, to be denied communion with his people. A sinner such as we (or at least I) did not have anything to offer for our cleansing. We would have never known about the malady had it not been revealed to us; we would never have gotten to the priest had we not been carried; we would never know what it would take for our cleansing. But Christ is everything to a poor sin-

ner. May God enable us to leave off that which divides, that which confuses, that which subverts, and know among the people of God Jesus Christ and him crucified.

Your little brother, if a brother, through grace.

W. D. G.

SERMON BY
ELDER D. V. SPANGLER AT THE
PIGG RIVER ASSOCIATION
AT ROANOKE, VA.

1964.

Elder Turner told me this morning that there was an afflicted brother here who has hoped someone would talk on the scripture which is found in the 30th verse of the fifth chapter of Ephesians: "We are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones." I am sure this is a wonderful text.

One of the things that stands out in the Scriptures, is that wherever God has brought his church to view, he has presented her as something complete. When he refers to the church of God, he speaks of that church being the bride, the Lamb's wife. And we find also that he tells us how, at some time in the future, he will present that church unto himself a glorious church, not having spot, wrinkle, blemish, or any such thing. When the Lord has brought Zion to view as the church, he presents her as a city set upon a hill, that cannot be hid. When he has spoken of the safety of this city, he has told us that salvation shall be her walls. Not the salvation that men talk about, but the kind that God Almighty appoints, for he said that salvation will God appoint for walls and bulwarks.

When God brings Zion for his people to view, he brings her to view as absolutely complete in him; he brings her to view as being watered by the river of the water of life; and that stream, he tells us, makes glad the city of God. Now if your heart has ever been made glad as you heard the gospel of Christ

preached, as you mingled with your brethren, it is evidence that some of the streams have reached you.

"Makes glad the city of God." I like to think about the effectiveness of this stream — that there has never been one too poor but that the stream will reach him. Last night, as we sat on the brother's porch, I talked about people going home to the church, for I feel in my ministry to encourage God's people: if they love His name, to stand up as God blesses them, and be counted with his people. And I saw a tear in a friend's eye; and I said, "My friend, there's room for you in the house." He said, "I'm unworthy." A very acceptable answer, wasn't it?

We want to talk about the text, but we must first get to it. We want to show, the Lord willing, that we are a part of the body of our Saviour. And we are going to show, the Lord willing, that Jesus Christ did not come into the world to make a decision as to a single person going to heaven. Somebody has brought forth such false doctrine that they advance the idea that men are helping other men to go to heaven — to make a decision for Christ. Christ taught that he himself never made the decision while in this world, as to a single person who would be in glory. We find, in her earthly understanding of Christ, that a woman approached Him, and said that she had a request, that she had two sons and she would like for one to sit on his right hand and the other on his left, when he entered into his kingdom. And Jesus said, "Woman, you don't know what you ask; it is not mine to give." He didn't come into the world to decide who would go to heaven, but to make it sure to every one that was chosen in him before the world began. He said, "It shall be given to them for whom it is prepared of my Father." If any man has advanced the idea that Christ went about upon the earth trying to save sinners, making decisions as to who would enter the kingdom, this scripture forever sets it at naught.

But he brings this matter to you

and me, for it is said that we are members of his body, of his flesh, of his bones. There is a depth here that I doubt whether any minister has ever reached; there is a depth here wherein our Saviour, (I hope I can say, our), has taken our flesh and our bones. We are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. As we look back at the wonderous work of grace, we find that when God created a man of the earth earthy, (and in a sense a type of our Lord Jesus Christ), the woman was in the man, and a part of the man, before she was ever taken from him; and that the law that God gave to Adam, was given him while Eve was yet a part of his body. That is why Adam said, "She is bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh." That is why Paul, in his epistle to the Ephesians, said that a man has never hated his own flesh, but he nourishes and cherishes it, even as the Lord the church. "This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church." In the preceding verses, how wonderfully he said, "Husbands love your wives, even as Christ loved the church, and gave himself for it."

There are a few things in my life that have been most humbling to me; one is, that God would love a sinner like I am; another is how brethren could love me. Another humbling thing to the minister is when God's people tell him, "You were blessed to preach the gospel to me." This never exalts one of God's ministers. Oh, no! but the devil does sometimes. He will sometimes tell one that he preached a wonderful sermon; but a tear in a person's eye is more humbling than all the Devil has ever said to him.

He took the woman out of his side. The Bible doesn't say his side, but He took a rib, and that is where the side is; and He gave her to him to be a helpmeet. The side of Jesus Christ was torn when he hanged on Calvary's hill, when darkness covered the earth. The soldier pierced the side of Jesus. Why did he pierce his side? Two reasons: prophecy had said it would be; and the

soldier didn't know what he was doing — he knew nothing about the purposes of God. Men today are living out the purposes of God blindly, but I assert that the purposes of God shall stand. If I didn't believe that, I would be afraid to start home this afternoon. Someway, I believe with all my heart that in our journey here, the angels of God have been our protection.

But, I want to talk about the text. "You are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones." Eve received the law through Adam, and the Ark was the only thing that could weather the storm of the wrath of God, when his wrath for sin was poured out upon the world. The door of the Ark, the Bible says, was in the side. It didn't have two doors; it had one door, — in the side.

When Abraham sent his servant to seek a bride for his son, he caused him to swear that he would not go among strangers, but that he would go among his own kindred. What does it show? that Jesus Christ came into the world to save a people that already belonged to him — that were united with him. And the servant wanted a sign; and he said, "When I reach a certain well, have somebody there to draw water for the camels." And we find a willing Rebekah there. She even ran to meet him; and said, "Drink my Lord." And when the question arose, when the servant had told his business, "Will you go with this man?," her parents said leave her a little while, and then she can go. But they left the answer with Rebekah; and she said, "I will go." I like a doctrine that brings about in the heart a willingness to do the will of God; that not only brings about a willingness, but makes every particle of His service a delight.

"You are flesh of his flesh, and bone of his bones." We find in the wonderful works of grace that God Almighty has brought home to his people throughout the ages, two things clearly brought to view; One is, that he has saved them because he had an everlasting love for

them; and the other is, that they are unworthy of everything that God has done for them.

I remember that when David went out to fight the battle for his brethren, he was just a lad; and his brethren rebuked him, saying that the naughtiness of his heart had brought him down to see the battle. Here is a giant! if we can't overthrow him, we know you can't: Goliath, the giant of the Philistines. David was of the bone and the flesh of his brethren, wasn't he? And David said, "Is there not a cause?" Yet they did not believe in him until he manifested to them his power to fight the battle. And that is when every sinner believes in Jesus Christ. David's brethren would scorn him, but he said that he would fight the battle; he would meet the giant; but he would not take the armor of Saul, for he had not proved it. David went forth saying unto Goliath, "I come to thee in the name of the Lord."

They were David's brethren, and nothing they could say would ever change his love for them; no rebuke from them would change him. Neither will anything, my friends, ever change the love of God for you; for Paul said, "I am persuaded that neither death nor life, things present or things to come, principalities or powers, etc., nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God that is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

"Flesh of his flesh; bone of his bone." Let's find out more. Joseph was a beautiful type of Jesus Christ. We find him hated by his brethren — hated because he had a dream. Did the devil give him the dream? Oh, no! But it caused his brethren to hate him. God gave him a dream in which he saw his brethren bowing down to him. One of the things that Elder Helms spoke so clearly in his Introductory was that all things worked together for good to them that love God. The hatred and malice of Joseph's brethren would have done away with their brother; but it couldn't be. They put him in a pit; and but for

the grace of God they would have left him there to die. But he had a brother to speak for him. The Midianite merchantmen come by, and he was sold for twenty pieces of silver. God took care of the situation. Sometimes in my mind I have seen that boy being led off, with his brethren watching, no doubt glad to get rid of him, thinking it was the last time they would see him. But then we find that there came a time when it was God's time to bring them to him — through famine and hunger, which God alone could bring and control. Someway I believe that every drop of water that falls on the earth, God sends it; every famine that comes, God sends it.

And, finally, I like to think of Joseph when he couldn't refrain any longer. He knew his brethren all the time: he knew them because they were flesh of his flesh and bone of his bone. They were a part of him. "Come near me; I am your brother."

Has the Lord ever drawn you near him? Have you ever felt the encircling arms of Christ? I remember what dear Elder Gilliam said, when he was at the point of death for days: "I felt those arms under me."

I'm your brother — you thought evil — God meant it for good.

Now to reach our case He came all the way to where we were. Our Saviour must take our flesh, since, as the Scriptures say, the children were partakers of flesh and blood, he himself likewise took part of the same, that he might destroy the works of the Devil. How must the Lord Jesus Christ come into the world? He must be found under the law. Paul tells us in Galatians so clearly, that when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law. He took our flesh and blood as the Son of man, taking it in union with him as the Son of God — our very flesh and blood. "God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law to redeem that that were under the law."

I like to think also that it is said that

he took not the nature of angels; for an angel could never reach our case. But he took on him the seed of Abraham — our flesh and our blood; and we are members of his body, of his flesh and of his bones; and was made in the likeness of men, and being found in their likeness, he humbled himself. Men did not humble our Saviour — he humbled himself unto death, even the death of the cross. Why? because from all eternity his people had a standing in him: they were chosen in him, and their life was in him before Adam fell. They fell in Adam, but they were safe all the time. To reach his bride, Jesus could not come as an angel, but must come as the Son of man. We are glad that he spoke so many times of himself as the Son of man—more than he spoke of himself as the Son of God.

I like to think of the expression of the Apostle that there is one Mediator between God and man. Talk about the Pope, talk about the Priests of the land being mediators between God and man, there has never been a greater lie preached under heaven than that. To believe that, you would have to burn your Bibles; to believe that doctrine, you would have to preach that Jesus Christ didn't come to save a people who were already his; and to take in union with himself the flesh and blood and bones of his people.

There is one Mediator! None of these preachers here are mediators between God and man; there's never been but one. Who is he? the man Christ Jesus. The one of whose body we are members. Think of it, my friends! People of God members of the body of Christ! the mystical body of Christ, of his flesh and of his bones. We never know the full force of salvation until we have known something of how low our Saviour came: If we only know of his humiliation, and not of his glory, it won't do us any good. I cannot speak of his glory, and know the wonderful love he had for us, unless I see his humiliation.

I went for years wondering what it means when it is said in the 8th chapter

of Acts, "In his humiliation his judgment was taken away; and who shall declare his generation, for his life is taken from the earth." Then I saw it one day. I saw that God left his Son hanging in the body that He had prepared — the only body that would satisfy as a sacrifice. He left him hanging there, and turned his face away; and Jesus cried out and said, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" If we are his people, every one of us was hanging there — represented in him. To be a complete sacrifice, he must be left to die.

Have you felt my friends, that He died for you? What a wonderful thing! "Gave himself," Paul said, "for me." I like to think of Him who took our flesh and blood in union with himself, when he was held up before the people of old: I like to think that every time the high priest went with the names of the tribes of Israel on his heart — with their names on his shoulder, he showed that the people of God were represented in him. I think of the high priest going once a year into the most holy place, making atonement for himself and the people, that he couldn't put away sin; but I think of one who went into the most holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. The high priest couldn't feel the groans of his people: he hadn't experienced them. But, my brethren, today we have an high priest who can be touched. We have one who can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, and was tempted in all points. I like to think that when Stephen was dying, he said, "I see Jesus standing on the right hand of God." Standing, waiting to pour out his wrath upon the people.

What a blessing to have a great high priest in heaven, who is brought near as our brother, our very brother. We read that he who sanctifieth, and they who are sanctified are all of one; for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren. These are my brethren; Who? He that doeth the will of my Father, the same is my mother, my

brother, my sister. He is not ashamed to call his people brethren, because they are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. The only way there can ever be a people prepared for heaven whom God will not be ashamed of, is for he himself to prepare them.

The doctrine I am preaching to you today, will be preached on and on, until the Lord of glory comes from heaven; and the people I am talking to and about today have the grace of God wrought so perfectly in them, that God in heaven will never be ashamed of one of them.

We are told that Abraham, when he was called out, went not knowing where he went; that he sought a city which hath foundation, whose builder and maker is God. He was looking for a place where God is not ashamed to be called our God.

"We are members of his body, of his flesh, and his bones." He didn't come part of the way under the law; he didn't come just to make an offering for sin, and leave the acceptance to men, but He came to redeem us from the curse of the law. The Scriptures say that he went to heaven, having obtained eternal redemption for us. Do you know why he is coming again; and who he is coming for? He is coming for his bride; he is coming for those who are members of his body, of his flesh, of his bones.

"As by man came death, by man also came the resurrection of the dead." When Paul speaks in Corinthians of the resurrection of the dead, he said, "Now is Christ risen and become the first fruits of them that slept." When Christ rose from the dead, it was a promise that there was a crop coming: The people of God — their bodies are going to be raised. Not like you are as I look at you now, but fashioned like His glorious body; and will be prepared to praise him.

When the priest under the law took the sheaf from the people and waved it before the Lord, it was saying, There is a crop like this. So is the resurrection of the body of Jesus Christ from the dead. He was the first fruits of his

people; and they will be like the first fruits. The glorious day is coming — the day all the saints have looked for, the day of all days, when we will be taken home. I have been coming here almost forty years; most of the old ones who were here when I began coming, are sleeping somewhere. In a few years we will all be sleeping, laid away somewhere in the silent tomb; but, bless the Lord, He will not deny his own. When he comes the dead will be raised. It is the resurrection of the dead, not merely from the dead.

You that love his name — it will be you that day. It will be the redeemed sinner; it will be one whose vile body is changed, and fashioned like the glorious body of Jesus Christ. Lift up your heads, my brethren; praise the Lord! No wonder when David started in the 22nd Psalm he said, "My God, why hast thou forsaken me." and said in the 23rd, "The Lord is my shepherd." Then in the 24th, he said, "Lift up the everlasting doors that the King of Glory might come in. Who is the King of Glory The Lord of hosts is the King of Glory."

(The above is taken from a recording, and is somewhat condensed. — J. D. W.)

VOICES OF THE PAST "He being dead yet speaketh"

RESISTING THE HOLY GHOST.

(Acts vii. 51.)

Not with a self-reliant or "egotistic" presumption that we are capable of solving all mysteries or expounding all the scriptures, nor yet with an intention to draw the mind of any one to us and away from God as the only efficient and infallible teacher, do we attempt a reply to the earnest appeal of our unknown correspondent for our understanding of this much perverted portion of the sacred scriptures; but with a deep sense of our own weakness, and utter inability to speak or write so as to edify, instruct, comfort or satisfy the craving desire of such as are

not advanced so far in the knowledge of the truth as to have no need of the feebler gifts which God has given for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, and for the edifying of the body of Christ. Such light and understanding as we hope God has given us on any part of his sacred word we dare not withhold from those who ask for our views; but we desire none to accept them only so far as they shall find them sustained by the unerring scriptures of truth.

The cutting rebuke in our text was addressed by Stephen to the high priest and murderous Jews who were about to stone him to death. Professing to be the people of God, and the most zealous and devout people on earth, pretending to be shocked at the blasphemy which suborned men had testified that they had heard Stephen utter. Arrested, and having a mock trial, and arraigned as a prisoner before them, he was permitted to make his defense, at the conclusion of which he addressed to them the words of our text; and when they heard these things which he charged on them, they were cut to the heart. Not like those who on the day of Pentecost were pricked in their hearts, and completely subdued, and made to cry, Men and brethren, what shall we do? Theirs was a death wound, their rage and violence were checked, their hearts and ears were circumcised, their resistance to the Holy Ghost was overcome, and their circumcised ears were anxious to be informed of God's salvation of helpless sinners by and through that Jesus whom they had rejected and crucified. But these were only cut to their heart; it was but a flesh wound. They were not slain, nor circumcised in either heart or ears; but the deep and deadly malice of their heart was excited, and became more violent and frenzied with rage and violence, and they gnashed on him with their teeth.

The question has often been agitated, In what sense did these murderous Jews resist the Holy Ghost? It could not be that they were resisting the

Holy Ghost, as existing in their own hearts; for if the Holy Ghost had dwelt in them, their hearts would have been circumcised, and their ears as ready to listen to the preaching of Stephen as were those at Pentecost to Peter and the rest of the apostles; but their hearts were controlled by an opposite spirit. The Holy Ghost which they were resisting was in Stephen, but not in them. In the preceding chapter and fifth verse, we are told that Stephen was full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, while his murderers were full of the spirit of him who was a murderer from the beginning; and his spirit in them was manifested by their resistance of what the Holy Ghost inspired Stephen to say and do. It was not Stephen, as a man, they felt so much enraged against; for if Stephen had not been moved by the Holy Ghost, he would not have incurred their wrath. It was only those who by the Holy Ghost called Jesus Lord, that they persecuted unto the death. Nor was it alone on this particular occasion that their resistance to the Holy Ghost was demonstrated. It was the general and constant disposition of the carnal hearts of those whose circumcision was only outward in the flesh, and not the circumcision of the heart and ears, which is made without hands. The circumcision on which the carnal Jews relied was outward and in their flesh, was made with hands, and its praise was of men, and not of God; it did not therefore circumcise their hearts to make them love God, nor their ears to hear, love or obey the truth, but left them in all the enmity of their carnal minds to resist the Holy Ghost by stoning the prophets, and killing those whom God had sent to them. The prophets were sent to the Jewish nation with the message of the Lord, whose peculiar people they professed to be, and the prophets spake as they were moved by the Holy Ghost; so their opposition to the prophets only manifested the turpitude of their hearts, their love of sin, and hatred of truth and righteousness.

"Ye do always resist the Holy Ghost,"

in the same way and manner in which their fathers did, by killing the prophets and stoning them. Jesus said to those carnal Jews, "Ye also outwardly appear righteous unto men, but within ye are full of hypocrisy and iniquity. Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! because ye build the tombs of the prophets, and garnish the sepulchres of the righteous, and say, If we had been in the days of our fathers, we would not have been partakers with them in the blood of the prophets," &c. "Wherefore, behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes: and some of them ye shall kill and crucify; and some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute them from city to city: that upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of Zacharias, son of Barachias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar. Verily I say unto you, All these things shall come upon this generation." — Matt. xxiii. 28-36. How terribly was this declaration fulfilled in that generation, not only in the tempest of divine wrath in the overthrow of Jerusalem, but in the filling up of the measure of their iniquities. God has set bounds beyond which serpents and vipers, as these workers of iniquity are called, cannot go, but to the full measure of which they are doomed to go; and in filling up this measure by that generation, Stephen, who was one of the number that Jesus said he would send to them, and they should kill, was sent with a message from God, which cut them to their heart, and made them gnash on him with their teeth. But it was not Stephen, but the Holy Ghost in Stephen, that enraged them. Stephen, being full of the Holy Ghost, spake by that Spirit; and as they were filled with an opposite spirit, and acted as moved by the spirit of the world and of Satan, they not only resisted Stephen as the messenger, but God who sent him, and whose words he declared to them.

We know of no other way in which

men ever resisted the Holy Ghost. Stephen testifies that this was always the manner. As your fathers did, so do ye; not only now, but it was always by persecuting and slaying those who were sent by him to declare his messages.

It is preposterous to contend that the Holy Ghost was, is or can be successfully resisted in its work upon the hearts of those who are quickened by it. Those who are quickened and made alive from the dead by the Holy Ghost were not consulted as to whether they were willing to be made alive. Whether we consider the work of the Spirit as agreeing with the figure of a resurrection from the dead, or a birth, both illustrations alike forbid the idea that the subjects of this work can either resist or facilitate the work. Jesus says, "The dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live." — John v. 25. And Jesus has condescended graciously to inform us how, or in what manner, he will perform this work: "For as the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so [or exactly so] the Son quickeneth whom he will." — Verse 21. Can any rational being suppose that in God's manner of raising up the dead he strives with them to consent and allow him to raise them up? Or that he proposes terms and conditions for them to perform, on the performance of which he will raise them from the dead? Or that he by his spirit woos, pleads, implores and beseeches them to allow or consent to be raised up, and that he thus pleads and strives with all the dead, and in the greater number of cases fails to get their consent, and after laboring to the full extent of his power and patience, leaves them sorrowfully to remain in death? Can any who know the true God and eternal life entertain such a view of him? Equally absurd and blasphemous is the thought that either in the generation of mankind or regeneration, or new birth, those who are the subjects have any volition or agency in bringing themselves into existence. Surely all who are held under such chains of dark-

ness do greatly err, not knowing the scriptures nor the power of God.

The scriptures affirm of the power of God that he raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them, not that he tries, and in most cases fails, and that in the same manner the Son quickeneth whom he will; and those who know by happy experience these scriptures, and have experienced that translation from darkness to light by the exceeding greatness of the mighty power of the Father of glory, know the scriptures and the power of God. "The eyes of their understanding being enlightened, that they may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints." — Eph. i. 16-20.

Since the day that sin entered into the world, man has manifested an aversion to and shrinking from the presence of the supreme and omnipotent God, and in their aversion and alienation from him have shown their preference for gods which they could hold in subjection to their own control: gods that they can carry on their shoulders, and use to subserve their own purposes. This being the idolatrous condition of the world, we are told by an inspired apostle of many false prophets which are gone out into the world, and the saints are commanded to try the spirits, whether they be of God. He says of these false prophets, "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; hereby know we the spirit of truth and the spirit of error." — 1 John iv. 5, 6. The Spirit of truth is the Spirit which Jesus says the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him. — John xiv. 17. But the spirit of error and delusion is a spirit of the world, and the world is in love with it. It is as easily attained as they who are led by it have and do represent it to be, and they affirm that it requires no more effort to receive it than it does to turn one's hand over. Indeed, man in his fallen, depraved state is under its power

already; and the spirit of error which already possesses them makes them as hungry for error, as the Spirit of truth in the children of God makes them to be fed upon the truth as it is in Jesus. No grace is required to qualify a man to embrace any error, or to worship any idol. But the God of our salvation is a Spirit, and only they can worship him acceptably who worship him in spirit and in truth.

Eve required no superhuman or supernatural power to enable her to receive the forbidden fruit from the beguiling spirit of the serpent; Adam asked for no divine aid to follow his bride in the transgression. Cain, unaided by the Spirit of truth, drank in the spirit of delusion, false religion, enmity and murder. But Abel required that faith which is the fruit of the Spirit of truth to qualify him to offer a lamb in sacrifice to God, to which offering God had respect. Cain resisted the Spirit of truth in his opposition to Abel, but not as existing in himself, striving to obtain his consent to be converted. If the spirit of God had been in Cain, he would not have entertained a desire to murder his brother. If God, the Spirit, had ever failed to accomplish any work by him undertaken, what assurance could any poor sinner have that he might not fail in his attempt to bring us unto glory? The antediluvians, who in Noah's days resisted the Holy Ghost, resisted it as manifested in Noah as a preacher of righteousness, by adhering to the spirit of unrighteousness which had full possession of themselves. So that Stephen could say truly, that the development of that murderous spirit in those wicked Jews who were about to murder him was the development of nothing new. It was that which always had been in the world since sin entered; and these more modern Jews were doing just what their fathers before them had always been doing, in killing the prophets, and stoning all who were led by the Holy Ghost.

Men do always resist the Holy Ghost when they pervert the scriptures, which

are inspired by the Holy Ghost, when they teach for doctrines the commandments of men, when they oppose and persecute those who are called of God, and qualified by the Spirit to proclaim among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ; and especially when they preach salvation by any other name than that of Christ, or when they pretend to preach Christ by any other spirit than that which is from above. No man can preach the doctrine of free-will, free-agency, or any other doctrine of men, without resisting or opposing the Spirit of truth, which is the Holy Ghost. But we have great reason to rejoice that their resistance cannot prevail. While they like raging waves of the sea foam out their own shame, although the world may applaud, and lavish their encomiums upon them, and their wealth, and call them rabbi, still their resistance of the truth of God and of the spirit of holiness will ultimately clothe them with everlasting shame and infamy. No person can preach or believe that the Holy Ghost has ever failed to fully accomplish all that he ever attempted or designed, without impeaching the wisdom, power and truth of God, and thereby resisting the Holy Ghost; but their resistance can never prevent or hinder the full and perfect accomplishment of all his pleasure. Nor can any give encouragement to those who do thus preach by attending on their ministry, or contributing of their substance to sustain them in their opposition to the Spirit of truth, without resisting the Holy Ghost.

It will be well to remember that the Holy Ghost is God; and although man, in his deep depravity, may resist his government and oppose his power, yet he can by no means thwart his purpose.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe September 1, 1880.)

OBITUARIES ELDER S. E. TERRY

The recent death of Elder S. E. Terry, a true, humble servant sent by the Lord Jesus Christ, brought great sorrow to a host of

brethren, sisters and churches of Zion far and near, and especially to the New Bell Spur Primitive Baptist Church of Carroll County, Virginia. He was born in Patrick County, but lived most of his life in Carroll County. He was the third son of the late George B. and Ruth Terry, born May 17, 1899; and departed this life August 28, 1964. He was married to Dorthey Lee Jessup April 3, 1921, by Elder C. A. Vipperman. She survives, together with their nine children, as follows: Marvin, Reuben, Wesley, Samuel and David, of Meadows of Dan, Va., and Hubert, of Pulaski, Va.; three daughters: Mrs. R. O. Slusher, Jr. of Floyd, Va., Mrs. Curtis Cox, Jr. and Mrs. Owen Dalton, of Meadows of Dan. Surviving also are two brothers and three sisters: Joe Terry, Salem, Va., Mack Terry, Meadows of Dan, Mrs. Willie Shelor and Mrs. Robert Grey, of Meadows of Dan, and Mrs. Bennie Clifton, Vista, Va.; and twenty-one grandchildren. Three brothers and one sister are deceased.

In June, 1924, he united with Bell Spur Primitive Baptist Church, and was baptized with his wife by Elder C. A. Vipperman. In January, 1923, he was licensed to speak in public, and was ordained to the full work of the ministry in 1936. He was chosen moderator of Bell Spur Church in 1939, and served this church faithfully for thirty-one years; and served Green Hill and Jack's Creek churches for several years. He was a faithful servant, going far and near to his appointments through all kinds of weather, and attended many associations. Even after his health became poor, he continued on and baptized some. He had a stroke and later a heart attack, and his health was poor for many years. He was so humble in all his afflictions. Being a good husband father and friend, it was a joy to visit in his home. On many occasions his home was filled with his brethren, and it seemed such a joy to him; but his greatest joy was to be blessed to preach the gospel of his Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ: and truly this servant was blessed to set forth the true doctrine, "Salvation by grace, and not of works" in his preaching and daily conversation. I believe the thought of death became very sweet to him, and I never saw anyone look so peaceful after death.

His funeral was held August 30th at the New Bell Spur Church by the following Elders: William Holland, B. O. Tompson, J. M. Vipperman, Allen Easter, Amos I. Hash, and Leonard Brammer; and there were several other Elders in attendance. Pall bearers were deacons from various churches. There was an overflowing congregation of people, though it was a severe rainy day. His body was laid to rest in the church cemetery in the beautiful Blue Ridge Mountains under one hundred beautiful floral arrangements. They have faded, but his spirit went back to God who

gave it, to rest in paradise.

We thank thee, O Heavenly Father, for having the privilege of living near this humble servant, and for having known him, his lovely wife and family for several years.

Written at the request of the church by

Pauline Spencer

SISTER BUENA WRIGHT

Buena Vista (Henderson) Wright was born to Mr. and Mrs. Simon Henderson October 13, 1898, in Quitman, Texas, and passed this life October 4, 1964. The church, Sheppard Fold, of Houston, where she was a charter member, and all the saints abroad who knew her, were greatly shocked by her sudden death in a car wreck near Livingston, Texas. It is with a sad and heavy heart that I, her pastor, write of her death. We feel that we have sustained a great loss, and I as her pastor feel with tender sensation of heart a great loss of a "Priscilla," (Acts 18:26); "my helper in Christ Jesus." (Romans 16:3); a "Mary who bestowed much labor on us." (Romans 16:6); a "Tryphena and Tryphosa, who labor in the Lord. Salute the beloved Persis, which labored much in the Lord." (Romans 16:12)

In memory of Sister Wright, I would like to divide my remarks into three heads:

Love: Oh, the great love she had for her blessed Master; not that she first loved Him, but because He first loved her. "Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins." (1 John 4:10) She was so ravished with the feeling of this love at times she could say without fear or doubt, "My beloved is mine and I am his; he feedeth among the lilies." (S of S 2:16)

Dedication: to his blessed cause and his people. None of the membership wondered about the absence of Sister Wright on meeting days, because she was always there, forsaking all others, yea, even her own blood relatives, to be present when Zion met to worship her God. What a beautiful dedication of self-denial as our blessed Master directs in Matthew 10:37-39; 16:24, 25; Mark 8:34-38. etc., and in losing her life. she surely found it — a manifold blessing was poured out upon her while she lived among us.

Humility: was a force and fruit of the Spirit manifested in her among us. Humility is a fruit that must be manifested through much tribulation and suffering one way or another. Sister Wright through the tribulation path, lost a son twelve years of age, which was a very trying time to her; as was the passing of her much loved husband; and then the following thirteen years as a widow. These losses, body afflictions and at time a great felt sense of her sins and shortcomings, and her great trouble and concern for Zion's welfare, which caused a sad

countenance to be manifested the last two months of her life. All this was set apart to humble her and keep her at the throne of grace in Zion's behalf. But in the midst of all of this God has come into his garden to gather one of his precious "lilies." (S of S 6:2) What a blessing from God to have had such a close walk with her; but now she is "absent from the body, present with the Lord." (2 Cor. 5:8)

Oh, what a beautiful life and fellow-traveler we have had by the grace of God in Sister Wright. May we be given a prayerful heart to ask the giver of this gift to us, to also manifest others among us in behalf of his blessed cause, and our comfort. I am sending with this letter received from Sister Wright May 6, 1964, which is one of many savory letters I've had from her pen. She is now silenced in death, not gone to be no more, but only gone on before.

May the Lord comfort her dear children who are left to mourn her passing: a son, R. C. Wright, Meredian, Miss.; two daughters, Mrs. Welta Scruggs, El Paso, and Mrs. Kelsay Swain, Houston. Also three sisters, Mrs. Artie Tucker, Mrs. Lizzie Atterback, Mineola, Texas, and Mrs. Floy Bair, Dallas; a brother, Burton Henderson, Dallas; and six grandchildren.

Funeral services were conducted by Elders R. W. Rhodes, Lloyd Wall, and C. M. Haygood, and she was laid to rest near Quitman, Texas, to await the coming of her blessed Saviour.

(Elder) C. M. Haygood

IDA G. HOLLOWAY

As it has pleased the Lord to take from our midst on September 20, 1964 our dear and beloved sister, Ida G. Hollaway, we would bow in humble submission to the will of our God.

Sister Holloway was born September 22, 1873, and her parents were the late George and Sarah Ann Jarmon Warner. She was married December 24, 1912, to Daniel Holloway, who departed this life in 1933. To this union one daughter was born, Mrs. Gertrude Johnson, of Newark, Delaware; who survives. Surviving also are one brother, William Jarmon, of Wilmington, Delaware, and several nieces and nephews.

In 1910, while living in Baltimore, Sister Holloway was given a desire for a home in the Ebenezer Church there, and was baptized by the late Elder Joshua Rowe. In 1913 her membership was moved by letter to the Snow Hill Church in Snow Hill, Maryland; where she remained a faithful member until death.

It was always a pleasure to visit Sister Holloway, and to converse with her concerning the grace and mercy of our God. She gratefully rejoiced in her hope of eternal life beyond the grave; and was always ready to

extol the name of her blessed Saviour, giving Him all the praise and glory.

Funeral services were conducted by the writer and Elder W. D. Griffin on September 23, 1964, at the Burbage Funeral Home, Berlin, Maryland; and she was laid to rest in the Evergreen Cemetery in Berlin, Maryland, beside her husband.

May it please the Lord to reconcile her daughter and other relatives, and her many friends, to feel that their loss is her eternal gain, is the humble prayer of the writer.

(Elder) Arthur R. Warren

SISTER JENNIE EVANS

Sister Jennie Evans passed away September 7, 1964, after a long illness. She was born near Strong, Arkansas, April 5, 1879. She is survived by one son, Johnie Evans, Marion, La.; and by the following daughters: Mrs. Whet Baker, Mrs. Sally Teal, and Mrs. Jessie Plair, of Marion, La.; Mrs. Dovie Mannine, Lake Providence, La.; and Mrs. A. O. Dopson, Strong, Arkansas. Surviving also are 17 grandchildren, 36 great grandchildren, and 5 great great grandchildren, and other relatives.

Sister Evans joined old Good Hope Church many years ago, and the writer baptized her and her husband. Her husband preceded her in death several years. She was blessed to be a devoted member of the Primitive Baptist Faith, and a very devoted wife and mother, and was held in high regard among the brethren who knew her.

She was very sick and feeble many years, and was an invalid about four years before her death. We believe that she was among those blessed to die in the Lord, and is now where sin and trouble can molest her no more. May we not weep, for she is much better off. May the Lord bless each of you who mourn, and give you that precious faith she manifested.

Her funeral was conducted by the writer at old Good Hope Church in the presence of a large congregation of those who knew her, and had great sympathy and respect for her.

R. W. Rhodes

MRS. LEVIE FRANCIS CHANDLER

Mrs. Levie Chandler was born near Downs-ville, La., August 22, 1889, and became the devoted wife of Grover C. Chandler, of near Ruston, La. She became much afflicted several months before her death, and was in the hospital quite a bit. She passed away July 30, 1964, and her funeral was conducted at Ruston, La. She was buried at Douglas Cemetery, near Douglas, La. There was a very large and devoted congregation present, and many nice

flowers, which manifested the loving devotion of her family and many friends.

Sister Chandler, as I most always called her, was not a member of the Primitive Baptist Church, but she gave great evidence that she was a devoted believer in the doctrine. Both she and her husband were very often present at the meetings. I visited her several times before she passed away, and was privileged to talk with her concerning her belief in the precious salvation of the God of heaven. It is sad to lose her, but we believe our loss is her eternal gain.

She is survived by her devoted and saddened husband, Grover C. Chandler, and other relatives, and by many Primitive Baptists with whom she had associated over a period of many years. May the Lord comfort and console all who mourn her passing, especially her husband. May the Lord bless you Brother Cleve.

The writer conducted the funeral in the presence of a very large congregation, especially at the cemetery near her home near Douglas.

R. W. Rhodes

ELDER THOMAS L. GRIMES

Thomas L. Grimes, son of William Thomas and Pattie Barnhill Grimes, was born in Martin County, North Carolina, on June 5, 1898. In this same year, when he was three months old, his mother died. As a result of this tragedy, his father gave up housekeeping, and Tommie, as he was then called, went to live with his father's oldest sister, Mrs. John Taylor, near Robersonville, North Carolina. In this home he lived and went to school until his aunt's husband, John Taylor, died. At this time Elder Grimes was thirteen years old. "Mama," as he called her since she was the only mother he ever knew, decided to break up keeping house since she was unable to manage her small farm herself. After selling the farm she went to live with her oldest sister, Mrs. J. W. Roebuck, who also lived near Robersonville, North Carolina.

As a consequence of change in circumstances, Elder Grimes returned to live with his father from whom he separated thirteen years before. While living with his father this second time, he continued his schooling through the tenth grade. A year or two later, having reached man's estate, Elder Grimes left home and, after working for a year or so, he joined the U. S. Army and served for four years. After receiving his discharge from the Army he returned to his father's home and began to prepare himself for a job with the U. S. Postal Railway Service. When he thought himself ready, he took the examina-

tion and passed with honors. He entered the postal service around 1928 or 1929. Two or three years later he met and later married Miss Appie Christman of Wendell, North Carolina, where he lived the remainder of his life. To this union two children were born: first, a son, Thomas Robert, and later, a daughter Pat. Elder Grimes retired from the U. S. Postal Railway Service in 1961.

Several years after marriage and moving to Wendell, North Carolina, he began feeling a strong urgency to preach the Gospel, and after long consideration, thought and prayer, he was convinced that the Lord had called him, and he began to read and to study the Bible as he had never read and studied it before. Soon he began talking in various churches, and a few years later was ordained a preacher in the Primitive Baptist faith.

Elder Grimes continued to serve his Lord and to preach the Gospel as it was revealed to him until his death Friday, August 2, 1963.

Written by his brother,
Elder W. E. Grimes
Robersonville, North Carolina

SISTER MARY L. ECKARD

At the request of the family of Sister Mary L. Eckard, of Spokane, Washington, I am sending the obituary of our beloved sister in the Lord. She was born in Bellingham, Washington, September 9, 1913, and passed away suddenly in a hospital July 18, 1964, following treatment for a heart condition; which shows that when He calls us, we will hear his voice and will come.

Sister Eckard is survived by her husband, H. B. Eckard; two sons, Russell Owen Eckard, Spokane, Washington; and Leander Jackson Eckard, Kansas City, Missouri; four brothers: Jack Withers, in Ohio; Steven Withers, Demming, Washington; Louis Withers and Charles Withers, in Idaho; four sisters: Ivy Jenson, Mead, Washington; Lela Lidquist, Spokane, Washington; Hazeltine Allen, Spokane; and Evie Floyd, Tulsa, Oklahoma; and many nieces and nephews.

She was the daughter of Wm. D. and Elizabeth H. Withers, and was married to H. B. Eckard March 1, 1934. She was a member of Bethel Primitive Baptist Church, Riffe, Washington; and was baptized by Elder Hughett, at Bellington, Washington, on March 2, 1944.

She was laid to rest in the Fairmont Memorial Park, Spokane, Washington, mourned by many friends, who will miss her greatly. The service was conducted by the writer in the absence of Elder Ernest Attebury, her pastor, who was ill at the time.

Charles W. Bond

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 133

DANVILLE, VA., MARCH, 1965

NO. 3

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
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THE SONGS OF ZION

(Psalm 137:3)

The songs of Zion, Oh, how sweet,
When the saints in harmony meet!
With the spirit and understanding too,
They sing songs both old and new.

But the good old songs, I do prefer;
They're the ones the heart doth stir:
Sung by the saints in Zion below,
They often cause the tears to flow.

And the sweet melody in Zion above,
Where all will be perfect love,
Will fill the soul with pure delight,
Forever dwelling in unearthly light.

The old song of Moses, who had led
The Israelites as from Egypt they fled,
Was sung by them at the Red Sea
When from the Egyptian host set free.

They passed through the sea as by dry ground,
While the host pursuing them was drowned:
A truly great reason for thanking the Lord,
And joining "in a song of sweet accord."

Lastly, the song of the Lamb will be sung,
A new song chanted by every saint's tongue
In the regions of glory and of peace,
Where His praises will never cease.

This song of redeeming love will be
The song of the ransomed to eternity:
"To God and to the Lamb they will sing,"
Beholding the glory of Zion's king.

To mansions celestial they will soar
And reign with Christ forevermore.
His presence will be heaven indeed,
When from sinning we shall be freed.

Oh! may it be our unspeakably happy lot
To wear a robe without wrinkle or spot;
To sing a song of Zion in heaven above,
And drink our fill of everlasting love.

C. W. Vass,
Elizabeth City, N. C.

"CHRISTIANS"

WHO ARE THEY?

I hope my mind has been directed of the Lord in studying upon the subject of Christians and who the truly made or "ACTUAL CHRISTIANS" were in ages past and in the present time. Of late particularly, we see in the many magazine and newspaper articles as well as hearing so much over the radios and television and also from the pulpits of the hundreds of churches everywhere, the word "CHRISTIANS" bandied about so much that the people of the world generally believe that they are everywhere by the millions and hundreds of millions. One Church alone, the Catholic, claims to have over a half-billion in their fold and others claim to have many millions. The grand total of all alleged Christians, by their standards, would be a staggering number.

Turning to the Bible, we find no such word mentioned in the Old Testament, which is to be expected, since Christ, from whom the word was derived, had not yet come into the world. In the New Testament, we find it only three times and it came from man first, from those people who were enemies of the true followers of Christ — Acts 11:26. It is rather significant that the word (Christian) should spring from the enemies of the followers of Christ and that today we find so many millions calling themselves thusly.

Apparently after the word was first used, the Apostles and others accepted it generally. It is next found in Acts 26:28, when used by King Agrippa before whom Paul stood in his own defense, and Paul seemed content to be called a Christian for he said — "I would to God, that not only thou, but also all that hear me this day, were both almost and altogether such as I am, except these bonds."

The final recording of the word Christian is found in 1st Peter 4:16 — "Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed, but let him glorify God on this behalf." In the preceding verses it is shown that Peter meant those truly born of the Holy Spirit, for Verse 13 says: "But rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings." etc. So by no means could his use of the word have meant the multitude of people at that time, and in time to come, **who were, or who are, not born of God** but who profess to be followers of Christ by reason of parentage, training by man, or by man's conversion, or their own desire to so acclaim themselves.

Now as to the "ian" addition to a name, or adding "ian" to Christ, (which means definitely one belonging to Him), "ian" is an adjective suffix and fixes or attaches something to that to which it is added. It is used widely to denote those born in a certain country or state, such as those born in Canada are Canadians, and so on. As used by the Apostles above referred to, they meant those **born in Christ or coming out of Christ and definitely tied to Christ**, spiritually speaking. The Church being Christ's Bride, would mean that those referred to were **born in the Church or in Zion**. Turning to Psalm 87, we find a most interesting recording. David viewed the nature and glory of the Church or Zion, and in verses 5 and 6 we find, — "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.

Selah." What better proof do we need? David and the Apostles spoke and wrote as inspired by God, and we must accept their word and record which establishes that the **true and only Christians of those days and of the present time**, are born-again-people having the in-dwelling of the Holy Spirit, and not the so-called Christians numbering countless millions, even billions.

Their claiming to have many millions of Christians in their ranks does not coincide with the Scriptures, for it refers to the truly predestinated and chosen ones as being a "**remnant**," or just a small part of the whole thing or number. That word is found many times in both the Old and New Testament. The most striking use of the word is found in Romans 9:27 — "Esaias also crieth concerning Israel, though the number of the children of Israel be as the sands of the sea, **a remnant shall be saved.**" Also Paul makes the same statement again in 11:5 — "Even so then at this present time also there is **a remnant according to the election of grace.**" Since it is firmly established by the Scriptures that the true followers of Christ, or children of God, all of whom will be saved, are but a remnant or small number of the whole, then we can see that this is contrary to the claims of the worldly Churches, for their total number could not be taken as a remnant or small portion of our worldly population, at the present time or in times past.

It seems worthy of mention that the Apostle Paul, as quoted in Acts 26:28, indicated that he, of himself, would desire that King Agrippa and all that heard him that day, were such as himself, excepting the bonds. The Apostle had just finished telling the King of the Lord's dealing with him in changing him from the natural mind and actions to a **born again man of God** and Spiritual servant of God, it would seem that he, of himself, was willing that many men around him could be like him. How many of us, (if I may be so bold as to include myself) this day and age do

many times find ourselves desirous that all those around us could be as are we — possessed with a hope of eternal life based on the saving grace of God thru His predetermined will and calling before the world was. When meditating on this very Scripture — **that only a Remnant shall be saved** — as I am wont to do in the dark hours of night, I become exercised in thinking on it, and it gets hold of me to the point wherein I say — What a pity that all mankind from the beginning to the end of this time world could not be included in the saving Grace of our Lord God Almighty. Then sounder reasoning takes over and I yield, saying **“thy will be done, O Lord”** and not mine, or any earthly being’s will or desire in this matter. Then I go on to think upon what would be the case **if earthly man should have any power whatsoever in determining our eternal status**, or even in directing our earthly lives and actions. While it does seem that we are affected in our earthly lives by man’s actions, yet we cannot refute the Scriptures that say otherwise. In Ecclesiastes 1:9-10 we find — “The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be; and that which is done is that which shall be done: and there is no new thing under the sun. Is there anything whereof it may be said, See this is new? it hath been already of old time, which was before us.” So we must believe that we live and do exactly as the Lord designed we should, long ’ere the world was, and that no man, of himself, has changed, nor will ever change the purposes and designs of God. Solomon also said, Ecc. 3:14, “I know that, whatsoever God doeth, it shall be done forever: **nothing can be put to it, nor anything taken from it.**” etc.

Concluding, may I say that if I have written anything that is of interest to the true Christians (and I so strongly hope that I am one) scattered about this wicked land, our temporary dwelling place, then let the honor and praise be to the Lord. I deserve none whatsoever. I ask anyone of the Household of

Faith to remember this unworthy one in their prayers, that have a mind to so do.

In Christ-ian bonds, I hope.

Wm. O. Hall,
Box 595, Mount Vernon, Washington

ABLE TO STAND
BUT LIABLE TO FALL

(By Elder H. M. Curry in 1895)

The Proposition that Adam was able to stand but liable to fall, came first to my ears from Methodists and New School Baptists. The expression sounded puerile and illogical to me then, and sounds so yet. To me the phrase is meaningless; but grant it a meaning, and it arrays itself against the whole tenor of Bible Truth, and all facts of human experience, as exemplified in the universal history of the human race. Such sayings and phrases as this became current through lack of thoughtful investigation. I invite the reader’s attention to the following discussion of this **trite** expression; and if, after impartially considering this matter, he should still be of the opinion that “Adam was able to stand, but liable to fall,” his position will be more clearly defined in his own mind, and perhaps entitled to more credit from those of contrary belief.

Let us now proceed to consider some of the *a priori* arguments. First, God had a purpose in man on the earth. When faith beholds the works of God in creation it sees nothing in vain; the domestic beast of burden, the ravenous beast of prey, the wholesome grape, the deadly upas, the useful iron, the seducing gold, the wholesome food, and the destructive poison, all answer some useful end, some wise purpose, some intelligent design of the mind that created them. Shall we confess this, and then say that man, the climax of the natural creation, was created without a purpose or design, either for time or for eternity by the God of all wisdom?

Did God create man, and turn him loose in the world to ruin himself and all his posterity, to thwart God's will and destroy all his pleasure?

The first purpose of God in placing man upon the earth was that he should multiply and replenish it. **God made the earth not in vain; he made it to be inhabited.** — Bible. If Adam was able to stand, he was able to defeat God's purpose in this; for had he stood, there is no ground to believe that the earth would ever have been inhabited; for, "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) These words of Jesus set forth a universal fact in nature, a deep and comprehensive truth. The same truth may be stated in these words: **Without death there is no reproduction.** In the vegetable world seed must die before they germinate and reproduce their kind. The same principle, although not so plainly exhibited, extends into the animal world. The animal organism embodies both animal and vegetable life mysteriously combined, and the power of reproduction, growth and repair lies in the vegetable life. The multiplication of the human race did not begin until death passed upon the man; so from this it is seen that if Adam was able to stand, he was able to render the creation of the world in vain.

But grant that the multiplication would have gone on without the fall, what would have been done with the people who would have come into the world by this time? The garden of Eden would have been full to overflowing against this time. There would have been a continually increasing stream of humanity pouring into the world, and none going out. What would be done with them? Upon what would they subsist? Where would they stay? What would be their occupation?

Again, suppose Adam had stood, then each of his posterity would have been subjected to the same probation. Each one able to stand, but liable to fall. Some, doubtless would have succumbed

to this liability to fall, and would have fallen, while some would have demonstrated their ability to stand, by standing. The human race would then be divided by death, some dying, and some living here forever. What a state of confusion this would be. Instead of the wisdom of the Creator being exemplified in the harmony of his creation, it would be impeached by this monstrous, unnatural, impossible discord.

It was doubtless God's purpose that the earth's resources should be developed, as exemplified in the various lines of human industry, enterprise and progress. The one essential element of human character upon which all industrial enterprise depends is the **love** of money. This is declared in the Scriptures to be the root of all evil. This root of all evil, then, is the prime impetus in all human progress, advancement and improvement. Without it new countries never would have been discovered, explored and settled; cities would never have been built; civilization would never have developed; the arts and sciences would have remained unknown; there would be no such thing as social or political society, no commerce, no trade, no improvements, no progress, no luxuries, no conveniences; in fact men would all be savages. The fall of Adam enters into the very foundation of all the essential elements of the qualification of men to inhabit the earth. All the lust of the eye and pride of life are essentially necessary to building up human society, either social, political or religious.

Again, the world in its present condition is either as God intended it should be, or it is not. If it is not as God intended, then God's intention has been defeated, and everything has gotten from under his control. There are only three positions to be taken with regard to the first man: God either purposed that he should fall, or purposed that he should not fall, or else had no purpose at all in the matter. If he purposed that he should not fall, but remain sinless forever, then the earth is peopled

with an entirely different race of beings from what God intended; everything has gone contrary to God's purpose. If **one** man could reverse the purpose of God, and change the whole world, both for time and eternity, of what account is God's purpose? Where is any ground of hope of salvation either for time or eternity through the purpose of the same God? Where are our obligations to call him God, or worship him as such? Where is his right to call himself God, and claim our confidence, reverence and praise? To say that God purposed him to stand, but that man fell, is to plunge into the darkest, blankest, most hopeless fatalism. If we say that God had no purpose one way or the other, then what do we mean by talking of God's purposes, and calling him a God of purpose? If we say that God purposed the fall, then there is no conflict between God's purpose and the existing state of affairs. We can then look upon the word "purpose" as meaning something; and when we talk of God being a God of purpose our speech harmonizes; and when we speak of his purpose of grace we can do so with just reverence and holy confidence.

Again, **God purposed that man should be removed from the earth by death.** "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." One may say these words were spoken after man sinned. True enough; but did they come into the mind of God after man sinned? This is the utterance of a decree; but is the decree no older than its utterance? If God did not intend in the creation that man should return to dust, why did he create him from dust? Why did he not make him of some other material? But the very fact that He made him of dust shows that the decree, "**Unto dust shalt thou return,**" was in the mind of the Creator when He made him. "It is appointed unto men once to die." — Bible. Death, then is an appointment. Who made the appointment? God made it. Has God any appointments now that he did not have from eternity?

Let us now turn to God's purpose of

grace in Christ. All the provisions of grace for the salvation of the people were made in Christ before the foundation of the world. If Adam had stood, what would have become of the purpose of grace? When we say he was able to stand, we say that he was able to defeat God's purpose in Christ. It is declared in the Scriptures that Christ was foreordained before the foundation of the world. Foreordained to what? To die. To die for whom? For men who might not need it — for a man who was able to stand? If Christ was foreordained to die, and Adam was the figure of Christ, is it not plain that Adam was included in the same decree of death? When Christ died He was delivered to death by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God; not by the provisional counsel, as a remedy provided to meet an emergency; not by his permissive counsel, as one permitted to be slain for the sins of others. There is no mention in the Scriptures of a **Permissive Counsel**, but **Determinate Counsel**. Then, if Adam was included in God's counsel at all, he was in his **determinate counsel**. The creation of Adam was in God's counsel, for He said, "Let us make man." God's dealings with the man after he was made were in his counsel, for He placed him in a certain environment, with certain restrictions upon his liberties.

One may say that God knew that Adam would fall, and provided the remedy before the calamity came. To admit God's foreknowledge of the event is to yield the point that he was made to stand, for how was he able to stand if God knew that he would fall? The proposition is incompatible with foreknowledge. It is argued by some that God knew that he would, but he did not fall by God's decree. By whose decree did he fall? If God foreknew the man would fall, the event was **certain, inevitable** and could in no wise fail to come to pass. Now, what made the event certain? What rendered it inevitable? What brought it to pass? One says that God's foreknowledge of an event does not ne-

cessitate its coming to pass. If God's knowledge does not, what does? "Who is he that bringeth to pass when the Lord commands it not?" (see Lam. 3:-37) Either God's decree makes the event certain, as foreknown, or it is purely a matter of total necessity.

If Adam was able to stand, how long was he able to stand, against what was he able to stand, and wherein consisted his ability to stand? Was he able to stand forever? Was he able to stand under all circumstances? If we answer yes to these questions, then his ability to stand consisted in his infinite perfection, for nothing short of infinite perfection could stand forever under all circumstances. If he was infinitely perfect, to enable him thus to stand, wherein lay his ability to fall? How did it come that he did fall? Ability to stand and liability to fall cannot exist at the same time in the same creature; for where liability to fall sets in, absolute ability to stand ends. Ability to stand, in this expression, must be absolute, or it cannot be considered, for if it is not **absolute** it must be **relative**, and relative ability to stand is entirely swallowed up in liability to fall.

Let us now pass to the *posteriori* arguments. The fall itself is evidence that the man could not stand. Had he not fallen he would thereby have demonstrated his ability to stand; but he fell, and consequently he demonstrated his inability to stand.

The transmission of his sin to his posterity is conclusive argument against his ability to stand. The total, inherent, hereditary depravity of the human race is essentially and inseparably connected with this subject. Cavil as we may about predestination in Adam's case, it shows itself in all his progeny. They are all born sinners, grow up sinners, and die sinners, without exception or remedy. What then has fixed the universal, unalterable, irrevocable reign of sin and death? Is it fixed by God, or does it come by fate? Is it the provision of infinite wisdom, or is it through the lucky intervention of some work of

chance? Did God, either in ignorance or knowingly, leave the issue of life and death of unborn millions to the uncertain will of one man? If God did not know the consequence when he created man, then he is ignorant and stupid, and is no God. If he knew the consequence, and yet created the man, and gave him power to ruin his unborn progeny in sin, death and eternal destruction, knowing certainly that he would do it, is he not a strange kind of God? Is not such a course more like that of a madman than like that of an allwise God? Which is the greater display of wisdom, righteousness, justice and judgment, for God to leave the issues of life and death of an unborn world to the caprices of one man's will, or to fix all by his own infinite will and wisdom? Which would **faith** choose as a source of consolation, that the well-being of a world was left to **one** man, and he ruined it, or that God held the issues in his own eternal grasp?

The great stumbling-stone in the way of most minds is the trite, meaningless expression that this would make God the author of sin. But is it not taught in the Scriptures that God visits the iniquities of the fathers upon the children? Where is there any human code of practice or standard of justice but what would pronounce that unjust, wicked and cruel? Visit the iniquities of the fathers upon the children of the third and fourth generations. Punish the child for the crime of its grandfather, a crime committed before the child was born, or even before its parents were born. If we are going to impeach God by human standards we must impeach him here, and declare him wicked, unjust and cruel; and renounce his name, and abandon his worship. But again, Jesus said that the blood of all prophets, from the blood of Abel to the blood of Zacharias, that perished between the temple and the altar, shall be required of this generation. Where is the justice, from a human standpoint, in requiring all the righteous blood that had been shed for four thousand years, of that

generation? Such destruction as had not been seen since the world began was sent upon that generation of men, women and helpless children, and God did it. Then, upon this point of God being unjust if he does so and so, let the words of inspiration stop every mouth, and silence every tongue.

The law in its nature, design and effect enters into this discussion. Many minds are misled by their wrong notion of the law. The law was not given for men to keep. It entered that the offense might abound. They say that God would not have commanded Adam not to eat if he intended that he should eat. How do they know what God would have done? By what or by whom do they judge? How could man transgress without a commandment? It required the commandment to answer the purpose. It is argued that God's decreeing the fall of Adam would destroy man's accountability. Would it be any worse, from their own standards of judging, to hold Adam responsible for what he was purposed to do, than to hold a babe born in the nineteenth century responsible for Adam's transgression by fixing upon it the sin committed by another six thousands years before it was born? The doctrine of hereditary total depravity will not harmonize with the proposition that Adam was able to stand.

Lastly, I shall call in the testimony of christian experience. Can a Christian live without sin? We regard those persons who hold and teach that a man can live without sin as deluded, fanatical heretics. If the Christian, who is born of God, washing in the blood of Christ, justified, sanctified, and led by the Spirit of God, cannot live without sin, how can the natural man live without sin? Adam in his creation was a natural man, of the earth. earthy. He had natural capacities, fleshly qualifications, propensities and desires; then how could this man in nature be expected to do what the most gifted saint cannot do?

(The above is copied from the *Signs of the*

Times of November 27, 1895. When we read it recently, we felt that the importance of this truth required that we pass it to the brethren for their edification. — J. D. W.)

CIRCULAR LETTER

(Written by Elder W. D. Griffin)

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

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

We believe that God's chosen people, his heirs of salvation according to promise, are led in ways they know not, through many storms of life, to teach them that they cannot direct their steps, and to show them their need of our Heavenly Father to keep and sustain them in that pathway that Job spoke of when he said, "There is a path which no fowl knoweth, and which the vulture's eye hath not seen." (Job 28:7) Thus we feel that the natural mind of man cannot understand the things of God,

neither has, or ever will, walk that heavenward journey by his natural mind, for we are told by the Apostle Paul, "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them because they are spiritually discerned." (1 Cor. 2:14) We believe that man is born in this world with a natural mind, and he keeps it as long as he stays here on these mortal shores; but we also believe that our eternal God gives his chosen people another mind, a spiritual mind to see things that the natural mind cannot see, for the natural mind never sees the vanity of its being.

We feel that God has and still does throughout the world, in his own time and place, bring his chosen ones out of the darkness in which they were born, into the light and knowledge of the truth which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. Darkness has always preceded light, for in the beginning the evening and the morning was the first day, and so on. Therefore, if we are what we hope to be, we are traveling in newness of life, viewing things that we did not view at one time; viewing from day to day our weakness in the flesh, and thus hoping in the mercies of our eternal God and not in our own works; for Solomon said, "There is not a just man upon the earth, that doeth good and sinneth not." (Eccl. 7:20)

We believe that God knew his people before the beginning of time, and loved them with an everlasting love; that he chose them in his Son — for as Eve was in Adam, so was the church in Christ: he being the foundation of that building not made with hands, for we are told in God's holy word, "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." (1 Cor. 3:12)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Elder D. V. Spangler, Moderator
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William Adkins, Clerk
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WOULD GREATLY MISS
THE PAPER

Rt. 1, Box 111,
Gustine, Texas 76455

Dear Editors:

It is time once again to renew my subscription to the *Signs*. It has been coming to my home regularly for more than 68 years. My husband was a subscriber at the time of our marriage; and I do not know how long before. I would miss its coming almost as much as a member of the family, especially since I am now able to attend meetings but seldom — only once last year.

A few years ago I gave away most of my *Signs*, but have those that have accumulated since. I love to get them out and read them again. They contend for the same glorious truth as they did then. I love to read the letters re-printed that were written so long ago.

To the dear Editors, and all who write, I would say, May the dear Lord keep you in health, and enable you by his Spirit to continue to contend for this same blessed truth for many years to come — this gospel truth which is now so lightly esteemed, and growing more so each day, it seems to me. But it is a great source of comfort to me. Apply three dollars to my renewal, and balance as you think best.

Ida Bowers

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BUSINESS OFFICE

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

Elder David V. Spangler

R. F. D. 1, Box 539, Beechwood Lane
Danville, Virginia

Elder John D. Wood

P. O. Box 186, Manassas, Va.

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Elder W. D. Griffin

39 Welsh Tract Road, Newark, Delaware

Elder E. J. Lambert

306 Richardson St., Winnsboro, Texas

Elder George Ruston

Dutton, Ontario, Canada

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EDITORIAL

MICAH 5:5

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

We have been requested to write our views upon the above Scripture, which we have often read as we have turned

to read Micah 5:2, which was the verse that the chief priests and scribes found for wicked king Herod when he enquired of them where Christ should be born. Matthew 2:6. In answering him, they gave only part of the verse, but we would like to declare faithfully who this Christ was. He is and was the Wisdom of God and the Power of God. I Corinthians 2:4-5. "Whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting." Read Proverbs 8. Verse 23 says, speaking of him, "I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was." "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." Isaiah, divinely inspired, could say over seven hundred years before Jesus was born, "Unto us a child is born, (born of the Virgin Mary) unto us a Son is given," for "God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son." The eternal Son of God came in the likeness of sinful flesh, and such was the goodness of divine mercy that those chosen of God saw his day and were glad. Abel saw him in the innocent lamb offered in his room and stead, Abraham saw him as the ram caught in the thicket of God's eternal purpose, and through faith could receive his son Isaac as from the dead in a figure. The Old Testament is the record of his goings forth, not only to the individual, but as Captain of the Host of the Lord to lead Israel into the promised land. Joshua 5:13-15. If we read the four gospels, we see Jesus made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, finishing the work of redemption, and true to his word, linking up Jonah, who was three days and three nights in the whale's belly, with the Son of man who was in the bosom of the earth three days and three nights. He lived a holy life to produce a righteousness that would cover all for whom he came to save. He submitted to a shameful death on the cross, the penalty for the sins of those for whom he died. He arose at the appointed time, was seen of many of those who were his, and he, Jesus, ascended into

heaven, crowned with glory and honour. Read I Timothy 6:11-16, in which Paul, as a faithful shepherd, charges Timothy. This Jesus, blessed Jesus, said in his last sentence in Matthew 28:20, "Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen."

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

the sight of the Lord, according to all that David his father did." And the prophet Micah saw one in that dark day who "removed the high places and brake down the images, and cut down the groves, and brake in pieces the brasen serpent that Moses had made, for unto those days the children of Israel did burn incense to it: and he called it Nehushtan." (a piece of brass)

The Assyrians in our subject are a people who have not a true regard for a "Thus saith the Lord," and would bring into Israel today, if possible, that which is contrary to what Christ and his apostles established. These men were led as those of old, by the Holy Ghost, and wrote of those things which they had heard, seen and handled of the Word of life. The apostle John wrote, "The world knoweth us not, because it knew him not."

Micah speaks of seven shepherds, this number seven comes often in the Scripture and sets forth God's perfection in dealing with mankind. For the sin of ignorance, blood was sprinkled seven times before the Lord. (Leviticus 4:6) Seven golden candlesticks are seen in Revelation 1:10-20, while John was in the Spirit on the Lord's day. The seven golden candlesticks were the seven churches and One like the Son of man in the midst. He had seven stars in his right hand, which were the angels or messengers of the seven churches. In Malachi 3:1, John the Baptist, the forerunner of Jesus, is spoken of as a messenger, and our Lord also, who is called the messenger of the covenant. The good shepherd, who gave his life for the sheep, in his covenant, saw fit that there should be a perfect ministry. The stars are heavenly. The Rock of Ages is spoken of by Peter as "A stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them who stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed." (I Peter 2:8) Zechariah 3:9 tells us that this stone had seven eyes. Our Lord established a perfect testimony, and when one preaches the word by the Holy Ghost sent down

from heaven it is evident that he is in the right hand of him whom John saw in the Midst of the Churches. We view the churches set forth by the golden candlesticks as representing the various phases of the church during the gospel dispensation, and there are many signs that we are in the Laodicean period, when, as James 5:9 says, "The Judge standeth before the door."

We could use most of our space in showing that the Assyrians under various conquerors were finally established in Babylon, which was a type of Babylon the Great, which is still flourishing, so that all the world wonders after the Beast. We feel its likeness, history and fall are fully set forth in the word of God, so will get on with our subject. The eight principal men are the eight writers of the New Testament, Matthew, Mark, Luke, John, Peter, James, Paul and Jude. The Old Testament has much of the New Testament concealed therein. Solomon, the wise man in Ecclesiastes 11:2, says, "Give a portion to seven and also to eight." We know the eight writers were so guided so that they recorded so much of the Old to confirm the New. The worldly-wise deny that Jonah was in the whale's belly; in doing so, they deny that Jesus was in the bosom of the earth, for one confirms the other. The seven messengers, who have been in the right hand of our Lord, also have their portion in the Old Testament as in the New. We have spoken of the Assyrians as setting forth the world walking after the flesh, but there is much of the world in us, for we are still in the flesh, and in the flesh we cannot please God. Paul says, "But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you." Are we to-day any different from the Corinthians or from the brethren of James scattered abroad? Read that faithful shepherd's testimony and you will see how much they needed a faithful ministry. In Micah's day there were only a few who feared God and looked to him for help, and there are but a few to-day. He said, "When the Assyrian

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

We sing "Prisons would palaces prove, if Jesus would dwell with me there." Often God's afflicted children have found a sick room a palace, and they have been blest to find themselves in sweet fellowship with all who have ever tasted that the Lord is gracious, and the Man Jesus by his reconciling love was their Peace. We have mentioned James, one of the eight, and we would like to speak of the scattered brethren to whom he wrote. One can see that the flesh or Assyrian got in there, yet how faithful James was; he did not have any variance with Paul, another of the eight, who wrote about being justified by faith, not of works lest any man should boast. James believed the same as Paul, but it is evident that already there were those who talked, but did not live, their religion, as there are to-day, and it is good when the Church of God raises up against such, the testimony of the seven shepherds and the eight principal men. There is much in the epistle of James applicable to the Church in the present day, and when prayerfully read, we hope will be to the instruction and building up of the brethren in practical godliness. There is also in Paul's, Peter's and John's, and it is becoming, when we in godly fear, study to show ourselves approved unto God, workmen that need not

to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

We remember an old brother in New York State who had seen the Church in its loveliness in his younger days, and to his sorrow and the grief of many, they witnessed the flesh get the better of good men and divide them. It grieved him the more when good brethren said such unkind things about those they had once fellowshiped. Both sides professed the same truth, sang out of the same hymn-books and read from the same bibles. That afflicted brother one day in pouring out his troubles said, "Brother, is it possible for those whom you know love the same truth that you love, and you loved them for years, for you to cease loving them?" The writer said, "No, it is not possible, if it were the Love of God, that is like God himself, unchangeable." Brothers and sisters of natural families fall out, and parents, if they are wise, will want them to acknowledge their faults one to another. How much more it becomes God's dear children to confess their faults one to another and to wash one another's feet. What stops them if they are what they have professed to be? Our answer unequivocally is the flesh, the Assyrian, and the seven shepherds and the eight principal men will ever prove it to be so, for they testify of the man, the only MAN who is our PEACE. They preach him still in the midst of the throne, the LAMB as it had been slain, slain for sinners, of whom Paul said, "I am chief." Surely the faithful testimony presented by a servant of God, upheld by the right hand of our glorious Lord, would break a heart of stone.

Do we see this MAN who is our PEACE just in pictures on the wall, or have we pictured him in our minds? That is no better, but do we still see him as we have, I hope, seen him in our brethren as he was in the Ark of old? so that "the wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion and the fatling together, and a little child (the holy child Jesus) shall

lead them." (Isaiah 11:6)

The writer is glad to be able to state that the old brother lived to see his cries and prayers answered, and estranged brethren falling on one another's necks in a loving embrace, proving that Micah's testimony was true, that this man born in Bethlehem with our names engraved upon his hands, is our PEACE.

G. R.

SUBSTANCE OF SERMON AT BLACK ROCK CHURCH

While coming from the meeting at Rock Springs Church this morning, a portion of the 3rd chapter of 1st Peter came to mind. I would like to read it to you, and if the Lord is pleased to give some light and liberty, to speak of some of the wonderful things the Apostle had under consideration. He wrote:

"But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts, and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear. Having a good conscience, that whereas they speak evil of you as evil doers, they may be ashamed who falsely accuse you of your conversation in Christ."

As I came into the house, I was somewhat impressed with the thought that the church of the living God in its entity, is the most exclusive organization there is. There is no other like it: No one can be dismissed from it; and no extra one can be added to it. The right of membership is eternal, for each one who is a member, was chosen by God the Father before the world began. And God alone, in his own appointed way and time, makes it known to each that he is among the number composing the church.

(The fact that the church in its visible organization, is sometimes assaulted by those who "creep in unawares," in no wise creates a problem for the Lord, for He knows them that are his; and will make the separation in due

time.)

Now the reason that Jesus told Nicodemus that except a man be born again he could not see the kingdom of heaven; even as he told Peter that flesh and blood had not revealed that Jesus was the Son of God, was to show plainly the way the church was made manifest in the world. And Jesus gave assurance that all the Father had given him should come unto him, and he would in no wise cast them out, but raise them up at the last day.

In the epistle from which I read the text, Peter wrote to those who had been brought to the knowledge of the truth, that they were strangers scattered throughout those provinces, but that they were also elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father. We are aware that most people believe that God gave the Bible, through men enabled to write it, for the purpose of enlightening all the people of the world concerning the way of life and salvation: that they by searching and reading may find the way by which they may come into eternal life. But I would like for us to hear well, as the Lord may give us understanding, what the Spirit has said unto the churches, for it is written, "If any man hath an ear, let him hear." Taking this epistle of Peter for one example, it is immediately noticed that he is writing to strangers in the world, but who also were elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ. He was not writing to any one, either then or now, other than such as these; and to them he desired that grace and peace be multiplied.

It is not an overstatement to say that these, (and their brethren), were the only ones who knew what Peter was talking about, for they are further described as having been begotten again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance, etc., as shown in the verses which follow. Likewise David in his 66th

Psalm wrote, "Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul." David was not concerned for any except those who feared God; for these alone know what God does for their souls. And we find John, in his first epistle, writing to those of whom he said, ". . . ye have an unction from the Holy One, and ye know all things. I have not written unto you because ye know not the truth, but because ye know it, and that no lie is of the truth."

Now Peter takes up the same theme, and says to them, in the language of the text, "Be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear." I suppose we need not expect anyone to be able to give the reason of a hope unless he has a hope. So the addressee is clearly defined. It would be of no value for a person to compose things he thought would be acceptable to the brethren for membership in the church, for he would only be victimizing himself, even if he should be received. I remember hearing of a person who knew the requirements of the Old School Baptists quite well, that they required certain evidences or they would not receive one into their fellowship. This person thought that he could fool them, and could tell things that would satisfy them to receive him into the church. He arranged things in his mind, and told them to a church on an occasion. Some seemed to be satisfied, but there was an aged sister who said that she was not satisfied with the young man, and that she could not receive him. That ended the matter. I suspect this is true, because I know that some have come before the church who did not have anything to tell as a reason of a hope. One came before one of the churches I was serving some years ago, and asked for membership. The brethren asked him some questions; but the more he talked, the farther he separated himself from the brethren. He was not received. A little later he came back, and upon being

asked to tell something of his hope, he could only say that some months before he had had blood poisoning, and hoped he would get well. That was as far as he had any understanding of a hope; and you know the brethren could not receive him.

Now let us consider the preaching of John the Baptist, for he required something of those he baptized. He came, as the forerunner of Christ, preaching, "Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." Repentance in that day, as it is in this, was not just a matter of confessing with the lips, but rather of speaking from inmost conviction. There were those who came to John in whom this was not found, and John said, "O, ye generation of vipers who has warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance." He meant, as the context shows, that the claim of having Abraham as their father, was not sufficient, (as no other thing of the flesh is sufficient), to enter into the kingdom of heaven; that God's fan was in his hand, and the threshing floor should be thoroughly cleaned, and His wheat should be gathered into His garner, but the chaff should be burned. Those whom John baptized came confessing their sins, of which the "generation of vipers," the Pharisees and Sadducees, had no conviction. But those whom he baptized had something which caused a godly fear in them, that they should come and ask for baptism. These were of the wheat which was being gathered — they had profound conviction that He whom John said should shortly come, was the promised Messiah.

To be faithful, we must say that no person has a right to membership in the church except those who have evidence of proper fruits. Many thousands think that the mere act of being baptized (or even sprinkled) of water gives them regeneration, and the right to church membership; and this is all that is required by some organizations. But unless a person has been born of the Spirit, he has never seen the kingdom of heav-

en; he has never seen the glory, power, or mercy of God; nor, indeed, has he realized in his heart that the grace of God was the only thing that could ever do him any good. And unless he knows all of these things, his profession is empty and insufficient. So, though a person may join this or that organization and be baptized, if he lacks that which makes him meet to be partaker of the inheritance of the saints in light, (Col. 1:12) it will not set him on a course to heaven. One must bear the true marks of grace to find himself at home among the Lord's people.

You will remember that Isaiah said, "He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised and we esteemed him not." The account of Jesus in John 1:10-12, is, "He was in the world, and the world was made by him, and the world knew him not. He came unto his own, and his own received him not. But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name: which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God."

The Lord has not changed in his way of bringing his own out of the world, for the church is composed of those who are called out; just as Paul wrote, "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." Salvation is still according to his purpose and grace alone; and it should be remembered that to each one of these the evidence of their being saved and called, is brought to them during their sojourn as strangers in the world, and they are sealed with the holy spirit of promise here, which is the earnest of their inheritance in the world to come.

I think now of something I mentioned this morning: We have a great many things in our literature which are highly regarded, some of them called master-

pieces by men who were great writers. But have you noticed that they often present things contrary to Scriptural teaching? Perhaps you have enjoyed William Cullen Bryant's *Thanatopsis* as much as I have, but did you notice that he said, "So live, that when thy summons comes to join the innumerable caravan, which moves to that myterious realm . . . thou go not, like the quarry slave at night," etc. So live! that we might lie down in peace. He did not mention the grace of God. But I must mention grace as the one important thing, for it is by His grace alone that we are brought to the grave in peace.

Again, a few days ago I read in a lecture by a noted man, "We are even at this present time laying up for ourselves eternal glory or everlasting contempt." No one who is taught of the Lord can believe that sinners by their manner of living, can work themselves into heaven. Yet that is almost the universal teaching in the theology of men, but it is not found in the study of God's word and his relations with men. The very best in the nature of men nowhere approaches an atonement for sin. This is well learned by the Lord's people, but scoffed by others. When it is written, "There is none other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved," it certainly does not implicate the works of men; but rather the grace of God alone providing Him who is "made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption."

This is what the gospel is all about: the power of God unto the salvation of his own people. For anyone to rashly implicate the works of men as a substitute for, or even causitive of, grace, is to charge God with foolishness in sending his Son for the purpose of redeeming sinners. Such as do this assume that men are not dead in sin, but are able to lift themselves by their own bootstraps; that men are not incapable of righteousness, but can circumvent the Cherubims, and the flaming sword which turned every way to keep the way

of the tree of life. But, of course, such as this is entirely contrary to the teachings of Jesus and his Apostles; it is not known in Christian experience, as found in reading the accounts of those whose lives testified of the grace of God bringing them out of darkness into the marvelous light of the Son of God; with which the Scriptures abound.

The ways of God cannot be acceded to in the minds of the unregenerated, for God's ways are as high above their ways as the heavens are above the earth. Let a man search all he may, if he has nothing but his own spirit of man in him, he will search but not find the ways of God to his liking. The result is that men attribute to God such ways and doings as seem to them God ought to have; and further results in the doctrines of men — another gospel; which is not the gospel of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. In every age of the world, men not enlightened of the Spirit have devised many strange things, and their philosophies are far more popular throughout the world than the doctrine of God our Saviour.

If there are any here today who feel that they are able to bring themselves out of the natural kingdom of man into the kingdom of God, you are believing something other than the doctrine of God; and just as sure as you live and die with the belief that salvation depends on what you do — and you feel that you have done sufficiently and heaven is your reward, there will be weeping and wailing in that great day. One, many years ago and in my presence, who was conducting a so-called revival, asked those who had been "converted" during his meeting, to let it be known when they got to heaven that it was through him they had been saved. Many believe just such as this suggests. What has become of the old time religion that confesses that God has done it all? Where are the old time people who confess their unworthiness, but that they love the things of God, and have nothing to trust in but the grace and mercy of God? How many people go

before churches today and say that they are not fit to join and be with the Lord's people? We hear them coming to the Old Baptist Church that way. But what if one comes as was mentioned in a sermon at the Virginia Corresponding Meeting last year: a lady came asking for membership, who said that if given an opportunity, she would show she was as good a Christian as any of them. They did not receive her! Would you have? No! she did not have the marks of a child of God.

And, lest we get too lengthy, let us think about the marks of the Lord's people. The love, mercy, and grace of God will remain almost a dream-like mystery to them; and each one will always ask, Why were these things given to me? Why was I included in His love; and the peace that passes understanding? In him that has a hope in the Lord, the Lord is set apart and held in reverence (sanctified), and he knows nothing in his conviction, deliverance and salvation save Jesus and him crucified. He claims none of his own works, confesses his insufficiency, and testifies of what the Lord has done for him, as he gives the reason of his hope. What people other than the Old School Baptists ever mention having a hope? I know of none except those who believe as they do. But I have heard them most of my life, as they met together in their homes and meeting-houses, talk about what their hope consisted of, what their evidences were that they should be saved with an everlasting salvation.

This hope does not imply a perilous defect or uncertainty, as some would have us believe. I had one to say concerning my speaking of our hope at a funeral, that, if I continued to trust in that "old hope stuff," I would come up short at the end. But, in spite of objections, let us see what the Apostle said about it. "We which have the first fruits of the Spirit groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body. For we are saved by hope: but hope that is seen is not hope: for what a man seeth, why

doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it." **This is the hope we talk about in giving our reasons of it.** Paul said again in Hebrews, "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." **One without the other would have no real meaning.** And of those who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before them, Paul again said, "Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil." **So the children are perfectly secure in their hope.**

Think of this for a moment, how many of us would be willing to come into the presence of God and claim what we have done while we lived, as a reason why we should be passed into heaven? Doubtless there are many who are willing to rest on their works; and they may flaunt them in this life, but it is to be remembered that God is not mocked, and his word will never become of none effect. In spite of the fact that, "There is a way that seemeth right unto men," it will always remain that, "the end thereof are the ways of death." His word has gone out and will not return unto Him void. There are those who say that if one does the best he knows how, then God will count it in his favor. But I cannot preach such things, for I must contend that it is by grace we are saved through faith, and that not of ourselves, it is the gift of God; and not of works at all. I recently used as a text, "For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. So then it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy." I believe you know my understanding of it.

Brethren, this is the doctrine of God our Saviour, that salvation is by His grace. It is unto all the elect of God — those chosen in Christ before the world began, and, as said before, not one can be added nor one taken away. Though

many false doctrines are preached which disturb, and overthrow the faith of some, it will always be true that, ". . . the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are his." Aren't we perfectly willing to stand upon this: The Lord knows them that are his; and upon the Saviour's words, "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight." Aren't we willing, yea more, aren't we fervently desirous of nothing else?

There is so much more to be said, but we must conclude for this time. Each one who believes these things, knows that something has taken place within him that is mysterious; something with which he did not have the slightest thing to do, except to feel its effect; something which was so memorable that it is never forgotten. Were you ever in the horrible condition of felt sin and condemnation? Were you brought out of that condition after a while to joyful deliverance, and your goings established in the grace of God? Do you now sing a new song, even praise unto God? Then you have a reason of a hope to tell, for this is what it is — what the Lord has done for you. Having this, you have unmistakable evidence of being one of those who were chosen in Christ before the world began, and have right, by the leading of the Spirit, to baptism in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Ghost, and for membership in the visible church. And yet there is more: many of those who have such evidence may never be counted in the church in this life, yet they, together with those who have been rightly brought into the visible church, will be brought into their incorruptible inheritance, which is undefiled and fades not away, and reserved in heaven for them; for they are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

We must mention the latter part of

the text, "Having a good conscience, that whereas they speak evil of you as evil doers, they may be ashamed who falsely accuse you of your conversation in Christ."

How hardly can one refrain from speaking of his hope in the Lord? though often through modesty he holds his peace. When one speaks of his hope — of his travels from nature to grace, he has absolutely nothing to be hesitant about before men. Paul said to Timothy, "For God hath not given us the spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind. Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner." He that has a hope, has a good conscience in the matter that will sustain him before any unbeliever. And though some may speak slightly of one who talks of his hope, or speak evil of him because he does not conform to the common notion of religion; yet the daily walk and conversation of such an one in the Lord lifts him above the crowd, and he is noticed even of men; so that even men wish there were more like him in the world.

So, brethren, do not hesitate to give the reason of your hope when any require it of you.

(The above is the substance of discourse at Black Rock Church, Butler, Maryland, the first Sunday in January, 1965. It was taped, but is necessarily condensed and edited for publication, in lieu of attempting to write an editorial. — J. D. W.)

VOICES OF THE PAST
"He being dead yet speaketh"

Dear Brethren Gold and Lester:

I returned from a short trip among the destitute brethren in Bedford County yesterday, (destitute in respect to the preached word,) and on reaching home found the Landmark for the 15 inst. which had come in my absence. I at once commenced reading it. And can say of a truth that I felt to rejoice for

the consolation received from its pages. How brethren with the love of God in heart can write or speak lightly of our sound periodicals and valuable books now being published is a mystery to me. I feel to commend them and only wish I was able to take them all for the benefit not of myself only, but for the benefit of my Children who I wish could never see or read the light, trashy blasphemous publications of the present day so eagerly sought after by the hords of arminians in the land.

But I started out to write something upon the sure standing of the saints, or the final perseverance of all God's children which I conclude is taught in the Scriptures beyond a peradventure. Since I hope I experienced the new birth I have never doubted but that grace reigned unto eternal life by Jesus Christ to all that are born of the Spirit of God, or that ever will be born of that Spirit. I sometimes think that none but an infidel can believe that a subject of reigning grace should ever be lost, or that Christ only placed man back upon the same footing or standing with Adam before his transgression, that is, if they have ever read the scriptures to any profit. Reason, it seems to me, would teach men better. But alas, men love darkness rather than light. It is a lamentable fact that professed Christians will ignore the plain teachings of the Scriptures in order to try to support some favorite theory.

When the man transgressed he was driven from Eden's Garden never to return. Before his transgression he was only fit to dwell there. He was not a Spiritual man, but of the earth earthly. I have thought that **he was fit neither for Heaven or Hell, but for the very place where his Creator placed him,** (the garden of Eden.) The death of Christ never placed him back into the garden, nor any of his posterity. Hence he was not, neither was his posterity, placed where he was before the transgression. But as he and his wife were transgressors or fallen creatures, all their posterity were transgressors or

fallen creatures; and were doomed to death eternal, if a deliverer did not appear. For he and his wife were powerless, — had not one ray of hope left on account of their righteousness, for they had none to plead. So it appears that by this one man sin had entered into the world (see Rom. 5:12) and death by sin. And the man was driven out. How foolish to talk of his being placed back where he was before the fall with death yet in the world. But I hear it preached constantly, if I go out.

But how shall any of his race escape eternal death, or obtain eternal life, (not how shall he get back into the garden,)? Let an apostle answer, "But God who is rich in mercy for his great love," &c (see Eph. 2:4, 5). How could this love exist without an object to center upon? Impossible. Here the wisdom of God appears, and shines in the following, "And I will put enmity between thee the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; It shall bruise thy head, and thou shalt bruise his heel;" (Gen. 3:15) Here is a deliverer promised according to God's foreknowledge, who says, "Remember the former things of Old: for I am God and there is none else: I am God and there is none like me, Declaring the end from the beginning (from all eternity) and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand and I will do all my pleasure." (Isa. 46:9-10)

Then his knowledge comprehends the end of all things from the beginning. Therefore all and every act of men, devils, and angels was present before him, and before man was created He saw his fall, and had wisely arranged to save by or through Christ all that ever will sing in glory. And by virtue of that counsel that he declares shall stand, it was his pleasure not to place Adam back where he stood before his transgression, but to save eternally all who were viewed in the counsel of peace as being members of Christ's body. He who was to bruise Satan's head appears as the deliverer to fulfill the counsel. "Behold the man whose name is the

Branch: and he shall grow up out of his place, and he shall build the Temple of the Lord. Even he shall build the temple of the Lord; (not if his bride helps him) and shall bear the glory, and shall sit and rule upon his throne; and shall be a priest upon his throne: and the counsel of peace shall be between them both." (Zech. 6:12, 13) Is not this Christ who is to build the Temple? If so will he build, and suffer another to pull down? No. If so, how will he do all his pleasure. I think that in this counsel God, the almighty Lord, sat as sovereign umpire, and the number that should be eternally saved was agreed upon, and it embraces the bride, the Lamb's wife who had fallen by reason of her sin in her federal head, Adam, and was saved in her eternal head, Christ.

So I conclude that there will be no misgiving or failure in the matter. And that she should be fully assured of this fact the prophet, under the direction of the Holy Spirit of God, speaks thus to her, "Comfort ye, comfort ye my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned: for she has received of the Lord's hand double for all her sins." Isa. 40:1. This sets the matter in a clear light, for if the church has received double for all her sins, she is not only forgiven all her sin in Adam but all her sins by commission or omission in all time, and in Christ has eternal life which doubles for all her sins. How foolish to think that he would accomplish her warfare, and pardon her iniquity, and yet leave her liable to fall away and be lost! He is mighty to save. "Who is this that cometh from Edom with dyed garments from Bozrah? This that is glorious in his apparel travelling in the greatness of his strength? I that speak in righteousness, mighty to save." (Isa. 63:1)

Ah, says the objector, these things were spoken to the Jews. Not so fast, he, Christ, is the Saviour of Gentiles as well. The counsel, blessed be God, embraced the Gentiles also. That which

saves the Jews must save the Gentile. There is but one Saviour, and but one way of salvation, and that is Christ. The first promise under the gospel dispensation runs thus, "And she shall bring forth a son and thou shalt call his name **Jesus**. He shall save his people from their sins." (Matt. 1:21) That settles the matter if there was not another scripture bearing upon the subject. She brought forth a son, and the son saved his people from their sins of every kind: did not propose to save, if they would aid him, or work for their salvation; but he found them dead in sins, and quickened them into life. It was by virtue of his life, death, resurrection, ascension, and effectual mediation, which was all arranged in the wonderful counsel or covenant ordered in all things and sure. "Shall save his people," not try and fail, not pardon and unpardon, not give life and take away, not marry and then divorce, not deliver and suffer to be taken captive; but save, absolutely, positively save. He Christ is their life, eternal life I mean. How can one who hath eternal life be lost? Not until their eternal life is overcome. "I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any pluck them out of my hand. My Father which give them me is greater than all, and none is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand, I and my Father are one." (John 10:28, 29, 30)

But poor mortal man will rise up in the face of the dear Saviour and declare that his children have been plucked out of his hand and dragged down to an eternal hell there to welter in pain world without end. When men assert that one who has been born of the Spirit can fall from grace, as they call it, and be lost, they simply give Christ the lie, that is all about it, and this a subject of grace will never do; so I am forced to the conclusion that all who hold and teach this doctrine of the apostasy of Christians unto death are unbelievers. The Saviour said to his people, because I live ye shall live also. (John 14:15)

But this, says the objector, was spoken to the Apostles. Yes but Christ is the head of the church which is his body, and common sense teaches us that the head cannot live without the body, neither the body without the head; so the glorious promise embraces the whole body, the church. But ignorant worms of earth being blind and deaf, can neither see, nor hear, but foolishly teach a doctrine that, if true, would destroy both head and body. For it certainly must follow that if Christ is the head, and the church the body, that the death of one is the death of the other. Besides what sense or reason is there in, or comfort can come of, a doctrine that robs Christ of his inheritance? Certainly none. Christ said, "I came down from heaven not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." (John 6:38, 39) Again, "I have glorified thee on the earth; I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do." (John 17:4)

Now if he came to do the will of the Father, and that will was to save all which the Father has given him, and he did the will of his Father, and finished the work, how can it be possible that the satisfied will can be broken? How can the gift of God to the Son be lost, and Christ's honor be vindicated? Can grace fail to reign to the final victory of all his redeemed? Horrid to think; impossible in fact. Then if any teach otherwise it is blasphemy. The life of Christ was a life of perfect obedience. He came to the law and fulfilled it in every respect. Justice could demand nothing but what he paid. The atonement sealed forever every thing that the law of justice could demand. Therefore he as surety had the right to open the prison house to all the captives and lead them out, never to be imprisoned again. His resurrection justified them, for he was raised for our justification; his ascension assured their ascension, and his mediation saves them from sin.

Because says the apostle, "If any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous," (1st John 2:1.) Then how can they finally fall away and be lost? Christ said, "ye must be born again." (John 3:3) Without this birth none can see the kingdom of God.

Well, all Christians (not all professed Christians) are born again, or born of the Spirit. The natural birth is of the flesh, and is flesh. It can be nothing but flesh, it cannot be unborn. That which is born of the Spirit is spirit. It cannot be any thing but spirit and is compelled to remain born of the Spirit. Hence the impossibility of the Christian ever falling finally away. Men **fall from great profession, but never fall from grace**, for grace reigns unto eternal life by Jesus Christ. The Apostles understood the teaching of the Saviour, and Paul taught the Romans thus, "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." (Rom. 8:38, 39) O! but says the objector, I know that none of these things can accomplish the final apostacy of any of those born again, but they by sinning bring it about themselves. John meets you here with the following soul comforting words, speaking by inspiration and therefore speaking truth, "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. In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil." &c. (1st John 3:9, 10)

I conclude that whatsoever is born of the Spirit is of Christ and hence can not sin, therefore can never come into condemnation. The children of God endure unto the end. The children of the devil fall from their great pretension, and, to cover the cheat, claim that they were once Christians, but have fallen

away or fallen from grace. Again, "the Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God. And if children then heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together." (Rom. 8:17) That will do. It is just as easy to non-suit one joint-heir as another. If the Christian is not a legally born heir then there is no use of language. Then, it is just as easy to drag Christ down to hell as it is to drag the joint-heirs with him to hell. For the apostle affirms that, "Ye are dead and your life is hid with Christ in God, and when Christ who is our life shall appear then shall ye also appear with him in glory." Bless God for his care of his children. They do not want to run away from him, or displease, nor disgrace him. But the great desire of the Christian is to live near to him, knowing that he is their strength, and life of their delight. Though they are often crying, O! my leanness, my leanness, how oft is the cry extorted from them, "Oh, merciful God, how I do desire to glorify thee by an orderly walk and godly conversation. But I am so poor, weak and blind that I fear that I am not born again. But if I am deceived for Christ's sake undeceive me. I do not doubt thy power to save. But I often fear that thou hast not saved me." Christians are not uneasy about falling from grace, but often fear they have no grace. But they can't consent to leave Christ, for they are kept by the power of God, and grieve and often mourn because they cannot love him more and serve him better.

Brother Gold, this imperfect scribble is at your disposal. If you can find any thing in it that is fit for your paper publish, and if not consign it to the waste basket. May the Lord prosper you and give you yet many years to edify his saints for Christ's sake.

J. C. Hall

(The above by Elder John C. Hall, of Virginia, appeared in *Zion's Landmark* of May 1, 1890 which was then published by Elders P. D. Gold and P. G. Lester. — J. D. W.)

OBITUARIES

GEORGE W. McDUFF

It pleased the Lord to take from us Brother George W. McDuff on September 9, 1964. He was born October 2, 1894.

Left to mourn his passing are his devoted companion, Sister Cara McDuff, Longview, Texas, and three children: Irene Zane and Maurice Stone, of Houston, Texas; and Raymond McDuff, of Fort Worth, Texas; and eight grandchildren.

Brother McDuff was a deacon of Fellowship Church, and Moderator of the Fellowship Association. By the grace of God he filled both offices aswellas any brother I ever knew. He was known among the Primitive Baptists throughout the United States and Canada, and was loved by all who knew him. He had a good report from without, aswellas from within. We feel that our loss is his eternal gain.

May the Lord bless Sister McDuff and children to weep not as those who have no hope, for Brother McDuff was blessed with a good hope beyond this vale of tears. May He comfort you in your sorrow.

There was a large congregation of brethren and friends at his funeral, which was conducted by the writer.

Elder Lloyd Wall

ELDER RANDOLPH PERDUE

Elder Randolph Perdue was born in Franklin County, Virginia, October 12, 1868, and died October 6, 1964, in the county of his nativity. He was buried on the 8th of October, 1964, and funeral services were conducted at his home. He was laid to rest in the Rocky Mount Cemetery by the side of his two wives.

He joined the Bethel Church in July, 1895, and was baptized by Elder J. C. Hall, and was ordained to the full work of the ministry in October, 1912. He organized the church at Rocky Mount, Virginia, in 1916, and was called as its pastor, and remained so until his death. He was chosen as Moderator of the Pigg River Association in 1916, and served 48 years in meekness: longer than any so far as I know. He served as pastor of the following churches in his day, Bethel, Rocky Mount, Martinsville, Chestnut, Little Creek, and perhaps others, but always in meekness, and never as a dictator, for he loved Peace. He was chosen as one of the board of directors of the Peoples National Bank of Rocky Mount, Virginia in 1908, and was President of the bank and later Chairman of the Board of Directors.

The Lord prospered him financially, yet this never made him forget who called him by His grace, and made him love his people. He

finished his work, and was called away to something that was prepared for him; and the One that called him will care for all of his people here and in the hereafter. So, we all say, "Well done," and we hope to join in the song of redeeming Grace in the day to come.

Written by request.

J. P. Helms

TRIBUTE TO SISTER BUENA V. WRIGHT

"Like Clouds that rake the mountain summit
Or waves that own no curbing hand,
How fast does brother follow brother
From sunshine to that Sunless land."

How poignantly true these words were made manifest to us on October 4, 1964, when the shocking news reached us that our sister Buena Wright had been killed in a car wreck, we having just left her a few hours before. When we bade each other "good bye" at the Sulphur Fork Association, little did we think it would be the last time together; yet realizing we have no assurance of our lives from one hour to the next. Buena dreaded the trip home having been in a wreck just one week before, and received injuries which necessitated her canceling a trip to Alabama to other associations. She was a regular attendant at associations, and had traveled extensively to hear the doctrine she so earnestly contended for. She was a gifted writer, and well versed in the Scripture.

Buena joined the Primitive Baptist Church at Cana, October 5, 1940, and was baptized by the late Elder J. R. Hardy. She remained a faithful member there until the organization of Shepherd Fold church in Houston where she made her home. She was one of the few remaining charter members, and a faithful attendant and supporter; never letting anything hinder her from going to her meetings unless providentially hindered.

Her body was brought to Quitman funeral home, to await the arrival of her children, after which she was tenderly laid to rest by the side of her husband and young son, who preceded her in death several years. Services were conducted by her pastor Elder C. M. Haygood, and Elders R. W. Rhodes and Lloyd Wall, at Myrtle Springs Baptist church, with burial in the cemetery there. She is survived by one son R. C. Wright of Meridian, Mississippi; and two daughters, Mrs. Welta Scruggs, El Paso, Texas, and Mrs. Kelsay Swain, Houston Texas; and by one brother and three sisters.

God's mercy overshadowed her in death in that she was not conscious of any thing, as she lived only a few minutes until death relieved her.

"Dearest sister thou hast left us;
Here thy loss we deeply feel,
But 'tis God that hath bereft us
He can all our sorrows heal.

Peaceful be thy silent slumber
Peaceful in the grave so low
Thou no more our throng shall number
Thou no more our song shall know."

A Sister-in-law,
Buena White

ROSA MILLER OSBORNE

Rosa Miller Osborne, of Nottingham, Pa., passed from this low ground of sorrow, March 24, 1964, in her 81st year. She was a daughter of the late Fielding and Mary Walters Miller, of Ashe County, N. C., who were members of a church of the Primitive Baptist faith. She was born Nov. 22, 1883, and joined the River View Church, the church her parents belonged to, and was baptized by Elder William R. Craft over fifty year ago.

After removing to Pennsylvania, she had her membership at the Rock Springs Church, Lancaster County, for 34 years. Many of the brethren and friends were entertained in her home, both in North Carolina and in Pennsylvania, down through the years.

She was united in marriage to Isom V. Osborne, Aug. 12, 1900. To this union were born 10 children. Three preceded mother in death. Left to mourn her passing is her husband and these seven children: Charles B. Osborne, Quarryville, Pa.; Mary, wife of James N. Payne, and Mrs. Brucie Leftwich, both of Whiteford, Md.; Barbara, wife of Eugene Grace, and Vaughn W. Osborne, both of Nottingham, Pa.; Bliss E. Osborne, El Paso, Tex.; and Eugene F. Osborne, Catonsville, Md. Also surviving were 11 grandchildren, 15 great grandchildren and two brothers.

Funeral services were held March 26, 1964, at Cauffman Funeral Home, Oxford, Pa., conducted by her pastor Elder John D. Wood, and interment was in Oxford Cemetery.

Gone into that light that shines so fair;
Gone from the earth of sorrow and care,
Resting those hands that did their best,
Gone, dear mother, gone to rest.

Charles B. Osborne

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

WHEREAS, God in His infinite wisdom has called from us by death our beloved brother and pastor, Elder W. W. Roberts, who calmly fell asleep in Jesus on August 26, 1964 at the age of 88 years:

Brother Roberts united with the Primitive Baptist Church of Newport River on April 4,

1904, it being our regular meeting and was baptized the following day by the pastor, Elder W. W. Brinson. In a short while after this the church recognized his gift as he was impressed to comfort others with the comfort wherewith he was comforted. On March 4, 1911 he was licensed by the church to exercise his gift wherever his lot was cast. On December 7, 1913, he was ordained to the full work of the ministry and was a faithful minister until death relieved him, serving his home church as pastor more than thirty years. He was faithful to the cause he so much loved and had the utmost respect of those who opposed him.

He was married to Miss Josephine Prescott in early life, and to this union was born ten children. His wife and one daughter preceded him in death. We pray that the Good Lord will comfort the children and grandchildren in this hour of sorrow.

We miss his comforting words in the Church but desire to be reconciled to God's Holy Will, and feel to say "Thy Kingdom Come, Thy Will Be Done." We do know that though we walk through the Valley of the Shadow of Death we shall fear no evil for God will be with us, his Rod and Staff will comfort us, even there nothing shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. No other one is worthy of our trust.

Funeral services were conducted in the Church of his membership by Elders M. M. Denning and M. L. Simmons, among a large congregation of brethren and friends, after which his body was laid to rest beside his devoted wife, to await the second coming of our Lord when these bodies that are sown in weakness will be raised in power and see the Great King in his glory, be like Him and be satisfied.

RESOLVED, That a copy be sent to the Signs of the Times for publication, a copy to Old Faith Contender, a copy to the bereaved family and a copy entered in our Church record.

Done by order of conference Saturday before third Sunday in September, 1964.

M. L. Simmons, Moderator
G. C. Garner, Clerk

BERTHA L. FERREE

Sister Bertha L. Ferree was born March 10, 1893, and died in her sleep September 18, 1964, making her stay on earth about seventy-one years, and six months. She was united in marriage to E. L. Ferree in May, 1915; and is survived by her husband and eight children.

She became a member of Rock Hill Church in 1945, and was a true and faithful believer until death. The passing of Sister Ferree was sad indeed, and we at Rock Hill Church, along with her family, will miss her very much; but we believe that our loss is her eternal gain.

Therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, That, first, we at Rock Hill Church extend to the family of Sister Ferree our sincere sympathy; and, second, that three copies of this be made: one for the Church record, one for the family, and one for the *Signs of the Times* for Publication.

Done by order of the church in conference in October, 1964.

L. B. Lambert, Deacon
W. A. Carter, Clerk

SISTER CHARITY PARKER

Sister Charity Parker was born August 9, 1874, and died July 31, 1963, making her stay on earth 89 years. She and William E. Parker were married in 1897, and the Lord blessed them with a son, Rosker Parker. Her husband and her son preceded her to the grave by many years; however, she was left with a lovely daughter-in-law and six faithful grandchildren to love and take care of her in her last days.

Sister Parker united with Creech's Primitive Baptist Church about the year 1913, and was faithful to attend until poor health confined her to her home; still she remembered and loved her church. We thank God that we were blessed with the sweet fellowship of Sister Parker.

Her funeral was conducted by Elders D. B. Stokes and W. E. Turner, and her body was laid to rest in the Old Beulah Church Cemetery. May God bless us to live humbly and lovingly as dear Sister Parker did while she was with us.

Submitted for Creech's Church by
Margaret C. Johnson

REDMAN BURKHALTER

It was the will and purpose of the eternal God of heaven and earth to call Brother Redman Burkhalter from this earthly life in a car wreck near Texarkana, Texas, June 30, 1963, at the age of seventy-five. Funeral services were held at his home church Prospect, Simms, Texas, by his pastor, Elder Lloyd Wall.

He was very faithful to his church, and a regular attendant of the sister churches of the surrounding area. He believed that God holds all things in His hands without the help of man; and he always gave God all the praise, honor and glory for his hope. We are bound to give thanks to God for the precious memories of Brother Redman, as he was known.

Written at the request of his sister, Sister Ollie Burkhalter, by

G. C. Fowler

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

God in his infinite wisdom and mercy has called to his beloved embrace by death, Sister Faye (Phatama Mae) Hauk. She was born January 22, 1890, to George H. and Polly Tatum; and was married to R. H. Hauk June 12, 1912. She departed this life March 4, 1964, at Hobart, Oklahoma.

She was the widow of the late Deacon R. H. Hauk, who preceded her in death February 8, 1958. Together they joined Little Flock Church, at Altus, Oklahoma, were baptized by the later Elder J. C. Sikes, November 8, 1924. "Sister Faye", as she was lovingly known, had a severe stroke in July of 1953, and never walked or talked the remaining almost eleven years of her life. Though her afflictions were great, her faith in her blessed Redeemer never failed, as was manifested in her love for the church and the doctrine of salvation by grace.

In sorrow, and with a deep feeling of loss, we bow in humble submission to the divine will of our Heavenly Father. May the mercy and love of God sustain those who are left in sorrow.

RESOLVED, That a copy of this be filed with Little Flock Church records; a copy be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Done by order of the church June 28, 1964.

Elder C. M. Haygood, Pastor
Ana Stewart, Church Clerk

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

We, the members of Pleasant Grove Church, wish to bow in humble submission to the will of our Heavenly Father, who doeth all things well, in removing our esteemed brother, Tom W. Walker, from our midst.

On June 12, 1964, some of the members from Pleasant Grove Church and our pastor Elder Harvey Smith, held a service at his bedside, and at the close Brother Walker told of his love for the church, and was received in the church. He was a devoted and humble member; but was never able to be baptized.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the church has lost a faithful member whom we will miss very much. And second, That a copy of this be spread on the church records; a copy sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication; and a copy sent to the family.

Done by order of Pleasant Grove Church at the regular session July meeting, 1964.

Elder Harvey Smith, Moderator
Robert F. Walker, Clerk
Reidsville, N. C.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 133

DANVILLE, VA., APRIL, 1965

NO. 4

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 4/65
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

"THOU ART MINE"

Hark! Hark! the soft answer, the sweet, solemn voice!

'Tis the word of Jehovah that bids thee rejoice.

How blest the assurance, the promise divine,
Fear not, thou worm Jacob; Behold thou art mine!

Eternity saw thee enshrined in my love,
And the favor I bore thee no time can remove:
Thy sins shall not frustrate my gracious design;

Fear not, thou worm Jacob; Behold thou art mine!

Though fiery the trials that wait for thee here,
Yet bright through them all thou at last shall appear;

And when dark the storm gathers, this word shall be thine,

In all thy afflictions, Fear not, thou art mine!

When thy foes shall beset thee, and dangers assail,

Although they distress thee, they shall not prevail;

His claim to thy person shall Satan resign:
As a brand plucked from the burning, Behold, thou art mine!

When faint thy heart beats, and slow draws thy breath,

And thy soul is engaged in its struggle with death;

When thy friends gather round thee to catch the last sign:

In death's gloomy valley, Fear not, thou art mine!

When the grave closes over thee, in darkness and gloom,

All that thou claimest on earth in the tomb,

Though thy dust shall be scattered on mountain or main,
Yet still thou art mine! and I'll raise thee again.

When the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall arise,

And fruition of glory shall beam on thy eyes,
In song of salvation, the chorus divine,
Shall burst from thy lips, and proclaim, Thou art mine.

E. J. — Gospel Standard, 1855
Selected by Bro. Geo. W. Jackson

TIMOTHY 1:9

1029 Daniel Street
Jacksonville, N. C.

Dear Brother Spangler,

I have for sometime thought of writing a few lines for the "Signs," but because of my weakness I have hesitated.

I desire by His grace to make a few comments on the second epistle of Paul's letter to Timothy 1:9, "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began,"

The apostle Paul clearly sets forth the doctrine of predestination, foreknowledge, election, calling, sanctification, justification and glorification in this one verse. When God blesses us with the spirit, it is sweet to meditate on the finished work of salvation. So it is upon this finished work our soul rejoices, giving us that longing to be in the presence of our heavenly King.

We find here that Paul began this verse with "Who hath saved us, . . .," giving reference to God, which ascribes all the glory to Him who bowed the heavens and came down: He who was

and is the King of kings and the Lord of lords. The beauty is that He is not going to save us but already hath. No wonder God's people can sing a song of "What Wonderful Love is This." Their future estate does not rely on what the creature has done or will do, but on Him who hath saved us. I'm glad the little word US is there, for we find in 2nd Peter 3:9, "The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is long suffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance." This scripture verifies to me the same US as Paul refers to. What a glorious harmony between the saints of God.

Now, by his grace we come to the calling. Paul states further, "and called us with an holy calling." I hope, my dear saints, I know something of this calling. Do you? I feel that to every child of God two phases of the call are embraced in this calling, yet they are knitted together as one. Why? Because they came from God and one depends on the other, which means that they accomplish one aim and purpose. Let us, if God is willing, examine this and try the spirit, that it might coincide with our experience.

God called us in and by the law, and as we struggle we find we cannot perform the duties or the demands it makes. We find ourselves totally depraved and in a pit of nature, struggling only to find we become weaker and weaker until we are brought into the lowest hell and to the ends of the earth. Jonah found himself in this same condition. The word of the Lord came the first time to Jonah and told him to go to Ninevah, and he paid the fare thereof. So did we, and it only brought misery to be cast into a sea of trouble and affliction. Yet when all seemed lost, God purposed a whale to be where he was tossed overboard. A safe place but not a comfortable place to the flesh. Just think, Jonah was cast from the presence of all human flesh and all human help. He, as well as you and I, was be-

yond the help of mortal man; and it was by reason of his affliction he cried unto God saying, "I will pay that that I have vowed, salvation is of the Lord." The Lord spake unto the fish and it vomited out Jonah upon dry land. The word of the Lord came unto Jonah the second time saying, "Arise, go to Ninevah, that great city, and preach unto it the preaching that I bid thee." It was in the afflictions of life that Jonah was made to know God, not in a Sunday school room nor a school of theology. After this experience I find that Jonah went.

By the law we lose our life, and find of ourselves we can do nothing, but by His grace which strengthens us we can do all things. So the first phase of this call is by the law which brings us to naught, and to Christ, that we may be fit subjects of His grace. The second phase: how easy it is to go. I've been told and I feel I know by experience how hard it is to try to preach (impossible), but to be blessed to preach is so easy and most reviving to a poor soul. Dear readers, remember without the holy calling there would be no law or grace, for if no law, who would need grace? Yet the law and grace are knitted together in such a mysterious way even as the Father, Son and Holy Ghost and cannot be separated but must be fulfilled in Christ.

Now the last portion of this verse, "not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." I feel we know, even as Jonah, by now that our works and our righteousness are as filthy rags in His sight. The law teaches us this, and the reason it does is because the grace was ever before the law (or at least before the law was given), fulfilling all of our needs. So it was God's eternal purpose to bring us in a peculiar way that we might be a peculiar people, making us to have no confidence in the flesh but to look to Him as the author and finisher of our faith; that we should show forth the praise of Him,

who hath begotten us unto a lively hope, (not a dead one), by the resurrection of His Son from the deadness of the law that brought us to death, that we should live to Him; that the glory and honor and all praise should be to Christ, who is our head.

Just think, this was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began. No wonder John could say, "Behold, what manner of Love the father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God; therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not." (I John 3:1) Yet we cannot understand what his purposes are nor what he hath prepared for his people. Paul says again, I Corinthians 2:9, "But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him." Yea, we love Him. Why? He gave us the answer: It is because he first loved us. Why did he first love us? Because we were given to him by the Father before the world began. We belonged to him, therefore he came to redeem His people, to justify them by His blood, to present them to the Father without spot or wrinkle, which represents the glorified state that they some day will be in, in that city who's builder and maker is God, which is eternally in the heaven.

So may all of us by His Spirit be blessed to say as Jeremiah in 17:14 said, "Heal me, O Lord, and I shall be healed; save me, and I shall be saved: for thou art my praise."

D. B. Stokes, Jr.

THE LORD HAS RICHLY BLESSED THEM

807 Pope Street,
Memphis, Tenn.

Dear Brother Spangler,

I am sending you a check to re-new my subscription to the **Signs** another year. It is filled with good reading, and I am sometimes blessed to enjoy it so

well that I feel I would love to write each writer and try to tell them how much their words mean to me.

I am sending the experience of my nephew, and a dear brother in Christ; and I believe every heaven-born soul will witness the fact that it was the working of God's mighty power in turning him from his own way, causing him to seek his Saviour's face, and there find mercy and salvation. I am so glad that the Lord puts the desire in the hearts of many of his children to write these experiences, for, to me, it shows the power of God, and lifts us up as we are when we listen to a gospel discourse from a minister.

Richard Campbell is the son of my sister, Carrie, who lives here in Memphis, and Luther Campbell, our deacon who is now deceased. He joined the church several years ago, and was later ordained a deacon also. His gentle manner, his walk, his talk and steadfastness has endeared him to all.

The Lord has so richly blessed us here. We are few in number, but the fellowship is so sweet. May it be God's will to continue these blessings, and keep us humble and in peace, and fill our hearts with compassion toward each other and cause us to bear with one another in our weaknesses, and to overlook each other for good, and not to wound or hurt. Wouldn't it be heavenly indeed, if our God would fill all our hearts so full of his rich abounding love, that none could say he had ought against a brother. But Wisdom knows all things; and as one wrote:

"He treasures up his bright designs
And works his sovereign will."

So He knows all about his creatures here below, and is causing all things to work together for good to those that love God: He loved them, is the reason they love him. "What wonderous love is this, Oh, my soul?"

I want to say a few words more. I have just read the "Voices of the Past" in my December **Signs** which came today. It is so wonderful to read words written by such an able man as Elder

Gilbert Beebe, and for them to tell exactly how you believe and understand texts, or verses of Scripture.

Mrs. James E. (Lucille) Young

EXPERIENCE OF BROTHER
RICHARD H. CAMPBELL

2761 Cochese Ave.,
Memphis, Tennessee 38118

I would like, the Lord willing, to write regarding what I hope and trust has been the Lord's dealings with a poor sinner. I cannot say that I know that they are, but it seems from talking with others, that there have been many sign posts along the way that agree with their travels. These are some of the things that strengthen our hope, and enables us to press on to the mark for the prize of the high calling of God; if in truth we are on that highway.

In my younger life I had never thought seriously about religion. I always thought that someday, when I got older, I would join the church — and that church was always the Primitive Baptist Church. This was just a natural impression because my parents and grandparents were members. I never really knew anything about the church, but even then there was something that I could see there which was not found anywhere else. I never had any time for the other churches, because it seemed that even then I knew better than to believe that stuff. To me, God was not like they claimed him to be. But my thoughts were just of the flesh, and I did not worry about it one way or the other.

I was thirty years old, married and living in West Point, Mississippi, when I first began to question life, its meaning; and the future. I remember buying a Bible from a door to door salesman, just because I felt that every home should have one, I guess. Not that I wanted to read it or was concerned with its teachings. Sometime later I began to ask a blessing before meals in my home

— again, just because I thought it was nice and should be done; not because of any reason that I can explain. I then began to have trouble with my nerves, and was convinced that it was heart trouble. I thought that I was in serious trouble, and even despaired of living because I felt that death could come at any moment. I began to try to pray to God to have mercy on me, and show me the way that I should go. I did not know what the right way was but I knew I was not walking in it. This all happened over a period of a year or so; and it is only looking back that I hope I can see the hand of the Lord in the matter. At the time these were all separate and distinct occurrences, and some even unnoticed. I was not attending church, and had no thought of it during this period. Looking back, I feel that if I have ever prayed it was at this time.

One Sunday in March, 1954, my wife and daughter left to go to their church and Sunday-school. As they left I picked up the Bible and laid down across the bed to read. As far as I was concerned, it was just a whim of nature, as I had tried to read before but would not read more than a chapter because I could not understand what I read. I could see only with the eyes of the flesh, and understand with the natural mind. These have no part in the things of God, because the natural mind cannot understand the things of God, for they are foolishness to him. This was not the case this time, if not deceived, because the more I read, the more I wanted to read. And I continued to read every spare moment for two or three years. If I had fifteen minutes, I would spend them reading the things that were now my meat and drink, and my whole life. It seemed that I understood the words, and did not question the fact that this should seem strange, because I had never been able to understand before.

This was not the only thing that was different, however. From the moment I began reading forward, my whole thought was of God and his word. It

was three or four weeks after I began reading before the second Sunday when they held their monthly meeting in Memphis, Tenn. I could hardly wait for the opportunity to go and hear the preaching, for I felt to know that I would understand; and yet, I never had before. I also knew, it seemed, that I understood what I had heard talked about all my life in my home before I was married. I could see that my parents and the brethren and sisters who visited us, had something that was very beautiful and precious to them; and I had never understood what it was. This has been a great consolation to me, the fact that all this happened when I was away from home, and not in contact with anyone who knew of these things. To me, it is evidence that it does not matter whether there is a preacher, a brother or a sister, or anyone, if the Lord calls, his children will answer; and with all understanding, for He is their understanding.

My thoughts previously were entirely on the things of the world earning a living, because this was all that I knew. Now my whole sense of values were changed: my walk and every waking thought were different. I no longer enjoyed the same things. It seems that it all happened in a twinkling of an eye, and yet it did not seem strange — it was as though I was another person. The things I had previously enjoyed were foolishness to me; and I was concerned whether I could carry on the affairs of everyday living and working. I remember one Sunday of reading in Revelation. I don't remember where, but suddenly a great dread came over me, and I could not continue reading. As we sat down for lunch, I remember looking at my family, and thinking, Oh my! things can never be the same between us again. I was sad, because the family was the same and had every right to expect me to continue the same, but I knew I could not. I even worried about whether I could go back to work the next morning; but the next morning this was gone from me.

It was for two or three years that I read the Bible daily, and wanted to do nothing but read, or hear the brethren talk on these things. I was traveling at this time, and I would take my song book with me, and drive down the highways singing the songs, and rejoicing in this new found love that was so sweet and precious to me. I learned most of the songs because I sang them so many times. This was indeed the sweetest season that I have ever had; and while in this spirit, it seemed that I could say without question, "I know that my Redeemer liveth, and all is well with my soul."

This season lasted a long time, and then it was gone. I was just as powerless to keep it from leaving, as I would have been to try to have kept it from coming in the first place. I have had many different travels and experiences since that time. Some of them agree with these earlier experiences, and this always strengthens my hope that they are of God, and are building line upon line, and precept upon precept, to the perfect work of Christ. I have thought that these early seasons of rejoicing, when the new heart of flesh is young and tender, are the most beautiful and precious to the child of God; if, indeed, I know anything about it. I have wondered if this is the well of water springing up within, as Christ said to the Samaritan woman at the well, because these continue on into and agree with the later experiences. We continue to draw from this well as long as we live. I say this because these are the things we look back to when we are in doubt, and fear that we are mistaken in it all.

It is a fearful thing to claim to have a hope in these things, seeing ourselves as we are; but this we feel to know, if God be for us, we shall stand. We cannot, and do not want to deny this precious truth, and only pray that in His infinite mercy He has looked on us through the precious blood of Christ; which makes His children perfect in His sight, which they could never be of themselves.

We cannot, nor do we desire to turn

back, but we can in remembering the way in which we have been brought; the way by which we were delivered from the former things we once loved and trusted in, press on by faith in Him who is able to do more for us that we could even think to ask. In this we realize that we are nothing and less than nothing, and altogether vanity; but, as it is written, "He that has begun a good work in you will perform it unto the day of Jesus Christ." Our prayer and hope is that He has begun this work; and, if He has, we are just as sure to inherit heaven and immortal glory as God is God, for He cannot deny himself. Praise His holy name.

I sometimes try to pray, and it seems as mockery to even attempt. At other times it seems that I do not try, but every breath is praising Him, and prayer is said whether words are uttered or not. Great is the mystery of godliness, and his ways are past finding out. We cannot find them: they find His children, and His ways are precious in their sight.

I have tried to write some of the things that I have experienced, and hope to believe. They are not of my doing. How can one perform that which he understands not? I hope and trust that this has been of the leading of the Holy Spirit, because it is upon these things that I base my hope to have been blessed to understand some of the things pertaining to God and godliness, and that they are the travels of a child of God, being led in a way that I knew not. His children are as the kine pulling the cart with the Ark of God: they go lowing, looking neither to the right nor the left. They realize that their natural home and loved ones are behind them, but know that their way is set, and their course determined.

My prayer to God is that he will lead me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake, and that he will give me the strength sufficient for the steps that are ahead of me. My constant desire is to live so that the words of my mouth and the meditations of my

heart be accepted in His sight; and to the praise, honor and glory of His holy name. This can only be accomplished if He leads and directs the steps I take, and keeps me in the strait and narrow path that leads to eternal life.

The above was written after much consideration and a fearful realization of the weakness and imperfections of this poor sinner. It is just a feeble attempt to give the reason for this hope that I trust I have. It gives me much sorrow when I see myself as I am; but much joy when I am blessed to look away from self and see the perfection of God in all things; and feel the love that fills my heart when the brethren meet together — and love seems to reign in every heart.

May all who read this, receive it in the same spirit that it is written: not as a proud, boastful attempt to try to lay hold on something that I do not have, but rather as a prayerful plea: Come tell me is it thus with you. May God's richest blessings be with all who call on His name from a pure heart — a heart made pure by the precious blood of Jesus Christ, and the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

In bonds of love,
Richard H. Campbell

Rt. 1, Box 115,
Bivens, Texas

Dear Elder Wood:

I am sending you a letter I received from Sister Buena Wright's daughter after Sister Wright passed away. Would be glad for it to be published in the **Signs**, if you see fit. Hope you and the brethren in your section are doing fine. We are doing very well.

Your brother in hope,
(Elder) Lloyd Wall

59 Neyland,
Houston, Texas 77022

Dear Elder Wall:

It is very hard for me to put my feel-

ings into words, but I want to try to tell you how much it meant to me to have you come and speak at mother's funeral. She believed that you spoke and preached the truth, and would defend it regardless of what others believed. She loved you and your wife very much. I believe that her funeral was all that she would have wanted, and a great tribute was paid to her, not only by three preachers, but by the presence of so many who loved her.

I hope that some day I might receive the gift and love that can only be given by God's mercy through his precious Son, Jesus. I hope to believe the same things she did, and if I do I know that this belief and understanding is given me only by the grace of God, but I have not laid down the old life, and cannot unless He gives me the will to do so.

Please tell the brethren at Fellowship Church that we thank them sincerely, and from our hearts for the artificial wreath. It was lovely, and will remain a sign of love long after her grave is cleared of the other flowers.

. . . Please give your wife and family my best wishes; we would like to hear from you sometime. If you come to Houston don't fail to call us.

Sincerely,
Kelsay Swain

LETTER FROM
SISTER BUENA WRIGHT
TO ELDER HAYGOOD

Houston, Texas
May 6, 1964

Dear Brother and Sister Haygood and family:

Kindred in our blessed Lord and Saviour, (if this poor worm is not deceived), made precious by His life's blood. It seems the sweet dew drippings that fell so sweetly into my soul on Sunday are

still felt in some precious measure; and the meditations thereon are made a rejoicing in my soul to the extent that I would communicate to one and all, if it were in my power. These precious things proclaim the power and workings of the Holy Spirit in the benighted souls of poor lost sinners, that all might see, feel and praise Him. Alas, this I cannot do, but feel bound to speak in my feeble way, to those who have tasted these glorious things.

What a gracious God, what life giving power, what amazing things He causes his little ones to behold in righteousness. My poor heart breaks at His goodness and mercy to this poor, sinful creature; and while I am thus enamoured of his love, there is a twinge of fear, such a distrust of self, that I tremble for fear I shall do or say something that will cast reflection upon His holy name, and His precious cause. I desire so earnestly and fervently to do and say all to His honor and glory. Yet I fall short, Oh, so short.

He is so precious to my soul:
Oh, magnify His name with me;
Oh, come who will and behold
What mercy He has bestowed on me.

Oh, sing His praise, my soul sing praises,
I tremble in His love so free.
Oh, who can behold lovely Jesus
And not desire Him through eternity.

I do not pretend to be a poet, but His mercy felt, His love drunk in must flow forth, and therefore the feeble words above.

Do so hope you were cared for by this Lovely One, in much felt nearness on your way home: that He brought you safely to your destination, to find all well at home. That you might, as dear old Warburton, and millions of others so deeply wrought upon by His love and mercy, fall upon your knees and sing out His praises.

Yours in a blessed, sweet hope that this Jesus is mine. Pray for me as given grace.

Buena Wright
(see obituary)

LETTER FROM A CHURCH
TO ASSOCIATION

The Salisbury Old School Baptist Church of Salisbury, Maryland, greets, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, the churches composing the Salisbury Association, meeting with the Snow Hill Church on Wednesday and Thursday, October 21 and 22, 1964:

Beloved Brethren:

The passing of another year has brought us all together once more — another year in which the Lord has been our refuge and our strength. Again, the appointment by the Salisbury Church to write you the annual letter brought solemn questions to the mind of the writer and a seeking for the leading of the Lord. Once more, the answer seemed to be given in the words of Hebrews 9:22 “Almost all things are by the law purged with blood; and without shedding of blood is no remission.”

At the very threshold of the Scriptures, in the account of Adam and Eve, stands boldly and unmistakably, the sacrifice of blood as the only offering for sin acceptable to the Creator God. Adam and Eve made aprons of fig leaves to cover their shame, but God prepared coats of skins to clothe them, skins divinely provided by the shedding of blood. In the account of Cain and Abel — Cain offered unto the Lord the fruit of the ground, of the earth, earthy, the product of his own efforts — a bloodless offering. Abel, by faith, offered the firstling of his flock, requiring the shedding of blood. God had respect unto his offering but unto the offering of Cain He had not respect.

When the High Priest, on the day of Atonement, went within the veil, into the Holy of Holies to make an offering for his own sins and the sins of the people, he took for the offering, a lamb without blemish — remission by the shedding of blood. When the Lord passed over the land of Egypt, smiting the firstborn of all, both man and beast,

from the firstborn of King Pharaoh even down to the firstborn of the maid-servants, only those families displaying blood on the door and sideposts, did the Lord pass over, setting forth deliverance by blood. When the City of Jericho fell, Rahab, the Harlot, was spared destruction by placing the scarlet line in her window, showing by its very color, safety through bloodshed. So, on and on, throughout the Scriptures, runs the scarlet line.

All of these point in type and figure to Jesus, the Lamb of God, who poured out His precious blood on Calvary's awful cross for the ACTUAL remission of sin. Now, let us consider for a moment, what the shedding of that blood did for, and means to us who humbly trust it was shed for the remission of OUR SINS. By virtue of that shed blood, we have been delivered from the penalty of the sin in which we were conceived and born; we are now being delivered from the dominion of the sins which do so easily beset us, and we shall be delivered from the stain of sin, so that our dear Redeemer may present us to the Father spotless, blameless and forever free from condemnation. By virtue of that shed blood, He who was dead and is alive forevermore, is now seated at the right hand of the Majesty on High and by virtue of His presence there, the throne on which He sits is no longer a throne of judgment but a throne of grace. By virtue of that shed blood, sinners burdened with a load of guilt, realizing their helpless condition, tremble with fear to approach Him who has every right and every reason to condemn them; but as they fearfully look up, lo! they behold not the face of their judge, but the face of their Saviour, bidding them come. By virtue of that shed blood, we are now seated in heavenly places in our Saviour; and by virtue of that shed blood, death will be swallowed up in victory and we shall dwell forevermore with our dear Redeemer in that city of which He is the light, beholding and sharing His glory!

Oh, Brethren, as we are blest to behold our wonderful Saviour — to meditate upon the merits of His blood and by faith to believe it was shed for our salvation, we are made to cry out as did the Apostle Paul in amazement, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath entered into the heart of man, the things the Father hath prepared for them that love Him." And all things the Father prepared for us, He gave us in Jesus Christ, our Lord.

Our meetings remain unchanged. The Lord has continued to nourish our souls through the channel of our dear pastors, Elder D. V. Spangler and Elder W. D. Griffin, who preach nothing among us save Christ — crucified, arisen and glorified, and His people complete in Him. Our meetings are well attended and we hope and believe that brotherly love continues among us and for you, our dear Sister Churches.

Should the Lord tarry another year, we the Salisbury Church, hope for and invite you all to meet with us in October, 1965.

Submitted in love and fellowship.

Elder D. V. Spangler, Pastor

Elder W. D. Griffin, Assistant Pastor

Maude T. Laws, Clerk

Written by Mildred V. Dykes

THEY KNEW *THE SIGNS* CONTAINED "SOMETHING"

Box 481,

Island City, Oregon 97851

Dear Editors:

I notice, after reading my paper, that I have allowed my subscription to come to the end of the way. Enclosed find a check to cover two more years of the Old Paper, which I have slept on, and looked at and wondered what it contained since my earliest childhood. (It was so precious to my parents that "we must never destroy the *Signs* — that's Daddy's *Signs*"; and from the oldest to the youngest knew from birth that those papers contained "something").

Just the last few years I have been privileged to be able to read, enjoy and understand what was written therein.

I have been blessed in many ways, and though I have been exposed to much of our modern churches, I have never been able to see what they were trying to do. I have been led down the ways — many of them not the best — where the other denominations would say with horror in their voices, "Old Satan has surely been handling you." Yet when all was done, or I came to a quiet resting place, I could look back say, that the Lord was guiding me, (for what purpose I knew not; to what end I could not see.) Yet we are not to question Him, for his ways are so far above our ways that we cannot see why these things have been made to come to pass. But I am convinced that I could not have changed one step that I have taken, nor undo any of the things I have done. So I can see His handiwork, and believe that I can see why I have been led along those paths; and hope that I am not deceived when I think I can see what he has planned for me to do.

I especially enjoyed reading Elder Curry's article in the November issue on "I Saw No Temple Therein." I have known all of these things for a long time, and have known there was a reason why I could not enter into and partake of the services of the "temple," and be satisfied with its "being the house of the Lord," as it is supposed to be. After reading this article, I can see these things. I see that, in spite of the teachings of these worldly churches, that these temples are not the house of the Lord, but are where money and worldly works are traded for what is supposed to be our salvation.

How anyone can believe these things, is beyond me. Yet just a few short years ago I could not hear anything that was said in an Old Baptist meeting, and know what they were talking about. Our ears must be tuned to hear

these things; our eyes must be opened that we can see; and our hearts must be made to recognize the truth, and to know that there is nothing that we can do to obtain this salvation. It is the gift of God, not of works lest any man should boast; for we are his workmanship, etc. Instead of trying to argue with those whom I know do not know what I am trying to show them, I would ask God to open their eyes as he has opened mine, so that they can see and understand the "things that are hid from the wise and prudent, and revealed unto babes."

I do not believe that this means that babes in years are the ones to whom it is revealed, but rather these babes are ones who are newly led into His power and light. To these it is most revealing, and it isn't given according to our learning in earthly schools.

If I have written anything that might prove interesting to others, you may publish this.

One of the flock who is watered and fed by the word of God as written in this Old Paper.

Charles W. Bond

DESIRES MORE KNOWLEDGE AND UNDERSTANDING

6510 N. Calispel,
Spokane, Washington 99208

Dear Editors:

Another year has passed and it is time to renew my subscription. I have just finished reading the January issue and did enjoy it so much, especially the editorials by Elders Wood and Lambert. Sometimes I can read something in the *Signs*, and its just as good as being at church: I feel as though it were written with me in mind.

I am an "un-baptized Hardshell Baptist" in faith — the first, I hope by God's will; the second, I hope by His grace. I would like someday to be baptized, but only if it can be the way I

believe it should be: by the will and grace of God. I do so doubt my own assurances, hopes, etc., at times; but I hope and believe that I have faith in God and in his word: and if I do, I know that I have it by His grace alone. I feel sometimes that my soul sings praises to God for the doctrine of Salvation by Grace and the glory that is his; and I rejoice when I feel that way.

Often I wish that God would increase my knowledge and understanding, for it seems that I understand so very little. Sometimes it seems that all I ever get, are crumbs from the Master's table; yet He can make these crumbs seem like a feast, and my cup runs over.

"But unto everyone of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ." (Ephesians 4:7) Sometimes I don't see how anyone could help but praise God for all things: at other times I wonder if I'm not deceived, and even wonder if there is a God; and what it is all about. But, thank the good Lord, these times do not stay with me long.

I have been upset for the last few months over the mess the world is in — worrying and stewing, thinking that maybe I should try and do something, but not knowing what; and wishing that God would help me make up my mind. Lo and behold! last night He did. I could remember "the powers that be are ordained of God," and I looked it up and read all of the thirteenth chapter of Romans. And felt so amazed and glad — it was what my heart and conscience kept trying to tell me all the time, and I wouldn't listen; or, at least, argued with it.

I hope I have not said anything amiss, and that if I have, God will forgive my trespasses; for his is the kingdom, the power and the glory forever and ever. Amen.

We (the family and the church) lost a very dear one last July, when my aunt, Mrs. Mary Eckard, passed away. But I do believe she is with her Lord and Saviour; and I hope I can in my heart rejoice for her. May God bless

his people everywhere, is my earnest prayer, and give them strength, faith and hope according to their need. "But he that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord. For not he that commendeth himself is approved, but whom the Lord commendeth." (2 Cor. 17, 18)

Enclosed is money order for \$6.00; please renew my subscription, and also that of my mother's, Mrs. Carl Janson, Route 1, Mead, Washington.

Sincerely,
Mrs. Caroline Martin

SOURCE OF COMFORT

334 E. Pine Street,
Lodi, Calif. 95242

Dear Editors:

As it is time to renew my subscription, I will say that I have enjoyed the *Signs* so much, and have for a great many years. At times, being so far away from church meetings, it has been a source of comfort to me. I received the January issue, and it was a joy to read the New Year Editorial, and the Editorial "Associations and Churches"; also the "Voices of the Past" by Elder Chick. In the November *Signs* the Editorial, "Jesus, The Chirst, Is King," and the "Voices of the Past" by Elder Beebe, are so inspiring. I also enjoyed the interesting accounts of Elder H. M. Curry's life, and the article by him, "The City Without a Temple."

I have a copy of an article by Elder Curry that was published in 1895, which I have read over and over. It is so clear to the mind and knowledge, and a treat to read. I hope you will publish more of his writings.

I hope to take the *Signs* as long as I am able to see to read, and hope that will be as long as I live. I will be seventy-five in April. Since January of 1961, I have been blessed to attend meetings, but before that it was hit and miss.

May you be blessed with a successful

New Year in all your duties.

In much hope,
Mrs. Mabel Lindsey

(We expect to publish more of Elder Curry's articles from time to time, including the one mentioned above. — Editors)

REMEMBERING THE PAST

Rt. 1,
Nebo, Ky.

Dear Editors:

Find enclosed \$5.00 to pay for subscription to the *Signs of the Times*. We enjoy reading it so much. I don't put it down until I have read every word. We attend old Lick Creek Church, and love to hear and talk with Elder Biggs and family, and all who are there.

I remember when I was a little child, my granfather, Gilbert Tyson Fox, would take us over there in a surrey and two big, gray horses. The hill would be covered with people, and there was singing and preaching and shouting. People would spread their dinners, (not just at associations), as many came from afar then by buggies, and would spend the day just for worship and fellowship with one another. Grandfather would take two or three loads of folks over home to eat, and spend the night in a little old log room, with another one attached; and the porch with boards so worn you would stub your toe, and even holes in places. There was a little old apron stove in the kitchen, upon which I thought my step-grandma cooked the best food I ever ate; and the table was bow-backed, literally from all the food.

The folks would eat, and talk about the Bible. My Dad never joined the church, and Mom was sick so much she never thought she could entertain, but he loved the old church and the folks there. Dad would take us by buggy to the association twenty or twenty-five miles. Four or five feather beds would be made down on the floor and they would be full. Every minute of the two

or three days' services would be enjoyed by everyone.

It is the same old church, with the same kind of worship — believing in grace, and that Christ finished what he came here to do — the same good brethren, but so few. Sometimes even I have a hope.

Mrs. P. D. Kirkwood

(I have a nostalgic interest in the above, since it brought back many memories of childhood when I visited the meetings and associations with my father and mother, riding in a hack about twenty miles, and usually staying with grandfather during the meetings in Summers and Raleigh Counties, W. Va. Grandmother was a member; Grandfather was not, but he was a strong believer who was not timid in talking about it. — J. D. W.)

230 Marilee Row,
Grants Pass, Oregon 97526

Dear Brother Wood and
Readers of *The Signs of the Times*:

I have just received my *Signs* for January and have read it from cover to cover. I note with interest a piece written by Dora Greathouse and her mention of Elder Lefferts, who preached my father's funeral at Strausburg, Virginia, 30 years ago the 12th of January.

My father was Elder I. R. Greathouse who preached and wrote for the *Signs of the Times* for over 60 years. One of my six sisters was named Dora Greathouse. Guess I am kin to every Greathouse in the United States, as the first one came here from Heidelberg, Germany, 256 years ago who had many dealings with William Penn.

I also enjoyed very much reading Mrs. Fred A. Horton's letter, as she spoke of Elder H. M. Curry's most wonderful letter. I also enjoyed his letter very much as I had the pleasure of hearing him preach many times 60 years ago at the Lebanon Old School Baptist Church. I was also a student part of 1906 and 1907 at this Lebanon

National Normal University which was established in 1852 by Alfred Holbrook. I heard him make one of his last speeches at the age of 94, I think he lived to be 97. He was a very small man with a great brain.

This school is where Elder Curry was a student and an instructor. My wife's father Joseph Steddom was also a student there and graduated in 1883. He and Elder Curry were great friends. I married Mr. Steddom's daughter, Sadie 57 years ago the 11th day of last September I will now be 82 years old the 17th of this coming March. My wife is now 75, and we both are rather active for people our age. Thank the good Lord, he has been so good to us all the days of our lives.

I also want to mention Elder Cornell who was pastor at the same time at the Lebanon Church as was Elder Curry. There is one thing that is still fresh in my mind that Elder Cornell told. He said when his mother passed away he prayed to God to show him a sign of some kind that his mother had gone to heaven, and a framed picture of her was hanging on the wall, and a star came and lit on the right upper corner and stayed there until everyone in the house came and looked at it. I doubt if I could have believed this had anyone but a Primitive Baptist told it.

Oh yes, one thing more I would like to tell, while I was a student at this university we young people use to meet in a room at 12:30, and one of the teachers or someone would come down and make us a talk. One day one of the teachers came down and in his talk he said when he got to heaven he didn't expect to associate with common ordinary people. The thought popped in my mind, Brother if you could be a janitor you would be happy.

I don't get to hear very many sermons as our nearest church is 250 miles from Grants Pass.

In bonds of Christian love,
C. H. Greathouse

P. S. Brother Wood, if you see fit and have space, I would like for you to publish this in the *Signs*; which is the best paper I know of. It is about all the preaching I get, and I certainly enjoy every letter in it, and especially your editorials and the others, and also the *Voices of the Past*. I am more than pleased to see that you are publishing the same doctrine that was published over a hundred years ago. May God bless you to continue in the same old paths for many more years to come. I know if we are saved, it will be by the grace of God our precious Saviour.

If any of my old class mates should read the above, I would love to hear from them.

C. H. G.

EXPERIENCE

"For thou hast delivered my soul from death: wilt not thou deliver my feet from falling, that I may walk before God in the light of the living?"
(Psalm 56:13)

Dear Children of God:

I have made at least two attempts previously to relate orally a little of what I hope the Lord has done for me, but in trying to suppress my emotions, the spirit of the matter was lost. I will attempt to write it, and if it is God's purpose to be glorified through what He has done for this wretched soul, then his Spirit will guide my hand.

As far back as I can remember I had thoughts about God. I thought that I believed He was controlling everything. My parents were Primitive Baptists, and hearing them, and others, talk, I never found it difficult to believe that God had predestinated all things; and I tried to argue for it with others sometimes. I believed that God had a chosen people; and my understanding of an experience of grace was that at God's

appointed time he took these creatures and showed them in some strong way that they were definitely his. So, I can remember from time to time wishing for this experience.

I don't know exactly what I thought of Christ: I read some about him, and I heard the preachers talk a lot about him, but I couldn't fit him into the picture. I thought, if God predestinated all things, and chose his people and showed them in time, why Christ?

It was revealed to me, if not deceived, in 1949 that Christ is the *only way*. I was in the Navy aboard ship, and was having some trouble with my superiors because of my misconduct. It was night and I was lying in bed; and most of the men were somewhere watching a movie. I had a mind to read some in the Bible, to try to get some consolation. I thought I could pick out something here and there that would suit me, and I would feel justified in anything I had done. But this didn't work this time with me. The more I read in the gospel of John, the more discontent I grew.

After a while, suddenly I was made to sit right up in bed — I was in the presence of God, though I did not see him. I think if I had seen him, I would have been destroyed then. But I felt his presence, and his wrath. I was shown myself; and words can't describe what I saw. I was the most sinful mass of corruption I had ever viewed. My sins rose higher than the mountains. I was before God alone. I had no excuses. I was looking for a way out, and I thought, "What can I do to atone for all this. What can I pay with?" God was demanding justice.

I felt myself going down in endless hell and death: Then Jesus appeared to me. It seems he was high up on the cross and his blood was flowing to me, giving me life, and cleansing me. I was lifted up out of that hell; and then I saw Jesus as if he had risen from the grave in all white garments, going up to heaven. I was given there to view

Jesus who died and arose again for the elect of God; and who will come again to gather them to present them to the Father, and say, "I am their justification." Praise his holy name!

I realize most of the time that I am not worthy to be numbered among you dear people — a living people that have been made alive by the blood of Jesus. But, if my soul has been delivered from this death, may it please God that my feet will be delivered from falling, and that I may walk humbly before God in the light and love of His living.

A brother, I hope,
Paul Morton
High Point, N. C.

ANNUAL MEETING

The Annual Meeting of the Harmony Primitive Baptist Church will be held, God willing, all day Saturday and Sunday, May 29 and 30, 1965.

Services to begin Saturday at 10:30 A. M. and Sunday at 10:00 A. M.

The Meeting House is located one mile east of Huntington, W. Va. city limits, on Cedarcrest Drive; and one-quarter mile off U. S. Route 60, at Eastern Heights Shopping Center. All who are interested are welcome to come visit us.

Elder J. R. Lane, Moderator
110 Harrison Court,
Huntington, W. Va. 25702

Mrs. Mildred Stanley, Clerk
1046 Cedarcrest Drive,
Huntington, W. Va. 25705

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(To February 1, 1965)

J. A. McLamb, N. C.....	\$ 3.00
J. W. Black, Can.....	5.00
Mary Hendricks, Okla.....	1.00
Duncan Black, Can.....	2.00
Mrs. R. L. Milligan, Ark.....	2.00
Eliza Turner, Va.....	1.00
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Danville, Virginia

April, 1965

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BUSINESS OFFICE

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

Elder David V. Spangler

R. F. D. 1, Box 539, Beechwood Lane
Danville, Virginia

Elder John D. Wood

P. O. Box 186, Manassas, Va.

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Elder W. D. Griffin

39 Welsh Tract Road, Newark, Delaware

Elder E. J. Lambert

306 Richardson St., Winnsboro, Texas

Elder George Ruston

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

R. F. D. 1, Box 539 Beechwood Lane
Danville, Va.

EDITORIAL

MATTHEW 8:1-4; LEVITICUS 14:4-7

"The priest shall command that one of the birds be killed in an earthen vessel over running water. As for the living bird, he shall take it, and the cedar wood, and the scarlet, and the hyssop, and shall dip them and the living bird in the blood of the bird that was killed over the running water: and shall sprinkle upon him that is to be cleansed from the leprosy seven times, and shall pronounce him clean, and shall let the living bird loose into the open field."

What a picture is before us! Yet, as we view it and meditate upon it, we are brought forcibly to the knowledge that what we see in the letter, that all of the colors of the artist, that all of the natural talent of tongues and pen are not enough to get at the root of this matter. As far as schools go, they are wonderful. If all of the Old School Baptists criticized scholastic learning, that will not change my attitude about literal learning. I do not know as much of letters as I would like to know; so much is this true, that I am still trying to gain more of the knowledge of what is called a literal education. As this desire began when I was about three years old, it has not ceased until the present time. About forty years ago, when I was just past twenty years of age, I sometimes hope that I was given a desire to know more about the heavenly Teacher. This desire, like the first desire, was given to me. *I did not desire to have the desire in either case* (I Cor. 4:7). In the receipt of that gift, (if I did receive it), from that day to this I have intended to set forth a crucified Saviour. It has been the desire of my heart to know nothing save Jesus Christ, first, between that and the last, and at the last, for all of our salvation.

In the picture before us in Matthew 8:1-4 there is the victim. Look carefully at the victim. Do you find in it anything that seems to be like you? Have you ever been in the condition that he is in? Has your health (standing) before God become impaired so that you feel to be an outcast, not only from him, but from his people? Have you seen and felt the ravages of your disease in all of yourself? After first having it discovered to you, did you do all that you could to rid yourself of the disease? failing in that, did you try to alleviate your sufferings by poultices and doses and the lo heres and lo theres? and did they all fail, as such efforts will always fail? (Luke 8:43) If these and like experiences have been

yours, you certainly will find a resting place as you are given to explore the precious things before us.

God uses many things to teach his people. We sing:

“Soon will the toilsome strife be over,
Of sublunary care;
And life’s dull vanities no more
This anxious breast ensnare.
Courage, my soul on God rely,
Deliv’rance soon will come;
A thousand ways has Providence
To bring believers home.

“Ere first I drew this vital breath,
From nature’s prison free,
Crosses in number, measure, weight,
Were written, Lord, for me:
But thou, my shepherd, friend, and guide
Hast led me kindly on —
Taught me to rest my fainting head
On Christ, the corner stone.”

And each way is one that gainsayers can not place human efforts, and the instrumentalities of conditions, among them. As hunger brought the prodigal son to acknowledging his sinfulness (Proverbs 3:6; Luke 15:16, 17); as being swallowed up by the whale (power) brought Jonah to pay all that he had for the truth (Proverbs 23:23; Jonah 2:9); as the look from the Saviour humbled Peter into bitter tears (Matthew 26:75), in the same manner the disease of leprosy will bring a man to the medical authority, and the malady of sin, when revealed to a man or woman, bring them to Christ.

Everything, everything from first to last comes from an outside source. The sinner does not get the disease; it is one that he has had all the time, but the knowledge of it comes by revelation. The cure, with all of the various applications of that cure, must come, and will come, from the priest in type, from Christ in anti-type. In the application of the cure the priest commands that two birds be used. One of them is to be killed. There is not any difference in the two birds as to their value in the cleansing. If we endeavor to leave the Man Christ Jesus the Lord out of our preaching it is useless and com-

fortless to the sinner under consideration; equally so, if we try to preach him less than God, we are not preaching Christ and him crucified.

The doctrine of God's predestination is a glorious doctrine. As taught in the Bible, and as applied in our experience, it is a lovely doctrine; as it is warped and twisted by carnal reasoning it becomes a monstrosity and hideous to one taught of God. In the lovely matter before us, the order of God is made manifest. There has been a strenuous effort made to make the word *order* mean something in the Bible that it does not mean. In no place does it mean good order or bad order, in order or out of order; it does mean to teach the ordination of God in all of our church affairs. The ordination of God is so clear in the crucifixion of Christ. That which we would call useless or remotely connected, is of the utmost importance. As there is not a little sin, any more than there is a mild case of leprosy, just so, in the same manner, to the same degree, there is not a little event in the crucifixion of Christ, or of the tribulations of God's people. And this order holds good in the cure and cleansing in type and anti-type.

As the command to kill came from the priest, just so did the command come to kill the Son of God. *The priest commanded that one of the birds be killed.* God Almighty, the Creator of all things, the builder and keeper of the church (Romans 11:36; Col. 1:16; Rev. 4:11; Psalms 127:1), awoke his sword and said to it, Smite the shepherd, etc. (Psalms 17:13; Isaiah 10:5; Zech. 13:7). As the minister of the gospel delights in feeding the sheep, in contending for the doctrine, in doing the commandments of his God, just so, did the priest delight in having the bird killed.

The order (ordination) of the priest was that the bird be killed in an earthen vessel. If there are brethren that subscribe to the idea that Christ was not any kin to his mother, I am willing

for them to have all that they can get out of it, but I beg to be excused from having any part in it. If there was, and if there is, any way in which Jesus was different in looks to other babies I do not find it in the Bible. If he was born of a woman, he was born of one as much as I was; if he was made under the law, he was made under it as much as I was. Being born of one, and being made under the other, necessitated his dying. The Son of man was put to death in the flesh (I Peter 3:18), which clearly shows the humanity of Christ, the dying in an earthen vessel. Have I viewed the death of my Lord over running water? Do I know the beauty, the cleansing of the constant flow of running water? Have I felt the rising of the water to a stream in which one could swim? (Ezekiel 47:5) Have I had this cleansing water to arise as a well overflowing and springing up into everlasting life? (John 4:14) Have I stood in amazement on the bank of the river of God's love and seen it flowing in winter and in summer (Zech. 14:8), and have I beheld its crystal waters as I stood on the wide street (bank) and rested in the shade of the tree of life? (Rev. 22:1, 2)

It is not any wonder that our brother called godliness a great mystery (1 Timothy 3:16), for when we look at the picture and see the living bird being dipped in the blood of the dead one, it is awe inspiring. I desire to have the right perspective towards this inexplicable fact. At any time we quarrel about God, we show that we do not have God as our Father. That which was born of the virgin was God and man. If the Lord blesses me, I will not set him up as having more virtue as the Offering or the Offerer. Our inability to understand him as being set up with the Father from everlasting, to everlasting delight in the sons of men in the habitable part of his earth; to view him as being made in secret, and curiously wrought in the earth (Psalm 139:15); to look in worship

at him as being God in the beginning as the Word (John 1:1), as being one inseparable from the other, as the Word being made flesh (John 1:14), as God shedding his blood (Acts 20:28), as coming in a body prepared for him (Hebrews 10:5-10), does not lessen it being true.

Not only did He tell us that he was the door, but when he was born of a woman, made under the law, he came in at the door. (Gal. 4:4) He was the first born among many brethren. The bird killed prefiguring the death of Jesus Christ, the blood prefiguring the cleansing blood of the Saviour, it behooved the living bird to be dipped in the blood of the slain bird. The sins of God's people had to be imputed to the One that had been brought up, who had delighted and rejoiced in his brethren. (Proverbs 8) As the blood of the dying Redeemer ran down his side, so was the living bird dipped in the blood of the dead bird. In the house of the Lord clean vessels must be used. God's curse upon Adam extended to every living thing (Genesis 3:17), and the cedar wood, the scarlet, and the hyssop must all be dipped in the same blood.

The power that is in the shed blood was felt and enjoyed long before the coming of Jesus Christ, but the cleansing of the body of Christ was in promise, not in actuality. The spirit's power was measured before the day of Pentecost, but even since Christ fulfilled the law, died in the place of sinners, went back to heaven, the Holy Ghost has been in its fulness so much so that it convinces of sin (Jude 15; John 16:8, 9); dwells in the Lord's people (John 14:17); guides them into all truth (John 16:13); shows them the things of Christ (John 16:15); and was poured out on all flesh, even to the filling of the house and of the saints where they sat (Acts 2:2, 4). Here we see the blood being sprinkled upon him that is to be cleansed. Here is that delightful theme, the predestination of

all things that pertain to the salvation of God's elect, seven times being required for the cleansing. Six times would not be enough; eight times would be too many; seven times was absolutely necessary for the cleansing, for, while it may be ridiculed, the Bible is full of complete things found in the number seven.

In the case of leprosy, it was Christ that pronounced the leper as being cured, as being whole. In the type the priest must do all the work; only the priest has the authority to pronounce the leper cleansed.

Then the living bird is let loose in the open field. How precious it is to think that the God of the whole earth did not die, but that the Man Jesus did die, and that in his death the law of God was magnified, the covenant of redemption certified, the wrath of God vindicated, the promise of God verified, the righteousness of God made manifest, and the justice of God satisfied. All of this took place in the killing of the first bird, which, to me, was the dying of the Saviour of sinners, together with the dipping of the living bird, and all of the things that went with it, in the blood of the slain bird. This teaches the unity between him and His Father, between him and His people.

The living bird was not released until after the cleansing. The Son of God would not have arisen from the grave had he not finished the work his Father gave him to do. He ought to have suffered all, that he might enter into his glory (Luke 24:26). He bought the field that had the pearl in it (Matthew 13:46). He is today in the open field seeking such as do worship him in spirit and in truth. This field is the world of his people, and he is not bound by uncleanness among his sinful people; he is not beset by any difficulties in the field, he having overcome the world of opposition; he is not laboring under any man made rules and rituals in the salvation of sinners. W. D. G.

VOICES OF THE PAST
"He being dead yet speaketh"

MATTHEW 7:6

"Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine, lest they trample them under their feet, and turn again and rend you."

This text is found in the closing part of what is familiarly termed Christ's Sermon on the Mount, in which he taught them privately, and gave them lessons of instruction, which are of the greatest importance to the saints in all subsequent ages. These instructions should often be examined and re-examined by the children of God, as they are given for their special benefit and contain admonitions and precepts of the most vital importance. From the rich cluster of the golden maxims and rules laid down for the observance of the disciples of the Redeemed in this sermon, we are requested to give our views on the text written at the head of this article, to which we will call the especial attention of the readers.

"Give not that which is holy unto the dogs." The things which were holy under the ceremonial law were the things which were especially consecrated, sanctified or set apart for holy purposes, as were the tabernacle, the ark, the altar and the consecrated things of the inner temple of the Lord in Jerusalem. The tribes themselves, being solemnly set apart from all the families of mankind, were ceremonially holy, and forbidden to intermingle with the other nations of the earth, and as a consecrated and holy people they were to live on consecrated and holy food; they were forbidden to eat that which was common or unclean. Of all the beasts of the field none but those which divided the hoof and chewed the cud were set apart by the special enactment of the Lord as the consecrated or holy sustenance of

the consecrated tribes of the Lord, and these consecrated things must not be polluted by contact with other things which were not set apart; no mixture with anything else was allowed.

All this was undoubtedly to signify to us that God's chosen and redeemed people, who are born of God, receive from him spiritual and immortal life, which must be fed and sustained on spiritual and immortal food. This lesson is taught us in all the types and shadows going before. For instance, when God had created man out of the dust of the ground, he provided that the food necessary for man's subsistence should grow out of the same dust of the ground. His nature and composition being of the earth earthy, his subsistence must, to be adapted to the support of his earthly nature, be also earthy; and when man had transgressed the law of God and fallen under the curse, the earth out of which he was to subsist was also cursed for his sake, that it might be still adapted to his nature, as a fallen, sinful, earthy man. So in the figure we are taught that in the spiritual creation in Christ Jesus, they who are born of the Spirit of God must be sustained on spiritual things; as their spiritual life is in God, so is all their spiritual food and sustenance. The productions of the earth cannot feed and sustain the inward man, nor can all the joys of the Spirit, which do feed and sustain the new man, prevent the old man, the earthy nature, from requiring its earthly nourishment. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that flesh is of the earth earthy, and cannot be sustained without that food which is produced from the earth; and he that is born of God, although he might possess all the produce of the earth, would starve if he were not fed on that bread which cometh down from heaven. Except we eat the flesh and drink the blood of Jesus we have no spiritual life in us, for spiritual life can live on nothing else.

Those who are thus born of God are

a "chosen generation, a royal priesthood, and holy nation, a peculiar people," etc., chosen, consecrated and set apart, "sanctified by God the Father," "elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit," etc., cleansed and washed, purged and justified, and as a holy, consecrated people they are made partakers of the divine nature, and qualified to eat the flesh and drink the blood of the Son of man, who is the true bread which came down from heaven. Then the things which are holy are appropriated exclusively to a holy people; a people which God has cleansed, and which we are forbidden to call common. This sanctified people are called sheep, lambs and doves, and by many other figurative names, but they are never called dogs or swine. A dog is a very different kind of an animal from a sheep or lamb; he neither divides the hoof, nor does he chew the cud, he is therefore unclean. His disposition is also very unlike that of the sheep or lamb: he is ferocious, quarrelsome, vicious, and, like the wolf, it is his nature to worry, scatter and kill the sheep. His food, or that on which the dog subsists, is not that which would feed the sheep and lambs, nor can the sheep and lambs subsist on what the dog can feed upon. The dog would starve in the richest pasture field, where the sheep would fatten, and the sheep would starve if fed only on what dogs delight to feed upon. Dogs are dangerous animals, and we are admonished to beware of them. Some of them are said to be dumb dogs what cannot bark; sleepy dogs, lying down, loving slumber, and greedy dogs that can never have enough. In Revelation 22:15 they are classified with sorcerers, whoremongers, murderers, idolaters, and whatsoever loveth and maketh a lie.

The admonition of the Lord in our text then clearly means that his disciples shall not give, or minister the gospel, or its provisions, its promises, its comforts, its ordinances, or any of

its commands, to any who are thus designated dogs, or who are in nature, disposition, practice or appetite as unlike the regenerated and spiritual people of God as dogs are unlike and inimical to the sheep and lambs. The gospel is food to the saints, because it is Christ; the preaching of the gospel is preaching Christ, and it is food to the spiritual, and hence the ministers of the gospel are commissioned to feed the sheep and feed the lambs; to feed the flock of God which he has purchased with his own blood, but charged to give not that which is holy (and the gospel and all its ordinances are holy) to dogs. Dogs have no use for holy things, they can do them no good, for they are not adapted to their nature or suited to their appetites; besides it is a desecration of holy things to give them to dogs or to swine. It is true, the gospel is to be preached to every creature, to all nations, and in all the world, for a witness to all nations, but only those who have ears to hear can hear what the Spirit saith to the churches.

The ministers of Christ have nothing but the gospel to preach, and that they must preach wherever God is pleased to open a door for them to preach; and its effect will be to discriminate between the living and the dead. All who have been pricked in the heart by the life-giving power of the Spirit will gladly receive the word, as did the quickened on the day of Pentecost; while others will mock and reject the testimony. But what we understand as being intended by this admonition, is that we are forbidden to attempt to Christianize unregenerated men, by teaching them the letter of the word, and applying to them the ordinances of the gospel as a means of salvation; by catechisms, Bible classes, Sunday Schools, etc., as though we could so improve their carnal minds as to make them acceptable to God, without being born of the Spirit.

According to our understanding of the subject, every effort to apply the things of the Spirit of God to unre-

generated men, is to give that which is holy to dogs. Theological institutions for giving ministerial qualifications to graceless youths for preaching, and to unrenewed children and adults for church membership, and for evangelizing the world by humanly devised plans and schemes, is an attempt to give that which is holy to the dogs, and is clearly a transgression of the authority of our Lord, and an open violation of the words of our text: "Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your pearls before swine."

It is not in the nature of swine to appreciate the value or beauty of pearls any more than it is the nature of dogs to relish the rich pasture on which the sheep feed. The children of God are in possession of jewels of inestimable value, which none but the children of God can appreciate or enjoy. Their spiritual privileges, their Christian love and fellowship, their gifts and graces, their experimental joys and peculiar exercises, their knowledge of divine things, are all pearls of great value to them, but their excellence cannot be known or appreciated by those who know not God. There is a fitness and utility in exhibiting these pearls among those of like precious faith, but those who have never possessed them would rudely trample on them if cast before them, as swine would trample upon the most costly and precious jewels. Christians are greatly edified and comforted by speaking often to each other of all the way in which the Lord has led them; they can talk freely one to another of their joys and sorrows, their conflicts and victories, but should they make these things the theme of their conversation in the streets and market places, or in the synagogues of Satan, they would be treated roughly: infidels, Arminians, will-worshippers, like swine, would trample them under their feet, and turn and rend the child of grace.

The psalmist said, "Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul." They

who fear the Lord can understand the language, and they know too well the value of such precious pearls to despise or trample on them. But those who have only the religion of the world neither divide the hoof nor chew the cud, and, like swine, serve only their swinish appetites; their god is their belly and their glory is their shame. The swine seem to have but one desire, and that is the gratification of their ravenous appetites; cast before them the most costly and splendid gems, or pearls, and as they cannot eat them, they have no other use for them, and they would as soon trample on them as on the most common earth; and they will turn again and rend you, determined to obtain something that they can eat. So when the Christian attempts to display the glorious things of the kingdom of Christ to unbelievers, they will sometimes be surprised to find that those with whom they labor cannot appreciate those experimental things of which they speak. Expostulate with them, and demonstrate what you say by the most clear and positive Scripture authority, and they will disregard your testimony and your Scripture, and trample both under their feet and then assail you again with as much vigor and determined violence as though you had not exhibited to them your pearls.

Sheep, swine and dogs are not suitable companions for each other, they cannot live in good communion together, nor should unnatural amalgamation be attempted, but let the sheep be associated with sheep, and let them "beware of dogs," and avoid the society of swine, and they will be more pleasantly and comfortably situated. The great and good Shepherd has told his flock, "Ye are not of the world, even as I am not of the world." He has chosen them out of the world, and called them to be a separate people. Let us then heed the admonition of our Lord, and give not that which is holy unto dogs, neither cast our pearls before the swine, lest they trample them under their feet,

and turn again and rend us.

(The above was an editorial of Elder Gilbert Beebe, published November 1, 1862. We think that our readers will be in full accord with his exposition of the text. — J. D. W.)

ORDINATION OF DEACONS

Pursuant to the request of Thompson's Grove Church, on Saturday, October 3, 1964, the following Elders: B. O. Thompson, J. P. Helms, Wm. Holland and Julius Bocoek were organized into a Presbytery by selecting Elder J. P. Helms, Moderator, and Elder Julius Bocoek, Clerk. Elder Wm. Holland was selected to lead in examination, and Elder B. O. Thompson was chosen to offer the ordination prayer. Elder Bocoek was appointed by the church to be church spokesman. The following deacons were also members of the Presbytery: P. D. Akers, Bobby Bernard, Gary Akers, Andrew Gibson, R. C. Gearhart, Brammer Nichols, Walter Burgess, Leonard Nichols and Denver Simpson.

Brethren Nelson Reed and George T. Rakes were delivered into the hands of the Presbytery to be examined as to their qualifications as deacons; and if found qualified, to be ordained as such of our faith and order.

Elder Holland questioned the church spokesman in reference to the scriptural qualifications of these brethren. His answers were satisfactory. Elder Holland also questioned both brethren relative to doctrine, faith, and order, and their calling; and their answers being satisfactory, a motion was unanimously carried to proceed with the ordination by laying on of hands, and prayer by Elder Thompson. Then Elder Helms delivered the charge in a very impressive manner; and Deacons Nelson Reed and George T. Rakes were given back to the church, and the Presbytery was discharged.

To all the churches of our faith and order we recommend our beloved brethren as servants of God. It is our prayer and hope that they may prove a blessing to our people, and go wherever He directs, and that they may be kept by His power and thus hold out to the end as good and faithful servants of Almighty God.

J. P. Helms, Moderator
Julius Bocoek, Clerk

OBITUARIES

SARAH ALICE NOLEN SMITH

We desire to express our love and fellowship for our dear sister in the Lord. She was born May 12, 1887, and passed from this

world June 10, 1964, in a hospital in Christiansburg, Va. She was the daughter of Lucrecia and Richard Nolen, and lived all of her life in Virginia.

She is survived by her husband, Graves Cleveland Smith, of Christiansburg, and the following children: Mrs. E. Turman and Mrs. E. P. Nolan, Roanoke, Va.; Mrs. L. A. Gallimore, Floyd, Va.; Mrs. W. W. Dobyms, Blacksburg, Va.; H. L. Smith, Radford, Va.; G. M. Smith, Richmond, Va.; and R. R. Smith, Philadelphia. Surviving also are 19 grandchildren and 11 great grandchildren; one sister, Drusiler Gillispie, Baltimore, and one brother, C. H. Nolen, Williamson, W. Va.

She had a great desire to unite with the church, but was afraid she did not have evidence sufficient to go to the church. I was away at that time and could not be with her, and she went to see her cousin, Sister Eliza Turner, and told her of her travels from nature to grace; then she sent for Elder J. G. L. Hash, who went to see her, and advised her to come to the church as soon as she was able; that he was satisfied with what she had told him. She had been in declining health for several years. She went to County Line Church, Floyd County, Virginia, and was received in love and fellowship, and was baptized by Elder J. G. L. Hash, the pastor.

She reared a large family, and they were all good to her and she was well taken care of to the end. She attended her church as long as her health permitted, and was a strong believer in salvation by grace. Dear children, we miss her; however, our loss is her eternal gain. Our Heavenly Father called her to eternal rest. Her darkened glass has been removed, and she has no more of the doubts and fears which befall the children of God while in this land of sin and sorrow.

Her request was to be buried at County Line Church, and for Elder J. G. L. Hash to conduct her funeral; but as he had passed on before her, his son Elder Amos Hash and Elder J. O. Conner conducted her funeral. Many true and kind words were spoken and all was beautifully taken care of. The floral offerings were lovely. She was laid away in the church cemetery to await the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, who shall call her sleeping dust to come forth and be forever with the Lord. Written by her only sister,

Drusiler Gillispie, Glenarm, Md. and
Eliza Turner, Floyd, Va.

ELONA MURRAY GAY

Sister Gay was born March 23, 1892, in Nash County, North Carolina. She was the daughter of Hinesberry and Minnie Murray.

In 1908 she was united in marriage to Junious Howard Gay, who became a faithful member of Sandy Grove Primitive Baptist Church in Nash County in the year of 1923, and was ordained a deacon in 1956, passing away February 10, 1961. Sister Gay united with Sandy Grove Church in 1928 where she remained a faithful and loving member until her heavenly Father called her from our midst July 29, 1963.

She had a warm spot in everyone's heart who knew her; and evidence on her sick bed showed she was ready to depart from this sinful world and await the resurrection morning. Her walk and conversation proved the love she had for her church and its members. While her voice will not be heard anymore, her memory will never be forgotten. She made the statement several times that she felt as if she was walking on Holy Ground when attending church services. I feel our loss is her eternal gain.

Her funeral was conducted at the Sandy Grove Church by Elders D. B. Stokes, J. B. Murray, and others. She was laid to rest in the Bailey Cemetery. The huge mound of beautiful flowers and large attendance showed the love her many friends had for her. It was a blessing that we enjoyed attending services and singing the beautiful hymns together.

Written by her son who misses her so much.

Preston Gay

SISTER CORA MILLS

Sister Cora Mills passed away September 24, 1964, at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Elaine Kinsey, in Midland, Texas. Aunt Cora fell July 11th and broke her hip, from which she did not recover enough for us to know how she fell. She suffered much, but when awake was always trying to quote scriptures. She was born February 28, 1874, the daughter of Elder J. R. and Polly Morton, she being the last of eleven children. She was married to E. D. Mills in 1899, and to this union three children were born: two girls and a boy, the boy being deceased; surviving are: Mrs. Elaine Kinsey and Mrs. Ovbery Foutz; four grandchildren and five great grandchildren, and a host of nieces and nephews.

She joined the Primitive Baptist Church at Cool Springs, in VanZandt County, Texas, the fourth Sunday in August, 1911, and was baptized by Elder W. W. Slaughter. She lived a devoted member and loved the doctrine of predestination and salvation by grace without wavering. She was blessed to get to come back to her church the past several years at the three-days' meeting time. Her daughters counted it a great pleasure to be with their mother

on her visits to her church. Oh, how she did enjoy meeting her brethren and sisters, and to hear the preaching and singing the songs of Zion.

Funeral services were conducted by her pastor, Elder D. D. Wallace, at Canton, Texas, September 26th. She was a loving mother, and will be missed not only by her children, but by a host of brethren and friends who will miss her pleasant smile and kind words; but I would say do not weep for her: she fought a good fight and kept the faith, and finished her course, and a crown of righteousness is laid up for her which the Lord will give when he comes to gather his children home. May God in his love, comfort and bless all that mourn her passing.

Written by her niece,

Mrs. Minnie Donohoe

SAMUEL KEMPER NOLEN

Samuel Kemper Nolen was born February 10, 1875, and passed away May 11, 1961. He was the son of the late Alexander and Judith Turner Nolen, of Patrick County, Virginia. He was united in marriage to the late Loula S. Nolen April 25, 1901, and to this union nine children were born; two preceding him in death. Surviving are: Mrs. Alvah Thomas, Floyd, Va.; Mrs. Bernice Greer, Roanoke, Va.; Mrs. Ava Marshall, Newport News, Va.; Jewel D., of Martinsville, Va.; L. Earl, Cecil R. and Marvin V. Nolen, of Floyd, Va. Also surviving are eight grandchildren, and six great grandchildren. His mother, who lived to be 103 years old, preceded him in death by only eight months.

He united with County Line Church, Floyd County, in July, 1911, and was ordained deacon in August, 1914; and acted as assistant Clerk and Clerk for more than forty years. He was a firm believer in salvation by grace, desiring peace in the church, and always filled his seat until the last few months. The weather seldom got too cold or rough for him to go to the meeting house on meeting days, whether there was anyone else there, or not. He bore his suffering patiently, though he expressed a desire to pass on so as not to be a burden to any one; but he could not die until the Lord's time.

His funeral was conducted at County Line Church by Elders J. O. Conner and B. O. Thompson, and he was laid to rest in the church cemetery, in the presence of many relatives and friends, to await the resurrection morning. The floral contributions were large and beautiful.

Written by a daughter,
Mrs. Bernice Greer

ELIZABETH PETTIS

Sister Elizabeth Pettis, daughter of the late James Edward and Francis Ann Shelton, was born September 13, 1878, in Tyler County, Texas; and died March 24, 1964. She was united in marriage to Albert Pettis in 1898; and to this union one child was born. Her husband lived less than a year after their marriage, and her daughter preceded her in death in 1948. She leaves one sister to mourn her death, Mrs. C. G. Westerman, San Antonio, Texas; two brothers, A. L. and David Shelton, Gilmer, Texas; three grandchildren; eight great grandchildren; and four great great grandchildren.

Sister Pettis was very humble, and her greatest desire was to attend church and mix and mingle with God's people. We feel that our loss is her eternal gain.

May the riches of God's mercy be with those who mourn her death.

Lloyd Wall

JAMES SANLIN SNYDER

James Snyder was born on February 11, 1907, in Oklahoma, and died October 3, 1964, at the age of 57. He is survived by his wife, Una, and seven sisters: Watie Gill, Clara Clour, Jewell Garland, Bertha Wright, all of Bakersfield, California; Etta Walker, Altadena and Thelma Strickel, Huntington Park, California; and Elbie Hilton, Lubbock, Texas; also by one brother, Loran, Buena Park, California. The sisters living in Bakersfield are all members of Little Flock Church there.

Jimmie was not a member of the Old Baptist Church but he was a believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace, and made an outward manifestation of his love for the Primitive Baptists. He was sick about two years and I had the pleasure of visiting him many times, and each time, although his sufferings were great, he greeted me with a smile. He was loved so much by the Old Baptists that each church sent flowers for his funeral. Amidst a hugh floral offering he was laid to rest in Greenlawn Cemetery, Bakersfield, to await the coming of our Lord. The writer was called back from North Carolina to conduct his funeral service. The good Lord made the way possible for me to render this last service to a dear friend and his family, for which I am thankful.

May it please the dear Lord to comfort his dear family, and especially his wife who stood by him so fraithfully through all his sickness. Her home is still an open home for the Old Baptists. I shall never forget the

kindness shown me by this family.

T. R. Jefferson

MRS. ANNIE APPLE OSBORNE

Sister Annie Apple Osborne was born in Caswell County, North Carolina, July 10, 1895, and departed this life September 17, 1964, at the age of 69 years. She had lived most of her life in Guilford County, North Carolina.

Sister Osborne united with Tate Street Primitive Baptist Church at Greensboro at her June meeting, 1913, and lived a faithful member for more than 50 years.

She is survived by her husband, Brother Charles L. Osborne, Sr.; three sons, C. L., Jr., Otis B., both of Greensboro, and W. A. Osborne of Asheville, N. C.; six daughters, Mrs. Sam Lewis, Mrs. H. I. Swink, Mrs. B. L. Pegram and Mrs. Joe C. Wrenn, all of Greensboro, Mrs. James Brignull and Mrs. Martin L. Harder, both of Valatie, N. Y.; three sisters, Mrs. J. L. Cole, Mrs. Minnie Madren and Mrs. Kate Morgan, all of Greensboro; one brother, J. A. Apple of Greensboro; 23 grandchildren, six great grandchildren, and a host of friends.

Sister Osborne was known for her meek and humble life, always thinking of the welfare of others before herself. In all of her sufferings she never complained, but often said that God had been so good to her that she couldn't complain. I think Solomon spoke some very fitting words that described her life (Proverbs 31:27-31). "She looketh well to the ways of her household, and eateth not the bread of idleness. Her children arise up and call her blessed; her husband also, and he praiseth her. Many daughters have done virtuously, but thou excellest them all. Favor is deceitful, and beauty is vain; but a woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised. Give her of the fruit of her hands; and let her own works praise her in the gates."

May God's blessing be upon each member of the family to guide, keep and sustain them in the death of this precious loved one.

A few days ago I received the following poem written by Sister Osborne's grandchild, Janet Brignull, age 13, of New York:

IN MEMORY

Who is that woman who loved her family,
Loved them with all her heart?
Who is she who counted her blessings,
Counted them one by one?

She is the one who loved nature,
And respected and loved God so
She who thought only of others
Has gone to heaven, in all her grace
She is my Grandmother.

Written at the request of the Church at Greensboro by her pastor,

W. C. King

SISTER CLETIE R. HOLLEY

Sister Holley was born May 21, 1887, and was married to her late husband, W. P. Holley, May 10, 1902. They were the parents of one daughter, Mrs. Lurlene Hudson, of Farmer-ville, La., who survives. She is survived also by one granddaughter, Vivian H. Gray, and three great grandchildren.

Sister Holley survived her husband about two years, and was ill and afflicted nearly all the time of her widowhood, but she was blessed with humble and great courage, and blessed to trust in the Lord, in whose hands we are. The writer was privileged to visit her many times, and was deeply impressed that she was most wonderfully kept by faith through the grace and mercy of God. May the bereaved ones therefore not weep as those who have no hope, for she is better off in the silent grave, with her spirit with God who gave it, where there is no more suffering, trouble or sorrow, awaiting the great day of the resurrection.

Sister Holley was a very staunch but humble member of Hopewell Primitive Baptist Church, Wood County, Texas. She joined this church in September, 1915, and was baptized by the late highly loved and respected Elder H. B. Jones. She was loved by her brethren and highly regarded by them. She passed away December 9, 1964, at her home at Farmerville, La., and her funeral was conducted by the writer, assisted by Elder W. W. Hudson, Jr. and Mr. Corley, the Methodist minister, at the Methodist Church. There was a nice attentive congregation, and the flowers showed the high respect in which she was held.

May the Lord richly bless each one of her family who mourn, and the brethren and sisters who loved her, and visited her lovingly in her sickness and trouble.

Your unworthy brother,
R. W. Rhodes

IN MEMORY OF ONE WE LOVED

Our hearts have been saddened by the death of Mrs. Myrtle Everett, wife of Elder John T. Everett, our pastor. Mrs. Everett never united with the church, though she was a strong believer in salvation by grace. She was so faithful to see that Brother Everett had all the care that loving hands could give, and was always present at church when her health permitted. She was eager to entertain in their

home, and aided Brother Everett in filling his appointments.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, That we the church at Antioch bow our heads in humble submission to the will of God, who does all things well; and we thank him for the life of Mrs. Everett to live among us these years. Also be it

RESOLVED, That a copy of this resolution be sent to Elder Everett; a copy sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication; and a copy be recorded in the church records.

C. B. Britt, Moderator
J. M. Proffitt, Clerk

JAMES FREDERICK DEHART

Brother DeHart, son of William Lawson and Fannie Dalton DeHart, was born in Patrick County, Virginia, June 9, 1887 and departed this life January 5, 1965.

He was a retired engineer of the Norfolk & Western Railway with more than 44 years service.

Brother DeHart united with the Primitive Baptist Church of Christ at Roanoke, Virginia, March 26, 1939 and was baptized that afternoon by Elder J. F. Stegall. Brother Jimmy, as he was called by his brethren and closest friends, was a faithful and loyal member of his church; always attending the meetings with a special interest in her conference meetings and the church's welfare as a whole, and was always concerned about his pastor's welfare and was ready to lend a helping hand to anyone in need.

He was married June 30, 1918 to Maude Elizabeth Thomas. He is survived by his wife; one daughter, Mrs. Annette Fralin, Roanoke, Va.; one brother, Elijah DeHart, Stuart, Va.; two sisters, Mrs. Charles Harris, Draper, N. C.; Mrs. George Hughes, Greensboro, N. C.; and two grandchildren.

A very comforting and consoling funeral was conducted for Brother DeHart by Elder Cecil E. Turner. His body was laid to rest in Fair View Cemetery, Roanoke, Va. to await the coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, who shall call the sleeping dust of His Saints to arise and be fashioned like His own glorious body and be presented to the Father, where sickness, sorrow and death can never come.

May each of us be given to say not our will but thine be done, knowing that God is too wise to err and too good to be unkind. May God's richest blessings attend each one who mourns the passing of this faithful, kind and loving husband and father.

Written by request of the family.

E. V. Poff

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 133

DANVILLE, VA., MAY, 1965

NO. 5

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE IS
5/65
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

ENJOYED THEIR VISIT

Whitefield, Maine

Dear Brethren:

On this Sabbath day, January 17, 1965, my companion and I are alone, but comfortably situated and happy in our home; realizing how blessed we are that God, the giver of all good things, has provided abundantly the necessities and pleasures we have experienced through our fifty-eight years of married life. We trust that we are truly thankful for His every blessing, knowing full well our unworthiness. All praise to Him who doeth all things well; to Him who doeth according to his will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?

My mind is directed to past experiences that have caused much meditation; and to the privilege we, and a dear friend to us and the church, Helen Bailey, had in attending the Virginia Corresponding Meeting, the Salisbury Association, and other meetings of our faith, last Fall. It was a blessed experience to attend the meetings and to hear the several preachers declare the word of God — all preaching the same truth. We each enjoyed our stay in the homes of several dear ones, and

were glad to meet them again on the shores of time. We also enjoyed meeting several brethren whom we had not met before: The sweet manifestation of love and fellowship shown by each one, assured a welcome that is always among Old Baptists. This is a gift from on high, all according to God's plan. It was a wonderful and blessed season, and enjoyed more than can be expressed.

Two past experiences came to my mind as I was reading the Scriptures this day, and wondering if I had any part in these things God has prepared for his own.

"'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?"

Years ago when I was a girl in my teens, one night just as I lay down on my bed, a vision, (I know not what else to call it), of Jesus, I hope my Saviour, appeared. He stood robed in white, in full figure, by the side of my bed, with one arm outstretched, looking down on me it seemed as much as a minute, then turned half around and disappeared. This wonderful sight I saw as plain as I ever saw anything in my life. It has caused meditation as to its meaning, and at times is comforting to think that in this strange way Jesus came to me. I have a hope it was an assurance to me of his love.

Another experience about three years ago, which I had forgotten until a few days ago when I came across what I had written at the time: I was sitting alone in my living room, distressed in mind and with tears in my eyes. Suddenly I was inwardly moved that God was directing my mind to some Scrip-

ture to comfort me in trouble that was weighing both my companion and me down. Almost instantly the 23rd Psalm come to mind. I repeated it; then a passage in Isaiah come, and I repeated it: "Fear thou not: for I am with thee: be not dismayed: for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness." (Isaiah 41:10)

I then picked up my Bible, and it opened at the 116th Psalm. My hand slipped as I turned pages, and it opened again at the 116th Psalm. I stopped and my eyes fell upon these words: "I love the Lord because he hath heard my voice and my supplications. Because he has inclined his ear unto me, therefore will I call upon him as long as I live." Such comfort and peace was mine as I read these words. I read all the 116th, 117th and 118th Psalms, and never before had I read with such an assurance of God's presence, as I did at that time. I felt that it was for me, and I could in some strange way know how David must have been comforted as he conversed with his God, and was made to feel to give thanks unto the Lord. This was all so wonderful for one like me. My very soul and being was comforted, my tears dried, and I was lifted beyond the trials of this world.

Such seasons come and go: Much of the time I walk in a wilderness, still wondering, Am I his or am I not?

A sister in hope,
Elta Merigold

LIKE COMING HOME
AFTER MUCH WANDERING

4702 Florist Road, N. W.,
Roanoke, Virginia

Dear Editors of the *Signs*:

I hope our Lord has made me worthy to address you thus, for of myself I feel unworthy of any of his mercies

and blessings. If anything at all, I feel to be a wild olive branch grafted in contrary to nature — a sinner in deeds, as well as an inherent one: without hope in the world until God in his infinite mercy, through our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, lifted me out of that horrible pit, and gave me a precious little hope of salvation; to which I cling. I pray that our Lord will deliver me from seeming to boast of these things, and enable me to render Him all the praise, honor and glory. I am prostrate at the Saviour's feet much of the time.

No doubt a greater power than any on earth led me to you dear people, for until a few years ago, I had never heard of the Primitive Baptist Church. When my dear companion and I asked for a home among you dear brethren, and were received, it was like coming home to friends from much wandering in a wilderness. We found fellowship with people who had tasted that the Lord was abundantly merciful, as we had; and that God's love and mercy is wholly unmerited by us. We would praise the Lord for lifting us up many times through this fellowship, the preaching at the different churches, associations, funerals, and the little gatherings, and in reading the *Signs*. We love to read the *Signs* for the writings it contains squares with the truth as our Lord has revealed to us. I have pondered many questions that have been so sweetly answered by the Editorials, etc. Praise the Lord for it!

On behalf of my wife and myself, I wish all of you, and all of God's people wherever they may be, good health and much happiness in the Lord. May the love of God, and the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. Amen.

I am enclosing check for \$5.00 to renew our subscription.

Remember us in your prayers when at the throne of grace of our Lord.

Yours in hope of eternal life,
D. C. and Sallie Randolph

LETTER TO ELDER BRAMMER

Route 1, Ruffin, N. C.

Elder Leonard Brammer
Route 3,
Martinsville, Virginia

There has been placed in me for some reason known to God, the desire to write you a few lines telling you how much the words you preached last Sunday evening in Monticello meeting house meant to me. I believe I shall never forget how humble your appearance there before us, the manner in which admonition was used, what a difference, and how when used in spirit will stir up one's mind that they think upon what has been said. The first part of which you expressed brought to my mind much consideration "I have never learned how to be obedient. I have learned many lessons in things and I have never learned how to be obedient in the nine years I have been preaching." How comforting to me were those words: I, who am so often out of the way, if indeed I have ever been in the way, my thoughts evil and I feel so low that I fear greatly what I have hoped was a hope in the mercy of God, seems hanging as a thread, so small and uncertain — weak and frail; and you, a preacher of the most High God telling how I feel.

Oh! how my very being longs at times to praise the God the most high, and desire to know and do His will, yet how to perform that which is good I find not; I cannot have a good thought and sin is mixed with all I do. In this condition my hopes are all crossed. You say, "I have never learned how to be obedient." "Though He were a Son yet learned He obedience by the things which He suffered." Suffering brings one low, one said out of the belly of Hell I cried and He heard my cry — He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, and out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings — I so often fear of speaking the wrong

things; and do, when left to self. I just can't help believing that we are never obedient unless that obedience is worked in us. Christ is the Head over the Church, His body. Then He is our obedience, our all things pertaining to life and Godliness.

If I know anything about the walk of a Child of God, it is not on flowery beds of ease that we are carried to Heaven, — the journey is mountainous; and have we ever experienced journeying to the mountain top? Don't we believe our lives contain a cross to bear? And a cross is surely something contrary in principles — the flesh against the spirit and vice versa, so that we cannot do the things we would. This old nature is so ugly, so all opposed to God and Godliness, it will only yield to submission when brought under subjection by His controlling power. When suffering brings us to the foot of Jesus' cross we are willing, for that is the day of God's Power, or the time He manifests to us He is ruling in the armies of Heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth, and none can stay His hand, or say unto Him, What doest thou? Aren't we thankful that He will not allow one to stray beyond help of Him, but in mercy gathers us as tender lambs in His arms, caring for us as a Father that pities His children? Oh when we feel we have wandered far from Him and are so alone, how our eyes run down in tears to glimpse a sight of Him and joying over His return (old *self* separates us). He brings our help in time of need. Then in sincerity can we say, He is the Saviour of the whole world, and a special Saviour to His elect loved ones, praise His dear name. (Acts 12th Chapter.)

How much have I thought upon what you said about the locked doors swinging open, — the word of God is not bound and will open locked doors, and carry one in forbidden paths. Many have been killed for daring, or I should say showing forth the fear of God more than the fear of man. There are sweet

experiences of trial, hardship, etc. We have records of these truths. Much comfort I have received in reading some of Hassell's Church History. I would that every Old School Baptist home contained one of these, and they could be stirred to reading from its pages what our people have contended for, and how our people amidst severe trials set up the landmarks of the Church of Jesus Christ (Militant), and how they remained firm in doctrine and practice in the face of some who wanted some of the glory themselves. Leaving our people, they would not have the doctrine of the absolute (certain, sure) predestination of all things; some setting up mission work to help God save souls, which is erroneous. Why would one object to the word absolute, either God controls all things, or He controls nothing? God does nothing in half measures. If we can do one thing to save ourselves we could equally do all of the saving and not need the Saviour.

God has not so taught this poor needy one; I need Him every moment, hour and day. How I would fear to start out anywhere, if I did not believe He controls the powers of darkness and fixed all things; appointing our times and seasons, our down sittings and uprisings. All my times are in His hands, working all things together for good to them who love Him, to *the called* according to His purpose. He causes the evil often to work for our good, overruling it to that end; never makes one do evil, — don't have to; and too holy to be charged with folly. Just leave us to self and old nature takes over. "The wrath of man shall praise Him and the remainder of wrath He restrains." Oh, were it not for that restraining, checking force we surely would destroy ourselves, as I have often said. Thus He shows us how weak we are and dependent upon Him, who is at the helm, and is all powerful.

We are living in a day that apostacy has enlarged, and we're being brought under dominating forces in the land.

It is a time when every God fearing creature should feel the solemnity and be concerned; and this may become more severe before the coming of our Lord. Then how sweetly do we feast, in the face of opposition, on the words "The word of God is not bound." This is edifying and causes our poor hearts to rejoice in the God of grace and mercy for the love bestowed on sinners such as I.

Fred joins me in regards to you and yours. May God enable you and all His called ministers to stand boldly declaring the Whole Counsel of God, never swerving to the right, nor to the left as men pleasers, but enduring hardness as a good soldier. May He cause one and all who fear Him to search diligently and inquiringly, "Am I in the way?" "Is this the old path our loved ones strived to point out to us?" Oh! that He would give us hearts to pray and keep His statutes still. We hope you will come our way again. Cast the mantle of charity over my imperfections; all truth praises God, error belongs to man.

Hoping in God's love and mercy, I am,

A little one, if one at all,
Mrs. Fred Cobb

545 N. 6th Street,
Fairfax, Okla. 74637

Dear Editors of the *Signs*:

You will find enclosed one dollar to help send out the good news, saved by grace, not of works. How I wish that everyone could take it! I hold mine as something very precious, but do pass one on when I find anyone that will read it. I am going to see if they will let me put them in our library here, where some may read them.

I love all the writings, and when the paper gets here, I can hardly wait to get to reading the good news. I do wish I could say, Thank you, for sending it to an old lonely woman of seventy-eight, who lives alone and does not get to

church very often, as I live 139 miles away and have to depend on others to take me.

Please accept my poorly expressed thanks; and may the God of all grace and mercy bless you to continue to send the good news. I love the *Voices of the Past*; they bring back memories of seventy years ago.

Mary E. Hendricks

THE NEW BIRTH

(Elder H. M. Curry)

When Jesus said, "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God," he gave a name to a hitherto nameless fact. The doctrine of the new birth as announced by Christ and developed in the New Testament Scriptures, was a novel doctrine at that age of the world, and remains a novelty yet. The fact of the new birth, as exemplified in the experience of God's people, is as old and as universal as man himself; but the doctrine had never been named before. The new birth is not stated in the Old Testament, although the effects of it are clearly manifest in the experience of patriarchs, prophets, priests and kings, and many in the humbler walks of life, among both Jews and Gentiles. It is not mentioned in any religious writings, either Jewish or Pagan, before the New Testament. The ancient epics of India, the ethical codes of China, the complicated systems of Egypt, the fanciful philosophy and poetry of Greece, the gorgeous ceremonials and mystic rituals of ancient Mexico and Peru, are all silent upon this doctrine. It came from the lips of Jesus a novelty, an original doctrine, a new name for a hitherto nameless truth, a golden key to unlock the rich mines of Christian experience so long closed by human ignorance, so completely covered by ceremonials, and so deeply buried in tradition, a lamp by which the wonderful works of God in the children of

men was to be more clearly understood, the exceeding greatness of his power to usward more fully known, and the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints more fully beheld.

The novelty of the doctrine is one of the clearest proofs of the divinity of the great Teacher who was the first to announce it. The most gifted prophet, the most highly favored priest, the great law giver, Moses, nor even the favorite Gabriel, who stands in the presence of God, had never been blessed to discover this truth or honored with the commission to announce it to men. Thus the novelty of the doctrine gives weight and prominence to its

IMPORT

"Ye must be born again" is the initial statement of the doctrine of Christ, and constitutes the fundamental difference between Christianity and all religions. Take away the necessity of the new birth and Christianity will take its place on the common plane of all other religions, and will be robbed of that which alone entitles it to the distinction of divinity, and will be degraded to a mere system of ethics, a naked code of morals, or to empty, meaningless and vain ceremonials. The fundamental idea in all other religions is man's ability to reform himself into newness of life, based upon the alike false idea of the universal fatherhood of God. The last of these, the universal fatherhood of God, gave birth to the World's Congress of Religions in Chicago; and the first, man's ability to save himself, formed the basis of every system presented, whether by Buddhist, or Brahmin, Mohammedan or Mormon, Catholic or Protestant. Hence all of them are loud in their cry for reformation; and the only difference to be found among them is the name and manner in which the end is to be reached.

The superficial notion of religion is deeply fastened upon all men; but it seems that modern Protestantism has a double portion of it. The Jews, in the

time of Christ, were extremely zealous for vain traditions, empty formality and hypocritical appearance. They thought that drinking wine and eating with unwashed hands polluted and defiled a man. But the Saviour condemned their foolish traditions by the simple axiom, "It is not that that goeth into a man that defileth him, but that cometh out." It is from the heart that evil thoughts, thefts, murders, and all other wickedness, proceed. Evil thoughts are not in the wine a man drinks. Bad conduct does not come from the food taken with unwashed hands. A man steals because he is a thief; a man kills because he is a murderer, or lies because he is a liar. The theft is in the heart before the hand is put forth to steal; the murder is in the heart before the hand is stained with blood; the lie is in heart before it rises to the tongue or is coined by the lips. The tree bears fruit after its kind. Cultivating the tree can never change the kind of fruit; the only effects of cultivation are seen in the quality and quantity of the fruit. Can a thorn tree ever be made to produce grapes, or a thistle to bring forth figs?

Men are carried away with the notion that through religious instruction, training and favorable opportunities, children or men are made Christians; that men enter the kingdom of God through teaching and moral suasion. Agrippa had this idea when he said to Paul, "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian," and Nicodemus betrayed the same weakness when he said to Christ, "We know that thou art a teacher come from God." But the answer of Jesus covered the whole ground, when he said, "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." This is as much as to say, "Why, Nicodemus, this is not a mere matter of teaching; there is something vastly deeper; a man must be born again." A man does not have to be born again in order to be religious; he may be infatuated with religion, and be a zealous

devotee to creed and ritual; he may be taught to observe most rigidly forms and ceremonies, and to subject himself to the strictest discipline; to mutilate his body and deprive himself of all earthly comforts; to yield perpetual obedience to priestcraft; to pray three times a day and give tithes of all he possesses; take up the sword in defense of his religion, or lay down his life in testimony of his zeal; but except he be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God. A man must be born again in order to receive Christ, or embrace his doctrine in truth and reality. The import of the doctrine leads us to consider its

NECESSITY

"Ye must be born again" is not a mere dogma of theology, but a necessity, arising from deep fundamental, basal principles of biology; hence we shall first consider the biological necessity. "That which is born of the flesh is flesh." The term flesh, here, is generic, and is used in the Scriptures to designate man as a whole, and comprehends him with all his attributes, all his powers, parts and capacities, including body, soul and spirit in their mysterious combination in constituting human personality. It is equivalent to saying, That which is born of man is man.

Men by nature are dead in trespasses and sins. This death is not merely a moral or ethical condition, but a condition extending far beyond the moral or ethical sphere. It is a biological condition. Take this illustration: Science divides this world into two great kingdoms, the organic and inorganic, or in equivalent terms, the dead and the living. The stone belongs to the inorganic or dead kingdom, the plant to the organic or living kingdom. The difference between the stone and the plant is a biological difference. Again, the organic kingdom manifests different orders of life: animal and vegetable life.

The difference between the animal and the tree is a biological difference. They belong to different orders of life.

Now, just as the animal life is of a higher order than vegetable life, so Christ life is of a higher order than Adamic or natural life. And just as the tree, although alive in its own order, is dead to the presence and voice of the bird that sings among its branches, so is man, although alive to all within his environment, dead to the things of the Spirit of God. This truth, although most persistently disputed, most vehemently opposed and wickedly ridiculed, by professors of Christianity, is legibly and indelibly written in the stones and in the trees, in the earth and in the sky, and in the experience of millions of human hearts. Man, then, is cut off from the kingdom of God by the deep, mysterious, impassible gulf that separates the non-living from the living, the organic from the inorganic, the natural from the spiritual. As man enters this world by birth, just so he enters the kingdom of God by birth; and as his birth into the world was contingent upon things entirely outside of himself, so his birth into the kingdom of God is contingent upon things entirely outside of himself. This birth is "not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God;" so says the Scripture. Except a man be born he cannot see the world, is a fact which none can deny, and which none would ever think of denying. But how few of all who have read it acquiesce so readily in the conclusive truth of its analogous expression, "Except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God."

We turn now from the biological to the experimental necessity of this birth. Children may be most carefully trained from their youth in the name of Christ and in the precepts of the Scripture and religious observances, but except they be born again they have no more knowledge of Christ than if they had never heard his name.

This birth is the beginning of the Christian experience, and all that is ever seen, felt, heard and known of

grace in this world, or glory in the world to come, is but the development of the life imparted in this birth. All knowledge of Christ is vital or experimental knowledge; this includes all knowledge of the need of Christ. I once thought that the time when the child of grace received his hope and experience deliverance, was when he was born again; but I have come to a different conclusion. Who can remember when he was born naturally? Let the mind run back to childhood, to our earliest recollections, even to the very borders of infancy; but our birth was prior to that. All things fade from our memory, and we are lost in a sea of oblivion, and still the time of our birth is not reached. We grew into the domain of memory, passing through a long stage of which we know nothing at all. Think back over your experience; you came to many Ebenezers, to many milestones and memorable places; you approach the time when hope came to you, a helpless sinner; but the birth was before this. You pass on to the time when you first realized that you were a sinner indeed; but the birth was before this, and this was only the result of it. How long before you felt the first movements of soul I cannot tell, but it was before. Those who place their birth upon conditions to be complied with by those receiving it, have never seen the necessity of it. If a man can repent of his sins and believe in Jesus before he is born again, then the Scriptures are not true. This notion of religion puts the cart before the horse, puts the fruit before the tree, the effect before the cause. Without this birth sin would never be hated and holiness would never be loved, poverty of spirit would never be felt, and the riches of Christ would never be prized; none would ever hunger and thirst after righteousness, and the bread which came down from heaven would never be desired; the fountain of living waters would never be sought, there would be none to love the truth, and faith would not be found

on the earth; the wilderness would never blossom as the rose, and the parched ground would never become a pool; the name of God would be but an empty sound, and his existence a mere matter of speculation, and all worship would be but dry formality and empty mockery.

EFFECTS

The person affected by the new birth is the Adamic sinner. This needs no argument, for there is no other personality on earth, and personalities in heaven do not need it. The immediate effects make up what is called Christian experience, and belong to time; the ultimate effect is to awake in the likeness of Christ, and is realized in the resurrection. The effects are evidences to us that we have been born again. Let us now examine ourselves, and prove ourselves, and see whether we are indeed what we profess to be, or only graceless hypocrites, carnal professors, who have never known the love of Christ or the power of his resurrection. The most momentous question ever propounded to an exercised heart is, Have I been born again? And when we begin to examine ourselves, the evidence that the carnal mind seeks is not found within us; but we are full of things that our traditional notions of religion record against us. The carnal mind is not eligible either to sit as judge or to testify as witness in the trial of a Christian, because it is enmity against God, and cannot be subject to his law.

One of the best evidences that any one has ever had that he is born again is that he is personally concerned about his own case. The man who thinks that salvation is by works is never concerned about the new birth; but the heart upon which the import and necessity of being born again have been impressed, is bound to be personally concerned in the matter; but the import and necessity of the birth are only communicated through the birth itself. Let us begin the examination with a ques-

tion. Do you know that you are a Christian? Every exercised heart answers at once, I do not know that I am a Christian. Do you know that you are a sinner? O yes, I know that I am a sinner. Do you know that you are saved? O no, I do not know that I am saved. Do you know how a sinner is saved? O yes; a sinner must be saved by grace. How did you find that out? Everybody does not know that. If you know that salvation is by grace, rest assured that you are saved, for that knowledge comes only by experience. None of the princes of this world know that. Human wisdom has never made that discovery. Those who have this knowledge are in position of that hidden wisdom which God before the world ordained to our glory.

The knowledge of sin is one of the brightest evidences that you will ever have that you have passed from death unto life. Permanent, incorrigible, inherent sinfulness has always been acknowledged by holy men. David said, "I am a worm, and no man," Isaiah confessed that he was a man of unclean lips, and Paul exclaimed, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" There was a time in the experience of many of us, perhaps, when we thought that we would never know sin nor sorrow again, but that we would live in the comfortable peace of that sweet deliverance all the rest of our days. But when we began to feel again the power of sin in our members, we sank into a sea of doubts and fears, and disappointment bordering on despair. We thought that one who is born again is free from the motions of sin; and when we found that sin still remained in us, we concluded that we were still in the gall of bitterness and the bonds of iniquity. But we have learned many lessons since that time, and are still learning. We have learned that in the flesh we are ignorant, sinful creatures, no better now than at the first dawn of our hope. I think these lines of Newton express the experience of us all:

"I asked the Lord that I might grow
In faith and love and every grace;
Might more of his salvation know,
And seek more earnestly his face.

"I hoped that in some favored hour
At once he'd answer my request,
And by his love's constraining power
Subdue my sins and give me rest.

"Instead of this he made me feel
The hidden evil of my heart,
And let the angry powers of hell
Assault my soul in every part.

"Yea, more, with his own hand he seemed
Intent to aggravate my woe,
Crossed all the fair designs I schemed,
Blasted my gourds and laid me low.

"Lord, why is this? I tremblingly cried;
Wilt thou pursue thy worm to death?
'Tis in the way, the Lord replied,
I answer prayer for grace and faith.

"These inward trials I employ,
From self and pride to set thee free,
And break thy schemes of earthly joy,
That thou may'st seek thine all in me."

— Newton

Men in nature have most strenuously assailed the doctrine of total, innate, inherent depravity, and have long devised and proclaimed their lying, deceptive and seductive argument against it; but God will make his people know the truthfulness of it by a daily experience of their own sinfulness. A vital knowledge of sin puts to flight every traditional theory of human ability or Adamic purity, and fastens upon the conscience a pungent conviction that man is a sinner, from the cradle to the grave, with no part or capacity reserved. It is not the Christian's burden that he only sins by word and deed, but his thoughts are unclean, and above all he discovers lurking like a serpent in the deep recesses of his heart the love of sinful things. This almost drives him to despair, and makes him hate his own life, and trust nothing but the blood and righteousness of the adorable Redeemer.

How prone we are to take comfort in the thoughts of our own hearts, or the state of our own feelings, and to look within ourselves for something good to build our hope upon. How often do we say, "O! if I could only see myself as

I desire to see myself, I would have some hope that I am a Christian." If you could always see yourself just as you would like to be, would you ever deny yourself? And if you should never deny yourself could you ever be the disciple of Jesus? Did he not say, "If any man will be my disciple let him deny himself?" When Jesus said, "Let him deny himself," denial of self must follow. God said, "Let there be light," and light was. He also said, "Let the earth bring forth," and it was so. Have you not yet been able to translate those feelings of unworthiness that fill your soul, and stand like an impassable wall, an immovable mountain, between you and your ideal Christian character that your own imagination conjures up and places before you? They are translated into this sentence, "Let him deny himself." This is the first qualification to follow Christ.

The tempter comes with another plea that we are not the children of God. This plea is our weakness. How often do we consider this suggestion of the tempter and put it on file as evidence against ourselves? Christ put the tempter to flight by quoting what is written; so allow me to bring the same weapon to our defense; it is written, "Except ye be converted and become as a little child ye shall in no wise enter the kingdom of heaven." What did the Saviour mean by this expression? I heard preachers say, in my early exercise of mind, that little children are innocent, pure and sinless, and that we must get like them or we can never be saved. I thought this was true, and set about most diligently to attain unto this child-like purity of character, but failed, utterly failed, failed as completely as Hermes in his search for the philosopher's stone, or Ponce de Leon for the fountain of youth. The more I tried it the more hopeless it seemed to grow, and yet I thought it must be so. O what absurd things will men not undertake in the name of religion! If all the absurdities that have been taught and

practiced in the name of religion could be collected and placed before men's eyes, the exhibit would shock the world, and would doubtless surpass in quantity and quality all other follies, whims, caprices and wickedness that the world has ever known. Suppose for one moment that little children do receive the kingdom of heaven upon the grounds of their purity of character, and we must become as they, where is hope to be found for any who have grown out of infantile purity? How can a man ever be a child again? We might repeat here the question of Nicodemus, "How can a man be born when he is old. Can he enter the second time into his mother's womb and be born? Suppose a man could be born when he is old, would he not come forth again in the likeness of his parents?"

A man might be made a child again, ten thousand times, if such a thing were possible, and still he would never be raised above the nature and likeness of his parents. A corruptible seed can never bring forth an incorrupt object. So if a man should be born again of the same father and mother, would he not come forth the same natural man, and grow up the same blind, alienated, wicked sinner? It is not only necessary to have another birth, but a birth proceeding from an entirely different source, a birth from above, from an incorruptible seed, a birth of water and the Spirit, of that water which is above the firmament. The Saviour did not mean that the little child is sinless, and we must become such. Sinless persons have no need of Christ, and he has no blood for them. What is the characteristic of the little child that forms the basis of the Saviour's teaching here? It is the helplessness, the weakness of the child, its inability to provide for itself. The child is not only unable to provide for itself, but unable to minister to itself what others may provide for it. Food and drink and raiment might be abundantly provided and placed in the closest proximity to the

child, and it left to itself, and it would be none the better off. It would perish as certainly and as speedily as it would if nothing had been provided. The man or woman who has experienced this helplessness in a spiritual sense has become as a little child, or, in other words, has been born again; and the very weakness which he so much deplures, and from which he would daily flee, is the sure and abiding evidence that God is his Father. Our blindness is often urged as an evidence against us, but God says he will bring the blind by a way they knew not, and in strange paths will he lead them. God leads his people as those who are blind, and cannot find their own way. If your travels have been in entirely different ways from what you yourself marked out, if you experience daily the opposite of your own planning, if you are led as one blind in unknown ways, then you are led of the Lord; and "as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God."

Belief in Jesus is an effect of the new birth, and consequently an evidence of it. "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ, is born of God." (1 John 5:1) What a comprehensive, decisive and conclusive statement! This birth raises men to a knowledge of Christ, and imparts to them the evidence that he is the Christ. The doctrine that men have the capacity to believe in him as a condition of salvation, is as fabulous, as illusive and as foreign to the gospel of the grace of God as the grotesque mythologies of the ancient Northmen, the fanciful poetry of the ancient Greeks, or the nonsensical nursery rhymes of Mother Goose. Belief is not a volition of the will. We do not have to revert to dusty libraries of philosophy to prove this statement, but to our own minds. Each man knows more about himself than the wisest philosopher knows about him. Belief is a condition of mind produced by evidence; it is an effect, and evidence is the cause. Every day we hear reports that we do

not want to believe, and seek in every direction a refuge from the conviction of the truth of the report. Every power of the mind is aroused against it; but facts come, evidence conquers, and we reluctantly, unwillingly sink into a belief on the very thing we tried so hard not to believe. Upon the other hand, how often have we exerted every power of will to believe a certain thing to be true; but notwithstanding our ardent desire and willing efforts we at last had to yield, to lack of evidence or to contrary evidence, and believe against our will to the contrary. Believing in Jesus is brought about by the new birth. It is only by the Holy Ghost that any man can say that Jesus is the Christ; and the man who believes in the only begotten Son may rest assured that he is born of God. "He that hath the Son hath life." It is he that hath the Son that believes on him.

Faith, which is the substance of the Christian's hope, is the evidence upon which we believe; and this faith is born of God, is the fruit of the Spirit, and is found alone in the man who has been born again. Believing in Jesus, repentance and faith, are new covenant blessings themselves, instead of being conditions of blessings, and are the fruit of the new birth instead of conditions upon which it is brought about.

The ultimate effect of the new birth is to awake in the likeness of Christ. This birth constitutes the man who receives it as a son of God, and consequently an heir of God, and guarantees to him a resurrection in the likeness of Christ, and consequently an eternal and enduring satisfaction. The development of Christ's character is a process begun, carried on and consummated by the inherent, sovereign, unailing working of Christ-life in the soul. It is an evolution, but a grander evolution than ever Darwin dreamed of; not the process that transforms a monkey into a man, but an evolution that conforms a wretched, wicked, hopeless, helpless sinner into the image of Jesus, the im-

maculate Son of God. This process is first the blade, then the stalk, and after that the full corn in the ear. The blade and the stalk may appear here, but the full corn in the ear must appear hereafter. Inasmuch as we have borne the image of the earthly, we shall also bear the image of the heavenly.

This birth originates from above, and is directed alone by sovereign, unconditional election. It comes by virtue of life given us in Christ before the foundation of the world, according as the saints were chosen in him in the ages eternal. We could never be born from above without a life above. This heavenly, eternal, incorruptible Christ-life is implanted in the subjects of God's electing grace, by the sovereign, irresistible, unconditional working of the Holy Spirit. It is imparted in God's own time, whether it be in the babe upon its mother's breast, as was the case with David, or from its very birth, as with John the Baptist, or in the declining days of old age and decrepitude, as may be the case with many; but whether in the babe upon its mother's breast, or in the man in the prime of life, or in old age upon the verge of the grave, the issues are all the same, and alike certain in results. All who receive it shall awake in the likeness of Christ.

(The above is copied from the March 20, 1895, issue of the *Signs*. We enjoyed reading it so much we felt the brethren and friends would too. It shows the only way that sinners are ever brought out of the darkness of nature into the kingdom of God. — J. D. W.)

GRATEFUL FOR LETTERS

1148 Sunset Drive,
Fairbanks, Alaska 99701

Dear Friends:

Tonight I am deep down in the valley of doubts, and indeed feel that without the guiding hand of the Great Master my life is but a shadow: useless, and, like the dry sands of the desert, without life, and not worth living.

Am grateful to each one of God's people that wrote me after my last un-

worthy letter in the *Signs*; especially to Sister J. P. Fallin for the book, "The Second Coming of Christ." I enjoy reading every word in these precious letters, and hope to hear from any who feel inclined to write; and will try to answer them all.

Surely goodness and mercy has followed me all my life, since I have not deserved to even know any of The Elect of the Lord's Kingdom. Yet wherever I go so many things happen to remind me that the cattle on a thousand hills are the Lord's: The mountains, the rivers, the sun, the moon, and all of the elements declare that man is only what the Master gives him grace and mercy to be.

My present position requires that I travel over the vast northern areas of Alaska, and during my last trip in the airplane on my way to Bettles, I saw one of the most impressive images of God's handiwork that man could ever conceive existed. About eight thousand feet over the snow covered mountains, the Northern Lights flashed across the star mingled sky. From the plane this appeared as if it was the colors of all the flowers and birds that existed, pushed across the vast space by the hand of a mighty painter, showing perfection as the colors bubbled out in space.

We have had a long, cold winter; 48 below now, and has been colder. From the air we see many animals, moose, caribou, bear and fox striving to get food in a fight for survival. Many would say that God is unjust to allow this to be, but, like many things we are trying to change, this could be no other way, for these animals could not survive in a warm climate — with their heavy fur they would die.

Why do we fight over trivial matters? Many times we think we are only standing firm on the Truth; but do not the heathen do this too? Today there are over fifteen hundred groups that claim to be the right church; they claim to be saving souls by the thousands. But what

has caused crime to increase more than 10 percent during the past year? "Behold I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me." Oh! that we could see this during our quarrels and differences, and strive to worship and praise the great and gracious Master. Who can say, "I am my brother's keeper?" I know my path is crooked, and my steps weak, but my hope is in the mercy of the Lord: not for what this old worm of the flesh has done. Even in this distant cold land, my Master is ever mindful of my needs, and will watch over me and mine until the time of my departure from this world, into a world of peace, to live with my Master forever.

I enjoy reading the *Signs*, for it is to me a feast at the Master's table, to hear God's praises all over the land by those that trust in God's ever present love and mercy. When at the throne of mercy, remember this unworthy creature.

William O. Wammack

GREAT COMFORT TO HIM

Rt. 1, Box 45,

Bearden, Arkansas 71720

Dear Editors of the *Signs*:

Enclosed is a check for \$5.00, for which please send me the *Signs of the Times* for another year; use the balance as you wish. I took the *Signs* some years ago, then moved here and there, and lost out. I have read the old *Signs* lately, and they are of great comfort to me. The Lord has wonderfully blessed the writers to write the good letters and editorials, and experiences, which sum up to the same thing; and it is a great pleasure to read them. Until we have been taught to know how frail we are, and that we are standing as vile sinners justly condemned before the God of heaven, we don't care to read them.

Jesus does not ask us to accept him as our Saviour; or, as we hear many

say, "You can if you will — if you don't you will be lost." We find recorded in John 5:40-42, "And ye will not come to me that ye might have life. I receive not honor from men. But I know that ye have not the love of God in you." Sometime in life the little sheep will hear his voice; and they will all be taught of God. "My sheep hear my voice and I know them, and they follow me." (John 10:27)

When the light begins to shine in one's poor soul, then he cries to the Lord for mercy. He doesn't go telling what he has done for the Lord; no! but he does tell what great things the Lord has done for him. What a difference! When this takes place, we say with Isaiah, "Then said I, woe is me for I am undone, because I am a man of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips, for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts." (Isaiah 6:5) That's when the light from above has shined in their hearts, being born again; and they look afar off with an eye of faith, trusting in the Lord, and him alone from whence all blessing flow. Then these poor little strangers see themselves as they are, and acknowledge that their righteousness is as filthy rags.

I hope, if I am not deceived, that I have a part in this, to the extent that I can say with an honest heart, Woe is me, I can't take a good step, I can't have a good thought; nor control my tongue, for I know that in me, that is in my flesh dwelleth no good thing. (Romans 7:8) I just have to say that I am a sinner; and I don't say this just because someone else said so, for I was taught this in a few moments many years ago. We find recorded in 1 John 1:8; "If we say that we have no sin we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us."

Just wanted to jot down a few thoughts — didn't aim to write so much. In your humble petitions remember a poor sinner. May the Lord bless the Editors to keep the good *Signs of the*

Times going. In reading them, it seems that I have met you.

A brother in hope,
H. L. Gardner

P. O. Box 927,
Princeton, W. Va. 24740

Dear Elder Spangler:

I am due to send my remittance for the *Signs*; which I enjoy very much, and look forward each month for its coming.

The older I grow the more precious its contents are to me. You dear editors are blessed to set forth the truth the *Signs* has stood for all the past years it has been in existence. I hope I love that doctrine. There is so much opposition to the truth, that without the grace of God, we would all be swallowed up; but there will always be a remnant who will walk in the old paths, neither turning to the right nor to the left.

Would love to see you and Sister Spangler, and hope to hear you preach again.

In humble hope,
Mrs. S. J. Priddy

WE ARE MAILING SAMPLE COPIES

By request we are sending sample copies of the *Signs of the Times* to the former subscribers of *Grace and Truth Magazine* for their examination. We believe that many of them will find that the *Signs* contends for the doctrine they hold dear, and that they will find comfort and edification in its columns.

Those who find that the *Signs* is what they would desire to come into their homes each month, we invite them to send their subscriptions. The price is \$3.00 per year, or \$5.00 for two years. Our address is, Signs of the Times, Inc., Rt. 1, Box 539, Danville, Virginia.

— Editors

PLEASE NOTE

Will all who have notices of associations or other special meetings which they desire published, please send them to us as early as possible so that we may have them in the proper issue. We require at least five weeks to properly handle them. They should be mailed to

P. O. Box 186, Manassas, Virginia, to save time and additional handling.

Also, we need more information on some of the churches which are included under CHURCH NOTICES, which are published each January. The Clerks or Pastors should give us this information if they want their notice continued. — J. D. W.

PLEASE NOTE

In the Circular Letter of the Salisbury Association of Maryland, published in the current March issue, we stated that it was written by Elder W. D. Griffin, which was in error. It was written by Elder Arthur R. Warren. We regret the error. Please note the change in your copy. — J. D. W.

DISTRICT MEETING

The District Meeting of the Coneuch River Association will meet at Valley Grove Church the 5th Sunday in May and Saturday before, 1965. The church is on U. S. 331 in Carrington County, Alabama, about 12 miles North of Opp, Alabama.

A. C. Carter

SKEWARKEY UNION

The next session of the Skewarkey Union is appointed to be held with the Mt. Zion Church, Halifax County, N. C., the 5th Sunday and Saturday before in May, 1965. Elder W. E. Grimes was chosen to preach the Introductory Sermon, with Elder B. D. Handy, alternate.

The meeting house is located one mile from Hobgood, N. C. on the highway. We cordially invite brethren, sisters, and friends to meet with us.

Elmer B. Peele, Union Clerk,
Rt. 2, Williamson, N. C.

PLEASE NOTE REQUEST: Brother B. K. Smith is now stationed in Germany and desires to know if there are any other Old Baptist believers there, and would appreciate any of our readers letting him know of them. Also he would appreciate hearing from any of the brethren.

He writes, "It is always a heartwarming experience to hear from, and to meet any that believe and profess the sovereignty of the almighty Creator and Redeemer, who works all things after the counsel of his own will." His address is: Sgt. B. K. Smith, P. O. Box 96, APO New York 09757.

— Ed.

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The Lord willing the Staunton River Union will convene with Cane Creek Church the 5th Saturday and Sunday in May, 1965.

Cane Creek Church is located near Ringgold, highway 726, in Virginia. Our brethren and friends are invited to meet with us.

R. S. Payne

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE INDIGENT FUND

(To March 1, 1965)

Mrs. D. M. Radford, Va.....	\$ 1.00
Edd. W. Rhodes, Ark.....	5.00
H. L. Gardner, Ark.....	2.00
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Mildred D. Gordy, Mich.....	2.00
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BUSINESS OFFICE

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

Elder David V. Spangler

R. F. D. 1, Box 539, Beechwood Lane
Danville, Virginia

Elder John D. Wood

P. O. Box 186, Manassas, Va.

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Elder W. D. Griffin

39 Welsh Tract Road, Newark, Delaware

Elder E. J. Lambert

306 Richardson St., Winnsboro, Texas

Elder George Ruston

Dutton, Ontario, Canada

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

R. F. D. 1, Box 539 Beechwood Lane
Danville, Va.

EDITORIAL

ECCLESIASTES 9:13-15

"This wisdom have I seen also under the sun, and it seemed great unto me; there was a little city, and few men within it; and there came a great king against it, and besieged it, and built great bulwarks against it; now there was found in it a poor wise man, and he by his wisdom delivered the city; yet no man remembered that same poor wise man."

As our minds are illuminated by the Holy Spirit we will see many wonderful mysteries about this city. The text teaches things that the wisdom of the earth is not able to understand, much less is it able to love them. Anywhere that we turn in the Bible we will find the truth of our brother Paul's writing to the church at Corinth. "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." The subject matter seemed great unto Solomon, and it will seem that way to all those that are led into the truth. Imparting this knowledge to the men and women that are natural, is something that we can not do. In the first place, what could we say about this city that would make it attractive to a man in nature? It is too small, its defense is too small, and its deliverer is too infinitesimal to draw the attention of strong men. If we were looking for a place of safety would we seek a little city? If we desired a place for assurance and calmness of thought, would we enter a city that had but few men in it? If we desired to have a future of security, would we be willing to inhabit a city that did not have any deliverer save a poor wise man? If we remember well, we know that at one time in our life that we would not have been caught in a city like unto this.

The strangest things take place with men. I did for a long time seek and

inhabit a city that was large, whose defenses were strong and able to all those in it, to deliver the city from all comers, to keep her borders inviolate from all that would scale the wall of protection. How foolish it would have been for anyone to talk to me that God favored a city like unto this little city. It would have been foolish in anyone to talk to me about it, for they would have been talking to a fool. While I am often besieged by suggestions by the wily one that I do not have a good hope, yet I do not feel that talk had one thing to do with my being blessed to see the Old Baptist Church. It had been weeks since I had heard the name of our Creator used, except to swear by; it had been ever so long since anybody had said anything to me about religion of any kind. And yet the first week in this month (December) was forty years ago, I am sure that I saw something that I had never seen before. The city that had been so well fortified fell to the power of the poor wise man. None was any more active than I in trying to prevent this great fall. I daubed mortar; I carried huge timbers (that I had helped to get ready) and put them in strategic spots; I gave much advice; I summoned up all of the old tricks of trade in order to outwit this poor man that I did not intend to have rule over me. (Luke 19:14) The city fell, and I fell with it.

What a glorious day it was when the children of God fled for refuge to the city of God. We had barely escaped in the falling of the walls of that old Jerusalem. To begin with our every hope died as those walls went down. We had been sheltered by them all of our life. This had been the only city that we had known, and as we fled it terrorized our soul to see the only home we had known fall down by the onslaughts of another. This left us homeless as well as helpless. I hope that my little message will reach you and you in retrospect; that you will be given to live once again that time when you had no

place to turn to, when you were a homeless vagabond in the earth. How strange it all was, for we did not know who had destroyed our once flourishing city. We realized His power, but not His mercy; we realized His destruction, but not His salvation.

Do you know what it is to be homeless? Do you know what it is to be run out of the only home and city that you have ever known? Another thing: Do you remember that there was a woe pronounced on those that were with young when that city fell? How did you make out? There has never been a calamity like unto her that is with young when the cry comes to leave the falling city. You had not long had a hope — in fact it was a young hope indeed, and yet you had to leave. Do you remember how it was with you? Did you wonder what would become of you? Did you think about your little hope, and that perhaps you had been mistaken about having one? As yet you know, you had not much to go on. You had met the law giver, but you did not know the law keeper. You had life all right, because it had sent you to Jerusalem (old), and you had tried to comply with every rule of the city, but it was not enough.

What were your expectations? Let us look back down the road. Didn't we expect destruction? Our city had fallen. We could not deliver it. God, the law giver, had waged a war that had ended in triumph and glory unto himself, but it had scattered the whole of the inhabitants of the city. This fleeing for refuge intrigues me. A refugee does not have time to get his household goods; he does not have anything to convey them to another location. He barely escapes with his life, and he despairs of retaining it. How anxiously he casts his eyes at the conflagration that he has just left, as he sees his city and his home and his possessions go up in ashes. It would seem that the tongues of the flames are lapping at his heels, and there is more hurrying although this

poor tried soul is so weary. Surely there is not any hope for such an one.

And there is not any hope for mercy from God the law giver. There is not any hope or expectation that this poor harassed sinner that could not stem the tide of God's vengeance against the city, could turn and recover his former standing and build again the vanquished city. What desolation is his or hers. But hark, my soul, did I hear a voice? Bend down little children that you might hear it as it floats over the way. This voice does not come from your rear. You heard a voice back there, and it sickened your soul as it thundered, "The soul that sinneth shall die." There is not any help at Sinai; there is not any likelihood of the law giver relenting. But that voice, how soothing it sounds! Listen tired and weary sinner. Yes, even now I hear the words come so lowly, and yet so clearly and so comforting. "Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."

But perhaps you think that I am not dealing with the work of the poor wise man. Perhaps you think that I am not writing along the line of election and predestination. *That is what I am doing.* God's everlasting covenant is a wonderful topic, and far be it from me to minimize the work of the Father in choosing his family. The work of Jesus Christ, as the poor wise man, is of paramount importance to the welfare of God's people. It is as important as the choice of the Father. Much has been said (much of it unwisely from every quarter) about time salvation. What would you know if it had not been revealed to you in time? If there is one person, from whatever corner of the globe they come, that will take the position that they have contributed anything to having a knowledge of God's choice and of the redemptive work of Jesus Christ, then I want it plainly understood that my text is not for them. The text that I am treating on has previously laid down certain characters

that did not do anything towards contributing to their welfare. They did not win the race, nor the battle, nor get their bread, nor come into riches, nor get their favors, — by what they could do. This certainly is treating of a class of people that are saved in time by the poor wise man. It is this saving, it is this experience that I desire to treat on. May I ask you again this important question, If the light had not shined around Saul and the voice from heaven had not spoken to him, do you have any evidence that he would have ever gone to Ananias? Please give chapter and verse.

If a like spiritual work had not been done for you and this sinner, what would our occupation be at this time? Would we be living in the old Jerusalem or in the new? Would we be in the city that the law giver would be bringing to destruction despite all our efforts, or would we be in the little city that the poor wise man would be delivering by his wisdom? Many are not too well acquainted with the doctrinal phase of this deliverance (including the writer), but many (including the writer) feel to have a good hope through grace that we have been in both cities; that we had to flee from the one in order to escape destruction; that we were found helpless and lost and hungry and thirsty by the Lord; that we were led forth by the right way to a city of habitation, even a city few in number (manifestly), and that he showed us his prevailing arm of Deliverance.

If I have ever known God, I found him as a strict God of justice. In his vindictive wrath against my law erected, law defended city, I found no mercy, no love, no hope. I stared death in the face without a voice of compassion, without a word of comfort, without a thought but that everlasting destruction was for the city and all of its inhabitants. I did not leave that falling city looking for Jesus, for I did not know Jesus. I left it with the full ex-

pectation of being apprehended by Him whose laws I had broken, and that at that apprehension death would be my lot. In this law city I fell among thieves, and they beat me and robbed me, and left me lying by the roadside helpless. Who found me? Draw near dear child of God, and let us reason together. Remember, if we can not reason together here, the time will shortly come when we shall come into the presence of God, with whom there is no slackening his justice in order to give mercy, with whom we can not reason. May our question resound into all the earth (that is, into all quickened earthen vessels), and may the reverberations thereof shake every idolatrous position we have taken to ourselves, may it cause us to take stock of what we are teaching as the doctrine of God our Saviour.

Now back to the question: Who found us? What did we do to call him to our side? On these questions hang the history of the church. The answer to these questions shows whether we are in the defended city or not. If we did anything to call him to us, then salvation is not of the Lord. If anyone helped him with the carrying of us to the inn (city), then salvation is not of the Lord. If any administrators or auxiliaries or other standby helps were involved in his care of us, then salvation is not altogether of the Lord, and the praise therefor is to be rendered according to the part played in salvation. If any of the brethren or friends paid any part of the two pence given for our keep, then the poor wise man did not pay the cost of redemption in full. If we must earn our keep while He is away, then salvation is not of the Lord; and since honest men do not collect the same debt twice, I feel sure that God will not do so either; and if we earned it while he was away and then he came back and paid everything there certainly would be dishonesty in the defense and deliverance of the city.

I believe in religious freedom, and if it suits men to preach any other name

than Jesus as the deliverer of the city, I am satisfied for them to do it. If it seems evil to preach Jesus, then any set of gods many or lords many will do; but what seems evil to men will be the meat and drink of Joshua's house.

When the Lord Jesus Christ found us and carried us to the inn (the city, the church) we were as free in spirit as we will ever be here. Did you hate anybody? Would you have hurt the feelings of the least of your brethren? Would you have made anybody an offender because of a word or the interpretation of it? Dear reader, pause for one moment with me. Did you see anything wrong with the city? Did you see anything wrong with the inhabitants of it? What was your attitude about sin? Did you think that you would be free of sin and trouble and sorrow? Answer me, reader, isn't it true that you were sailing on the balmy clouds of keen anticipation of a life among the saints unalloyed by the base things of time and nature? Not a sign of a great king coming, not a sign of an enemy, not a thing to be defended from. This period might be compared to the beauty of the Mount of Transfiguration. The Lord Jesus had led you up; he made known to you the beauties of that sacred mountain, but at the end of his revelation he led you down. Words become useless fancies to describe the feelings of a child of God when it is made apparent to him that he is still in the world of sin and sorrow, and that it lurks in every member.

What had been so wonderful to him now becomes a sorrowful hallucination. It looks like that this city is to fall; it looks like that their hope of a rest was being followed by the most harrowing experience at all. But the soul searching inquiries are followed by being told again that Jesus is now enthroned to defend the city, to give the inhabitants the victory in winning the race; to wage and win their battle against sin and the world and the devil; to give the simple bread, to give the riches of his grace to men whose understanding had

been null and void; to give favors and benefits and blessings to those who did not have any skill in their hands. (Psalms 78:72)

W. D. G.

VOICES OF THE PAST
"He being dead yet speaketh"

**THE VICARIOUS SUFFERINGS
OF CHRIST.**

The question often arises in our mind and seems to be of great importance, how God can be just, and the justifier of sinners, since it is written, "He that justifieth the wicked, and he that condemneth the just, even they both are abomination to God?" — Prov. xvii. 15. Yet in the sufferings of our Redeemer, we see one who is holy, harmless, separate from sinners, as the just and holy one of Israel, who in his own most sacred person knew no sin, who was immaculately pure, made sin for us, bearing the sins of many, numbered with the transgressors, condemned to die the just for the unjust, and the wicked freely justified through the redemption that is in him. Is not this a mystery that the angels desire to look into? This mystery is not obviated by the contemplation of the sovereign right of God to do all his pleasures; for justice and judgment are the habitation of his throne. He is a just God, and we are told that he "will by no means clear the guilty." Yet we see the vicarious sufferings of the spotless Lamb of God, when "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all.

He was oppressed, he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth; he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth. He was taken from prison and from judgment [or as in the margin, He was taken away by distress and judgment, but] and who shall declare his generation?

for he was cut off out of the land of the living; for the transgression of my people was he stricken. And he made his grave with the wicked, and with the rich in his death; because he had done no violence, neither was any deceit in his mouth. Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief." — Isa. 53:5-10.

In all that we have thus far noticed of the divine testimony the sufferings of our dear Redeemer seem to have been vicarious, or substitutional. One who is just and holy suffering for others who were guilty and righteously condemned by the holy, righteous and just law of God; but unless we can find something more than substitution in the sufferings of our Lord, we shall fail to discover the justice of the just suffering for the transgressions of the guilty.

Should a citizen of this world commit a crime against the laws of his country, no principle of common law or justice would allow an innocent person to bear the penalty in his room as a substitute. Such a substitution would be a gross violation of justice. Should a criminal convicted of murder, condemned to suffer the extreme penalty of the law, procure an innocent person to suffer death in his room and stead, it would not meet the demand of justice; and if such a substitute should be accepted and executed, it would be a clear case of murder, an outrage against law and justice, and would by no means make the transgressors any less guilty. Substitutions or vicarious suffering alone could never put away sin, meet the stern demands of the holy law of God, or answer the ends of justice. There must therefore be found a principle of relationship identifying the sin-bearing sufferer, before we can trace the justice of God in laying the iniquity of his chosen people on the sinless victim, who himself bare our sins in his own body on the cross. For this relationship let us search.

An owner or shepherd of a flock of sheep may in strictest justice be

held for the trespass of his flock. He alone has the right to redeem them because they are his own sheep, and were his before they went astray and committed the trespass for which they are held by law. He is the shepherd whose own the sheep are, and the law justly holds him responsible for expiation. So Jesus says, "I am the good Shepherd; the good Shepherd giveth his life for the sheep." — John x. 11. And the dread command is sounded from the throne of God, "Awake, O sword, against my Shepherd, and against the man that is my fellow, saith the Lord of hosts; smite the Shepherd," &c. — Zech. xiii. 7. Here is justice and equity. The sheep have trespassed, and the unoffending Shepherd suffers. But, in the absence of this relationship where would be the justice? Had it been the sheep of some other owner, could justice have laid on him their iniquity? But now as we have seen, "All we like sheep have gone astray, and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all."

Should a wife become indebted to the merchant, or to any other creditor, the relationship subsisting affords the only ground on which the husband is held responsible for the amount of the debt; but the law could not in justice substitute another woman's husband and make him responsible for the amount. In the absence of the relation of husband and wife neither law nor justice would allow the demand. Our Lord Jesus Christ claims his church as the bride, the Lamb's wife. He says he is married unto her, and in that relation holds himself responsible for her debts. And by his apostle he says, "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it." But apart from this relationship is a husband bound to love, by substitution, and give himself for some other husband's wife, as for any but his own wife? Christ loved and gave himself for his own wife, the church, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the

washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. — Eph. v. 25-27.

Children may be involved in trouble, trespass, or debt, and the father is held responsible, because he is their father; not merely as a substitute for them, but by virtue of the relation which he bears to them he is held in law; if it were only by substitutions, he might be held as well for the debts or trespass of all other children, as for his own. All whom Christ has redeemed are his children. He is their everlasting Father, and was held responsible for them as such. A surety is also held in justice for the payment of the bankrupt debtors for whom he has endorsed. But for capital offenses, in which life is required, and for which death is the penalty, still nearer and more vital relation is required; neither the husband for the wife, the parent for the child, nor the surety for the debtor, can be accepted. Should a wife or son or daughter be convicted of murder, no innocent husband or parent can be accepted as a substitute for the offender. A vicarious sufferer would not meet the demand of law and justice. But while Jesus sustains all the relations to his church which we have named, and in them all his sufferings may be regarded as vicarious, there is a more vital connection in which he is identified and held to answer all the demands of the law and justice of God.

The church for which our Lord laid down his life, is his body, and he is her head, (Eph. i. 23) and as her head he was numbered with the transgressors, and bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors. Isa. 53:12. The transgressors of the divine law for whom he was stricken were all the members of his body. The iniquity of them all was demanded at his hand. If the members of a body commit a crime involving life, it can-

not be expiated by cutting off such members from the body. Suppose a man's hand has plunged a dagger into the heart of a person, that hand if it were cut off would not satisfy the demand of the law which requires the life of the murderer. The hand could not have committed the murder if it were not connected vitally with the body, nor could the body without a head commit the act; therefore the head is justly held for the whole body of which he is the head, the shepherd for the sheep, the husband for the wife, and the parent for the child.

And thus we see the Son of God, the brightness of his Father's glory, and express image of his person, in his mediatorial humiliation, made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, made flesh and dwelling among his members, demanding of his disciples who were slow to believe all that the prophets have written, "Ought not Christ to have suffered these things, and to enter into his glory?" And responsive to that important interrogative, positively declaring "Thus it is written, and thus it behooved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead on the third day; and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem." — Luke xxiv. 26, 46, 47.

The point to which we desire to call special attention is the necessity of a vital relationship between Christ who makes the sacrifice, and the church for whom the sacrifice was made, to make the sacrifice available to them. If all the holy angels of heaven had been offered for the transgressions of man, such a vicarious or substitutional offering could not have been accepted by the law of God, and must have utterly failed to redeem the transgressors from their sins. Boaz could not have redeemed the inheritance of Elimelech, if he had not been vitally related, as a near kinsman who by vital relationship had in himself the right of redemption. —

Ruth ix. 1-9. If our neighbor's sheep have trespassed and are lawfully held for the damage which has been sustained, none but the owner of the sheep can, simply by paying the ransom demanded, make them his own sheep.

The spiritual, eternal life which was with the Father co-existent with his eternal being, was given to his children, in the Son, even that life which was, and is, and forever shall continue to be hid with Christ in God, and constitutes a vital relationship which secures to him the right to take on him the seed of Abraham, when that seed had in the flesh transgressed the law of God, and thus identify himself with them in their flesh, partake of the same flesh and blood of which they are partakers, assume a body made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, in which to suffer and bear their sins in his own body, be put to death in the flesh, that he might redeem them from the sins of their flesh, and bestow on them that eternal life which is the gift of God through him. In his begotten Sonship he is one with all who are begotten and born of God, even as in his supreme, unbegotten and self-existent Deity he is One with the Father in the Godhead. In his begotten Sonship he is the Mediatorial Head of the church, and the "First born among many brethren." Of these brethren, it is written, "For it became him, for whom all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the Captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings. For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one; for which cause he is not ashamed to call them brethren. Saying, I will declare thy name unto my brethren; in the midst of the church will I sing praise unto thee. And again, I will put my trust in him. And again, Behold, I and the children which God hath given me. Forasmuch then as the children [brethren of him that sanctifieth, and children which God hath given him, and whom

he is not ashamed to call BRETHREN] are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise [or in like manner] took part of the same," &c.

Their partaking of flesh and blood no more made them the children of God whom he gave to Christ, than Christ's incarnation made him the Son of God. Christ in his Mediatorial Sonship existed with the Father from everlasting, but was made flesh and dwelt among his children in the flesh when the fullness of the time for his incarnation had come; then, as he himself has declared, "I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me." — John viii. 42. "I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world; again, I leave the world, and go to the Father." — John xvi. 28. Also, John xvii. 6-8, "I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world; thine they were and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word. Now they have known that all things whatsoever thou hast given me are of thee: for I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me."

This record of the Son of God, as proceeding from, and subject to the will and control of the Godhead, we understand to relate to his Mediatorial, or begotten Sonship, and by no means in disparagement of his unbegotten, independent, eternal Godhead; for he is not only the Word which in the beginning was WITH God, but he is also the Word which in the beginning WAS GOD, and that in the most unlimited sense of the words. In his begotten Sonship we understand that he is the Elder Brother of all who are born of God, and the First Born among many brethren. In his Godhead undivided and indivisible, there being but One God. The head of Christ is God, even as the head of the body or church is Christ. Therefore as the atoning sacrifice for

his people we regard him as being infinitely superior to a mere substitute. The atoning sacrifice was made by Christ for his own body, the church, therefore he, in treading the wine press, says, "And I looked, and there was none to help; and I wondered that there was none to uphold: therefore mine own arm brought salvation UNTO ME; and my fury, it upheld me." — Isa. lxiii. 5. Whatsoever is done to any, even to the least of his members is done unto him.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe July 1, 1881.)

OBITUARIES

J. J. WHITLEY

James J. Whitley was born in Johnston County, N. C. on December 26, 1879, the son of W. G. and Nancy Lane Whitley. He was called from this life October 6, 1964. His wife, the former Ruth Honeycutt, preceded him in death, and he is survived by three children, J. J. Whitley, Jr., of Durham; Mrs. Beatrice Hicks, of Durham; and Mrs. Margaret Peele, of Ogden, Utah; two sisters, three brothers, and three grandchildren. His funeral was conducted by Elder W. C. King, assisted by Warren Bishop, a Methodist minister, and he was buried in Maplewood Cemetery.

Brother Whitley joined the Durham Primitive Baptist Church by letter from Old Union Church in Johnston County, in November, 1909. In February, 1929, he was elected as Clerk and Treasurer. In May of 1929, he was ordained as Deacon and in June, 1929, was elected a Trustee of the church. He served actively and faithfully in these offices until October, 1955, when, because of old age and failing health, he relinquished his active service and served mostly in an advisory capacity until his death.

Brother Whitley was a man of unique personality and gifts. Straightforward and direct in his dealings with others, he had the courage to stand for what he believed. Always quick to defend the Primitive Baptists against unjust criticism, he was equally certain to rebuke them if he thought it necessary. For many years he represented our church at Associations and Union meetings far and near. As a deacon he had a special interest in the care and upkeep of the church property. Even in his latter years he manifested a keen interest in church matters and showed a warm appreciation for the fellowship of his brethren.

Having lived a long and useful life, Brother J. J. Whitley fell asleep in the Lord, one of those of whom it was written: "Those that be planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish

in the courts of our God. They shall still bring forth fruit in old age; . . ."

Submitted by order of the Durham Church in conference January 16, 1965.

Elder James R. Hollandsworth, Moderator
Catherine M. Copley, Clerk

CECIL R. MASSEY

Cecil Rhodes Massey, the son of Edgar Hardy and Bessie Craig Massey, was born in Durham, N. C. April 9, 1903, and was called from this life on September 20, 1964. He is survived by his wife, Mala Vickers Massey; one sister and five brothers. His funeral was conducted at the Durham Primitive Baptist Church by Elders D. V. Spangler, W. Curry King, and J. Harvey Smith. His body was interred at Woodlawn Memorial Park in Durham.

At the time of his death he was serving as Deacon, Church Clerk, Treasurer and Trustee of the Durham Church. He joined the church June 16, 1940, and was ordained a deacon in November, 1950. Walking softly before the Lord, he used this office well, performing the work of a deacon with diligence and humility. He contributed many hours of personal labor to the maintenance of our church property. Brother Massey was a man of lovely character, soft-spoken, unpretentious, and sensitive to the needs of the poor of the flock. The doctrine of salvation by grace was sweet to him, and he loved the Lord's people, visiting frequently among our sister churches. The principles by which he lived, the doctrine which he loved, and his quiet confidence in God are some of the precious reminders of him we shall store away in the treasureland of memory. These things will be, perhaps, a more lasting memorial to him than anything we might write or say.

While we, as a church, pause to mark time in memory of Brother Massey, we entreat the Lord to grant us a spirit of submission to His will, and give us the sweet assurance of His promise to His people of old: "Thine eyes shall see the King in his beauty; they shall behold the land that is very far off."

Submitted by order of Durham Church, sitting in conference, January 16, 1965.

Elder James R. Hollandsworth, Moderator
Catherine M. Copley, Clerk

SISTER BALMA CALLAHAN

Sister Balma Callahan was born in Pickens County, Alabama, in the year 1892, the daughter of Elder and Sister William Dorris. She was married to William Callahan in early life and they lived together in sacred matrimony for a long number of years. To this hap-

py union two children were born, to wit, a son, Oness, and a daughter, Lorena. Mr. Callahan died in 1957. She leaves, besides the two children, four grandchildren, and two sisters, Mrs. Ida Ray and Mrs. Ruth Blalock, both of Steens, Miss.

But few people can appreciate the life that she lived. In 1924 she lost her eyesight (her two children and perhaps one grandchild are afflicted with the same trouble), and in 1930 her eyes were removed. As bad as it is to be without natural eyesight, I long for the day when I might have her spiritual vision. The God of Israel does not close a door without opening another. Her father was an Old Baptist minister, but she did not get the religion of the Lord Jesus Christ from his teaching. In 1927 she joined the Free Will Baptists, but it did not take but about two weeks for her to see that she had made a mistake. In November, 1931, she was received into the church at Zion in the same county in which she was born, and was baptized a short time later by Elder R. P. Hendricks.

I do not want to say a word about her walk before the children of God as though she contributed to it in any degree. She would lay her hand on my mouth while she lived if I tried to talk like that. Yet, I do thank God for her at every moment of meditation about the past. I was in the constitution of the church which she was a member of for more than twenty-six years. I was her pastor for nearly twenty years of that time. I could lay my hand in hers among a thousand people and she would call my name. What wisdom she had, and yet she feared that she did not know Jesus; what humility she had, and yet she was afraid that she had deceived the church.

Many sore trials came her way, but in them all she said that God was to be blessed for his goodness to her. Her health was poor for a long number of years; her life was made up of crosses and losses. May God be praised for giving her to us; and for taking her by the place where she laid down her cross and took up her crown; to where she has gained the happy shore of unending rest forever.

I loved her dearly. I do not have any hesitancy in saying that she loved me from babyhood, for I was named after her father. We have all lost a precious sister but she has gained a blest abode. I do not have any tears to shed, but rather rejoicing that she has entered into the joys of the Lord, there to await the resurrection of the body, which was a sweet doctrine to her.

She died on the third Sunday in September, 1963, and was buried at Bethel Church. The funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder H. C. Moon.

W. D. G.

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

We, the members composing the Skewarky Primitive Baptist Church, desire to bow in humble submission to the will of our merciful and kind heavenly Father who called from our midst our beloved brother, Brother John Albert White, on October 12, 1964; thus, making his stay upon this earth seventy years and eight months.

Brother White was born on February 12, 1894, and remained a resident of Martin County till death.

Although our dear brother was received into the fellowship of our little flock only about one and one-half years before his departure, it is with a deep feeling of gratitude that we were blessed with associations prior to this time, inasmuch as we were blessed to see the manifestation of God's love in his daily walk and conversation long before his request for a home. Yes, he was a faithful husband, a faithful father to his children; but most comforting to us was his faithfulness, to his God, to his brothers and sisters, and his church before and after his confession, so far as we were blessed to see and understand from the fruits he bore.

It was the writer's privilege to have heard our beloved brother express his experience several times. Tears of joy were always a part in his expression of how he felt he had received a hope in his precious Saviour over forty years ago.

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

He leaves to mourn his passing his widow, Sister Lucile White, to whom he was united in marriage on June 19, 1916; two sons, two daughters, eleven grandchildren, and one sister. To the family we extend our heartfelt sympathy in their distressing hours. May you be comforted by God's love and words of comfort is our prayer.

His funeral was conducted in the Skewarky Primitive Baptist Church by his pastor, Elder E. C. Harrison, assisted by Elder D. B. Stokes. Interment was in the Martin Memorial Gardens beneath a mound of beautiful flowers.

RESOLVED, That a copy be placed on the church record, a copy be sent to *Zion's Landmark, Old Faith Contender, Signs of the Times*, and a copy be sent to the family.

Done by order of conference second Saturday in November, 1964.

Elder E. C. Harrison, Moderator
Deacon Johnny Ray Gardner, Committee

SISTER SALLIE BRIDGES

Sister Sallie Bridges was born August 24, 1899, and died November 14, 1964. She was the daughter of the late Brother Jonas and Sister Elizabeth Reaves. She was united in marriage to the late Ennis B. Bridges. Surviving are: one daughter, Mrs. Pearl DeMartino, New Kensington, Pa., and two sons, Howard, of Dunn, N. C., and Corbett, of Raleigh, N. C.; and by four grandchildren.

Sister Bridges joined Bethsaida Primitive Baptist Church when she was eighteen years old, and moved her membership to Liberty Church in August, 1955. She was always a faithful member and a true believer in the faith of grace.

We, the church at Liberty, bow in humble submission to the will of God, who is the author and the finisher of our faith. As one we loved, we miss her, but we understand God loved her best.

It was agreed that a copy of this be given to the family; one for the church record; and one sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Done by order of Liberty Church in conference December 5, 1964, by the following Committee:

Liddie Tart
Effie Allen
Lovie Young

SISTER KATHERINE GILLIES

In loving memory of our dear and precious sister Katherine Gillies, who passed away in her sleep October 22, 1964, in Toronto, Canada. She leaves one brother, Dr. J. D. Gillies of Toronto, and two nephews, Dr. J. D. M. Gillies of Toronto and Prof. Donald B. Gillies. Interment was at Gillies Cemetery, West Lorne, Ontario.

She united with the church in July, 1956, at Lobo; and four others joined the church the same day. Three were baptized the following day and the other two in September by our pastor, Elder Geo. Ruston. It seemed a day of rejoicing in the Lord. During the night before Katherine's baptism she said she had sweet words come to her. Among them was verse 17 from 103rd Psalm, "But the mercy

of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, and his righteousness unto children's children." Also verse 4 from 34th Psalm, "I sought the Lord and he heard me, and delivered me from all my fears."

Our pastor spoke from Philippians 3:20, "For our conversation is in heaven, from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ," at the funeral service.

Katherine had a lively disposition and loved to talk on the scriptures. She will be missed by many. "Blessed are those that die in the Lord."

This is written at the request of Elder George Ruston by one who loved her.

Verna Carscadden

MRS. CORRIE ROYSTER

Dearest Corrie, you have left us in this world of sin and sorrow, but we feel you are sweetly resting, though we are heart broken. We loved you very dearly, but Jesus loved you best, for he called you home to heaven, to that land of peaceful rest. There we hope to meet you, Corrie; there we never more will part, but with our Jesus sweetly rest. Won't that be a glorious morning when we meet to part no more on that bright and happy shore?

As I have heard her say, "We'll meet in that bright world where we will never say Good-by."

Written by her loving mother,
Mrs. C. C. Clayton,
Durham, N. C.

CYNTHIA OLIN WARREN ADKINS

Dear Editors, will you please publish these few lines in memory of a dear sister of mine in the flesh, and I hope also in Christ.

She was called to rest May 29, 1963; and was born September 30, 1902. She is survived by her husband, Lonnie Adkins; one son, Cecil, and one daughter, Joyce; and eight grandchildren. Sis Olin, as we called her, was a sweet and faithful one. She was devoted to her church and pastor. Her health wasn't very good, but if she could sit up, she was always ready to go to church. She was some older than I, and was like a mother to me, so words cannot express how much I miss her.

She was baptized in 1947 into Rocky Swamp Church, by Elder J. C. Moore, of Whitakers; who was a precious one too. We rest assured that she is with her precious Father in heaven, and out of this world of worry and trouble.

Written with much sadness and fear.

Mrs. J. L. Smith

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 133

DANVILLE, VA., JUNE, 1965

NO. 6

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 6/65
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

"IT IS OF HIM WHO
WORKETH IN US"

4514 Third Street, N. W.,
Canton 8, Ohio.

Dear Brethren:

Sound doctrine that is delivered with unction and power of the Holy Spirit is getting scarce indeed . . .

Elder Roscoe Lane is a friend of mine, and he gave me the address to subscribe for the *Signs of the Times*. I have read a few copies and enjoy its contents. I believe in an all wise and sovereign God, in whom we live, move, and have our being; and that times and events are before appointed, and come to pass according to the divine will of God. Can the poor, puny creature change the things that God has fore-ordained to be?

I love God and rejoice in the fact that he has fixed all things: As he has fixed my eternal salvation, so has he fixed my time salvation. We have a time salvation to work out in this life, but it is of him who worketh in us both to will and to do of his good pleasure.

I enclose \$5.00 for two years subscription. May God bless the paper and pour out His Spirit to give us good writers of sound doctrine.

Yours in hope,
Russell V. Angle

THERE WILL ALWAYS
BE A FEW

733 7th Street,
Hollister, Calif. 95023

Signs of the Times:

I see that it is time to renew my subscription to the *Signs*. I enjoyed the article by Elder John C. Hall in the March issue very much. He was an able writer, as were many in his day.

I believe there will always be a few who believe in the only true and living God, who is the first cause of all causes, "Who declared the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying my counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." And, ". . . I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it."

The world believes in a god who is willing to save if you will just let him. "As it is written, I will put my spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments and do them." I wonder where they would get the power, for it is written, "Let every soul be subject to the higher powers, for there is no power but of God; and the powers that be are ordained of God."

I believe in a God who has all power, who says, "I will and you shall." "But this shall be the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws in their inward parts, and write them in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be my people. And they shall no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them

to the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more." (Jeremiah 31:33, 34)

According to the scriptures every child of grace was chosen in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, for it is written, "My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being unperfect; and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them." (Psalm 139:15, 16) I believe that at God's appointed time every one of them will be brought into the fold.

A brother in hope,
Austin M. Tipton

Tennessee Ridge, Tenn. 37178

Dear Editors:

I feel that I have been wonderfully blessed with a countless number of blessings the past few years, for which I am thankful to the great Creator of all things.

I retired at the age of 65, and moved to as convenient a place as possible for the purpose of going to church somewhere every Sunday that it is the Lord's will; and have been blessed with health that enabled me to attend from one or two associations and union meetings each year in my own surrounding area, and several distant meetings and associations in Alabama, Kentucky and Illinois, and I feel that I have been fed with that spiritual manna from above. I hope to be able to continue as time goes on, however I am past seventy years of age and cannot expect to live forever.

We cannot understand why these blessings are extended to one who feels so unworthy as I — it is only through the mercies and His abounding grace to His children, if I be one at all. Some-

times I feel to have a hope to that effect.

I have also been blessed to read the wonderful letters and editorials in the *Signs of the Times*, for which I thank the Lord. Let us give praise to the one to whom praise is due. The writers are blessed by a higher power to write the doctrine of our primitive faith.

I am enclosing check for my renewal for two years.

Yours in hope,
Harvey Vick

SERMON BY ELDER JAMES POOLE
AT THE VIRGINIA
CORRESPONDING MEETING
IN 1964

I will read a portion of Scripture that is familiar to most of you which is found in the 15th chapter of Luke. This is commonly called the parable of the prodigal son. Of all the portions of Scripture that is mis-applied and mis-used, probably the parables receive more apparent damage than any others. We might feel ourselves skilled interpreters of the word of God, but it is highly probable that many have but little insight of what the Lord conveyed in these.

I do not believe that a parable teaches any new truths. The Lord amplified or explained or enlarged upon something already brought forward, whether in the Old Testament or what he had previously taught. Further, I do not believe that any parable should be applied any further than its local application. The Lord had a specific design when he brought every parable before his hearers; and I think we assume something the Lord has not intended when we try to take a parable and apply it beyond that: it might fit, and it might not — we don't have this wisdom apart from God. Though I may differ with some here today, I feel that the application will be consistent with the remainder of the word of God. I

have heard ministers preach a discourse that I thought was good, but to me, (maybe I was wrong), they used the wrong text. What they preached was good, but they did not get the message from the part of the Bible I would have, if it had been left to me. Many times we get up and have a good text, and then not have such a good message. As I mentioned yesterday, let us trust our God for the disposal of all these things.

Before we attempt to look at the 15th chapter, I want to read several other verses in the book of Luke. "And the Lord said unto him, now do ye Pharisees make clean the outside of the cup and platter; but your inward part is full of ravening and wickedness." (Luke 11:39) "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are as graves which appear not, and the men that walk over them are not aware of them." (Luke 11:44) "In the meantime, when there were gathered together an innumerable multitude of people, insomuch that they trode one upon another, he began to say unto his disciples first of all, Beware of the leaven of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisy." (Luke 12:1) "And the Pharisees also, who were covetous, heard all these things: and they derided him. And he said unto them, Ye are they which justify yourselves before men; but God knoweth your hearts: for that which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God." (Luke 16:14) "And he spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others." (Luke 18:9)

I think this will be sufficient at this time to indicate what much of the book of Luke contains. Nowhere else in the New Testament does it show more of the opposition and hatred and malice of the Pharisees toward our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, than it does in the gospel according to Luke. Continually from the very first to the very last of the book, we find warfare there. They devised every means that they could

imagine to ridicule, condemn, and even destroy Jesus the Saviour. At every turn they watched him that they might trip him in his words; in every movement they sought something they could find that was contrary to the law of Moses. In everything that Jesus did they continually spied him out that he might be destroyed, and that his testimony among the multitudes might be gained.

The book of Luke, as much as any other book in the Bible, condemns phariseeism. I think that we have every reason in the world today, that we also, under the leadership of God, should condemn phariseeism. It is a common malady that afflicts all the world — except that God is with us and leads us in humility and recognition of our sinful condition. Phariseeism is the finest line that can be drawn of legalism; and I think that we can safely say that any institution, organization, or religious society in the world today that takes up the law and expounds it as a rule of faith to their people, has a tinge of phariseeism. Any preacher, any so called preacher, any church, any body of people that uses any system other than the divine that God has delivered, which is sovereign grace, is afflicted and diseased with phariseeism.

We come now to the 15th chapter of Luke. The Lord expounded certain things to these people. It begins by saying, "Then drew near unto him all of the publicans and sinners for to hear him, and the Pharisees and scribes murmured, saying this man receiveth sinners and eateth with them." They murmured and complained because Jesus was eating with sinners — eating with the vile and unclean of the day. He had said that he had come not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance; and he was as consistent as his word — he lived among them, walked among them, and dealt with them.

The wisdom of all ages had come down out of heaven unto them, and was delivered to them through the mouth

of the Son of God; and it was said, "Never man spake like this": we have never seen it on this wise before. When they heard these things they hungered and thirsted, and desired that they might be fed more of this manna which had come down out of heaven. They rejoiced and were greatly comforted, for they had heard the law of Moses; they had heard the scribes; they had heard the Pharisees; they had heard all the lawyers of the religion of the day speak unto them, and when they would go away, they would go away empty, because there was no food supplied them. There was no substance; there was nothing lasting; there was no comfort; there was no deliverance from the torment and grief of sin which they had endured in their mortal bodies; but as Jesus spoke, they drew near unto him.

Can you imagine the pride-filled Pharisees, those who had had the crowds follow them, as they saw Jesus carry away the crowds, and have the multitudes follow after him? They were jealous! They despised to see this minister of God from heaven come before the multitudes, and for them to desire to hear Jesus rather than themselves. They had a dead letter to deliver, but it made no difference to them, for they would ensnare the people of God at the expense of the glory of God; but it was impossible.

The Pharisees and scribes murmured, saying, "This man receiveth sinners, and eateth with them." This I think, embraces the teaching which follows. It is sufficient to say that these are not three separate parables, though some say, This is the parable of the lost sheep; this is the parable of the lost coin; and this is the parable of the lost prodigal son. These are not three separate teachings, but one — to teach one plain truth to those who have been given eyes to see, ears to hear, and an understanding heart and rejoicing mind, that they may be comforted.

"He spoke this parable unto them, saying, What man of you having an

hundred sheep, if he lose one of them; doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it?" So many have the idea that all hundred of these, because they were termed sheep, were the children of God everlastingly. In this particular parable, I think that Jesus is showing the inconsistency of the Pharisees, scribes and Sadducees, and all religious leaders who claim to be the sheep of God, for He left them in the wilderness to go after that one which was lost. This was the difference and distinction between all the multitude, and the sinners, the vile and the outcasts of religion who were hungering and thirsting after Jesus. The multitude of the Pharisees thought they were sheep; they thought they were religious; they thought they had the knowledge of God, having Moses' seat, yet they were full of dead men's bones and did not have any of the glory of God invested in them.

I think this is what Jesus is teaching here. He said, "What man of you having an hundred sheep." — they were all here, whether they were true sheep or false, "if he loose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness," — did not leave them in the tabernacle, did not leave them in the kingdom of God, but left them in the wilderness, "and went after the one." "And when he found it, he laid it on his shoulder, and came home rejoicing."

Notice the application of this: "And when he cometh home, he called together his friends and neighbors, saying unto them, Rejoice with me for I have found my sheep which was lost. I say unto you that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons who need no repentance." Let no one deceive you today, brothers and sisters, all of God's children need repentance, whether they be indoctrinated or whether they be in darkness, all of the children of God must have that repentance that God

sends down out of heaven to deliver their souls. Every one of them must be granted the faith of Jesus Christ from God as a gift; and so it is with repentance. We might not hear much about repentance today, because another crowd has taken the hue and cry of repentance and distorted it to a fashion that would suit themselves; yet repentance is still the doctrine of the Bible: It is still as much in vogue for the people of God today as it was two thousand years ago. When the Saviour came upon the scene, did he preach some other doctrine? He began by saying, "Repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand," as did his fore-runner John the Baptist, and as did Peter on the day of Pentecost. Repentance was preached by the disciples in those days, and I believe the true church of God today has ministers who preach repentance: not in order to get people to repent; but they preach the truth repentance: the necessity of the divine power of God to grant men repentance, and deliver them from their sinful nature and vileness.

Did the one sheep have any idea of repenting as it went over the hill? Did it have any desire of getting disturbed about its condition? One out of an hundred — ninety-nine left in the wilderness. And he went for the lost one, and brought it home rejoicing, saying that there was joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons who need no repentance — those who were just in themselves and thought they needed no repentance; thought they were righteous of themselves, despising others. That was the condition of the Pharisees: they felt that they had no need of repentance; that they were perfect, sinless and lived above everything, keeping the law.

The teaching of Jesus here was to instruct the people of God by way of condemning the Pharisees, when they murmured when Jesus received and ate with sinners. Had they known that they were sinners, their sins also had been

removed; but they were blind though they claimed they could see.

We come to the second parable. "Either what woman having ten pieces of silver, if she lose one piece, doth not light a candle and sweep the house, and seek diligently until she find it; and when she hath found it, she calleth her friends and her neighbors together, saying, Rejoice with me, for I have found the piece which I had lost." Notice that the first case was the lost sheep; the second is the lost coin. "Likewise I say unto you there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth." We don't need an interpreter for these verses — the Saviour himself interpreted them as being how the sinner repents, that it was not left to him. The sheep did not have the wisdom nor the ability, nor the desire to come back from its lost estate; neither did the lost coin have any power, or wisdom, or intelligence within itself to discover its own lost condition. I think in the first case we find the means the Saviour used: Him coming as the Shepherd of the sheep to seek out the lost sheep and grant them repentance that they may rejoice everlastingly in the fold and flock of God. In the second case, we find the woman sweeping diligently in the house, and bringing forth to light; which I think gives application and instruction of how the Spirit of God comes within, and brings the light to bear upon the darkened soul that it might be seen to be lost; and then recovers that lost inanimate object; (which we are apart from God, just as inanimate as the lost coin, for we have just as much ability to recover ourselves from our lost state as the coin did.) We have just about as much intelligence and understanding of direction towards heaven as the sheep had to recover itself from its lost condition; which was none. I don't know much about sheep, but from what I have heard they don't have to get very far away to be lost, and can't find their way back.

How many people today think they can go out and recover some lost sheep and take them from the fold of this world, and redeem them unto the heavenly Father! What a lie some people tell, when they stand before the people and instruct them to save themselves. Brethren, if there is salvation in this world, it is by Jesus Christ. It is taught throughout the Scriptures that all salvation is of the Lord: before, and now, and in the future.

We now come to the third section; which, I think, deals with the general application of repentance. First, we see a lost sheep, then a lost coin, (that neither one of them recovered themselves,) and now we see a lost son. "And he said, a certain man had two sons." I think it might be well before we go further, to turn to Galatians and think something about two sons in the fourth chapter, ". . . tell me, ye that desire to be under the law, do ye not hear the law? For it is written that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bond woman, and the other by a free woman." Where could we find a more fitting application to corroborate the truth of the parable here? Two sons — one by a bond maid, and one by a free woman. We find a fitting illustration of the difference between these two sons: one stayed at home, and the other went out into the grossest form of sin; and the distinction is manifest as it unfolds.

"A certain man had two sons, and the younger of them —" This is consistent with the rest of the word of God: the elder shall serve the younger. It was not the elder brother Esau, but the younger brother Jacob that was favored of God; it was not Cain but Abel that received the knowledge of God. And so on down through the word of God it is consistently said that the elder shall serve the younger; and we find it just as consistent when our Saviour is instructing by way of a parable. "And the younger of them said to his father, Father give me the portion of goods that falleth to me: and he divided

unto them his living. And not many days afterward the younger son gathered all together and took his journey into a far country, and there wasted his substance with riotous living." I think this is a full application of the condition of a sinner in this world today — the depths of sin he gets into: he didn't just journey down the block somewhere and frolic around a little bit and have an amusing time, but he took his journey into a far country. So far away that there was no means whatsoever in our natural understanding of his returning unto his father's house. He wasted his substance with riotous living. Have you ever considered how riotous we live in this world today: how sinful, how vile and unclean; the depths of woe and degradation that a sinner steeps in until such time that God in his all merciful love stoops down and brings him up by his Son — redeems him to sit upon a mountain top shouting the very praises of God.

"And when he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine." I believe it happens every time that one of the Lord's people starts a riotous living and the Lord is pleased to bring him out from under it. At the same time they have spent all and go bankrupt, the famine comes. Oh, that we can praise His name that it is so, and rejoice to know that the greatest thing that has ever happened to the child of God in this life, is when he is come to the knowledge of the fact that he is bankrupt before God, and that he lives in a land full of famine, destitute of any food or substance that might keep his soul and body together.

No doubt this son had had a great time with his substance: he lived it up and spent freely, and went with the harlots and wicked wine bibbers, etc., of the world. Then the time came that he went broke. He might even have written a "hot check" or two. You know there are lots of folks in the world today who are writing religious "hot

checks" — they surely are: writing one on all their good works in heaven, and passing them out. But they come back insufficient funds every time. It will never be honored in heaven; it will never be looked upon in favor before God. Yet everyone of us taught only of ourselves and of the world, would try to pass phoney money religious wise, if it were not for the grace of God.

But He is pleased to send a famine! I am convinced from the word of God that every famine that ever hits us, is for a cause and purpose. Every incident in our lives, whether it be big or small, is designed by the allwise counsel of God, that he might bring us to the time we could see nothing in him except glory and exaltation; and see nothing in ourselves but sin and degradation.

"The famine came, and he began to be in want." He didn't want anything while he had his own substance; while he had his pockets full of his own filthy lucre, but when he was bankrupt and the famine came, he began to be in want. The child of God, when he is under the afflictions of God, teaching and directing him, and leading him unto repentance, begins to be in want, because all the substance of this world cannot satisfy him.

"He began to be in want, and went and joined himself to a citizen of that country." If we should ask some in this congregation, many would say the first thing they did when they began to be in want, was to join themselves to citizens of this country; to line up with institutions and organizations, feeling that they had the necessary things. But we find later that the land we have come from, is where our inheritance is and is the only land we can be joined with.

"And he sent him into the field to feed swine." That is about what happens when we join with citizens of this land: we wind up slopping hogs. "And he fain would have filled his belly with the husks that the swine did eat; and no man gave unto him." No man gave

unto him, because no man could. When one is happy and has all he needs, and is in a good state, he has lots of friends, lots of companions. But when one is stripped by the famine, by the mighty power of God and brought to be in want, there is no one in this world that can give unto him — neither brother nor sister, mother nor father, friends or neighbors, or your preacher, none of them can give unto you.

"And when he came unto himself, he said . . ." Some folks would try to tell us that by coming unto himself, he just sat back on a log somewhere and scratched his head and made a decision. But this is not true at all: I think the man was spiritually insane until the time God restored his mind and made him to know that he was in the wrong place. And I think that every one of the Lord's people before they are quickened, are deranged in mind, and until such time that God gives them peace through Jesus Christ they cannot come to themselves. This man would have been happy if he could have kept the substance he had; if he could have gone on in riotous living with his friends he would never have had any problems. If he could have been without famine, and not having to join with a citizen of that land and feeding swine, he would have had no problems. But not so with God. The best laid plans we have can come to nought, if our God has other designs.

This man came to be in want, and then came to himself by the power of God. He said, "How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough to spare, and I perish with hunger! I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son: Make me as one of thy hired servants. And he arose, and came to his father. But when he was a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him. And the son said unto

him, Father I have sinned . . ." I have sinned! I think those are the sweetest words the Lord's people can ever hear another one say: I am a sinner. This brother here had the right testimony, "I have sinned."

Instead of going into details, let us just read now and find out about his elder brother. The father said to the servants, "Bring forth the best robe." We know what the best robe is: the righteousness of Christ. He put a ring on his hand: the seal of God. Put shoes on his feet: the gospel; and he brought the fatted calf, and killed it: the sacrificial supper that we commune with our heavenly Father. "Let us eat and be merry, for this my son was dead and is alive again; was lost and is found." What rejoicing there is when a sinner returns to the presence of his Father by His divine leadership, providence and direction.

"The elder son was in the field." He wasn't at the house communing with them: it is noteworthy to notice the wording, "In the field." Jesus himself explained what the field was in the 13th chapter of Matthew, when he said, "The field is the world." The elder brother stayed at home, but he was in the world all the while, even in the presence of his father. The Pharisees had the law of Moses, they had the temple, they had the sacrifices all the while they were in the field: They were in the world, and knew not the grace and glory of God. Here was the elder brother at home all the while, yet he was a stranger — he was in the field; and he came nigh unto the house and heard music and dancing; and he asked one of the servants what these things meant. He didn't have any spiritual light; he couldn't see for himself. The servant said, "Thy brother is come and thy father hath killed the fatted calf, because he has received him safe and sound.

"And he was angry." Doesn't this compare with the Pharisees and scribes who murmured, saying that this man

receiveth sinners. This is the very complaint of the elder brother: he was angry because his father received his sinful brother. He thought his father ought to say, "Depart from me ye worker of iniquity." But no, the father received him joyfully, and gave him the best robe, and a ring for his hand, and shoes for his feet. "He was angry and would not go in." Doesn't this compare with what our Saviour said in John 5:40, "And ye will not come to me that ye might have life." "His father came out, and entreated him." And he answered, "Lo, these many years do I serve thee," (legalism — "do I serve thee,") "neither transgressed thy commandments at any time." This is typical Phariseeism wherever you find it; and but for the grace of God, brothers and sisters, we would be Pharisees too; or worse still, a Judas probably. "And yet thou never gave me a kid that I might make merry with my friends." He wasn't interested in communion with his father around the broken body of Jesus Christ: he wanted to make merry with his friends.

I think we have much to praise God for that we can make merry and rejoice in Jesus our Saviour; that we as the prodigal son, came home after we were restored to our senses by God, and say that we have sinned. The elder brother gave every evidence that he had never tasted grace. The last verse says, "It was meet that we make merry and be glad, for this thy brother was dead and is alive again; and was lost, and is found.

The lost sheep, the lost coin, the lost sinner: it took the same grace to restore each one. The application of the lost sheep is, how His son saved his sheep; the application of the lost coin is, how the Spirit of God brings forth the light and sweeps the room clean — brings out all the filth; the application of the lost son is, the repentance, the returning home to the Father by divine providence, and the granting unto him the restored state. All of it was by

grace from beginning to end.

The Pharisees murmured against him because he had received sinners. The teaching and instruction here is that they were sinners, and had never seen themselves to be what they knew they were: they had never repented — and never would apart from grace. Friends, you and I would never repent were it not for grace; we would never give our idols up; we would never lay down our jewels of this world except God supplied us with that one jewel above all others — Christ in you the hope of glory. Let all else perish, let all the vain things of our imagination flee from us, if we can but claim that hope of everlasting happiness with the Saviour, who has abundantly pardoned the wickedest and vilest prodigal by his grace.

(The above is from a tape recording and is slightly condensed for publication. We believe our readers will find it most interesting. — J. D. W.)

2707 Idlewild Blvd.,
Roanoke, Virginia 42012

Dear Brethren in Christ:

It is time to renew my subscription to the *Signs of the Times*, and am sending \$5.00 for two years.

I enjoy reading the experiences of the saints, and also the editorials. And am glad to read the good sermons of our preaching brethren which you have published . . . The Lord has blessed us with some very able ministers, for which I hope we are thankful.

May the Lord keep and bless you with all spiritual blessings, is my prayer I hope for Christ's sake. From one in hope of eternal life.

Mrs. D. A. Law

ENJOYED THE
PUBLISHED SERMON

Route 1, Box 494
Granite City, Ill.

Dear Brother and Sister Spangler:

From time to time we are given a

feeling of inner thankfulness for God's merciful enlightenment pertaining to portions of the Scriptures. In this particular instance they occur in the February issue of the *Signs*: Your editorial from one of your recorded sermons, and *The Voices of The Past*.

My wife and I eagerly read, and expressed our enjoyment after reading your piece. How we feasted on your wonderful descriptions as to how Jesus Christ our blessed Lord and Redeemer was praised, and not puny, helpless man; how Jesus Christ the Son of God came down from heaven and took the sins of all whom the Father gave him, and glorified, magnified and fulfilled the law in their behalf; thereby leaving nothing undone for the creature whom Christ died for. The Son of God gave all; what can we give? Exactly nothing! All we do, if we be a child of God, is receive Christ and all his wonderful blessings; if not of the elect, we receive only the fruits of the flesh (works), and will be judged by the law.

We hope to be thankful to the thrice holy God of heaven and earth, that your sermon was recorded, thereby giving the household of the readers of the *Signs* the privilege of feasting and sharing the crumbs which fall from the Master's table, with you and the brethren in Virginia.

I remain a brother, I hope,
John F. Simpson.

*Wisdom is good with an inheritance:
and by it there is profit to them that
see the sun. (Eccl. 7:11)*

The wise man of the world, is guided by his conscience to live morally right, and to walk uprightly before his fellow man. The spiritually wise, who are called foolish by the world, are guided by the Holy Spirit to walk uprightly before God. This spiritual walk of those guided by spiritual wisdom, is what we hope to discuss, God being our strength.

The children of Grace once walked as

the foolish. Their eyes were blinded and they sought their joys in the decaying things of the world around them. They were very busy choosing whom they would serve among the little gods of the earth. They were wise in their own eyes, following the way that seemeth right to a man, and crooked paths of self-righteousness. The blind led the blind and walked after the counsel of the ungodly. Those who walk after the flesh, mind the things of the flesh and not of the Spirit. This is not a good inheritance, for the simple inherit folly, therefore they cannot inherit the kingdom of God, because they are flesh and blood. The things of the kingdom of God are spiritually discerned. Though they count themselves wise, in the light of spiritual wisdom and truth they are foolish and simple minded.

The question is, how can the blind see, the deaf hear, the lame walk, to find the good wisdom with an inheritance? "Where shall wisdom be found, and where is the place of understanding?" "The fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil that is understanding."

Dear reader, do you ever try to remember when the fear of the Lord entered your heart? When the scary tales of the devil and his cohorts took flight, as the evil spirits entered the swine and were choked in the sea? Do you yearn and long and try to pray, with me, that you actually experience Godly fear, and that you are one of the foolish things of this world, that He chose to confound the wise? Did you turn from your former life of folly and begin to fear God of your own free will? Did you lift your feet from the miry clay and place them upon the rock, the sure foundation? I think not. You were told in your heart to "Stand still and see the salvation of the Lord."

Though we see through a glass darkly, and walk by faith and not by sight, if we are what we hope to be, the foolish things of this world have passed away, for us, and the inheritance that

comes with spiritual wisdom is our meat and drink. Christ's sermon on the mount gives in detail the good inheritance; and those who will receive it.

Let us reread the text, "Wisdom is good with an inheritance: and by it there is profit to them that see the sun." By it, there is profit. If we are wise in the fear of the Lord, and receive an inheritance (an unearned legacy) that profits us, the profit is as much a gift as the inheritance. Christ with whom we are heirs and joint heirs we hope, died to satisfy the law in our place, and gave us redemption from the law and salvation to life eternal. He took away our stony heart and gave us a heart of flesh. With this gift, he gave light, truth, and wisdom to understand there is no other way to enter the climes of immortal glory except by himself. He is the only door.

The new heart of flesh is wise to the source of its profit. It knows the roads it followed in folly. It knows the miry clay, the desert land, and howling wilderness from which it was rescued. This heart that now is lowly, meek, humble, poor, and wise to its own short comings, looks to the Giver of its inheritance, for wisdom, strength and comfort. It dwells in the wisdom that, "Man's goings are of the Lord, how can a man then understand his own way."

How do those who are wise in the fear of the Lord profit by this inheritance? They are filled with the needs of the inner man as dictated by the Spirit. He knows and supplies our every need, but not the whims and fancies of the flesh. We are held down and made humble, lest we become puffed up, but then He promised Paul "my grace is sufficient for thee." No matter what the problem, or thorn in the flesh, the child of God is hemmed in, and hedged about, by his promises, which are yea and amen.

They that mourn shall be comforted, the meek shall inherit the earth, the pure in heart shall see God, the merciful shall obtain mercy, and they shall

sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. "With the lowly there is wisdom," says David, "and the wise shall inherit glory."

Every good and every perfect gift is from above. The wise man knows himself to be lost and without hope, unless a power outside himself intervenes. All of his efforts have been fruitless, and judgment seems his doom. When Christ enters his heart and makes a new man within him, then can the little child of God say, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." Even though, to himself, he feels sinful, unworthy and unfruitful, his brethren can see his new way, and his good and perfect gifts, shining *through* the old man. Faith, hope and charity are gifts that wisdom bids him use wisely and are profits from his inheritance. How wonderful to watch a Christian on the new road, as he is guided by wisdom. He walks it by faith, also a part of the inherited gift. Even though it is strait and narrow and hard, and though he falter and fall along the way, he is never lost nor utterly cast down. Why? Because his way is in the light and he is one of them that sees the sun. His feet are planted and kept in the way of life by the wisdom of that sun shining in his heart; by the love and mercy of that one that neither sleeps nor slumbers. To a way worn sinner, who knows his own wickedness and vanity; who has been taught his own foolishness, and has been made to know it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps, then to him, "Truly the light is sweet, and a pleasant thing it is for the eyes to behold the sun."

As all scripture is written for a profit to the man of God, to the children of God instead of the whole world, so is the wording of this text written to a certain people: "To them that see the sun." Broken into segments it means: wisdom is good to them that see the sun, or an inheritance to them that see the sun, or profit to them that see the sun. So in reality, we have wis-

dom, which is the fear of God; inheritance, which is the promise of God; and profit, which is the comforting faith and hope in the fulfillment of those promises, all pertaining to this certain people that see the sun.

I believe "Them that see the sun," are his people, chosen in Christ Jesus from the foundation of the world, and that the sun in this instance is God. "For the Lord God is a sun and a shield." (Psalm 84:11) He chose them as heirs of promise and set their hope and faith before them, as the path they must walk, on which they will continue until they come into full possession of the profit of their inheritance, within the veil.

These are thoughts, poorly presented, on a deep and wonderful subject. I hope that I have not been allowed to do violence to its meaning, and would love to hear some gifted, inspired brother proclaim its deeper meaning.

Mrs. Cisco Barron
Spearsville, La.

Rt. 4, Box 14,
Roxboro, N. C.

Dear Editors:

Enclosed is a money order for the good Baptist paper, the *Signs*, which I have been reading for the past two years. I think it is a wonderful paper; and I feel that I know you, though we have never met, but hope we may, if it be God's will.

I was reared near Chatham, Virginia, on a farm with my Uncle and Aunt, Mr. and Mrs. Tom Stowe, after my mother and father died. I feel that you knew my uncle, Elder Charlie Evans, who was my father's brother. I used to go with them to church a lot when I was growing up, and would look at the members as they were singing and shaking hands, often with tears running down their faces, and wished I could be as good as they were. I don't feel that I deserve a home with them, but

could not be satisfied anywhere else, and have been a member four years at Flat River Church. My husband passed away four years ago, and I wonder a lot why God is keeping me here; but I know that I shall not go before my appointed time. I know that I don't merit even one little blessing, but God has been so good to me. I have a hope of that bright home where there is no sorrow or tears.

May the Lord bless you to continue on to his glory, and the comfort of the elect according to his grace.

In love and hope,
Mrs. Charlie Allen

Box 427,
Winfield, Alabama

Dear Editors:

Enclosed is a check for \$16.00 — three for my renewal and three for renewal of J. L. Lucas, and the remainder to use to help send the *Signs* to those that can't pay for the paper. I feel that there are many who would enjoy reading the paper if they had the opportunity. I enjoy reading it so much I wish everyone that believes in salvation by grace, and the love of God that does all things well, could read it too.

In hope of eternal life,
Mrs. M. L. Lucas

HAS GOOD ACQUAINTANCE
WITH THE *SIGNS*

210 Fernwood Place,
Wilmington 2, Delaware 9802

Signs of The Times:

Enclosed you will find check in the sum of \$3.00 for renewal of my subscription to the *Signs of the Times* for another year.

May I inform you I have known the *Signs* when my grandfather was a subscriber and it was published in newspaper form. I have a few copies yet of that era. But few publications have survived the changes of the passing years,

as has the *Signs*. I was 87 the 5th of last June, and I feel I have a good acquaintance with the *Signs* and its doctrine concerning the gospel of Jesus Christ and his Apostles.

While its editors since its beginning have been men, I do feel they have been led and prompted by the Holy Spirit to write and publish only such things as would honor and glorify His name among the churches of the elect. May the Holy Ghost continue to so lead and inspire both editors and writers that the columns of the *Signs* continue to stand firm upon the Rock, Christ Jesus, in truth and practice, is my prayer. Amen

Most humbly yours,
(Elder) C. E. Benson

"HE SPEAKS AND IT IS DONE"

Rt. 1,
Maineville, Ohio

Dear Brethren in Christ:

It causes me to tremble to use the word brethren to such a precious people, for I feel so unworthy; and you people look so good to me.

I am the only one of my father's family that has his name recorded among you good people. My membership is at Union Primitive Baptist Church at Sharp's Chapel, Tenn. I joined the church and was baptized the second Sunday in September, 1954. I don't see how they could receive and live with a sinner like me. I know they don't need me, but I don't feel that I could live without them.

I was born in Bell County, Ky., and was a coal miner here in Ohio from 1925 to 1951. I don't get to be with the church very often, not more than two or three times a year, but if it is the Lord's will I am moving to Tennessee where I can spend my last days with the people who are preaching a sovereign God. People preach around here that God wants to save Adam's family, and that they are helping Him all they can; and that He looks to them for

help.

The God I believe in made and created all things by himself, and for himself; and by him all things consist. This God does not try to do anything: he just speaks and it is done. He hung this earth upon nothing; he doesn't need poor puny man's help. When there was not anything here but dark emptiness of space, all things that have ever been, or ever will be, was present with him in wisdom; and he declared from ancient times things not yet done, saying, my counsel shall stand and I will do all my pleasure.

I believe that Christ stood then in the eternal arrangement of the salvation of God's people, as if he had been slain. I believe that he came into this world on a mission, and that mission was to save his people. He came from heaven to seek and to save that which was lost. I believe he bore all the sins of all his people in his body, putting them away by the sacrifice of himself. If he came to save that which was lost, he either did, or didn't. I say he did. When he said "It is finished", I believe the whole debt was paid.

Brethren you will find \$3.00 enclosed for a year's subscription to the *Signs*. Later I want to help get the paper to others. Brother John Wilder gave me a copy of the *Signs of the Times* when I was at Sharp's Chapel, Tennessee last Sunday at church. I want to start getting my copies as soon as I can. If you think what I have written is according to the doctrine of God, you may print this in the *Signs*.

Your unworthy writer,
Garrett Wilson

"ENJOYS THE SIGNS SO MUCH"

Rt. 2,
Christiansburg, Va.

Dear Brother Spangler:

Since I am now living with my daughter, Kathleen Martin, and we are get-

ting two papers, please discontinue her's when her subscription expires, and continue mine.

We enjoy the *Signs* so much. Elder Curry's article in the last issue was one of the best I ever read. How well I remember hearing you preach at Payne's Creek last year. I was so comforted that when I laid down that night, I had no fear of dying — I felt that if I died that night it would be all right. I have always feared the sting of death.

John says that we know we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren. I feel I have that assurance. With much love, I am

Yours in hope,
Wm. Graham

PLEASE NOTE

Will all who have notices of associations or other special meetings which they desire published, please send them to us as early as possible, so that we may have them in the proper issue. We require at least five weeks to properly handle them. They should be mailed to P. O. Box 186, Manassas, Virginia, to save time and additional handling.

Also, we need more information on some of the churches which are included under CHURCH NOTICES, which are published each January. The Clerks or Pastors should give us this information if they want their notices continued. — J. D. W.

STAUNTON RIVER ASSOCIATION

The Staunton River Primitive Baptist Association will convene, the Lord willing, with Strawberry Church July 9, 10, and 11, 1965. Services to begin at 11:00 A. M. daylight saving time.

Those coming from the North, East or South should enter Danville, Virginia, on U. S. 29, proceed to Highway 41, and follow this highway to Highway 750 at Brown's Store. The meeting house is located about one mile on the right from Brown's Store. Those coming from the West should take Highway 41 at Callands, Va., and continue to Highway 750.

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

Burnell B. Williams, Assn. Clerk

BLACK CREEK UNION

The next session of the **Black Creek Union** will be held with the church at Sandy Grove, Nash County, N. C., the fifth Saturday and Sunday in May, 1965.

The meeting house is located on highway 97, about two miles west of Stanhope, N. C. All having a mind to attend are cordially invited.

Eli T. Smith, Sr., Clerk

CONTENTNEA UNION

The next session of the **Contentnea Union** is to be held, the Lord willing, with Otter's Creek Church, Edgecombe County, N. C.

All who love the truth are invited to meet with us.

W. W. Stallings, Jr., Clerk
Rt. 3, Tarboro, N. C.

Danville, Virginia June, 1965

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BUSINESS OFFICE

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

Elder David V. Spangler

R. F. D. 1, Box 539, Beechwood Lane
Danville, Virginia

Elder John D. Wood

P. O. Box 186, Manassas, Va.

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Elder W. D. Griffin

39 Welsh Tract Road, Newark, Delaware

Elder E. J. Lambert

306 Richardson St., Winnsboro, Texas

Elder George Ruston

Dutton, Ontario, Canada

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EDITORIAL

"THE LORD'S SUPPER."

(Matthew 26:26-29; Mark 14:22-25; Luke 22:17-20; I Corinthians 11:23-29)

We have been requested to write for publication upon the subject of "The Lord's Supper" and its observance by the Church of God IN REMEMBRANCE. "For as often as ye eat this bread and drink this cup ye do show the Lord's death till he come." The passover which the disciples had observed that night, had been a feast observed by the children of Israel ever since their departure from Egypt, (read Exodus 1). Our Lord, yet to be slain, partook of the passover lamb, for he was under the law, yet we are told in Revelation 13:8 that our Lord was the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, for God saw such perfection in his Son that it was as if all of Christ's works were finished from the foundation of the world. (Hebrews 4:3) Israel partook of the passover before their deliverance, the disciples partook of the Lord's supper before our Lord suffered death on the cross. Being surety for his people he must meet every requirement of the law; in his life he, like the lamb, was free from any blemish or spot. The only bread in the house at that time was unleavened bread; and from what is this bread made? Wheat, bruised or crushed, mixed with holy oil, the wheat representing the Word of God, and the holy oil the Holy Spirit's evidence, testifying beforehand the suf-

ferings and the glory that should follow. Unleavened bread used before Christ suffered was a type of the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

Our Lord was crucified, and before he expired he cried with a loud voice (the voice of a victor) and yielded up the ghost. On the third appointed day he arose from the dead, and for forty days he instructed his disciples in the things pertaining to the Kingdom of God. (Acts 1:3) At his command they tarried in Jerusalem for ten days. "Until ye be endued with power from on high." (Luke 24:49) We believe that the Church was established on the day of Pentecost when the Holy Spirit descended upon them as a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. Our Lord had, in the Gospel of Matthew, mentioned the church twice. In Matthew 16:18 he told Peter that on the Rock of his Divinity he would build his church and the gates of hell should not prevail against it. Again, in speaking on the order of his house, the church, which is the pillar and ground of the truth, he gives the disciples directions to be taken when a brother trespasses against a brother, in which he gives two steps to be taken first, and the third step, if the brother will not hear them, is to tell it to the church. (Matthew 18:15-17) Here then we believe that the descent of the Holy Ghost, when the day of Pentecost was fully come, is, as we have said before, the beginning of the Gospel Church. Christ, the firstfruits of God's harvest, had finished the work God had given him to do and had ascended into heaven with that body that arose from the dead and there he is enthroned in glory, EXPECTING, that is, WAITING FOR, all his enemies to be made his footstool.

We have said that during the time of the Passover there was no leaven in the house, but at Pentecost there were two loaves made of the firstfruits of the harvest. "Ye shall bring out of your habitations two wave-loaves of two

tenth deals: they shall be of fine flour; they shall be baked with leaven; (a type of sin) they are the firstfruits unto the Lord." (Leviticus 23:17) Here we see TWO loaves, why? Were there not Gentiles as well as Jews who had been healed by our Lord in his earthly ministry? "He maketh his angels spirits; and his ministers a flaming fire." (Psalm 104:4) Here we see those gathered in an upper room, "And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them, and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance. The tongues were cloven to show that henceforth the ministry was to be to both Jew and Gentile. This was the beginning of the harvest as Acts 2 shows. There is another instance we would mention to confirm the correct use of leaven in bread used by the Gospel Church. It was not easy for believing Jews to give up the practices received from their forefathers, especially circumcision, as we see in Galatians 2:11, where Paul withstood Peter to his face, because he was to be blamed. There is no doubt in our mind that from the descent of the Holy Ghost at Pentecost the church, Jew and Gentile, gave up the types and shadows of the legal dispensation, and that during the gospel dispensation, leaven has been used, because sin is still in the body.

The early church, both Jew and Gentile, found much opposition from unbelieving Jews, and when their pass-over came around again, their hatred was inflamed so much that Herod slew James, "And because he saw it pleased the Jews, he proceeded further to take Peter also. (Then were the days of unleavened bread)" This implies that the Jews were further enraged because the followers of Christ were indifferent to the practices of the unbelieving Jews. Here we would say that nowhere do we see the apostles telling brethren to use unleavened bread at their communion, because they knew that while this

harvest lasts, that is, the gathering in of the Lord's people in the gospel dispensation, leaven would be in the bread because sin is in the body. The Jewish unbelievers looked upon the Gentiles as dogs, and none knew better than Gentile believers that they were aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, but Christ brought those who were far off nigh by his precious blood. Paul saith, "For He is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace, etc." (Ephesians 2:12-22)

In the peace offering, Leviticus 7:13, there had to be an offering of LEAVENED bread, this is because, though Christ is our Peace, yet he who would give thanks has sin in him still. In the hymn, "Great God! from thee there's naught concealed," the third and fourth verses a poor sinner can sing: —

"But since my Saviour stands between,
In garments dyed in blood;
'Tis he, instead of me, is seen,
When I approach to God.

"Thus, though a sinner, I am safe,
He pleads, before the throne,
His LIFE and DEATH in my behalf,
And calls my sins his own."

When his blood has, by the Holy Spirit, been sprinkled, there comes a willing service, to those especially who are of the household of God. The apostle mentions this in Philippians 4:18, that the things willingly sent to him by the Philippians were "an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, well-pleasing to God," also in Hebrews 13:15-16. "By him therefore let us offer the sacrifice of praise to God continually, that is, the fruit of our lips giving thanks to his name. But to do good and to communicate forget not: for with such sacrifices God is well pleased." Our Lord was without sin, neither was guile found in his mouth, but we have all sinned and come short of the glory of God.

Our Lord said in Matthew 13:33, "The kingdom of heaven is like unto leaven, which a woman took, and hid in three measures of meal, till the whole was leavened." Our first parent Eve put sin into the the three dispensations, Patriarchal, Legal and Gospel, till the whole was leavened. Death, which is the wages of sin, will be here until our Lord comes the SECOND time without sin unto salvation. Then the saying of Isaiah, "He will swallow up death in victory." (Isaiah 25:8) And of Paul, "Death is swallowed up in victory." (I Corinthians 15:54), will become a fact, then indeed, DEATH WILL BE SWALLOWED UP IN VICTORY.

Leaven, a type of sin, puffs up, unless grace prevent. In I Corinthians 5, Paul shows the church puffed up and not ashamed of the evil doing of a disorderly member. In 2 Corinthians 7:9-10, his reproof had taken effect, for he said to them, "Now I rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye sorrowed to repentance: for ye were made sorry after a godly manner, that ye might receive damage by us in nothing. For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of." Peter said, "Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins." True Israelites are those who have been quickened to a consciousness of their sinnership before a just and holy God, who were slaves to sin and Satan. To such Paul could say, "You hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins." Such have heard the voice of the Son of God and live. (John 5:25) They know how sinful and vile they feel to be, such walk not after the flesh but learn to mortify the deeds of the body, and their quickened souls, led by God's Spirit, find that this world is not their home. They are brought down so low that they fellowship their Lord, who, in his humiliation, said, "I am a worm, and no man: a reproach of men, and despised of the people."

How often has the writer, we hope through the Spirit, cried

"A guilty, weak, and helpless worm,
On thy kind arms I fall;
Be thou my strength and righteousness,
My Jesus and my all."

Only Jesus can cleanse away their guilt and give them a good conscience toward God. In such, while they have a body of flesh which is dead because of sin, yet, through grace, they are not puffed up, but the reverse, and they are brought into the fellowship of God and see Christ as their all, and there is much sweetness in being brought down to loathe their own life, for in that, they live the life of Christ in this mortal flesh. We believe that there is an appointed time when God says, "Let my people go," and he, who is the Head of his household, shows them how he delivered up his well-beloved Son, the Lamb of God, for them all, that he sprinkles their consciences and spreads their table, PREPARED FOR THEM, with Christ their passover, slain for them, and his precious Word, which is food to their souls, this is truly the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. How wonderful that worms have learned to lisp his name. "Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord of Hosts." All such subjects of grace learn that the word of their Lord is a LIVING WORD, that heaven and earth will pass away, but his word will remain. While still in this life, his word will spring up in them, often checking them, sometimes encouraging them so that they can smile at Satan's rage and face a frowning world. Such belong to another world, and when Jesus' living word comes to them, "Follow me," they will desire, being dead to this world, to be buried in the watery grave and be raised to live with his dear people as one body, yes, the body of Christ, for he is the head over the body the church.

We once heard one of God's servants say, "I don't want to bury a live person," and we believe that all of

God's sent servants, in their right mind, will agree. One of our hymns says, "A sinner is a sacred thing, the Holy Ghost has made him so." The Holy Ghost applies the word and that word washes their feet and they are clean as Jesus said to his disciples, "Ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you." (John 15:3) Paul tells his brethren, "Christ also loved the church and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word." (Ephesians 5:25-26) Here let us say that God's word, by his Holy Spirit in a believer, turns that person from dumb idols, and from man's word in changing God's ordinances, such as sprinkling (a Pagan practice brought into professing Christian bodies by Rome) in place of God-established baptism, and many other doings contrary to Christ's teachings. These are all to be rebuked by God-sent servants, as Paul rebuked the Corinthian Church in I Corinthians 5. All such works of men are leavened out by God's grace being brought home to individuals who have before been led captive by the devil at his will. The devil has been a liar from the beginning and no lie is of the truth. It is this which Paul means when he says, "Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us: Therefore let us keep the feast." What feast? not the Lord's supper but the passover, seeing Christ sacrificed for us, and as we do eat, not the doctrines of men or with what I have done to help the Lord, that would be the leaven of the self-righteous, and all that must be purged out of every one that eats of that feast, yes, neither sinful self nor righteous self can eat of the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.

In speaking of the Lord's supper we are considering the memorial of our Lord's death, until he come. Those who are commanded "This do in remembrance of me" have been like the wheat,

crushed through tribulation and affliction to fine flour. They have been tossed about in the devil's sieve to sift out such chaff as we have already mentioned and we are assured by God himself that not the least grain shall fall to the ground. Crushed to the very dust they find great comfort at times that they have been brought down to where Christ was in the flesh, and, like Paul, they can say, "O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Such glorify God as Paul did when he said, "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord." Elder Durand said once in our hearing, "When we break the bread, if there were one grain of wheat in the loaf not crushed, it would not belong there, it would fall out." Be thankful, my dear brethren, that you feel unworthy, it causes you to esteem others better than yourselves.

Our Lord Jesus is still the High Priest of our profession. He who girded himself with the towel of covenant love, and who still retains the bason of the gospel, filled with the water of eternal truth in his own hands, will be true to his promise, "From all your filthiness, and from all your idols will I cleanse you." Ezekiel 36:25. You who have been brought to his footstool and to the feet of each other will need this washing as well as those whom our Beloved cleanses from their wrong-doing, who have in the past gone out from you through their flesh puffing them up. God's grace and mercy bring us as one body drinking from the one cup. We have shown that it is his work alone to bring us into this fellowship and keep us there. The leaven of sin in us will still be there even if we should leave out leaven in the loaf we make. We have shown that leaven was to be in the bread during the harvest gathering, then why walk in a vain show, seeing that we are still sinners? "But where sin abounded, grace did much more abound: that as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus

Christ our Lord." Romans 5:20-21.

G. R.

VOICES OF THE PAST
"He being dead yet speaketh"

Cambridgeport, Mass., Feb. 20, 1858.

PARABLE OF THE RICH MAN
AND LAZARUS.

(Luke 16:19-31)

Our Savior, in the first eighteen verses of this chapter, has been pointing out the distinction between the two dispensations. At the 16th verse he declares that the legal or Mosaic dispensation ended, and the gospel commenced in the days of John. At the 19th verse he begins a parable to illustrate his previous instructions, and to point out the relative position of the Jew and Gentile under the gospel dispensation. By many this portion is held to be historical, rather than a parable; hence they base upon it many assumptions respecting a future state. Such a view not only destroys the obvious connection with the context, but furnishes an anomaly in the scripture teachings, which are uniformly and designedly silent respecting the state of the dead.

The terms rich and poor are almost invariably used in scripture to denote character. Here the rich man seems evidently designed to bring to view the Jewish nation or those who are under the legal dispensation. These claimed all the blessings of the Abrahamic covenant, and excluded the Gentiles. Such, moreover, is the temper of all the legalists, who justify themselves and despise others. Of the Savior it had been said "this man receiveth sinners and eateth with them;" and he had declared, "Blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." The poor man seems to bring to view those who were not Jews by nature, and who consequently were excluded from the blessings of the Abrahamic covenant, and it may be also a gracious soul —

one who is a beggar. Such is the relative position of these characters — the legalist rejoicing in his abundance, and the beggar desiring to be fed with the crumbs which fell from his table, as in the case of the Samaritan woman. See also the experience of David recorded in the 73d Psalm. But in the time of John, there came a change of circumstances. Let us consider it more particularly.

The beggar and the rich man both died. The one was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom; the other was *buried*, and in Hades, or in his grave, as the word signifies, he was in torment, and saw Abraham afar off, and Lazarus in his bosom. That this describes the end of the legal dispensation, seems most evident. The close of that dispensation was the grave of Judaism. It is said that when Moses died on the mount, the Lord buried him, and no man knoweth of his sepulchre unto this day. The Jew is in his political and national grave — the types, ceremonies and pompous rituals of his worship have ceased, never more to be revived.

This change of dispensation affects equally the Jew and the Gentile — the legalist and the gracious soul. The poor man is carried by angels into Abraham's bosom. By what singular straining of metaphor, this is made to represent Heaven as a paradise, it is difficult to understand. Our Savior had said they should come from the East and the West, and should sit down with Abraham in the kingdom of God, and he had further declared, "there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth when ye shall see Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and all the prophets in the kingdom of God, and you yourselves thrust out." — Luke xiii. 28. That this has reference to the enjoyment of gospel blessings by the Gentiles, is clearly evident. The despised beggar becomes a sharer in the promise made to Abraham; the exclusive privilege of the Jew exists no longer. The very existence of both

Jew and Gentile as such has terminated, for under the gospel dispensation there is neither Jew nor Greek, and circumcision or uncircumcision availeth nothing; all that are of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham. The Gentile, therefore, as such, no longer exists, nor yet the Jew; while the one is, through grace, admitted to share in all rich new covenant blessings, and the other is buried without hope of relief or resurrection.

Perhaps it may not be out of place here to allude to the experience of Peter when he was sent for by Cornelius, and the manner in which he was taught that the Gentiles had been made partakers of the blessings of the gospel. The history of the attempt made to bring the Gentile converts under the Jewish yoke in the early period of the church, is too well known to need recital. The spirit of Judaism, though the system is in its grave, still remains, and more than one child of grace has had experience of its proselyting and ensnaring power.

We now come to a most remarkable part of this parable — the conversation between Abraham and Dives — especially remarkable according to the hypothesis of those who hold that the narrative is designed to teach us anything respecting the future state. To imagine such proximity of place between the abode of the blessed and the damned as this hypothesis presupposes, and upon which is based the whole system of means and appeals to the ungodly to flee from the wrath to come, is monstrous indeed. Nor does the idea of an intermediate state, or spirit land, relieve the subject of its difficulties. Nor have we on such hypothesis, any means of determining the true nature of the instruction here conveyed. But by supposing that the spirit of Judaism, or legality, is here endeavoring to infuse itself into the gospel system or upon gospel characters, we have a key for unlocking the whole. The legalist, finding himself deprived of the

exclusive benefits he had before claimed, now seeks aid from the gospel. All he wants is a little help. He is reminded of two things: first — he has had his good things. "He that doeth these things even he shall live by them." Second — there is a great gulf between him and the aid he seeks.

A question may arise whether a legalist ever comes to a state where he finds his resources fail him, and he reduced to that state of torment here expressed. It may be answered that the parable is designed to teach the fact that the legalist has no longer any hope from the law. Even Abraham, whom he was so proud to claim as his father, declares that his day has passed. Under the first covenant, natural blessings were promised and enjoyed; but whatever they might have been they have passed away, for that dispensation has come to an end.

But if it were not so — if there were still any hope from the provisions of the law — the gospel can do the legalist no good. There is a great gulf between law and grace, over which those on one side or the other cannot pass. You cannot take a sinner out from under the law, and place him under the gospel; nor can you bring a gracious soul under legal requirements. The attempt to introduce conditions into the gospel, or to amalgamate the two systems, is equally destructive of both, and utterly futile for the relief of the soul. The idea that if the sinner does all he can, Christ will do what he cannot do, is annihilated by the teachings of this parable.

The believers in an indefinite atonement and conditions of salvation, are welcome to all the comfort they can draw from the parable. Dives was evidently a believer in "missionism," and true to the promptings of his legal nature, and the spirit of his system, he asks that Lazarus may be sent to his brethren at his father's house. Whether any particular meaning is to be attached to the number five as indicating

ten tribes of Israel, since by the supposition one is made to represent two tribes, the house of Judah and Benjamin, is perhaps immaterial to our present examination. It may give some strength to the idea that these six brethren were designed to represent nominal Israel, or all who are under the covenant of works. The spirit of his request is that the gospel may be preached, and its blessings presented to those under the law. Abraham refers him to the law and the prophets. "What things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law." Besides, these pointed to, and had their fulfilment in Christ. — John v. 46.

But the legalist questions the efficacy of these means, and would have something more powerful used. Let but one go to them with the gospel they will repent. Whether some reference is not had in the words "from the dead," to the resurrection of Christ, or to the children of God who have part in his resurrection, would be, perhaps, an interesting enquiry. It is a favorite idea with the legalist that some extraordinary means resorted to, would be sufficient to arouse the sinner and lead him to repentance. At any rate, that the preaching of the gospel, the presentation of offers of mercy, and earnest appeals to the unregenerate, are the means of grace, and God's appointed instrumentalities for the conversion of sinners. The answer of Abraham teaches another lesson. "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded though one rose from the dead."

There are two or three lessons taught by this parable which are worthy of most attentive consideration. The difference between law and gospel is evidently pointed out, as well as the relative condition of those who are subjects of one or the other. Many contend that at the close of the legal dispensation, the entire race came under the gospel, as it was supposed to have been previously under the law; and that now,

although salvation is not attainable by the deeds of the law, yet it is attainable by and possible to all by faith in Christ. Then would the parable have shown us that Dives as well as Lazarus, was received into the bosom of Abraham. Instead of this the law still holds its subject, demands full satisfaction, and condemns the least violation. Therefore is he condemned already, and the wrath of God abides upon him. In this sense the legalist may be said to be in his grave. Dead in trespasses and sins, no offer or hope of life presented. Christ, however, has redeemed his chosen ones; they are delivered from the dominion and curse of the law; by virtue of the part they have in the resurrection of Christ, they are raised with him, an entrance is ministered to them abundantly into the everlasting kingdom, and their life is hid with Christ in God.

To cross the gulf thus formed between the two systems, is impossible. No power can divorce the sinner from the law; nor can a gracious soul be separated from Christ, his Head. That system which recognizes terms or conditions of salvation, to be performed by the sinner, is but an ineffectual attempt to cross the gulf. The mere enunciation of this gospel can never benefit one who is in his legal grave. Indeed, the gospel is a source of discouragement and torment to a legal soul, as it annihilates his hopes and destroys his life; as in like manner, legality is opposed to the hopes and comforts of a gracious one. 2 Cor. ii. 16. The one is the law of the spirit in Christ Jesus, the other is the law of sin and death.

But it would not be well to dismiss the parable without alluding to the idea that we are here taught something respecting a future state. Some suppose it brings to view an intermediate state between death and the resurrection; others, the final, fixed condition of the righteous and the wicked. But whatever are the views thus held, all who believe in the means system, insist

that it teaches the conscious state of the dead, and thereupon base those earnest appeals which are supposed to be so effectual for the conversion of sinners. On the supposition that the parable refers to a future state, the rich man appears to have been a believer in spiritualism as well as conditions of salvation. The similarity of his language to that of many now, is singularly significant. "Nay, father Abraham, but if one went unto them from the dead they would repent." Little wonder is it that spiritualism secures so many converts, when what are denominated evangelical pulpits so continually resound with Tetzal-like appeals respecting the sufferings of the damned or the enjoyments of the blessed — appeals of which spiritualism is but the inevitable result.

Brother Beebe, thus imperfectly have I sketched some of my views touching the leading points of this much used, and as it appears to me, much abused parable. I send them to you with the sincere desire that, should you make use of them, they may be of some service to the members of our Father's family.

Yours for the truth,
Leonard Cox, Jr.

(The above is taken from the *Signs* of March 15, 1858. — J. D. W.)

OBITUARIES

MRS. NORA ELIZABETH COX

Mrs. Nora Elizabeth Cox was born January 2, 1881, and passed away November 2, 1964, making her stay on earth 83 years and ten months. In 1896 she was united in marriage to James Manuel Cox, and to this union six children were born, three of which preceded her in death; surviving besides her husband are James Edward Cox, Mrs. Lula Mai Flanagan and Mrs. Ruby Lee Wells, all of Memphis, Tenn.

Our dear sister Cox (as we all called her, though she never united with the church) was loved by all, for she bore the fruits of a heaven-born soul. She loved to be with the brethren and to go to church, and to have them come to her home. She was always ready to go far and near to the meetings: she and Brother

Cox traveled in many different states when they were able to go. The Lord blessed them with a long life together — about 68 years.

In her early days she joined a church, but her heart was with the Primitive Baptists for many years, and she will be greatly missed by them in many churches which she attended when she could. May God in his tender mercy and loving kindness be with Brother Cox in his lonely hours and days to come; and with the children who were so faithful. She was in the hospital about three weeks before she died, and some of the children were by her bedside continually until she quietly passed away.

It is such a blessing to be called from this world of suffering, for Jesus will bring them forth by the word of his power and they shall be fashioned like unto His glorified body, and be with Him forever. Those that remain at his coming shall not prevent them that sleep, but shall be changed in a moment and be caught up to meet Him in the air. How good, glorious, and marvelous it is to have this to look forward to. May we all be kept by God's grace ready to be revealed in the last time. Written by request.

Carrie Campbell
Lucille Young

MARY A. (YARD) ATCHLEY

Mary A. (Yard) Atchley, daughter of the late Anna Mary (Tyndall) and George R. Yard, fell asleep in Jesus September 2, 1964, at her residence in Pennington, New Jersey, at the age of 77 years. She was born December 19, 1887. She was united in marriage to Walter B. Atchley September 29, 1907, and to this union were born two sons, Kenneth Y. and George T. Atchley, who survive her.

Her mother, as well as others in the family were members of the Old School Baptist Church at Hopewell, New Jersey. While she never asked for a home in the church, the things of God and of revealed religion were solemn realities to her. She was grounded in the faith of God's word, and believed in bringing all things to the test of the WORD.

We, her cousins, Brother Charles and Sister Mary Hellings, always found her ready and waiting when we stopped by on our way to meeting.

On December 24, 1864, her grandfather, William C. Tyndall, was chosen one of the deacons of the Hopewell Church, and one hundred years later on July 5, 1964, her cousin, Charles, was chosen deacon of the same church.

She was a devoted and faithful friend, and was endeared to many, not only in Hopewell

Church, but other Old School Baptist Churches where she visited. A good and gracious friend has departed, and left an empty place in our midst.

Her funeral service was largely attended, and conducted by Elder Arthur R. Warren, Pastor of the Hopewell Church, with very comforting words to family and friends alike. Interment was in the Harbourton Cemetery burial plot beside her husband.

The God of hope and peace was her comfort and her strength. May His blessings rest as sweetly upon her two sons and their families.

Written by request of the church.

Sister Mary L. Hellings

EMORY A. UPDIKE

Emory A. Updike was born in the vicinity of Hopewell December 25, 1873; and passed away August 21, 1963. The last sixteen years of his life he lived with a nephew and his family, and was with them in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, when he passed away.

Early in life he learned the electrician's trade and worked at it many years. After his retirement, he became custodian of the Old School Baptist Church in Hopewell, N. J., where he had always attended. He was very faithful in his attendance at the meetings, and would often take a car full of the church people with him to associations around the country.

His best and staunchest friends were those of the Hopewell Church. He would often bring his lunch and spend the day in the Meeting House and Cemetery; and he is now buried in the cemetery he cared for so much. His funeral was conducted at the Cromwell Memorial Home in Hopewell by Elder Arthur R. Warren, pastor of the Hopewell Old School Baptist Church.

Letha A. Blackwell

MRS. FRANCINA B. HILL

Mrs. Francina B. Hill passed away at her home in Hopewell, N. J. after an illness of ten days, at the age of 99 years and five months. She was the widow of the late Joseph B. Hill, and a lifelong resident of Hopewell. Her father, David L. Blackwell, was a member of the Old School Baptist Church at Hopewell from 1875 until his death in 1936.

Surviving Mrs. Hill are her four sons: Dr. David B. Hill, Alladena, California; Hervey S. Hill, Knotts Island, N. C.; Wm. H. Hill, Trenton, N. J.; and Edward U. Hill, Hope-

well, N. J. One daughter, Mrs. Helen B. Wells, died in 1942.

Mrs. Hill was much interested in the Hopewell Museum, but her main interest was her family and friends, and always the Old School Baptist Church.

Her funeral was conducted March 15, 1963, by Elder John D. Wood, and interment was in the Hopewell Old School Baptist Cemetery.

Letha A. Blackwell

ANNIE (JONES) McLAWHORN

On May 4, 1964, death again visited our church and claimed our dear sister, Annie (Jones) McLawhorn, who had been a member of our body since August, 1928. Death came after only a few hours of illness.

Sister Annie was a gentle, lovable, hard-working woman, whose life was taken up with the care and welfare of others from the time she was a very young girl, until the day she died. She was a wonderful person who suffered many heartaches, but was always able to meet one with a lovely smile and a cheerful countenance. She was devoted to her family — their friend indeed; and she was an asset to her community. She will be greatly missed, but we trust that our loss is her eternal gain. We bow in humble submission to our God who doeth all things after the counsel of his own will. May he comfort and sustain the bereaved family.

Done by order of Hancocks Church while in conference November 17, 1964.

Elder A. P. Mewborn, Moderator
Nina B. McLawhorn, Clerk

IN MEMORY OF
ELDER J. HARVEY SMITH

WHEREAS, It pleased our Heavenly Father in His divine wisdom to remove from us by death our beloved pastor, Elder J. Harvey Smith, on January 24, 1965, who had served us so faithfully since September 7, 1958, and

WHEREAS, We of the J. H. Gooch Memorial Primitive Baptist Church at Stem, North Carolina, bow in humble submission to a just God, knowing he makes no mistakes and doeth all things well.

Our hearts are saddened much by the loss of our pastor. He rejoiced in his hope and was patient in his tribulations. Truly his life was an inspiration to all who knew him. We feel he fought a good fight, finished his course, and kept the faith.

He leaves to mourn his departure his devoted and faithful wife, who has shared his joys and sorrows. Also surviving are three

sons, two daughters, seven grandchildren, three brothers, one sister, and a host of brethren and friends.

His funeral was conducted at Bush Arbor Church, January 26, 1965, by his pastor, Elder Curry King. His body was laid to rest in the church cemetery under a beautiful mound of flowers to await the coming of our Lord. Therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, First, that we extend our love and heartfelt sympathy to the bereaved family. And,

Second, that a copy of this memorial be inscribed on our church record, a copy given to the bereaved family, and a copy sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

This resolution adopted by the J. H. Gooch Memorial Church, assembled this thirteenth day of February, 1965.

Written by

Annie C. Gregory, Assistant Clerk

NANNIE GAMMON RICHMOND

God in His infinite wisdom saw fit to remove from our midst another one of our beloved members, Sister Nannie Gammon Richmond, who after two years of declining health passed away in a Burlington hospital June 5, 1964, at the age of 80. She was a native of Rockingham County, N. C., but had made her home with one of her daughters at Graham, N. C. several years prior to her death.

She was married to George Lee Richmond December 28, 1902, who preceded her in death several years. To this union were born six children, all of whom survive, Mrs. Gladys Nize of Chapel Hill, Mrs. Gertrude Adams of Graham, Mrs. Clara Fletcher of Danville, Va., Mrs. Kate McKee and Mrs. Ola Rockley of Burlington; one son George Lee Richmond, of Danville, Va. Also surviving are two sisters, Mrs. Mamie Martin of Ruffin and Mrs. Gillie Stone of High Point; one brother Shepherd Gammon; sixteen grandchildren and twenty-four great grandchildren.

Sister Richmond united with Dan River Church soon after her marriage and was a faithful member and a firm believer in salvation by grace. She attended her meetings as long as her health would permit. She was a devoted companion, a loving mother and a meek and humble sister in Christ. We have lost a precious sister but feel that our loss is her eternal gain.

Funeral services were conducted at Dan River Church by her pastor, Elder D. V. Spangler, and her body was laid to rest in the church cemetery to await the final resurrection.

Done by order of Dan River Church while

in conference.

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

Submitted in love.

Mrs. J. M. Davis
Mrs. G. F. Pruitt

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

We, the members of Tarboro Primitive Baptist Church, bow in submission to the will of our God, in taking by death our Dear Sister, Sister Anna Pierce Braziel.

Sister Braziel was born August 7, 1874 and died February 24, 1965. Making her stay on earth 90 years.

For many years, she was blessed to be a member of our church. She was faithful in attending, as long as she was able to go. For sometime before she passed away, she was unable to attend church, but she was always glad to have her pastor and brethren visit her. We trust that she is now resting in peace with her Master and Saviour.

THEREFORE, WE RESOLVE: First, that our loss is her eternal gain and we send our deepest sympathy to her family.

Second, that three copies of the Respect be made: One for the Church record, one to be sent to the family, and one to be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

This done in order of Conference at our March meeting.

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

ROSA JAMISON BURGESS

We, the Primitive Baptist Church at Camp Branch, Franklin County, Virginia, mourn the passing of our dearly beloved Rosa Jamison Burgess. She was the daughter of Joseph William and Octavia Josephene Hall Jamison, and was born July 3, 1885, in Franklin County, Virginia. She was married to Elder John E. Burgess October 11, 1930, who died April 15, 1963; and she died September 11, 1964, just two months after her beloved sister Miss Curtiss Jamison's passing.

Rosa was a patient in the Jefferson Hospital in Roanoke for several months, where she bore her sufferings well, never complaining. She did not have her name on our church book, but to us at Camp Branch she was one of us. She was faithful to attend, and was always willing to help in any way possible. We have missed her terribly for we love her dearly; and she is missed greatly by her many friends in the community and elsewhere.

She is survived by three sisters, Miss Irby Jamison, Mrs. Lola Philpott, and Mrs. Jennie Sigmon, of Roanoke; one brother, Cary T. Jamison, Calloway, Va.; one step-daughter, Mrs. Nina Koogler, Martinsville, Va.; and two aunts, (one aunt, Mrs. E. W. Brown, passed away December 13, 1964) Mrs. C. A. Hauley, of Texas, and Mrs. J. B. Flora, of Iowa.

Rosa's request was that Elder R. R. Brown and Elder O. K. Tench should preach her funeral, but Elder Tench could not come, so Elder J. O. Conner took part. It was held at her old home church, Little Creek, and her body was laid to rest in the family cemetery at Calloway beneath a mound of beautiful flowers.

We feel that our loss is her eternal gain through Christ our Lord, and that she is awaiting His second coming, when the ransomed shall be with Him in their eternal home.

Done by order of the church at Camp Branch while in session.

Elder R. R. Brown, Moderator
Nancy Haynes, Clerk

SISTER PATTIE HARRIS

We, the church at Lower Town Creek, desire to write a few lines in regards to our dear sister, Pattie Harris.

She was born May 8, 1877, and departed this life April 8, 1964. She was the wife of Brother J. E. Harris, whom the Lord called to his rest June 22, 1954. She united with the church in July, 1926, and was baptized by Elder A. M. Crisp; and was a faithful member, always attending when her health permitted. Sister Harris was confined to her daughter's home in her last days, and was blessed to have her devoted daughter, sons and inlaws to care for her.

Not only was Sister Harris blessed with a wonderful hope, but she was blessed to comfort those in need of a kind word. Her favorite hymn was, "Let worldly minds the world pursue, it has no charms for me." etc. (No. 89 in Lloyd's Hymn Book)

She leaves to mourn her death, one daughter, two sons, three sisters, one brother, nine grandchildren, Lower Town Creek Church, and many friends. We miss you much, Sister Pat, but truly feel that you are in God's loving care. She was laid to rest in the family cemetery with her companion.

We desire that a copy of this writing be placed on the church record, a copy sent to the family, and a copy for publication.

Done by order of Lower Town Creek Church.

Elder C. L. Coker, Moderator
W. W. Stallings, Jr., Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 133

DANVILLE, VA., JULY, 1965

NO. 7

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 7/65
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

God holds the future in His hand,
O heart of mine, be still!
His love will plan the best for thee.
The best — or light or dark it be:
Then rest ye in His will.

God holds the future in His hand,
Why should I shrink or fear?
Through every dark and cloudy day —
Yea, all along my pilgrim way —
His love will bless and cheer.

God holds the future in His hand,
And I can trust His love.
The past declares His faithfulness;
His eye will guide, His heart will bless
'Till I am safe above.

— Author unknown
(Submitted by Elder A. T. Benson)

Spearsville, La.

Dear Elder Wood:

I am sending an article Brother Rhodes wrote us in 1939, while he was the senator from our district. I ran across it while reading through some old papers, and I think it rich in truth, as well as comforting; and believe the household of faith will find it a source of comfort, and a song of praise to the Lord.

A sister in hope,
Mrs. Cisco Barron

THE SEVENTH DAY

Farmerville, Louisiana
April 11, 1939

Mr. and Mrs. C. C. Barron
Spearsville, La.

Dear Brother and Sister in hope,

I am in Baton Rouge, and for some reason I felt impressed to write on the following subject. I have no doubt in my own mind, but what it is scripturally and experimentally true, but I find myself so very imperfect, sinful and defiled, I want someone else to pass on it.

It needs many corrections in language and punctuation, but before I would have time to do all this, I might destroy it as I have other writings; which might be better in this case. I don't know why I've stayed up till after midnight to write it, as I needed rest very badly.

We seemed wonderfully blessed at Rehobeth Sunday, if I'm not deceived, and we tried to use this subject. I feel we were blessed to go into it more extensively than this writing.

I hope the Lord will see fit to bless us with true righteous Sunshine and Spiritual exercise in this dark, cloudy and evil day of deception and degradation; when the spirit of anti-Christ is ascending out of that dark, bottomless pit. We are entirely dependent on Him to give us light and to keep us in it. Oh, how I do hope we have been called out of darkness into his marvelous light and glorious liberties of the children of God. We know all things work together for good to them that love God (I hope I am one of them) through his goodness and mercy. If so, no weap-

on that is formed against me will prosper, and every tongue of accusation will be condemned; because that wonderful Counsellor, who bore my sins, represents me, having died in my stead.

I have had some desire in the last few hours, to write a few thoughts, that have been presented to my mind relative to the subject, as presented in Exodus 20:8, 9, 10, and 11. Please read these scriptures, before proceeding to read this writing.

The Sabbath Day, literally in this instance, no doubt, is the remaining day of rest, after all the work was finished. It would readily stand to reason, that if the Lord had finished all his work, there was nothing else for him to do but to rest or to cease from his labor, as is stated here and elsewhere in the scriptures.

Human minds, unless divinely enlightened, cannot begin to conceive of the greatness, glory and wonderfulness of all God's work in creation; of Heaven and earth and all the hosts thereof, to say nothing of the righteous, holy, divine and wise purpose for which they were created, and which they all fulfill to a jot and tittle, to his glory and praise, and to the good of his people.

God gave his people the seventh day, as a day of rest, but gave them six days, before the day of rest, and commanded them to do all their work in these six days and to do no work on the seventh, but to rest or keep it holy; even as He had finished all his work in six days and rested the seventh. They were commanded under strict penalty of death, if they were found doing any work on that day, even as much as gathering sticks to kindle a fire.

Now, dear reader, I am sure our finite minds are far too inferior, and our understanding is insufficient, to be able to express this wonderful, deep and solemn subject, but I desire to say, that I believe that every phase of each commandment and ordinance, was written aforetime, and was written for our learning, that we (even at the pres-

ent) might have hope and consolation. Therefore, there is a sense in which all these scriptural laws and ordinances are applicable now, or at least, that is my humble opinion. For example, the Ten Commandments were spoken by the Lord, himself, in fact they are his word. The scriptures say the word of the Lord endureth forever, from generation to generation.

In another place it says, whatsoever he doeth it shall be forever. Then his words, "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy," is as much in effect today, in an anti-typical sense, as it was in a typical sense, when commanded by the Lord to Israel.

I want to be understood. I don't feel that we are under the literal commandment to abstain from all literal physical labor on the Sabbath day, as the Jews then were. We are not faced with that punishment of death in the literal sense as they were. There is a sense through Christ, after the inward man, that the children of God are still under command to remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. It is always after they have done fully six days' work, after which they are always weary, faint or tired. In other words, it is after they have worked themselves out of tools and timber, and have fallen flat on the mercies of God, who through Jesus, has finished the work of redemption and salvation.

Now, it seems clear to me, that this great subject is amply verified in the old and new covenants as expressed in the 8th chapter of Hebrews; (read it). In the old covenant it is implied that they were taken by the hand to be led out of literal Egypt. They transgressed and were subject to the most serious punishment as a consequence. The new covenant was not according to the old. The Lord gives them a new and soft heart, and He makes a new covenant with them. He writes his law in their hearts and puts it in their minds in such a way, that they are safe from violation. They are kept by the power

of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time.

Also, in John's language it says, "He that is born of God doth not commit sin, for his seed remaineth in him and he cannot sin, because he is born of God." Then if it was sin for the children of Israel to work on the Sabbath day literally, so it also would be, for God's people to work in this Gospel Sabbath day. Wherein Jesus came to seek and to save that which was lost (not lost now, but is saved), so Jesus finished the work which his Father gave him to do. It has been the Sabbath of rest, from that day till now and ever will be to his people, because the work is finished.

When the Light of God's blessed Spirit is revealed from Heaven, in our poor benighted souls, then we are brought to see our lost and ruined condition before him. After six days of hard work, we are brought to our wits end, or to the ends of the earth. Then the blessed Saviour says, "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest." Mark the word rest in this text. The six days are over, when the blessed Lord gives us this sweet rest, in foretaste.

The opposite doctrine to this is that Jesus gives poor sinners a job; but not so. He gives them rest. At his command, they take his yoke upon them, not voluntarily, as all legalists believe, but through the constraining love of Christ which is shed abroad in their hearts. And Oh, dear reader, how easy is that blessed yoke that Jesus gives his poor, humble and bewildered ones, who are weary from a full week's work!

This yoke Jesus gives them, yokes them off from their own works and constrains them to cease from them and their burdens. They learn of Him, that He finished all the work of their salvation, and their entire six days' work is in vain, so far as saving them is concerned. How light is the burden of the precious Saviour to a poor, wayworn pilgrim. His thoughts and burden have

been that he must do something. When he learns of Jesus that the work is finished, Oh, how light is this precious burden and how easy is this yoke. The customary way to fit an animal for work is to yoke him to it, but in this case they are yoked off from their works, and are given to rest. It is the Sabbath and they are yoked to keep it. That yoke is quite different from any yoke formed by earthly wisdom and skill, for they are yoked to rest. David described this when he said, "He leadeth me beside the still waters; he maketh me to lie down in green pastures." Many others also described this beautiful, easy yoke and light burden of Jesus, the blessed Saviour.

In the 4th Chapter of Hebrews it is said, "There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God." Just the opposite to what blind nature believes and advocates. They all believe and advocate works as essential to salvation. It is positively declared that it is rest that remaineth to the people of God. When you see people working in order to save themselves, or someone else, you may know they are not remembering the Sabbath day; and by this you may know, it is Monday, so to speak, with them. And to clearly show this same doctrine, it is almost universally believed that anyone can help in the salvation of sinners. It must be remembered in the anti-type, no man, nor his man-servant, nor his maid-servant, his son nor his daughter, nor his ox nor his ass, is to do any work on this holy day. That is why we advocate that the sinner cannot do any work for himself, neither can all his closest relatives, nor his ox, which all have their anti-typical place and meaning.

Now there is quite a difference in the old and new covenants. Under the old so far as Abraham and his seed were concerned, after the flesh, it was impossible for them to keep the law. The new covenant is exactly opposite. He that is born of God doth not commit sin. He remembers that Sabbath day

to keep it holy, not through the carnal or Adamic efforts of nature, but after the inward man or the new man. "For if any man be in Christ Jesus he is a new creature." He has the new covenant of Grace. He has the law of the Spirit of Life in Christ Jesus and is made free from the law of sin and death.

He believes in his heart, although when delivered to the fleshly mind, he will at least to some extent, practice works just like anyone else. But as Paul said, "It is no longer I that doeth it, but sin that dwelleth in me." So then, the being, soul or spirit that is in the child of God, or that he possesses, sins not, and he always remembers the Sabbath day and keeps it holy, through the light and influence and yoke of the blessed Saviour Jesus Christ, who works in them both to will and to do of his good pleasure. "They are his workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God before ordained that they should walk in them." So it is a good work that is worked in them to remember the Holy Sabbath of rest, of the finished work of redemption and salvation.

Christ said, "I have finished the work." Then the six days are over, and when the light of the Saviour reveals this to us, we cease from our works. We enter into that rest the Saviour gives. How sweet it is to the poor, humble child of God, when this beautiful Sabbath begins to dawn from the darkness and toil to a full week's work, which has been all in vain. When the Sun is above all the timber, and shining above the brightness of the noon-day; when the blessed Saviour gives us that rest and trust in him as the Lamb that taketh away our sins, we are overcome with joy and gladness; and this is truly the Sabbath of the Lord.

The work is over, sweet rest is ours to enjoy. But as long as we are in the flesh, there will come other days of the week and we will still find ourselves entangled, through our fleshly mind. The light of this beautiful Sabbath will often

be obscured and we will, to some extent, become burdened in our experience. The blessed Saviour visits us again and again and restores the joys of our salvation, and gives us rest and peace and blessed satisfaction in him.

The eternal Sabbath is in existence, so to speak, even as all the host of Heaven and earth are finished, but we are only given the earnest of our inheritance here below, which means the interest on the whole. So if the little seasons of rest that are manifested or given to us, are so sweet and glorious and precious here in time, what will the principal or the fullness of this inheritance be in that rest beyond the shades of death and the shores of time, when we shall have laid down this vile, corrupt and sinful body, wherein we groan and weep and mourn?

When we come forth formed and fashioned like our blessed Saviour, without sin and corruption, then we will always live, body and soul, in that eternal Sabbath. No more of the toil, groans and afflictions, as we are subject to in the flesh, but eternal, glorious and peaceful rest, as is expressed in Revelation 14:13, "And I heard a voice from heaven saying unto me, Write, blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: Yea, sayeth the Spirit, they shall rest from their labors; and their works do follow them." The works which follow them, are the works that God works in them, both to will and to do his own good pleasure.

Also in Revelation 7th chapter we find that John saw these same people (who are given to remember the Sabbath to keep it holy) stand before God in white raiment. So they have kept the Sabbath in the Spirit of Christ, and all the other commandments, and they have cried salvation be unto our God and unto him that sitteth on the throne. Notice what they cried; and look around and see who they are. They also have washed their robes, not in literal water nor human cleansing, nor in their own works, because they have

remembered the Sabbath day and kept it holy. Therefore, they have ceased from their own works as God did from his. (See Hebrews 4th chapter.)

The best of Revelation 7 is where He said, "For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters, and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes." Oh, dear child of the heavenly kingdom, how I do humbly hope at times, if not deceived, that I am one of those that have been brought into that blessed Sabbath and have ceased from my own works, and have been made to feel the sweet yoke and burden and rest of Christ the Saviour. And that some day all tears of sorrow shall be wiped away and I may be given to praise and glorify the blessed Saviour forever and ever, with all those who have come out of tribulations.

Your brother in hope,
R. W. Rhodes

606 S. Kansas,
Liberal, Kansas

Dear Elder Spangler:

It has been a long time since I heard from you, but I understand that you were at the South Ouachita association in the Fall of 1964.

About a week or so later I attended the Sulphur Fork association at Bivins, Texas. Had I known of your plans to visit in that part of the country, I would have tried to be there, as I have such a desire to meet you.

Elder Hand and Elder Moon have invited me to Birmingham, Alabama, and I want to come to your state, but don't know which place I will be sent to, if either one.

Enclosed find an obituary of Brother Oren Parsons which the church in Amarillo desired me to write for publication in the *Signs*.

I have written many letters to the *Signs*, but never mailed any of them,

as they seemed to be of no interest to anyone. I sometimes think that God mixed a great amount of clay with the iron when he made me, and called me into the ministry, as the clay is so weak and the weary, rocky path I travel tries my strength, and the vain wanderings of my carnal mind seem at times to lead me to much fear and I doubt my worthiness to go among the brethren, much less try to preach to them. But, as my father used to say so often, "I wish and pray that I could be reconciled to His holy will."

There is no doubt but that all of God's precious saints long for a better life than they have here in this low ground of sorrow, but when He raises us up and makes us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, it is our joy and for a little season we can rejoice and sing praises unto His namesake, honor, and glory.

Brother Spangler, how can the natural man be anything but vile? I believe the natural bodies of the saints are just as vile as the bodies of the evil. If they were not the same, then the children of God (in the flesh) would be set part and no fruits be necessary — but, "by their fruits ye shall know them."

The writer speaks of "These vile bodies." The apostle says, "It is no more I but sin that dwelleth in me." Where but in the bodies (these vile bodies) could sin dwell? But our hope soars high when we feel that for a little season, maybe, that the scripture which says, "Christ in you the hope of Glory" pertains to us. We know that if Christ is in us, He and He alone can subdue the earth (the natural man) and can say, "Get thee hence Satan." He can cast aside all natural desires and open the seals of the Holy testimonies and make us feast upon the word of God, which is the meat and drink of regenerated sinners.

But He can open and none can shut, shut and none can open, so when we feel that when we read and cannot un-

derstand, and we feel that he is clean gone forever, it is because he has shut out our vision by closing the door to understanding. You know Christ can obstruct as well as reveal — one reason is that he is the door, and only He can open Himself unto His dear children who then can see through Him to the Father.

God the Father sent this Son who is the door, the way, the truth, and the light, but even with all of these it takes another portion — the word which was in the beginning and was God and was made flesh and dwelled among men.

The natural man contracted the debt because the creature was made subject to vanity and broke the commandment. The debt demanded death but the debt had to be paid with the same legal tender which the contract called for. The law had to be satisfied with the sacrifice of a body. "A body hast thou prepared me."

King Herod sent out and slew all the children two years and under — this was a figure of the law demanding payment. Have you ever wondered why the children three years old and under weren't killed, but only those of a certain age of two years and under were slain?

The gospel dispensation had not been revealed, just the law and prophets (thus the *two*). Had he taken the lives of those three years old, Herod would have been ahead of himself. Christ (by whom grace and truth came) must live until he had established the truth of salvation and fulfilled the demands of the Father and then give up the ghost so that His body could be buried and resurrected (and by the death of a body, pay the debt.)

When Christ said "It is finished" he still had to go through the grave. Some have said to me that that showed a misprint or misinterpretation by the translators. But Christ, who is God, cannot lie, but He was acting as a child (to us a child is born, to us a son is given — one born, the other giv-

en.) Now the work of the Son of God in the flesh was finished, so now He, you might say, turned the rest to the Father.

"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." These are the ones dead in trespasses and in sin; (it does not say grave.) Then we find that He says, "Marvel not at this: for the hour is coming (not now is) in the which all that are in the *graves* shall hear *His* voice." etc.

Christ resurrects from under the law but the Father resurrects from the grave. Now Christ paid the debt demanded; the supreme sacrifice which bulls and goats could not satisfy, and He paid it by dying on the cross. He had a body not sired by man; neither was Adam's body sired by man; so both the first and the last were alike as far as appearances were and if both men were seen walking together in the flesh, a stranger would not have been able to tell the man of sin from the righteous man until the revelation came (as to Paul).

Every man born into the world, until he is born again, persecutes Christ. Paul tells us why in a few explicit words. When Paul heard the voice from heaven saying, "Saul, Saul, why persecuteth thou Me?" Paul told Him, and us if we can understand, exactly why he did. "*Who Art Thou Lord?*" Here is his reason: he didn't know Him and therefore he persecuted Him.

A body houses the spirit of life, the body itself is dead; but the soul, the breath of life, and Christ in you the hope of glory, the spirit of life makes up the child of God enshrined in this temple of clay.

I am enclosing my check for \$5.00 to pay for my renewal of the *Signs of the Times*.

May God bless you and bring us together some day is my prayer.

Yours in hope of eternal life,

Elder W. A. Winfrey

"THE NAME OF THE LORD IS A STRONG TOWER: THE RIGHTEOUS RUNNETH INTO IT, AND IS SAFE."

(Proverbs 18:10)

To the Household of Faith:

I hope and trust that the Lord will direct me in this attempt to write something about this deep Scripture that emanates from the great and wise Solomon who certainly was qualified to leave a record of what he knew about the Lord our God. The Lord's people know, I'm sure, that his wisdom is never to be questioned. Likewise, they know that the several other Old Prophets and later Apostles and inspired writers of God's Holy Word, as they were given inspiration, wrote like words about God and of His Holy Son; wrote the truth whether we understand what it all means or not.

Now I am placing the emphasis on the word "NAME" in this text and in the other scripture quotes used. Also since the word "IN" is being used along with it, we must reckon with it too. The general use of the word NAME is as a title or appellation by which a thing or person is known. In certain instances, it is a descriptive or qualifying appellation. When someone speaks the word or name, President, it immediately identifies our highest government official who represents great power financially, militarily, politically, etc., due to the act of those electing him to that office. He acts only according to legally established directives. Officially, he relies on the funds, manpower, mechanical devices and help of others. He owns none of them. So in his name, or title, there is no power of its self, while Solomon said, "The NAME of the Lord is a strong tower."

The word "IN" denotes being inside a border, or place, or building, or thing, as we are to thus use it here. The word *into* denotes the act of entering therein, as, "The righteous runneth into it."

In reading and re-reading the several Scriptural references to the name of

the Lord, I find the different writers all were of one accord, tho they wrote many years apart. Also, I find instances where they praised God directly with no reference to His name, as in Genesis 14:20, where Melchizedek said, "Blessed be the most high God," etc. I was made to wonder why not all such utterances be directly to God? Then in Genesis 16:20, we find the name of the Lord and God used in the same breath (sentence) for Sarah "Called the name of the Lord that spake unto her, Thou God seest me." etc. After considerable meditation on all these Scriptures, I am convinced in my own mind that God, in his infinite wisdom and power designed that His very spiritual being would be also IN HIS NAME; and so it is. I see this to be identical with, "AND THE WORD was God" recorded in St. John 1:1. Could not the WORD also be His NAME? I believe so and shall try to show why, tho I feel so weak and incapable of delving into such deep things, and am mindful of what the writer of old said — "The ways of the Lord are past finding out."

Back to the text and what Solomon saw in the name of the Lord. He said it was a strong tower, and that the righteous used it. He said — "and is safe." I believe he meant that the tower was a safe place for the righteous to be in, tho we know, too, that they are safe when they are in the power of the Lord. It seems clear that *only* the righteous are to use it — never the unrighteous or ungodly ones of this sinful world. He does not say that a portion of the righteous only are to use it so it must be that *all* the righteous will use it, so it must be the Lord and His eternal home prepared for his elect. No mention is made of those running into it ever coming out, so they will be cared for and dwell therein throughout all time to come. "The righteous *runneth* into it"; and this would infer that this tower of protection exists throughout this time world, and

on into the endless world to come. It is only those who are in danger, or running from sin, trouble and persecution in this world that would run into it. They, the righteous, only have eyes to see this tower and know there is safety therein. They have been born again of the Holy Spirit and have been prepared and made fit to run into it. It seems certain that Solomon saw in the NAME of the Lord, our Almighty God, with all His attributes and His NAME and He Himself are one and the same.

Now to some other scriptures germane to the text. In Exodus 23rd Chapter, we see the Lord directing and informing Moses. He was to send an Angel to guide and keep him in the way. Verse 21 says — “The Lord said, For my *name* is in him.” This strongly implies that the Angel had more than a mere name in him. He had the power, or, the Lord in him. In Chronicles II, 2nd Chapter, verse 11, we see Asa appealing to the Lord for help saying — “In thy *name* we go against this multitude.” Could he not well have said — “In Thee or In Thy Power”? Notice the next verse — “The Lord smote the Ethiopians before Asa,” etc. Then did not Asa actually go against the multitude in the Lord and all his power? Was not the *name* of the Lord and the Lord our God one and the same?

In Psalms we find David writes in the same mind for he said in 21:1 “The *name* of God of Jacob defend thee,” and verse 5, — “And in the *name* of our God, we will set up our banners.” In Psalm 111, he exalts and glorifies the Lord for all his mercies, righteousness and redemption of His people and says, verse 9, “HOLY AND REVEREND IS HIS NAME.” Did he not see the *name* of the Lord as being one and the same as the Lord our God? And did he not make it very plain that the name or title “REVEREND” was to be that of the Lord only, and never to apply to puny man? This word reverend is found but *once* in the Bible, as used

by David. How greedily and universally the worldly churches have unrightfully taken it for their ministers. They have even enlarged it into “RIGHT REVEREND” AND “MOST REVEREND.” Some few use the title minister or pastor but they are all of the same school, whether they use that name or others such as Priests, Prophets, Cardinals, Rabbis, Father and Holy Father, and so on. How they love to publicize these titles and exalt those bearing them. How they resort to actions that make a true Minister of God shudder to see. They have even taken the name (Reverend) into the front ranks of present day hordes marching in various places, where violence and strife are rampant and resort to praying in public with the masses so engaged. Their sermons and writings are without bounds, it seems, and are very easy to identify as false doctrine which is for the world and not for the Lord’s elect. I am certain that we will never see the day when one of God’s elected, prepared and called servants or Elders of our Old Baptist Church will be found in such actions. All such use of the word *reverend* must be an abomination unto the Lord, if I read David’s word aright.

We can go on and on citing scriptures germane to the text and proving, I believe, that God himself is in His Holy NAME. We have it in Jeremiah 10:6 and 45:26; and Zechariah 14:9. Into the New Testament and to Matthew 10:22-18:5 and 20, where Jesus himself speaks in this same trend or mind and others write accordingly. Before concluding I will cite two scriptures that voice this very thing, and which the worldly churches wrongfully use in their false doctrines. In Joel 2:32, we find — “And it shall come to pass that whosoever shall call on the *name* of the Lord, shall be delivered.” Now who are those Joel referred to? Not the non-elect worldly people! In 2:22 he said “Ye children of Zion,” and in 2:27, “Ye shall know I am in the midst of Israel.” The Lord, thru Joel, identified

those who would be thus delivered, and it was not a delivery in the sense these people preach and teach it. In St. John 14:13 Jesus said — “And whatsoever ye shall ask in my *name*, that I will do.” He repeated it again in verse 14. Who was He talking to? Who were to ask in His *name*? He was talking to his chosen Apostles and Disciples. In both these Scriptures, those qualified to *ask in His name* were already living in Him — in His Spiritual Household and were his heirs, and needed such as they petitioned for, which was in full accord with his Divine will that they should receive, or else they could not receive such. Neither could they utter an effectual prayer. James made this clear in saying (James 5:16) “The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.” Asking in His name, seems to me to mean that they must be already living spiritually in Him and in His *name* or they could not rightfully or effectively ask of Him. Certainly they that shall so ask and receive in His name are those included in his Divine Will, and whose names are written in the Lamb’s Book Of Life, for I find nothing in the Scriptures that says that the non-elect and workers of iniquity are to receive of the Lord’s spiritual gifts and blessings; and their only benefits are while sojourning here in this time world and receiving natural worldly things so intended for them. So I say in Him — “IN HIS NAME” — which is one and the same, dwells all His Divine power; and we can never fathom fully the great mystery thereof. I must say too, that many imposters try to get into his name and work therein. Note the words of Jesus in Matthew 24:5, “For many shall come in my name, saying I am Christ; and shall deceive many.” He clearly shows that they were not in His name in the sense spoken above quoted. They were deceivers, and certainly there were none then, or now, nor will there ever be deceivers and fakers in His Spiritual

House. The Lord in Matthew 7:22 said, “Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful words?” In the next verse Jesus said, “And then I will profess (say) unto them, *I never knew you: depart from me ye that work iniquity.*” Notice that the Lord said *many* will say to me, etc. He certainly knew that in time to come such deceivers, fakers, false prophets, false workers, and so on, would increase. Look round about us this day at the multitude running back and forth over the entire world, doing God’s work, they say, in too many ways to mention here. Look at the hordes running about us with literature, books, etc., begging for funds or trying to convert many. Radio and television time is used liberally by the worldly churches and newspapers, magazines and such media carry pages of their appeals, false doctrines and so on. When thinking on this, I am moved to say, Lord, forgive them for they know not what they do.

Now, after bringing this writing thus far, fear seemed to take hold. Maybe I’m out of line in my belief as to what is to be found IN THE NAME OF THE LORD. I was led to turn to past issues of the *Signs* and immediately came to the writing of Elder Beebe in “Voices Of The Past” titled “Prayer” in the June, 1962 issue. If not mistaken, he wrote in this same mind but with much greater inspiration and greater mind than this poor creature can ever hope to possess. He stressed that we should always pray in the NAME of Jesus Christ our Mediator, if our prayers are to be acceptable to God. I quote from page 139 of his article, — “The privilege of asking in His *name* belongs exclusively to those who are embraced in His *name*; as all the members of a man’s body are included in His name, and as a wife is in the name of her husband, and as children are legally included in the

name of their paternal parent, so the Church of God, as the Lamb's wife, and all her members, are members of His body and covered by His name; and as His seed, or, children, His name is their inheritance, and their approach unto God in His name implies a vital relationship to Him; and His name is to them a strong tower, and perfect indemnity for all they need for time or eternity."

Concluding, will say that in later years the inspired writers of our good songs, saw so much in the NAME of the Lord, not unlike those of olden times quoted herein. I quote one verse of the song by Bartley titled — "There is a Name whose music thrills."

"Through all the ages it has been
A tower of strong defense,
A solid rock whereon to lean,
A sure relief from guilt and sin,
Our perfect righteousness."

One verse from Haskin's song: —

"In thy great name, O Lord, we come
To worship at thy feet.
O, pour thy Holy Spirit down
On all that shall meet."

I hope this will be of some interest to the scattered flock, and if I am one of this flock, prepared of the Lord to live in His name and to ask and receive in His name, such as His Divine will provides, then I am the very least one.

Yours in His name, I hope,
Wm. O. Hall,
P. O. Box 595,
Mount Vernon, Washington.

ANNUAL MEETING

The Bethel Primitive Baptist Church of Riffe, Washington, holds her annual meeting the third Sunday in August, and Friday and Saturday before. Visitors are welcome to meet with us.

Elder Ernest Attebery, Pastor
Mrs. Vernie Schoonover, Clerk
Morton, Washington

PLEASANT VALLEY ASSOCIATION

The Pleasant Valley Association is appointed to be held the 4th Sunday in August, and

Friday and Saturday before, with Mt. Olive Church, Stockdale, Texas. The meeting house is located at the intersection of Highways 123 and 87. All lovers of the truth will be welcomed.

Elder C. M. Haygood, Moderator
Elder E. B. Ault, Clerk

PIGG RIVER ASSOCIATION

The 1965 session of the Pigg River District Association is appointed to be held with the church at Rocky Mount, Virginia, July 30, 31, and August 1. All meetings will be held in the Franklin County High School building in East Rocky Mount.

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

John D. Wood, Clerk

MAINE ASSOCIATION

The Main Old School Baptist Association will convene, the Lord willing, with the Whitefield Church, Whitefield, Maine, August 21 and 22, 1965.

An invitation is extended to those of our faith and order, and interested friends.

Mrs. Sanford Bartlett, Clerk

FOR THE SIGNS' LIBRARY

We acknowledge with many thanks the receipt of the following bound volumes of the *Signs of the Times* from the family of Elder F. A. Chick: 1866 to 1870; 1880 to 1882; 1883 to 1885; 1895 to 1896; 1903; and 1904.

— Editors

CORRECTION

Please note that Brown's Store mentioned in the notice of the Staunton River Association in the June issue of the *Signs* should be Wood's Store. — J. D. W.

ENJOYS READING THE SIGNS

Rt. 2,
McKenzie, Alabama

Dear Editors:

I enclose \$3.00 for the *Signs of the Times* for another year. I surely enjoy

reading it; and when I have read each one three or four times, I pass it on to someone else to read. I hope to be able to read as long as I live, for I don't get to go to meetings very often.

The good Lord is all in all to me, and I know that if he is for us, no one can be against us. I have to look to Him for everything in this world, and the one to come. If I could know that He died for me I would be a happy person. I have so many doubts and fears, but I do have a little hope that I would not take this whole world for. This world doesn't mean very much to me.

I wish I could meet with every one who writes for the *Signs* and tell them how I enjoy reading what they write. May God be with every one of them, and bless them to continue to write the good news.

Mrs. R. S. Bell

UPPER COUNTRY LINE ASSOCIATION

The Upper Country Line Association is appointed to convene with the Dan River Primitive Baptist Church, beginning on Saturday, July 17th, at ten o'clock A. M., Eastern Standard Time, and continue three days.

Our ministers, brethren and friends are invited to meet with us.

Dan River Church is located in Rockingham County, N. C., between Reidsville, N. C. and Danville, Virginia. Those coming from the South turn left on State Road No. 914, about three miles North of Reidsville from U. S. 29, follow 914 to where it intersects with No. 700; turn right to the meeting house. Those coming from the East or North turn right off U. S. 29, about three miles South of Danville, Va. on State Road No. 700; follow this road about eight miles to the meeting house. The church is located on State Road No. 700, between Draper, N. C. and Danville, Virginia.

D. V. Spangler, Pastor

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Danville, Virginia July, 1965

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BUSINESS OFFICE

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

Elder David V. Spangler
R. F. D. 1, Box 539, Beechwood Lane
Danville, Va.

Elder John D. Wood
P. O. Box 186, Manassas, Va.

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Elder W. D. Griffin
39 Welsh Tract Road, Newark, Delaware
Elder E. J. Lambert
306 Richardson St., Winnsboro, Texas
Elder George Ruston
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EDITORIAL

THE HOUSE OF WORSHIP

*"I was glad when they said unto me,
Let us go into the House of the Lord."*

Psalms 122:1

My soul leaped with joy from its fainted condition the other day when an Elder softly said to me, "Let us go into the house." I was within the city limits of one of the largest cities in our nation. Everyone on the streets and highways seemed to be in such a hurry. I was meditating upon the fact

that things are so swiftly coming to pass that it is very difficult to believe such drastic changes are taking place. I began to realize that I was so heavily involved in this great turmoil of swift and rapid events to such extent that my mind was in a whirl, my heart was troubled, and my soul was fainted; — all because I could not keep up. What great relief of mind to enter upon the grounds of this house of worship and to be warmly invited into the house for the purpose of pausing in our hurrying to worship God. How good it is when you feel so cast down, unworthy, and unfit to be noticed by anyone, to hear them say, "Let us go into the House of the Lord." Aren't you glad that they even remember to invite you into such sacred place as the Place of Praises. Aren't you glad, also, that others have a desire to go into the House of Prayer and Praise.

Get your Bible and turn to the 122nd Psalm and read with us as we meditate upon some of the glorious expressions of the Psalmist. The second verse reads: "Our feet shall stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem." We recall that in Psalms 100:4 it says, "Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise . . ." Jesus said, "ENTER ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be that go in thereat: because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it."

When I entered the door of this building and beheld such smiling peaceful expressions on the faces of those who so joyfully greeted me, I felt to be standing within the gates of the City of God with a number of its citizens. No one there needed to say to any other, "I love you." The love of God was so manifest in each and every face, word, handshake, and embrace that we all had a foretaste of Heaven. When we had settled down to singing hymns of thanksgiving to God even for

the tribulations that had been ours to endure, I gazed at the open door through which we had entered. Then, I thought of the gates through which we had come to this place of joy and peace. I thought of the first gate that leadeth unto life, to wit: tribulations. Peace, joy, and happiness cannot be experienced while in confusion, sadness and misery; but after being exercised by these tribulations, we experience the peaceable fruits of righteousness which are patience, faith, hope, love, and joy of life. "Go through, go through the gates . . ." is an expression found in Isaiah 62:10. It must be through the gate of tribulations and persecutions that we learn to be submissive and to rely upon God for all things pertaining to God and godliness. This painful gate could be termed the gate of *regeneration*. You cannot climb over the wall to avoid this gate. If one gets into the position of indulging in special favors peculiar to the afflicted and poor people of God, this one would be classed as a thief and a robber. The walls are too thick to be penetrated; too high to be climbed over; and too strong to be overthrown. You must enter through the gate of tribulations which is the gate of regeneration. This is the evidence that brethren look for in listening to the experience of candidates for church membership. This being "born again" is manifest when their testimony proves that they have suffered to the extent of being brought into the knowledge of being unable to do anything of themselves to merit any blessing from God.

I went back into my experience and was given to re-live for a moment the period in my life when it seemed the mountains of my many sins were crushing me to death. The gates of hell seemed to be opened unto me and that I was being swallowed into its clutches. Every straw to which I so greedily clung could not so much as slow down my descent into the depths of such horrible pit. I re-lived for a moment my cries out of the depth of hell. I re-

membered the groans, the fastings, and the awful miseries of hell itself with all the doors closed and locked fast. I could not open any door of faith or hope. How I did knock and seek and ask but I had no faith. I wept bitterly with no hope for mercy because my sins demanded that I should forever be in misery. While in this awful condition and after I had exhausted all of my strength and energy it pleased God in His gracious providence toward me to put it into the mind of one of my friends to invite me into a house of worship. He kept insisting against my wishes that I should accompany him to a place of worship to hear a certain minister preach. I had read the Bible: it had condemned. I had listened at preachers: they had condemned me. I talked to my close associates: they all thought I was crazy when I would tell them of my hopeless condition. I learned in the pit that God was sovereign and holy and that no man could come unto Him. I felt that I had blasphemed against God under the cloak of a gospel minister in declaring the power of man unto salvation to such extent that I could never have forgiveness here nor in the world to come. This man who said unto me, "Let us go to meeting," saw something in me that I could not see. This is why he kept insisting that I go. His care concerning my spiritual welfare astonished me. I shall forever be thankful to God for that man who kept insisting, "Let us go to meeting." I had thought that I knew how to read and interpret the Holy Scriptures.

God opened the second gate unto me when He opened the "door of faith" thru the preaching of the gospel of this minister that night. "And when they were come, and had gathered the church together, they rehearsed all that God had done with them, and how *he had opened the door of faith to the Gentiles.*" (Acts 14:27) "It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching" to set before me an open door. God opened this minister's mouth to preach this

precious faith. God opened my heart to understand it. As soon as it was opened unto me I gladly went through it to such extent as to receive and embrace it with all my heart. I did not have to go to Heaven after it. I did not have to go across the seas and oceans to get it. You cannot open the door of faith yourself. It must be opened to you. Paul says, "A great door and effectual is opened unto me." (1 Cor. 16:9) When the door of faith is opened how devotedly we cling to the Lord Jesus Christ. The gate of faith being opened I saw the maneuverings of my Saviour. I saw Him come through the gate of Heaven. I saw Him descend toward the pit. I saw Him descend low enough to reach me who was the vilest of the vile. I saw Him wash me whiter than snow with His blood. I saw Him pay my penalty by His dying in my stead. I saw Him merit a home in Heaven for me with His life. I heard Him plead in my behalf before the Father. All of this led me to the door of Hope. In Hosea 2:15 we read of "A door of hope." On that memorable night for a fleeting time this gate of Hope was swung wide open and I was blessed to experience the entrance to that within the veil: "Wherein God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, confirmed it by an oath: that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, *we might have a strong consolation* who have fled for refuge to *lay hold upon the hope set before us: which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil.*" (Heb. 6:17-20)

The opening of the gate of hope gave me to see that within the veil. The opening of the gate of faith gave me to believe in Jesus, the perfect and powerful Saviour of His people. The opening of the gate of hope gave me to trust that I was one of His people and that all of the benefits He merited would be mine to experience in the

future. These gates lead into the inner palace of the King. The most inner-gate, or door, must be the gate of Love. In the Song of Songs we read, "My Beloved put in His hand by the hole of the door." (Solomon 5:4) We read in Revelations. "*After this I looked, and, behold, a door was opened in heaven . . .*" (Rev. 4:1) When this gate of love is opened in Heaven to us our hearts overflow with this Love of God. Perfect love casteth out fear. O what joy, peace, and happiness we do experience as result of the foretaste of Heaven itself. It is too wonderful to tell. It is too much for poor earthly creatures to experience but for short seasons. I am made to believe that God has ordained these wonderful banquets of the King to be participated in most gloriously here in His banqueting houses of worship. God's children will travel thousands of miles to one of these banquets. God meets His people with the gifts of His love within these Houses of praises. Sometimes we hear the voices of angels coming from the mouths of men as we worship God together.

While meditating in this meeting-house on the gates of tribulations, (or regeneration), faith, hope, and love, my question was, Are there any other gates? John gave me the answer in 1st John 4:16: "God is love, and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God and God in him." There is no gate beyond the gate of love.

When I came to the reality of my surroundings I felt that God had cemented everyone present in that congregation together so firmly with a heavenly mixture of grace and love that nothing could break fellowship. I felt that everyone there including the many young people were lively stones, made to be lively by the love of God and washed clean in the blood of the Lamb. I saw the manifestation of their labor of love as I gazed upon the newly finished walls, furniture, and fixtures of this House of Worship. I knew that it had

taken many hours and dollars to bring this into reality. I said in my heart, "Thank God for such evidences of a God-loving people who will gladly sacrifice their bodies and earthly treasures in providing a meeting place for the members and friends to worship God together." Recall that the 3rd and 4th verses of the 122nd Psalms says: "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.*" A company of believers blessed to worship God in unison in prayer, praise, and preaching is a wonderful experience of being compacted together both in body and Spirit.

I saw the Heavens open unto me a book of remembrances of the testimony of God's love and mercy. I remembered the 1st Heaven which was a paradise when the Lord first remembered me as related in this treatise. I called to remembrance the 2nd Heaven when a door was opened to me to be baptized and to be married to the particular church in covenant-relationship which holds to the Gospel Faith and Practice. I had been given the wonderful relationship to trust that God would providentially care for me and finally save me in that eternal abode because of His love and through the merits of Jesus Christ. Yet, I thought that I had so blasphemed His power to such degree that none would receive me into their fellowship here on earth. How glad I was when they received me and welcomed me into their fellowship. My joys in participating in the special privileges and ordinances allowed only to members of the church are considered as precious and sacred. Being caught up in the third Heaven for moments is enough foretaste to make me yearn to live there eternally with the redeemed of the Lord.

It is wonderful in this church relationship to be compacted together to mourn with those who mourn; to re-

joyce with those who rejoice: to be so united in affections one for the other that each one will be willing to make great sacrifices for the other ones' good. It is wonderful to be united in agreement upon religious beliefs. Being "Compact together" in love, belief, experience, and hope: all this causes a yearning to meet often together in worship of God for His benefits to us. All this causes the lovers of the truth to be glad when someone suggests, "Let us go into the House of the Lord."

We go to the House of God in unison to give thanks for His wonderful works. We listen prayerfully as the minister of the Gospel gives testimony of the will of God, the word of God, and the simple commandments of our Lord Jesus Christ. The minister comforts us as he is blessed to speak of the sovereign God who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will. We experience a feeling of security as the minister brings testimony after testimony from the Holy Scriptures to prove that God's will of purpose is solely, wholly, perfectly, and completely worked by Him, to the praise of His own glory and to the completion of salvation of each and every one of His children, without a hint of any jot or tittle of His will of purpose being disobeyed because He works it Himself; and, it embraces all times, events, words, thoughts, actions, and all creatures and things both visible and invisible. We are edified as the minister preaches the Word of God bringing a multiplicity of testimonies from the Book of books, proving that the will of God relative to the salvation of God's elect is because of God's great love for us through the merits of Jesus Christ, Who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. We eagerly listen as the minister preaches to us God's will of precept as he rightly divides the word of truth in warning the Lord's people of dangers and exhorting them to keep the commandments of Jesus, and to be fervent in charity.

"I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord."

I wanted to praise Him publicly for His divine providence, amazing grace, gifts of the Spirit, His great love, and gospel of Jesus Christ. I wanted to participate in the ordinances of Jesus Christ and His Church. There are two kinds of extremists relative to public praise. One is the child of God who is fearful of man to the extent that he will not participate in public praise. The hypocrite will engage in public praise to be commended by men. The proper Christian is not fearful of the frowns of the world, nor is he a public worshiper in order to be commended by those who profess to be Christians.

David said, "Give unto the Lord glory due unto his name: *bring an offering and come into his courts.*" You may ask, What shall we bring? Our strength will not help Him for He is all-powerful. Our wisdom will not direct Him for He is all-wise. Our God is so great that He does not require our wisdom to direct Him nor our power to assist Him. He owns all things; therefore, He does not require our wealth to enrich Him. He is so effectual in His works and so convincing relative to His greatness that He does not need our reputation to advance Him. What does He require of us? He requires us to fear Him because of His greatness, He requires us to love Him because of His goodness. "What shall I render to the Lord for all his benefits towards me?" (Psalms 116:12) What offering shall I bring? The sacrifice that the Lord loves is a broken heart and contrite spirit. The word contrite means, bruised. Paul says, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you *present your bodies as living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.*" (Romans 12:1) God does not need our help in any way but we certainly need His strength and guidance in all of our affairs. It pleases Him that we are to help one another in word, deed, and

prayer. Bring an offering of your material possessions for the support of the ministry, maintenance of house of worship, and the poor of the flock. The Scriptural rule for this is called an order to the churches which is plainly and simply stated in 1st Corinthians 16:1-3. (Read, if interested in giving according to rule.)

"I will offer to thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving." (Psalms 116:17) I will thank Him for His deliverance from death; for His deliverance of me from the clutches of law and death; for His setting before me the open doors of faith and hope; and, for His love that flooded my soul through the open door of Heaven. I will thank Him for Jesus Christ, my King, Saviour, Friend, Priest, Way, Truth, and Life.

When I come to the courts of the Lord and in the midst of His people, I pray that I will be given to remember my vows. May I be given to say as David when I am inside the place of worship: "I will pay my vows unto the Lord *now* in the presence of all His people." David said, "God is the Lord which hath shewed us light: *Bind the sacrifice with cords even unto the horns of the altar.*" (Psalm 118:27) Unless these instructions can be experienced, none of our sacrifices will be acceptable to God. All acceptable *sacrifice* is fervent constant confident *devotion*. That which *binds* is *faith*. *Streams of God's love* are the *cords*. The *altar* is *Christ*. *Christ's merit* and *power* are the *horns* of the altar. I find it to be more blessed to try and fail than not to try. I find that my conscience is more at ease when I go to the House of God and fail in my attempts at worship than when I fail to present my body. O that our people would more often say to their children, relatives, and friends, "Let us go into the House of the Lord."

It is very encouraging to see parents bring their children to church meetings. A greater percent of our church meeting congregations are young people now than when I first united with

the Primitive Baptist Church. Let us bring up our children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. Let us teach them to obey their parents, speak the truth, read good literature, to behave themselves conformable to high morals, and to respect the elderly. We know that it is God's work to regenerate and save eternally each and every one of His people; yet, it is our obligation as Christian parents to discourage our children from becoming involved in religious organizations whose object is to work zealously to influence young minds to embrace their doctrines and practices: which you know to be false and erroneous. It is your duty to encourage them to consider the Bible as the Book of books worthy of their reading. It is your duty to encourage their attendance at the place where you go to worship. You consider your particular church of your membership as being more right in its doctrine and practices than any of the organizations whose main purposes are to convince the young and to convert them to their ideas and doings.

The minds of children are very easily impressed and they are prone to follow anyone who takes a great interest in them. Take care that your children be not as those referred to by David in his prayer: "Rid me, and deliver me from the hand of strange children, whose mouth speaketh vanity, and their right hand is a right hand of falsehood." May we do our duty and pray God: "That our sons may be as plants grown up in their youth; that our daughters may be as cornerstones, polished after the similitude of a palace: that our garners may be full, affording all manner of store: that our sheep may bring forth thousands and ten thousands in our streets: that our oxen may be strong to labour: that there be no breaking in, nor going out: that there be no complaining in our streets. HAPPY IS THAT PEOPLE THAT IS IN SUCH A CASE; yea, HAPPY IS THAT PEOPLE, WHOSE GOD IS THE

LORD." (Psalm 144:11-15) May we assemble ourselves together more often, and often say, "LET US GO INTO THE HOUSE OF THE LORD." MAY GOD BLESS YOU. AMEN.

E. J. L.

VOICES OF THE PAST
"He being dead yet speaketh"

THE BAPTISM OF JESUS

BROTHER W. L. BEEBE: — I wish to submit to you for your consideration a question or two. If you have any light on the subject, please reply through the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. We read in Matthew iii, 11 that John baptized with water unto repentance for the remission of sins. We also learn from reading the Scriptures that Jesus came without sin unto salvation — that he had no sins of his own to repent of; then why was he baptized of John in Jordan unto repentance for the remission of sins? Was it only for example or pattern for his people to follow? Was it not more than an example for them to follow?

Yours to serve,

C. MARRS

FAYETTEVILLE, W. VA., July 19, 1886.

REPLY

In the revelation of salvation in our Lord Jesus Christ there is nothing which can be understood by natural reason. The visible organization of the church is not the pure spiritual body of Christ, for corruption and dissensions were discovered even in the apostolic age in the very churches organized under the inspired direction of those who were guided by the Holy Ghost. The literal fact that John baptized by divine authority is accepted by those who are satisfied of the truth of the records written by the evangelists, even though they receive that testimony only as history. Yet even at that time the most learned and zealous class of religionists confessed that they could not tell whence that baptism came, whether it was from heaven or of men. — Matt. xxi. 23-27. Literally the work of John was declared by Gabriel to Zacharias when his birth was announced, with the promise, "And thou shalt

have joy and gladness; and many shall rejoice at his birth. For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb. And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God. And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord." — Luke i. 14-17. This work was fulfilled by the preaching and baptism of John.

Neither the truth preached nor the ordinance administered by that favored servant of God could make ready any others except that people who were "prepared for the Lord." Hence, when many others came to his baptism he denounced them with their claim of merit on the ground of their natural relation to Abraham. If immersion had been all the preparation required, then John might have received them without requiring "fruits meet for repentance." On the contrary, being "filled with the Holy Ghost," John saw that they were not the prepared people whom it was his privilege to make ready. Their trust in their natural birth gave evidence that they were destitute of that preparation which was required before John's baptism could make them ready for the Lord. How clearly does this record expose the presumptuous folly of all those who profess to have ability to prepare sinners for the reception of the salvation of the Lord! The hope of divine favor by reason of pious natural parentage is also here cut off, since none can bring a higher claim on this ground than those who were Abraham's children naturally. As that plea was rejected, and the evidence of repentance was required of those who had trusted in it, clearly no other natural parentage can authorize a hope of acceptance in the sight of the holy God.

The repentance unto which John baptized the "people prepared for the Lord," was not that grief on account of conscious sin which is often mistaken for repentance by the religious world; that repentance which Jesus gives to his Israel is wrought by godly sorrow. — See 2 Cor. vii. 10. This scriptural repentance is a turning away from that in which the penitent has formerly lived. Hence, those Jews whose trust had been in the legal covenant were not manifest as subjects of this repentance while they yet boasted in their natural relation to Abraham. Evidently the natural mind could not discern the peculiar qualification of those who were prepared for the Lord, else those eminent Jews would have known that they were not the people whom John was sent from God to make ready. On the other hand, if their natural mind could see in themselves this repentance, the saints would have no further warfare in themselves.

While John was by inspiration enabled to discover and reprove the vain confidence of those legalists who trusted in themselves that they were righteous and despised others, he was not yet able to understand the wonderful mystery to which brother Marrs calls attention. He could comprehend the necessity of his work in giving expression to the repentance of his natural brethren the Jews, whose hopeless condemnation under the law forbade their trust in that covenant of works; but he needed a deeper lesson to enable him to see the propriety of the Lord himself receiving baptism at his hands. Jesus explained only that "Thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness." It was indeed a very impressive example, which has by the Spirit been brought home to the experience of many of his doubting and lingering disciples in all the ages since he made Jordan glorious by bowing beneath its waters; but it was more than an example. It was the expression of the whole gospel of divine grace, in which the great Captain of our

salvation through death destroyed him that had the power of death, that is, the devil; and delivered them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage. — Heb. ii. 14, 15. Neither in this ordinance nor in any other action or word of our Lord would we dare to limit his purpose merely to a ceremonial example. Only the blessed Comforter, the Spirit who searches even the deep things of God, can know the fathomless depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God, as contained in every word and deed of our Lord. As he was made under the law of Moses to redeem them that were under that law, so he was made a curse for us. "For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him." — 2 Cor. v. 21. As being holy and sinless in himself, Christ Jesus was and is above all law, and can neither sin nor suffer; but in his unity with the church of his redeemed people "he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors." — Isa. lii. 12. As he was so identified with his people that their sins were justly laid on him, in that relation he must go down into death and be cut off in their transgressions. So he went down into the depth of all the condemnation which rested upon them for whom he died. This was expressed in the figure of baptism in Jordan; and it was then and there assigned by the Lord as his reason for requiring John to baptize him, that "Thus it becometh us."

In taking upon him the form of a servant, Jesus recognized the authority of Moses even as vested in the Scribes and Pharisees; and while denouncing their hypocrisy, he taught obedience to their commandments. — Mathew xxiii. 3. By fulfilling every jot and tittle of that law of a carnal commandment, which was given by Moses, Jesus blotted "out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was con-

trary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross." — Col. ii. 14. To accomplish this work it was needful that he should be made under the law; and it is in this relation to his body, the church, that we understand there was propriety in his being baptized in declaration of his death under the law, and his resurrection by the glory of the Father to that eternal newness of life in which he leads captivity captive, and is glorified with the right hand of Omnipotence in all the glory which he had with the Father before the world was. There is no other being in whom that law is fulfilled in all its infinite perfection; therefore the name of Jesus is exalted above "every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come." As he made himself of no reputation in coming under the law, it was needful that he should declare his death to that law by the divinely authorized ordinance of baptism before he began to preach the gospel of salvation by grace. The repentance unto which he was baptized was the turning away from the legal dispensation, with all its rites, to the gospel kingdom, in which he was about to bring to light that life and immortality which had been hid for ages under the darkness of the night of just condemnation, since sin had entered into the world. In this repentance the Lord Jesus had no sins to confess but the inconceivable burden of the iniquities of his people, which were laid on him by divine justice. In himself he was without sin;

"For he who could for sin atone
Must have no blemish of his own."

It is not said of Jesus that he was baptized "unto the remission of sins." His own explanation of it to John was that "Thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness." It did indeed testify that he turned away from that legal bondage and left its weak and beggarly elements which could not give life. This was the most wonderful display of the superiority of the gospel

dispensation; that he who alone was faultless in the sight of the law, yet resigned all claims to justification on that ground, that he might lead the way in the path of the just, "that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." The righteousness which shines in the Lord Jesus is infinitely superior to the best obedience which could be rendered to the law, since they who are justified in Jesus are forever secure from condemnation, being no longer under the law of sin and death.

The covenant of works which was given to Israel was binding upon all who were born under its provisions; and no Jew could deliver himself from its requirements by any service rendered. It demanded perfect and perpetual obedience; so that he who had fulfilled its every injunction through a lifetime, was doomed to death in his first failure to meet all its demands. Hence it is called the ministration of death and of condemnation. — 2 Cor. iii. 7, 9. In his baptism Jesus turned away from all that gloomy system to the light and liberty of the gospel as embodied in himself. It was by this ordinance that he was made ready to preach the gospel to the poor. Having rendered to the law that perfect honor which was its due, he was now ready to enter upon the work of establishing his own everlasting kingdom by taking out of the way that heavy yoke of legal bondage. In the act of baptism he thus proclaimed the end of the law for righteousness, and the revelation of perfect justification in himself as the fullness of gospel grace.

It is a very limited view of the subject which would see in any word or act of Jesus nothing deeper than the mere ceremony which is visible to the natural eye. The observance of this ordinance by our Lord was the first step in the manifestation of his kingdom. Nothing in the law of Moses required that he should be baptized; but as John was sent directly from God to administer this ordinance, so every

proper subject of it was by the Spirit prepared to receive it. In the case of the sinless Redeemer this was evident from the direct approval expressed on the occasion when the Spirit of God in bodily shape like a dove descended and lighted upon him, and a voice from heaven said, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." The law of Moses derived all its authority from that God who gave it. By the same divine direction John was sent to mark the end of that legal dispensation. "The law and the prophets were until John: since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it." — Luke xvi. 16. The higher glory of our Lord Jesus in his gospel kingdom exceeds the glory of Moses in the law as the day exceeds the night in the light of nature. "And Moses verily was faithful in all his house, as a servant, for a testimony of those things which were to be spoken after; but Christ as a son over his own house; whose house are we, if we hold fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end." — Heb. iii. 5, 6. All this was expressed in the baptism of our Lord by his servant John; for without divine power there was no provision for the abrogation of that Sinai covenant; and while it remained there was no room for the establishment of the kingdom of Christ. Even the perfect obedience of Jesus did not cancel the requirements of the holy law until he poured out his soul unto death, and in his precious blood the sword of infinite justice was "bathed in heaven." Then in this terrible baptism he fulfilled all that was expressed in the sacred ordinance, when he was baptized in Jordan. When the waters closed over him there was the symbol of his death and burial, not merely in the new tomb of Joseph, but in that more dreadful burial where all the waves and all the billows of almighty vengeance covered him in the awful depth of death. Then the sword of justice was satisfied, and the law could

ask nothing more. But this significant ordinance tells of more than all this; for if this were all, then indeed would the gloom of despair rest upon all the earth and heaven. As the burial beneath the wave tells of death to the law, so the rising body of our dying Lord proclaims the resurrection of all the members of his redeemed body; not to that old life of legal bondage, in which they were dead with him when he died for all, but in him they are risen to newness of life. "Therefore we are buried with him into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." — Rom. vi. 4. Under the legal and prophetic dispensations there was only the *promise* of that life which in the gospel day is clearly revealed in the resurrection of our Lord by the glory of the Father. In his baptism that life is manifested in a figure which declares it to be everlasting life, in contrast with that mortality which was under sentence of death. "Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him. For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God." — Rom. vi. 9, 10. This is the glorious truth by which the subjects of his redemption are forever secured against falling under condemnation. They live in Christ Jesus by the power of that same endless life in which their Redeemer was raised by the glory of the Father; and as he has redeemed them from their bondage under the law, they can never again transgress its injunctions. Thus in Christ they are risen above all which could condemn them. This was testified in the baptism of our Lord Jesus in Jordan, when the waters of that river of judgment closed over his body, and gave way before his triumphant power as he rose from that liquid tomb. There in a figure divinely approved, our Deliverer asserted his power to lay down his life and to take it again. — John

x. 18. In the privilege of following his example, he has given to us the same approval in the answer of a good conscience toward God. So, in every step in which we follow him our Lord has fixed the great reward of his divine pleasure, which is unknown even to the subjects of his redeeming grace so long as they walk in disobedience to his commandment and fail to follow him.

In his baptism the Lord Jesus turned away from all the attractions and allurements of earth, and became obedient unto death; so he led the way for all who love him. In no other way can any man be his disciple; and in no other way does he accept the claim of any who profess to love him. The test as Jesus has declared it is, "He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him." — John xiv. 21.

Editorial by Elder W. L. Beebe November 15, 1886.

OBITUARIES

GEORGE WASHINGTON PAGE

Brother George Page was born April 10, 1881 and passed away February 20, 1965. He was 84 years old at the time of his death. He was married November 4, 1914, to the former Cora Lee Moorefield who preceded him in death by about one year. His remaining survivors are three sons, Charles Clarence Page of 311 Virginia Hills Avenue, Alexandria, Virginia; William Lester Page of Route 1, Pelham, North Carolina; and George Bethel Page of Route 2, Ruffin, North Carolina.

Brother Page united with Dan River Primitive Baptist Church on August 25, 1940, and remained a faithful member until his passing, always attending his church meeting whenever his health permitted.

At the time of his death he was living with his son, Bethel, and his devoted family. May the Lord in grace and mercy reconcile his children and loved ones to His sovereign will. The Lord knows in infinite wisdom all the days of our sojourn here below. When He calls, each of us shall answer Him, but we must, each of us, await all the days of our appointed time until our change comes.

His funeral was held at Dan River Primitive Baptist Church by Elder H. W. Wray and

he was laid to rest in the Mt. Carmel Cemetery.

BE IT RESOLVED, That a copy of this memorial be prepared for our church record, a copy sent to his family, and a copy sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication. Done by order of the church at her conference meeting the fourth Saturday night in March, 1965.

Coley S. Strader

CORA LEE MOOREFIELD PAGE

Sister Cora Lee Moorefield Page was born May 31, 1888. She was married to George Washington Page November 14, 1914. This union was blessed with three sons, Charles, William and George, who with her husband survive. As far as the writer knows she lived most of her life in the Mayfield Community near Ruffin, N. C. Sister Page having finished the chartered course that was set before her by an all wise God, departed this life December 19, 1964.

To the family, friends and relatives who are left to mourn her passing, we can truthfully say we are glad they mourn; it would be sad indeed if the passing of a loved one did not touch the hearts of loved ones left behind and cause them to mourn. The writer not having known her personally, has had to rely on friends and neighbors concerning her spiritual life, and her hope of glory in the world to come. From information gathered she was a firm believer in salvation by grace and a sovereign God who worketh His will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth and none can stay His hand or question His works.

Sister Page professed a hope in eternal glory and was received into fellowship and baptized as a member of Dan River Primitive Baptist Church (date unknown). We, at Dan River Church, believe Sister Page was the possessor of a sweet hope given her by our dear Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. This hope given by our dear Saviour is more precious than anything this world has to offer. We hope the Lord will reconcile the family and other loved ones that in her passing was the consummation of that glorious hope, the which she will need no more; for when a person receives those things hoped for, they have no more need of hope.

Her funeral was conducted by her dear pastor Elder D. V. Spangler. The beautiful floral offerings were evidence of the esteem in which she was held in the community. Her body was laid to rest in the Mt. Carmel Cemetery to await the second coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. It is requested a copy of this be spread on the church records,

a copy to the family and a copy to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Respectfully submitted,
James Carter

MRS. GRACE E. JONES

My beloved mother, Sister Grace E. Jordan Jones, was born April 15, 1886, and passed away Christmas eve, 1964, in Inglewood, California, of gangrene of the right foot. She was the daughter of Elder and Sister F. M. Jordan and the sister-in-law of Elders George J. and John Q. Jones, all of Iowa, now deceased. At the time of her death, she was a member of Liberty Old School Predestinarian Baptist Church, in Los Angeles.

In her teens she had an experience of grace and was given a blessed hope that when she was taken from this strife-torn sick world she would be with her Lord in a timeless eternity. In 1905, she was married to Jesse R. Jones who preceded her in death, and who was also a member of an Old Baptist family. In 1907, to this union was born an only child, the sad writer of this obituary, on her mother's birthday. In 1910, mother and father united with the church. They loved so much and served until their deaths thirty-six years apart.

Besides myself, mother leaves to mourn her death, two brothers: Grover Jordan, Downey, California; Bro. Stacey Jordan of Grinnell, Iowa; one sister: Sister Velma F. Fugate of Palestine, Teaxs, whose letters some years ago appeared in the *Signs* signed "A little sister from Texas"; a sister-in-law, Sister Dorothy Jordan of Hollywood, California; her church brethren and a host of friends and acquaintances, for to know my dear mother was to love her.

Mother was a semi-invalid from 1958 until her death last December. She never complained of her suffering and was many times not really able to attend church, but wanted to go and I took her. The preaching of our beloved pastor, Elder O. F. Dearing, was her joy and consolation. Her staunch belief in predestination, election, etc., was always confirmed so ably in his preaching. Her fortitude and sweet spirit were an inspiration to all who knew her, most of all to me. Her love for, her devotion to, and her pride in me were exceptional. Her innate dignity and kindness were as much a part of her as her sweet smile. She was a woman of grace, aptly named, and a Child of Jehovah, a subject of grace. She loved her Saviour and her church beyond telling.

From the fall of 1930 until the fall of 1940, we were privileged and blessed to enjoy the fellowship and hospitality of the Baptists on the East Coast. We lived in Philadelphia and New York when I attended Library School

at Drexel and Columbia. The preaching of Elders Lefferts, Vaughn, Topping, Bellows, Ker, and others fed our hungry souls.

My darling mother and I had a wonderful life together and I know that in that world to which her soul and spirit have gone, there are no crosses to bear, no burdens to share. Her passing has left a lonely void. God has been so good to us, guided and protected us all these years. Were it not for the grace of God, the blessing of His Holy Spirit and His everlasting arm beneath me during mother's illness and death, and my own illness at the same time, I could not have survived. For some reason known only to Him, He has brought me through deep waters. Praise His Holy Name! In Christian love,

Helen Jane Jones

MRS. BONNIE COLVETT

Mrs. Bonnie Colvett, wife of Deacon D. C. Colvett, was born August 16, 1889, and died October 5, 1964. She had been a member of the Primitive Baptist Church for twenty years.

Sister Colvett leaves her husband and three step-children: Shannon, James and Emma Colvett, to mourn their loss. The church at Bordeaux, Nashville, Tenn. misses her presence very much, but we feel that our loss is her gain.

Funeral services were conducted by her pastor and Elder J. N. Darnell, who tried to speak words of comfort to the bereaved, telling of the wonderful works of God's grace.

Written by her pastor,
Elder R. L. Biggs

OPHA C. ROBERSON

RESOLVED, That we, the Union Primitive Baptist Church pay this tribute of respect to Sister Opha C. Roberson, one of our long beloved members.

She departed this life April 14, 1965, at the home of her dear daughter and son-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. Norman Pace, near Haile, Louisiana. She was born July 27, 1880, and was united in marriage to Brother Sam Roberson, who died years ago. She is survived by one son, Bill Roberson, Monroe, La., and four daughters: Mrs. N. A. Pace, Haile, La.; Mrs. Mittie Walker, Monroe, La.; Mrs. Ruth Trantham, Monroe, La.; and Mrs. O. W. Parks, Refugio, Texas; three brothers: W. B. Haile, Sr., Haile, La.; Sam Haile, Monroe, La.; and Howard Haile, El Dorado, Ark. Surviving also are one sister, Mrs. Emmett Maroney, Marion, La., and fourteen grandchildren, eighteen great grandchildren, and three great great grandchildren.

Sister Robertson was a devoted and humble sister in the faith, but she had many tribulations, having lost her dear husband and several of her children; and later became weak and afflicted, which continued several years; but she was given so much courage and patience to endure it, until it was marvelous to observe. She was a member of Union Church and was greatly loved by the brethren and sisters, having joined in October, 1911.

Sister Fannie Pace, her daughter, and her devoted husband, Norman Pace, devotedly cared for her for the several years of her great affliction, for which they are to be commended. We feel that Sister Opha is much better off, for she is free from suffering. She left fruitful evidence that she had been given the victory through Jesus Christ over death, sin, sickness, and all trouble. Her spirit has gone to God who gave it. May God richly bless all who mourn her passing.

The writer and Elder David E. Turner spoke at her funeral in the presence of a very large and devoted crowd, with many beautiful flowers. May the Lord ever be with us all. Your unworthy brother in hope.

R. W. Rhodes

MRS. MAGGIE ESTELLE (SMITH)
McLAWHORN

Our Heavenly Father in his infinite wisdom has seen fit to remove from our midst our beloved sister, Mrs. Maggie Estelle McLawhorn (nee Smith) on July 15, 1964, at the age of 63. Her funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder A. P. Mewborn, and Elder Joseph Sawyer.

Sister Maggie possessed the qualities of a noble woman. She was generous, gracious and kind, and eager to lend a helping hand to those in need. She had no children of her own, yet was a wonderful mother to her stepson, two foster daughters, and a foster son; each of whom esteemed her for this kindness. And her husband was blessed to have her as a devoted helpmate.

This dear sister united with Hancocks Church by experience and baptism about thirty-eight years ago, and was a true and faithful member as long as she lived. She was sure to greet her brethren with a warm smile and a hearty handshake, born of the love she had for them. She was a firm and steadfast believer in salvation by grace, and she loved to talk of Jesus and his wonderful love. She said that she felt so weak and unworthy in this sinful world, and could only trust that she would be made rich in His love and grace. We miss our dear sister, but feel that our loss is her eternal gain. May

God comfort and sustain the bereaved family. Done by order of Hancocks Church while in conference November 17, 1964.

Elder A. P. Mewborn, Moderator
Nina B. McLawhorn, Clerk

ISABEL (OAKLEY) COX

On September 3, 1963, Mrs. Isabel Cox (nee Oakley), our beloved and highly esteemed sister, was called from her earthly existence at the age of 73. She suffered a long, painful illness, which culminated in death. Her funeral was conducted by her pastor, Elder A. P. Mewborn and Elder Joseph Sawyer.

Sister Cox was the wife of the late Franklin L. Cox; and of this union four children survive: Mrs. Alice Manning, Mrs. Dorothy Barrow, Mrs. Myrtle Ruth Haddock, and a son, Berline Cox.

Sister Cox was a firm believer in salvation by grace. She united with Hancocks Church in August, 1938, and was a true and faithful member; one who loved her church. Her tender smile manifested the pleasure she felt when mingling with her brethren. She was a gentle, quiet, unassuming person, a devoted wife and mother, a true friend and a wonderful neighbor.

We miss this dear sister, but feel that our loss is her eternal gain. We bow in humble submission to an all wise and merciful Saviour. May He comfort the bereaved family, and may His blessings be theirs.

Done by order of Hancocks Church while in conference November 17, 1964.

Elder A. P. Mewborn, Moderator
Nina B. McLawhorn, Clerk

SIMEUL LOFTIN

On January 11, 1964, death claimed our dear brother, Simuel Loftin, who had been a member of our body since August, 1924. Brother Loftin was a gentle person who had been afflicted with a malady all his life. He was a familiar figure to the whole countryside, and all who knew him regarded him with compassion. His gentleness and humbleness created a kindred spirit in those with whom he came in contact. "God moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform."

Brother Loftin will be greatly missed, but the writer feels that he heard the summons, "Child, your Father calls, Come home."

Written by order of Hancocks Church while in conference November 17, 1964.

Elder A. P. Mewborn, Moderator
Nina B. McLawhorn, Clerk

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

It was the sovereign will of our merciful God to call from time our dear Sister in Christ, Mrs. Hattie (Burns) Wade, widow of the late Brother S. F. Wade. She was born September 16, 1890, and departed January 25, 1965. She was baptized into the fellowship of Providence Baptist Church, Putnam County, W. Va. many years ago, by Elder H. J. Bird. She loved the courts of the Lord's house, and her rejoicing was in the doctrine and songs of grace. Her hope was grounded in Jesus' blood and righteousness. Her life was adorned with the grace of humility, esteeming others better than self. She was a good wife, a gracious mother, and kind neighbor. She peacefully fell asleep January 25, 1965. Her health had not been good for some years, but final illness was of short duration from a coronary condition.

Funeral services were conducted at Hamlin, W. Va., by Elder Veldon B. Linn, who was blessed to preach Christ the way, the truth, the resurrection and the life. Her brethren and sisters joined in singing some of the hymns she loved so well. Burial was in the Wade Cemetery, near Yawkey, W. Va. She leaves to mourn, two daughters: Mrs. Doshia McClure, Garrets Bend, W. Va. and Mrs. Ruth Adkins, Winfield, W. Va. and a step-daughter, Mrs. Beulah Chaney, Hurricane, W. Va.; three sons, Toney R., Luther E., and Minister Jesse F. Wade, Yawkey, W. Va.; three sisters, Mrs. Nettie Reynolds, Mrs. Rosie Salmon, and Mrs. Dollie Salmon, Hamlin, W. Va.; one brother, Walter Burns, Dayton, Ohio. Surviving also are fourteen grandchildren and ten great grandchildren.

BE IT RESOLVED, That we, the Providence Church, deeply feel the great loss which we have sustained in the passing of our precious sister and mother in Israel. Her life among us was a great inspiration and strength to us. We desire abounding grace to enable us to bow in humble submission to the holy will of our God, witnessing that He doeth his sovereign will in all things; and that what He doeth is ever right. We miss her so much, but we grieve not as those who have no hope, for we feel that our loss is her eternal gain. She died in the full triumph of a living faith in Christ, and the blessed hope of immortality. May God visit reconciling grace upon those who mourn. And

RESOLVED, That a copy of these resolutions be made a part of our church records; a copy be tendered the family; and a copy be sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Done by order of Providence Church in conference.

H. J. Bird, Pastor
V. L. Byrnside, Clerk

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

Sister Millie Burnett Perkins died in Memorial Hospital after a long illness. She was the daughter of the late Jabes and Nancy Emerson Adams, and was born in Pittsylvania County, Virginia, April 6, 1886. She had made her home in Danville, Virginia for many years, and had been a member of the Bradley Road Primitive Baptist Church since 1908.

Her husband died July 23, 1937. Survivors include a son, Lee P. Burnett, by a former marriage, and a number of nieces and nephews.

The funeral was conducted from Barker Funeral Home by her pastor, Elder H. W. Wray, with interment in Mt. View Cemetery.

We miss Sister Perkins very much, but we feel that our loss is her gain. She was well read in the Scriptures, and manifested a strong hope in the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. She attended her meetings regularly, and visited other churches when she could. She was a strong believer in salvation by grace, and grace alone, giving the Lord all the praise. I knew her for a long time, and it hurt when she passed on to the reward prepared for her. Written by Mary L. Patterson.

Elder H. W. Wray, Moderator
R. T. Holley, Clerk

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

WHEREAS, God in his infinite wisdom has seen fit to remove from us by death Brother Earnie G. Blackman, who was a faithful member of Oak Forest Church, and an humble brother who loved people; and who talked a lot about the love of God.

He was liberated to preach in the churches of the Seven Mile Association. We all loved Brother Blackman, and we, together with his family whom he loved very much, dreaded to give him up; but God, who does all things well, called him to rest until the resurrection morning, when He shall awake in the likeness of Jesus, and dwell in the city of God forever.

His family did all they could for him, and loved him; but God loved him and called him to himself. May we all bow in humble submission to God, and say, "Not our will, but God's be done." May God bless Brother Blackman's family.

Elder W. D. Godwin conducted his funeral at Hickory Grove Church.

BE IT RESOLVED, That a copy of these resolutions be sent to the family; one written in the Union Book; and one sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Done by order of the Black River Union in conference at Reedy Prong Church on Saturday before the fifth Sunday in March, 1964.

Elder Lester E. Lee, Moderator
Elder W. D. Godwin, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 133

DANVILLE, VA., AUGUST, 1965

NO. 8

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 8/65
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

"THE LAW OF THE LORD"
(Ps. 19:7)

I dreamed of saying to my Father
I would be willing to go
Where a certain Elder was going,
On leaving this world below.

On the following morning my heart
Went out to him in love
For I felt that his ultimate home
Would be in heaven above.

Then on another night I dreamed
He passed by my dwelling,
And of my felt love to him,
To him I was telling.

He inquired the cause of this,
Speaking with fluency,
And I replied I hoped it was
The love of God in me.

When I my answer had given
He in sweet accord,
Did utter these Scripture words:
"The law of the Lord."

This law of the Lord verily
Is the law of love,
On the wings of which we hope
To be carried home above.

I heard the beloved Elder preach
When I was just a boy,
And on the day I was baptized,
I heard him with joy.

His stammering tongue was loosed
To preach the precious Word;
Later he departed to be with Christ,
His ever blessed Lord.

C. W. Vass
Elizabeth City, North Carolina

A PRECIOUS THING

807 Pope Street,
Memphis, Tenn. 38122

Dear Brother Wood:

The communication between believers of the truth is a precious thing, and is, I believe, the real purpose of the *Signs of the Times* being published, so I am sending you two letters for your approval . . .

I have not met Brother Stewart, but I enjoyed his letter. I have known Clover Wall ever since I joined the church in 1936. She is a strong believer and I have received many good letters from her, and I believe this one will be enjoyed by all who know her. I wish that she may be blessed to go to the church. There is such a oneness there in the fellowship; a union, or like a family. Clover's father was a minister, (Elder R. M. Brann) and her mother a saint.

Lucille Young

IMPRESSED TO WRITE SISTER YOUNG

A225 Emerson Street,
Winona, Miss. 38967

Dear Sister Young:

I hope you will pardon my presumption in writing you, a stranger in the flesh, but I hope not in the Spirit.

I have read your letter in the *Signs of the Times*, and feel impressed to write you for some reason, and I hope it is of the Lord. I am a regular reader of the *Signs*, and through the medium of this good periodical my soul is both watered and fed. Each month it comes to me as good news from a far

country. May it be the Lord's will to continue to bless its gifted editors and able contributors to continue in this good work.

Through the mouth of the prophet the Lord has said, "I leave in the midst of thee an afflicted and poor people, and they shall (not maybe) trust in the name of the Lord." (Zeph. 3:12)

This is the experience of everyone that has been taught in the school of God's love and grace. Yes, God's little ones are both poor and rich. Poor in so far as saving themselves, but rich in faith toward our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. In a spiritual sense, every one that will ever be saved is first made poor, in order that he might be made rich. And we are not to marvel at this, for our blessed Lord himself for our sake became poor that through his poverty we might be made rich. As the poet said:

"Poor and afflicted Lord are thine;
Unfit among the great to shine,
But though the world may think it strange
They would not with the world exchange."

Not only is this true but the Lord's people must be made blind before they can see; they must be made sick in order that they may be made well; must be unclothed before they are clothed with the righteousness of Christ; must both hunger and thirst before they can be filled; must mourn before they can be comforted; yea, they must die that they might live. The Psalmist David said, "Blessed are the people that know the joyful sound, they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thine countenance." Surely, surely the gospel is the best sound.

I hope I have not worried you with this imperfect scribble. I am, I hope, a servant for Christ's sake.

Louis Stewart

LETTER TO
BROTHER AND SISTER YOUNG

Rt. 3,
Martin, Tenn.

Dear Lucille and Ed.:

I have been trying to get a few lines off to you all week, to tell you that Elder Darnell is home from the hospital, and doing very well; and that Elder Perkins is doing as well as can be expected since his stroke. He can use his arm and leg a little. Elder Paul Poyner is preaching at Mayfield for Brother Perkins.

. . . Yes, dying is all around us, and our people are getting fewer, but somewhere as long as this old world stands there will be witnesses to preach the whole truth, and some to hear it. I am glad God has given your son peace that the world can never give, and has guided his footsteps to a home here in this sin cursed earth. I have wondered why so many believers never go home to their friends. Some people believe that water baptism saves them, others that one must go before people and confess Christ, and pay tithes to receive blessings. But to me it came without money and without price. I am so unworthy, yet my mind always goes back many years ago when the children were little.

I was going about my everyday's work as usual. I believed there was a God like I believed Washington was the first president, for I had heard about Him; and had heard singing and preaching all my life. As I look back now to that day, it seemed different to all other days: I seemed to be at a standstill. Anyhow, late in the evening the children were playing in the yard waiting for their Dad to come. I laid down on the foot of the bed, and must have fallen asleep: a great storm came up, the black clouds were rolling, and I seemed to be in them. I began falling down, down in a black pit of hell; and I was so powerless to do anything. I knew it was my doom, and I could not do one thing. As I was sinking, a voice seemed to whisper, "I am able to save."

No sooner than I heard that voice, I was caught up, and seemed to be in the bosom of Christ; and was so happy.

I got up praising Him that saved me from destruction. I went out on the back porch, perhaps to see the storm clouds, but none were there. The moon had come up, and it was the most beautiful night I ever saw. The trees seemed to be bowing down, praising God: everything seemed to be praising Him.

I went on in this state quite awhile, and I thought all my troubles were over. Scriptures that I had heard all my life came to me, and seemed so plain — the true church and everything, I had no doubt where it was, and who they were. I had no Bible so every chance I got I read mama's and papa's; I would only open it and there were the scriptures that confirmed my belief. The power of God and the true people of God were so plain to me. The association was to be held at Concord, and I thought I would get ready and go home to my friends, and tell them what Christ had done for me. I could hardly wait — I would be baptized. Oh, yes, I fixed it all up, and it would be so easy, so wonderful all the days of my life. But you see I have had many doubts and fears, and this is the first time I have ever told this. I guess I let mama and papa see many times in many ways that I believed, for when Christmas came they gave me a Bible. I wish I could have made them happy and joined the church; but it has not been my lot.

I try to be reconciled; and many times since I have rejoiced in my Saviour in the still of the night. Some days when I seemed bogged down in despair, when I least expect it, hope and love comes to me in this wilderness of woe. The time of despair is so long, and I ask myself, "Is it all gone? Is there anything to it, or is it all in my mind?"

I know one night not too long ago, I dreamed I was going up a high mountain — I could not see the top, and thought I would never make it. I kept going along; and saw a deep chasm, a place I knew I could not cross, but I went on, or was carried over it. Then

I heard the most beautiful singing; I knew it was our people singing those beautiful songs, but it was more beautiful than I had ever heard. I was so happy, for I felt I would join them soon, since I was getting nearer and nearer. But I awoke and was happy, yet sad that I awoke; I wished so much to get to the top and join them in their singing.

Well, you see how I have poured out my heart to you. When I began this, I had no thought of doing so. Now I ask myself, if I should send it. Will it be of any interest or do any good? Have I given all the praise to God to whom it belongs? What am I to even speak of his Holy Name; or to ever doubt and worry over how everything seems to be going? . . . I know whatever comes to pass, God is still God of the whole earth; and his ways are not our ways. I guess the trouble is that we judge God by man's ways; and that won't do. I understand so little, and can only cry, "Oh God, help me and all your people."

How could we get along without Him? Many times we are struck down, half dead, and we fall by the wayside, then the good Saviour comes and picks us up and puts a new song in our mouth. Yes, the Lord has been so good to us all.

Your friends,
Raymond and Clover Wall

(Word from Sister Young on June 18th said that Elder Darnell is much improved, and that Elder Perkins is able to get around some with a walker after his stroke and coronary thrombosis. We will be glad to learn that they both are continuing to improve. — J. D. W.)

THE FULFILLMENT OF THE SCRIPTURES

By Elder H. M. Curry

I suppose that every one who professes to believe the Bible at all, looks for the fulfillment of the prophecies. To what quarter then are we to look for

this fulfillment? How can those who deny predestination, either in part or in whole, ever expect the exact, timely and certain fulfillment of any or all of the prophecies of the divine oracles? God has declared the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand and I will do all my pleasure. Part at least of this declaration he has made known unto us by the mouths of his prophets as recorded in the holy Scriptures. The events thus foretold must certainly have been foreordained or predestinated, and therefore must be fulfilled, each in its time and season. The Saviour said, "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my word shall not pass, until all be fulfilled."

When God says a thing shall come to pass, does he mean that he will bring it to pass? When he says a thing shall be done, does he not pledge his word for its performance? Were the prophecies of the Scriptures uttered upon any other authority than the authority of God's decree? Do they rest upon any vicissitude of time for their fulfillment that God's decrees do not embrace? Would mere foreknowledge, or bare permission warrant or even justify the expression, "It shall come to pass?" or the expression "Shall," in any sense of the word? In this part of the country people read and notice Hick's weather forecasts. When such changes come as have been prophesied, they will say, "Hicks hit it this time;" when the forecasts fail, they say, "Hicks missed it this time." Are we to look upon God's prophecies in this way? Are we to say, when we see the Scriptures fulfilled in this thing, God hit it this time? or when we fail to see them fulfilled in that thing, God missed it this time.

Are we to treat his prophecies as mere prognostications? One would say, O no, God knew all these things would come to pass, and so he was kind enough and thoughtful enough to tell us of them beforehand. This is a very puerile makeshift, a very fallacious and deceptive

subterfuge, and involves the one accepting it in a difficulty far more serious and ungodly than he supposes the one to be which he is trying to evade, to wit, God's decree of predestination; for if God knew that an event would transpire, that event is inevitable, that is, it cannot fail to come to pass exactly as foreknown; if inevitable, then it has been determined, and if determined, who determined it? If God did not, who did? The difficulty that I meet here, is an absolutely determined future, and either no determining power or some determining power outside of God, and independent of him. This is fatalism, and the one accepting such a theory is a fatalist in the fullest sense of that word. So here he is plunged into the very thing which he flattered himself that he was avoiding. In endeavoring to shun an imaginary Scylla, he has fallen into a real Charybdis.

How often do we come upon the expression in the New Testament, "This was done that the Scriptures might be fulfilled." When Herod sent forth and killed the little children in Bethlehem and all the coasts thereof, it was said then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Jeremiah the prophet, saying, "In Ramah there was a voice heard, lamentation, and weeping and great mourning, Rachel weeping for her children, and would not be comforted because they are not." Suppose Herod had not sent forth and killed the little children, then the words of Jeremiah would not have been fulfilled; if his word should fail in one thing, what confidence would his prophecies be entitled to in anything? But it is not Jeremiah's word which is at stake here, it is God's word that must be fulfilled. Herod's persecution also caused the flight into Egypt, and this was done that the Scripture might be fulfilled, "Out of Egypt have I called my Son." On the return from Egypt, notwithstanding Joseph had been warned of God to take the young child and his mother and go into the land of Israel, he through unbelief,

fearing Archelaus, turned aside and dwelt in Nazareth, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophets, "He shall be called a Nazarene." Here not only the wicked persecution by Herod, but also the unbelief of Joseph alike fulfilled the Scriptures.

When the time arrived that Jesus should be betrayed into the hands of wicked men, the betrayer was at hand, not as one who accidentally turned up in time of the emergency, but one who had been foretold by prophecy. David had given a pen picture of him hundreds of years before. It had also been said by the Christ that one of the twelve should betray him. Not only was the man marked out by prophecy who should do this, but it had also been foretold how much the traitor should receive for his work; and also what should be finally done with the money. The son of man truly went as it was written of him. He was delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, and when Herod and Pilate and the Gentiles and the people of Israel were gathered together against him, they were gathered to do whatsoever God's hand and God's counsel determined before to be done. (Acts 4:27, 28)

When the Saviour was crucified, he was put to death between two thieves. This was done that the Scripture might be fulfilled which said, He was numbered with the transgressors. Suppose there had been no thieves or transgressors, how then could the Scriptures have been fulfilled? It was the custom to break the legs of those who were put to death by crucifixion, but on this occasion they broke the legs of the thieves, but did not break the legs of Christ. This was done that the Scriptures might be fulfilled which said, "Not a bone of him shall be broken." This prophecy was fulfilled in its reference to the literal body of Christ, but it still remains in force in its relation to his spiritual body, and must be fulfilled to the utmost in this also. So this proph-

ecy warrants the eternal security of all the redeemed family, for we are members of his body and of his flesh and of his bones; so not a bone of him shall indeed be broken. Instead of breaking his legs according to the custom and the request of the Jews, they pierced his side with a spear. This was done that the Scripture might be fulfilled, "They shall look upon him whom they pierced." When in his last agony he said, "I thirst," they in their fiendish cruelty, gave him vinegar to drink. This was done that the Scripture might be fulfilled, "They gave me vinegar to drink." And after all, when they came to dispose of his raiment, they gambled for that, in order to fulfill the Scripture, "They parted my raiment among them, and for my vesture did they cast lots." In the most exact way, the Scriptures were fulfilled in the life and death of Christ, so that it may well be said, He died for our sins according to the Scriptures.

Men are saved to fulfill the Scriptures. "Therefore the redeemed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion," is a prophecy that must be fulfilled; but for it to be fulfilled, the redeemed of the Lord must return and come to Zion. This prophecy cannot be satisfied as long as one for whom Christ died, is away from Zion. "All that the Father giveth me shall come unto me," saith the Son. The righteousness, wisdom, power and grace of God are all engaged to fulfill these words, therefore there is no power or contingency that can ever interfere with the timely and triumphant victory of all the election of grace over every enemy. On the day of Pentecost, when that great number of people cried out, "Men and brethren what shall we do?" was exemplified in the fulfillment of prophecy. A great number of these men were Jews, those who only a few days before had crucified the Son of God with wicked hands: they had spit upon him, had called him Beelzebub, the prince of devils; and to express their resolution never to re-

pent, they said, "Let his blood be upon us and our children." But their obduracy could not hold out — God's prophecy must be fulfilled. The redeemed of the Lord must return and come to Zion. When Abel offered unto the Lord a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, this prophecy lay at the root of the matter. In the days of Seth, when men began to call upon the name of the Lord, the words of the prophet, "Therefore the redeemed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion," was being fulfilled in them. One might say that this prophecy had not been written in the days of Seth. It had not been written upon parchment, but it had been written in the book of God's decrees, and experienced in the hearts and consciences of men. All the prophecies of Jehovah are from eternity, and are yea and amen in Christ. Every poor pilgrim, whose anxious heart and weary footsteps seek that city whose builder and maker is God, is upheld, forwarded and guided on his journey by the immutable decree that the redeemed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion; and through the certain fulfillment of God's word, he shall reach the holy city and rest forever in her sacred palaces.

Men are lost to fulfill the Scriptures. Is this a hard saying? Can you not hear it? I am not responsible for the saying, however hard it may appear to be. The Saviour said to the Father in speaking of the twelve, "All of them have I kept, and none of them is lost but the son of perdition, that the Scriptures might be fulfilled." (John 16:12) Had Judas not been lost, the Scriptures would have been broken. The thoughtless and presumptuous man would say, If Judas had to do what he did, he would have been exempt from crime; he would have had no sin. Upon what ground would he have been without sin? What law would exempt him? According to whose judgment would he be innocent? State the law and name the judge, and if it be the law of God and God himself be the judge, then I will agree that the con-

clusion is the correct one. Jesus, who is himself the embodiment of all law, and the judge both of the living and dead, said with regard to this matter in reply to Pilate, "Thou couldst have no power at all against me except it were given thee from above: therefore he that delivered me unto thee hath the greater sin." Instead of the judgment of Christ in this matter concurring with the judgment of men, that under such circumstances a man would be without sin, he declared that for this very reason, he had the greater sin. Here is a question of responsibility for some of the champions of that cause to settle. And here is another one: Christ said to the Jews, "Behold, I send unto you prophets, and wise men, and scribes: and some of them ye shall kill and crucify; and some of them shall ye scourge in your synagogues, and persecute from city to city, that upon you may come all the righteous blood shed upon the earth, from the blood of righteous Abel unto the blood of righteous Zacharias, whom ye slew between the temple and the altar." (Matthew 23:34, 35) The Saviour here declares that these men should fill up the measures of their fathers. He also designates the crimes that they should commit in order to do this, not only generic crime but specific crimes; and the end to be answered thereby was that upon them might come all the righteous blood that had been shed upon the earth, from the blood of Abel to the blood of their most recent victim.

Now upon what principle of justice and judgment could four thousand years of crime be required at the hand of one generation? Let some of the champions of free agency solve this problem from their favorite standpoint of accountability. I have been accused of denying human responsibility, but in this as in many other things, I have been willfully misrepresented. I have only denied that the atonement of Christ left any responsibility upon his people; and further, I have denied the

foolish, imaginary, sentimental and ungrounded conclusion that predestination relieves men of accountability and acquits them of crime upon principles of equity and justice, and that therefore in order to be accountable, a man must be what men are pleased to call a free agent. I have here referred to these things to show that in the fulfillment of God's decrees according to his word, a deeper principle of justice is involved, than human standards set forth, or human pleaders comprehended.

Again it is said of some in the divine record, that they were before of old ordained to this condemnation. Now if they were before of old ordained to condemnation, when the condemnation came, did it not come in fulfillment of a decree? Who made the decree? Some would say that God made it, but he made it upon conditions. This they think necessary in order that the character of God stand above reproach in the judgment of men. They admit that the decree of election unto life is unconditional, but that the ordination of condemnation is conditional, and that the subjects of this decree are endowed with a free agency whereby they are permitted to work out their condemnation. This notion involves a monstrous absurdity, and that absurdity is this, That God has denied to man the freedom and ability to righteousness whereby he may be saved, but that he has endowed man with that freedom and ability whereby he may and can work out a sure and foreknown condemnation. And this is resorted to in the vain imagination that the character of God is thus vindicated from the charge of unrighteousness, and he justified in his ways to man. Peter in speaking of certain ones, says they were appointed to disobedience and stumbling. (I Peter 2:8) Now if they were appointed to disobedience, must they not fulfill the appointment? This they must do, even though God send them strong delusions to accomplish it. (2 Thess. 2:11)

Many are ready to exclaim now, If

this be true, who is to be blamed? This is an old question, and I will give an old and authoritative answer. I will first state the question in its ancient form: "Thou wilt say unto me then, Why doth he yet find fault? for who hath resisted his will?" Reader, do you recognize your question? If you have never seen it before, if you will read the ninth chapter of Romans, you will find it. I will now give the ancient, time honored answer: "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 honor and another unto dishonor?" Do you recognize the answer? If not, read the ninth chapter of Romans and you will find it. This is not your question; this is not a question of this age only. This question was asked two thousand years ago. Neither is this my answer. This is God's answer, and I am satisfied with it. This question comprehends everything that the cavilers of all ages have urged against the doctrine of God's sovereign decrees. Is not the answer of inspiration plain and decisive? If the solution of this problem is to be found in exceptions to God's decrees, and in making excuses for him, would he not have put a very different answer in mouth of his inspired apostle? Is not this the place above all places for such an excuse to be given? Is not this question sprung here for the express purpose of giving a decisive and unequivocal answer? Is not such an answer given? Shall we receive it as final and decisive, as coming from God himself, or shall we seek another, which, although necessarily false, is more pleasing to our pride and presumption, and more acceptable to ignorance and unbelief?

The unbelief of the Jews fulfilled the Scriptures. It is recorded by John that, although he had done many miracles, yet they believed not on him: That the saying of Esaias, the prophet, might be fulfilled: "Lord, who hath believed our

report? and to whom hath the arm of the Lord revealed? Therefore they could not believe, because Esaias said again, He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart; that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, that I might heal them." (John 12:37-40) Here it is expressly stated that the reason they could not believe, was that Esaias had fortold their blindness and hardness, and further that this blindness and hardness of heart was given from God. The object of this blindness and hardening was to prevent them from being converted that he might heal them. This language seems to imply that there might have been a possibility of their believing and being converted, had not God's decree intercepted and cut them off.

Heaven and earth shall pass away, said Christ, but my word shall not pass away until all be fulfilled. Whatever the divine record says shall be, must be. The same authority that says, The redeemed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion, has also said, The wicked shall do wickedly, and none of the wicked shall understand. The same book that says, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me," has also said, "Evil men and seducers shall wax worse worse and worse." The same God that opened Lydia's heart, that she attended to the things spoken by Paul, hardened Pharaoh's heart that he would not let the people go. The same God that works in his people both to will and to do of his good pleasure, has also put it in the hearts of wicked rulers to fulfill his will, and to agree and give their kingdom to the beast, until the words of God be fulfilled. (Rev. 17:17)

When Paul was arraigned by the Jews for preaching what was to them an obnoxious and destructive doctrine, his defense was that he had preached nothing but what Moses and the prophets said should come. If I am censured for what I have herein written, I have but one defense to make, and that is,

I have only written what Moses and the prophets and Christ and the apostles have said should be.

(The above is copied from the *Signs* of January 15, 1900. We feel that the subject is presented clearly and is worth the close attention of our readers. — J. D. W.)

TESTIMONY OF
MRS. MINERVA MacLEAN

11 Talbot Road, North, Lambeth, Ontario
February 12, 1963

Many times we wonder, why! I have had plenty of time these last fifteen years to wonder about many things; and to wonder, why!

My dear companion and I were united in marriage on September 20th, 1916, in a ceremony conducted by Elder J. B. Slauson. We had a happy married life together, until February 1950 when my dear one had a heart attack and was confined to bed. In the same month he was afflicted by a stroke. During the five years of his illness of body and mental suffering many nights I was unable to sleep or rest, and again I wondered why! Why should such things happen to loved ones. I would rise from my bed to search for comfort from my Bible, and it always seemed such a closed book to me. And again I would wonder why! However I did wonder and did find, after searching, a good deal of comfort from the Psalms. I would pray that maybe some day I would be given an eye to see, and an ear to hear. I knew that at times I felt rebellious, and when extremely worried I had not patience I should have had, I would feel that if only I could take my sorrows and worries to the Lord in prayer, and leave them there, everything would be all right. But that was not the way it was to be. No matter what I did it seemed I still had my burden on my shoulders. I oft times wished "I had the wings of a dove, that I might fly away, and be at rest."

My dear companion never complained, and was very patient, poor dear.

It seemed I just lived for my dear one, and our Church Sunday, which was once a month. It seemed when I would reach the Church I would forget everything else, and my burden would be gone, and I would forget all my worries and my grief. My dear one wasn't able to speak, although our gracious God must have blessed him to know when meeting Sunday came. He could make me to understand, "not to be late." It was a blessed relief to be able to walk to meeting, and to sit quietly in the meeting house, where my worries and my sorrow seemed to be forgotten, and I could be comforted, and thoroughly enjoy our dear pastor's preaching of the gospel. Then it was given to me to feel that "my yoke is easy, and my burden light." I would return to my home feeling more reconciled to my dear companion's illness, and to the many worries I had at that time.

On May 22nd, 1955 we had meeting in the Ekfrid Meeting House, morning and afternoon with lunch in the basement of the Church. It was so wonderful to me to be permitted by a merciful God to attend the meetings at the several places of worship. There had been for years a fear in my heart that something might come up to prevent my attending meeting. The Saturday of the June meeting in 1954 I could hear the church people talking around the dinner table. Everyone was able to speak and quote scripture to suit the occasion and the trend of the conversation. I felt like an eavesdropper who had no business listening in, yet, I could not tear myself away. I wondered why it was not given to me to talk as they did. When they finished their chat I went into the kitchen, and something seemed to keep telling me that it was no place for me. I was very sad, and low in spirit, and told myself that I would help over the June meeting, but then I would try never to attend services again, as I felt it would be useless. Although I had been reading my Bible, off and on, ever since

I could remember, it seemed such a closed book to me. Well, anyway, with a heavy heart, I went to hear the preaching on the Sunday. I so thoroughly enjoyed it, and got such a comfort, I felt, this is where I ever want to be. I prayed as the Psalmist wrote: "Have mercy upon me, O God, according to Thy loving kindness; according unto the multitude of Thy tender mercies, blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin."

I surely felt in a wilderness, and understood a bit of what some people come through who are filled with guilt, shame and confusion. I missed my dear companion as he was always so understanding. I loved him so, but I could not wish him back to a world of woe. I will never be finished thanking God for the health and strength given to me to carry on to see my darling through his last breath, and to his last resting place. My prayer before he died was: "God bless his soul, and may he dwell forever with the Lord beyond the reach of woe." I felt so much alone in this weary world. I was not grieving for my loved one. My real grief for my companion was during his long illness. He was so patient.

The things of the world I did not crave and long for. I went, I know, to a community gathering once in a long while, but got no comfort there. I found myself looking for an excuse to stay away. Please believe me when I say that the only true satisfying feeling I could have was when I was with God's people, and among those whose desires were as mine. It is still so. I have always a feeling of sadness and loneliness when the Quarterly Meetings, and the Regular Sunday Services are over. I have been greatly blessed to be able to attend so many meetings. I have such a feeling of guilt and shame, and feel so full of sin, that I wonder how you good people can ever trouble to greet such a creature as I felt to be. Why is it that I have this awful feeling of

guilt, when the people of the Church speak so kindly to me?

Something seemed to say to me: "Don't try to deceive these dear people." I tried not to do just that. Yet, all the time, I felt I was deceiving everyone, or trying to. May God keep me from such a thing. No doubt some will understand what I mean when I say: "I stand alone." I am not happy with worldly things, and still I feel to be also not of the Church. I must try to be content with God's goodness to me in being permitted to live, and a way opened up for me to get to the meeting as often as I do. It seems all down through my life I have never been able to do the things I wanted to do. Like Paul I feel: "The good that I would, I do not; but the evil that I would not, that I do." I pray that: "From every snare and evil work His grace shall me defend; and to His Heavenly Kingdom safe, shall bring me in the end."

As far back as I can remember I always had a desire to go to Meeting. One of our neighbors used to call at our home to take my sister to the Sunday Meetings. I remember standing in our back yard watching them go over the hill, and out of sight. I would bear in mind the persons who attended the Meetings, and how in my heart I longed to be numbered among those dear people. I never can forget dear Sister Beckie McLachlin's mother. I used to sit a few seats back of her, and wonder how one felt sitting up toward the front, and if some day I could have a seat at the front of the church. That was years ago when I was a young girl in my early teens. The years went by, and the longing to go to meeting never diminished, and I remained in this state of longing to hear the gospel preached until early in October in the year 1955, when I felt ill with such a strong desire for ever so long to speak to the Church. But this was so different, it seemed such a sweet, but urgent desire that could not be resisted. God willing,

I did hope to be given the opportunity, and I prayed the dear Lord to bless me. I prayed asking Him to fill the hearts of the dear people of God with an abundance of charity. I felt the need, and still feel the need of your charity and your love, if I was to be considered a fit creature to be taken into your midst. Please believe me when I say I feel most unworthy, and am filled with fear and trembling. My feelings are best expressed: "O Lord, how vile am I; unholy and unclean. How can I dare to venture nigh, with such a load of sin?"

Indeed I wondered very much at times if I dared to venture. I felt sure dear Elder Ruston must have been disappointed in me, so very many times. I could do nothing of myself to bring me to the place where I now am. But for the mercy of the Lord I would have been consumed long before this. Dear Elder Ruston seemed very happy about it, and I prayed the good Lord would put it into the hearts of you dear people to be happy and patient with such a worm as I. I am so fearful I keep repeating: "Shine, Lord, and my terror shall cease; the blood of atonement apply; Lead me to Jesus for peace, the Rock which is higher than I."

Even though I was filled with fear there was melody in my heart, and a peace like I have never experienced before. "The peace of God which passeth all understanding." I pray that I might never bring reproach on the Church should I be blessed with becoming a member of our beloved home. If I was rejected, as I deserved, all I could say would be: "Lord, help me and give me strength for my days."

I became ill, and had to undergo an operation. I had sent word to my children telling them of my desire to ask a home in the Church. They were very happy for me, but fearful lest I become ill again from going into the cold water of November 6th, 1955. I let our dear pastor know what my strong desire was, and he and his dear compan-

ion came to see me. Our dear pastor took me by the hand and said: "Sister Minerva." I can never forget how my heart leaped for joy.

Again I wondered if it could be really true that I might become a member of the Old School Baptist Church, which I loved so dearly. I was very, very happy, and very impatient for the day of my baptism to arrive. It was planned that dear Sister Flossie Hodgins and myself were to be baptized on Sunday, the sixth of November, 1955, at Lobo. My dear daughter Isabel came to be with me, she was very anxious about me, and if it to be too soon after an operation. She stayed with me, and in her sleep during the night I heard her say: "My anxiety has all been taken away." Sunday morning came, and the people gathered in the Church. Elder Ruston opened the service with a beautiful prayer. After which we sang the second part to the end of the seventh verse of Psalm 145. This was followed by the preaching of our pastor from Hebrews Chapter 12, verse 21. We sang from Paraphrase 58. Then we walked to the water's edge where the baptisms were to be conducted. We returned to the hall where a bountiful meal was prepared. We sat around a long table, and enjoyed a conversation of good things. I must say I felt most unworthy and unfit to mingle with God's dear children, and as we sat about the table I longed to pray, but felt how can a sinner like I felt to be come before a great and Holy God?

That was a wonderful never-to-be-forgotten day, everyone seemed filled with joy, and overflowing with love and sweet fellowship. What a privilege it was to be able to worship our God in the manner we wish, and how good and pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity. How sweet and how lovely and heavenly is the sight when those who love the Lord in one another's peace delight. "When each can feel his brother's sigh, and with him bear a part. When sorrow flows from eye

to eye, and joy from heart to heart."
Minerva McLean

PURGED OF FREEWILLISM

Box 126
Tuolumne, Calif.

Editors of the *Signs of the Times*:

It has often been my mind to write something for publication, well knowing my unworthiness for I have often been tempted to believe that I have fallen from grace. (All the Lord's people are perfected forever, and kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time, so there is no possibility of this. J. D. W.) So it is with fear and trembling I attempt to write anything to such a wise and well informed people. Yet I know that without their faith and testimony of the doctrine set forth in the *Signs of the Times*, I would be of all men most miserable. But thanks be to God for his unspeakable gift that through their word I have received the good consolation of the gospel. For God, after so many years, through their word has purged me of the thorns and briers of free-willism, having prepared something better for us who through the comfort of the Holy Ghost in the doctrine of the imputed righteousness of Christ Jesus, look forward to His coming, with patience and joy.

I am reminded of the prayer of our Saviour: "Neither pray I for these alone but for them also which shall believe on me through their word." (John 17:20) He was here, of course, speaking of the apostles, but are not some of you apostles, some teachers, some evangelists, etc.? For the love of God has given such unto the Old Baptist Church for the edifying of the body of Christ, whose members are both visible and invisible. I am not a known member in a visible way, yet I am constrained by the hope in me to be such, if ever that Godly privilege is given me.

I was brought up in an Old Baptist home, but the doctrine was not taught me; or, if it was, I did not hear it. When I was about nineteen years of age I came under conviction and condemnation of sin. I was ignorant of the gospel of Jesus Christ, and was aware only of the wrath of God; and was not able to bear it, yet was made to bear it. Although I made an attempt to take my life, I was not let, nor was I relieved to any large degree. It was my lot to be cast among the armenians and conditionalists. I was vexed and frustrated beyond measure among them. Aside from the spiritual comfort of my mother, I had no known friends in that way. I was made to travel that rocky road alone; I felt I was an out-cast to God and to his people. But somewhere along the road faith took hold, and, if I am not yet deceived, led me to the Rock of Ages, which is the Old Baptist Church which holds the true doctrine of grace. "Herein is that saying true: one soweth and another reapeth. I sent you to reap that whereon ye bestowed no labor: other men labored, and ye are entered into their labors." (John 4:37, 38)

"O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and the knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out." (Romans 11:33) I am no stranger to trials and tribulations, doubts and fears even now; and in view of the gospel and doctrine, could I hope to have it otherwise?

I have written this well knowing my unworthiness, and have not had much thought beforehand as to what I should write, but am made willing in the day of His power, hoping that we might be edified by the witness in us all.

May all, both small and great, be blessed to stand fast and unmoveable in the faith once delivered unto the saints. Yours in hope of eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Wm. P. Wheat

7942 Longridge
Houston, Texas 77055

Signs of the Times

Dear Brethren:

At the request of Shepherd Fold Church of Houston, Texas, I am submitting a copy of the minutes of the presbytery of the ordination of Shepherd Fold's three deacons.

If you feel that these minutes would be of interest to any of your readers, we would be happy that they be published in the pages of the dear old *Signs*.

I also wish to state that Shepherd Fold, 815 Little York Street, holds an open invitation to all Brethren and friends of the Old School Baptists who may be visiting in the Houston area. We meet each first Sunday and the Saturday before at 10:30 A. M.

In brotherly love,
Jerry Evers, Clerk

2416 Rockland Drive,
Burlington, N. C. 27215

Dear Editors:

Enclosed is check for five dollars for another year's subscription to the *Signs*. Use the other two dollars as you see the need.

I am a poor writer, but I enjoy reading the *Signs* so much that I never want to be without it in my house as long as I live. It has brought comfort to me many times when I was low and depressed. The writings are rich and beyond anything heard in arminian churches; if indeed I know the truth. I remain a faithful subscriber.

Sincerely,
Mrs. James F. Thompson

BLACK CREEK UNION

The next session of the **Black Creek Union** will be held with the church at Wilson, the Lord willing. The church is located in the city of Wilson, N. C. on the corner of Greene and Jackson Streets.

All who have a mind to attend are cordially invited.

Eli T. Smith, Clerk
Rt. 1,
Fremont, N. C.

CONTENTNEA ASSOCIATION

The next session of the Contentnea Primitive Baptist Association convenes with the church at Meadow, Greene County, N. C., beginning Friday before the second Sunday in October, 1965, and continuing through Sunday.
E. M. Smith, Clerk

LEXINGTON-ROXBURY ASSOCIATION

The Lexington-Roxbury Association is to be held, if God so wills, at Halcottville, N. Y. Wednesday and Thursday, September 15 and 16, 1965. Those coming on Tuesday take the Denver Road at Kelly Corners, then take the first left road to the third house, called Windy Acres, the residence of Mr. and Mrs. John Shultis. Those coming on Wednesday will go directly to the meeting house at Halcottville. Will those coming on Tuesday please notify Mr. and Mrs. John Shultis, Kelly Corners, N. Y. a few days ahead.

Lovers of the truth are invited.
A. J. Slauson, Moderator

SMITH RIVER ASSOCIATION

The 1965 session of the Smith River Association is appointed to be held with Salem Church, located on Highway 221, between Roanoke and Floyd, Virginia, to begin on Friday before the first Sunday in September and continuing through Sunday.

Our brethren and friends are invited to meet with us.
Amos Hash, Clerk

SPECIAL REQUEST

Our correspondents are especially requested to give their Zip Code Number in all correspondence with the Signs. This will help the Post Office Department in delivering all mail.
— Editors

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(To June 1, 1965)

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Victor D. Borst, Jr., N. Y.....	5.00
Drusiler Gillispie, Md.....	1.00
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Danville, Virginia

August, 1965

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BUSINESS OFFICE

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

Elder David V. Spangler
R. F. D. 1, Box 539, Beechwood Lane
Danville, Va.

Elder John D. Wood
P. O. Box 186, Manassas, Va.

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Elder W. D. Griffin
39 Welsh Tract Road, Newark, Delaware

Elder E. J. Lambert
306 Richardson St., Winnsboro, Texas

Elder George Ruston
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Danville, Va.

EDITORIAL

JOEL 1:1, 4

The word of the Lord that came to Joel the son of Pethuel. Hear this, ye old men, and give ear, all ye inhabitants of the land. Hath this been in your days, or even in the days of your fathers? Tell ye your children of it, and let your children tell their children, and their children another generation. That which the palmerworm hath left hath the locust eaten; and that which the locust hath left hath the cankerworm eaten; and that which the cankerworm hath left hath the caterpillar eaten.

With misgivings of mind I come before you to write upon this portion of the sacred word. I hope that I know in a saving way my limitations, and this anxiety produces in me a desire to beg your indulgence while I attempt to write, and to beg of you that you

remember me at a throne of grace that I might be given restraint in my writing so that I not run into tangencies and vain speculation.

In order to get at the kernel that is in this scripture, it is necessary to deal with dry technicalities. Of the history of Joel we know but little, if anything. Nor is it necessary for us to know, because we live by faith, not sight, whether hindsight or foresight. According to various theologians, it was the custom for Jewish writers to tell the name of their father when he was an honorable man. Joel thus had an honorable background in nature, and, the word of the Lord coming to him, is enough for us to accept him as one that the Lord had called to the office of a prophet.

At the very outset of this prophecy he brings before us a calamitous condition. Evidently it had not occurred before this for it had not been in their day nor in the day of those before them. Certainly, it is noteworthy, for it is a new thing. He takes them to task about it, to wit, Have you seen or heard anything like unto this? This is the history of mankind, whether it pertains to his natural travel or to his spiritual. We will never cease talking and writing about the deliverance of the children of Israel across the Red Sea. Why? Because that this is the first time that it had ever been done. We will never cease talking and writing about the conception and birth of our Lord and Master. Why? Because that this is the only time that such has ever been done. The past is searched, and these things are all new, something that had never been. Too, the news that is in these things are spread before *all* of Israel. All of the inhabitants of the land were to take notice, to search their memory and ascertain if they can recall a thing like unto this. Not only is it important to them of their day, but it is to be told down the ages.

In our examination of the Bible, we must keep in mind that the spiritual

is not first. Each is established and set up for a purpose, and each will run its course. They can not be moved backwards nor forwards to suit the whims and fancies of the ones that the two were set up to serve. That which is natural was first, and it will stay first as far as the power of it is concerned. In no sense of the word, in no degree whatever, in no way at all, can that which is natural become spiritual. The first was established for a purpose worthy of him that did it. It would seem at times that God is apologized for because that man was not spiritual at first. The fact that he was not has led too many of us to ascribe the nature of our father, Adam, to be himself. This is not holding the truth in righteousness. Whatever Adam was, as he came from the plastic hand of God, he was that by creation. He was not spiritual, but he was a natural man. Being a natural man, and that by the creation of God, it must have been according to His divine will. If he had been a spiritual man, he would not have sinned.

Let me say right here, once and for all, that God is not the author of sin. Then let me turn right around and say that had it been God's will to have done so, that he could have kept it out of the world. I want to quote Elder Hassel right here. I feel that many of my own brethren (that is, those that I am, at least, in nominal fellowship with) will not agree with me. Many of those (Who, incidentally, I claim are as sound as I feel to hope that I am) that have made such an issue about predestination (and that have gone all out to claim that Elder Hassel was with them) will not agree with him either. He said, "The Almighty power, unsearchable wisdom and infinite goodness of God so far manifest themselves in his providence, that His determinate counsel (Rom. 11:32, 34; 2 Sam. 24:1; 1 Chron. 21:1) extendeth itself even to the first fall, and all other sinful actions both of angels and men (and that

not by a bare permission)." This does not at all cover all that he said about this matter, but this suffices to show that the nature given Adam was in God's plan for the universe and that the fall of our first parents was embraced in the predestination (proorizo) of God (See Hassel's History, Page 672).

The first was necessary. If not, then all of God's work in making man and the garden, was in vain. We have been accused of being necessitarians, and I plead guilty. If there can be proved one thing in all of God's creation and his rule over it, that was not absolutely necessary, then, by the same stroke of genius, we will find him a poor finite creature having done something vain and speculative. Reason how we may, call brethren vile names how we may, God is the first cause of all causes. He is the antecedent cause of all other causes. Nothing can be the cause of that, which in itself, is the cause of all causes or things. God's creation of Adam as he was, was first. It will not do to say with a shrug of the shoulder that God foreknew what would be. Certainly he did, but He did not foreknow an uncertainty. If that which was foreknown was certain, then there had to be a predestinator. If God was not the predestinator of that which He foreknew in his creature, we have, of necessity, got to look for the predestinator somewhere else. Will you look around, and when you have found, him, please tell who or what predestinated that which God foreknew?

I plead guilty to reading a lot of so-called Old Baptist literature, as well as things from other sources. I hope that I know and appreciate the truth wherever I find it, but for me to enjoy that truth, it must come from a consistent source. If a magazine spends the most of its time destroying that which it once tenaciously contended for; if a publication uses nine tenths of its space to ridicule the doctrine of God's electing love; if a brother introduces

an idea that has never been accepted by the church from the apostle's day until the present, and then there is inserted either on the printed page or in a man's preaching an excerpt of truth, or one article among many from false sources, that makes his truth unpalatable. Let me urge again that the natural is first. This nature is not used in understanding the scriptures; it is set aside or removed out of the way. The first birth was a natural birth, but the second birth is a spiritual birth. That which is flesh will remain flesh. That which is spiritual will remain spiritual. The text that I am dealing with is from a book that belongs to the family of God, a spiritual family. From these sources of my reading matter I am often told that I spiritualize the scriptures too much; that I ought to let the Bible say what it says and let it be right there. This I will do with this text, the Lord willing.

It means what it says. It meant to the Israelites what it would mean to people in the United States when a great cloud of insects come upon a wheat field or cotton field. Also, when the children of Israel crossed the Red Sea, it meant what it said — they crossed the Red Sea. It meant what it said when Pharaoh and his hosts went down into the sea and the water destroyed them. Daniel was cast into the den of lions and the Hebrew children were cast into the furnace. All of the incidents connected with the travel of Israel were natural or literal. In our text the chosen people of God had their crops invaded by a horde of insects. This is indeed a notable thing. Four kinds of insects in the same year, either one, if left unchecked, would destroy the crop, seems too much for a nation in one year. We must remember that this is not an ordinary thing that is taking place. This is something that never has been before. As we read this first chapter of Joel our mind is carried away into anxiety for this nation, but are we seeing ourselves in it? We

must remember that this sad event is to be told to us; it is to be declared to generations to come. I wonder why that it is needful for us to know of their calamity. As far as crops are concerned, this did not occur any more with Israel; this one time must have had a great lesson in it for Israel all the way.

As I have done research for this article, I have consulted four different commentaries on the Bible. No two of them agree in detail, although there is some kind of an understanding that it has reference to Chaldea as an invading force that destroyed all vegetation as they swept over the country. I am going to let them have that version of the matter, and anyone else that wants it. I do not want it; therefore, God willing, I will not deal with this insect army as being a literal army of men of more and lesser degrees of passionate destruction. It does not mean that to me, but if it means that to you, I am willing for you to enjoy it, and I will not think less of you.

This is the army of the Lord. This mass of insects were sent by the Lord (2:25). Are you advocating that God sent this army to destroy? O, yes, the God that I would worship, created the waster to destroy (Isa. 54:16). But wait a moment. You said that God was not the author of sin. If he sent this devouring army to destroy the crops, and this is a type of something in our day, and we know that it does not pertain to worms, that would make God the author of sin. May God have mercy on us. We can not make God *anything*. He is this way, and he is not that way, but we can not make him *to be*. God is not the author of sin, but He does rule over sin, and who am I, or who are you, that would say to him that if you do what you will with your own, then you are the author of sin? God raised up Pharaoh to tantalize and torment and terrify Israel while they were in Egypt. God created and sent this army of worms to do the same for Israel here.

What would you do if this army of worms came into your cropland? How would you feel if one kind of worm came and ate the tops of your crop. You would walk the field with your hands behind you wondering if it was too bad for it to come out. But before that damaged crop could get started again, here comes a wave of a more devastating worms and eat still more of the crop. What would you do? *What could you do?* That is the question that you will hear more about. What could you do? Yet there is a stump of the crop; perhaps it will spring forth again. You look closely, ah, yes, there is a little greenery yet. This will be a bad crop but we will salvage something yet. But wait a moment. Yonder comes another wave of destroying worms and insects. This is more ravenous than anything yet. All of your work in vain. There goes the last vestige of something to live on. You watch what you have laid up go down under this glutinous army. What an onslaught it is! How complete is the destruction. There is not anything to eat for him that is hungry. There is not anything to drink for him that is thirsty.

Why this destruction? Why has God sent this insect nation upon the fields of Israel? This is God's way. They were under the law, and they professed its virtues, and their ability to keep it. When the Saviour was here in the flesh, he found his people still talking about that "these things have I kept from my youth." From time to time, they erected idols; from time to time, they worshipped they knew not what. They carried god material for the kind of god that they wanted (Isa. 46). In short, they sought out anything and everything for worship save him that demanded worship of Himself without measure.

As it was then, so is it now; as it is now, so was it then. It was a nation of insects then that the Lord sent against his chosen people. Israel boasted about their pomp and splendor all

the while. Poor flighty people! How frail poor sinners are! They, and we, told Joshua that we would serve the Lord, but Joshua knew better. The time came when God demanded and got a reckoning with Israel. They had plenty of warning. God demanded that they get ready to meet the issue. We hear right much today about preparing to meet God. We Old Baptists have spent a lot of time ridiculing the world because that they talked about preparing to meet God. If we are guilty (and we are) of saying and doing not; if we are guilty (and we are) of cleaning the outside of the cup and the platter and leaving the inside full of extortion and excess; if we are guilty (and we are) of paying tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and leaving the weightier matters of the law, then we will reap our crop as the people of God did back in Joel's day. God is not going to give his glory to another; He is not going to have his people running after other gods. Just as sure as it is done, when God's people begin to seek salvation by the law, the penalty of the law is going to be exacted. Since salvation was by the law (so they thought), and they were not doing the things in the law, God was exacting from them; He was saying to them, "You have not returned unto me, therefore thus will I do unto thee, O Israel; and because I will do this unto thee, prepare to meet thy God, O Israel (Amos 4:11, 12).

God's army came upon them. It came as a thief. When Israel sinned by trusting other gods the evil comes upon them. This evil is pictured to them as an army of worms, but in the spiritual phase of the matter, this army comes as law scavengers. They feed on what they have been teaching. This is our history. Men have arisen among us teaching for doctrine the commandments of men. They were of and among Israel from a nominal standpoint, but they were not of us. They cared not for the flock, but were following their own lusts. We followed them when they

first began to slip in a little of this and a little of that, calling it a well balanced diet for Christians. We knew them after the flesh. They were passing themselves off as being with us and of us, but they were the instigators of the thing that was false and they lived on it. They were wicked, yes; too, they were God's army to discipline, to correct, to chasten (Psa. 17:13; Isa. 10:5).

They were told what to do. They were told to return unto the Lord. A wonderful time was for them if they returned unto him. Let it be remembered that they were under a law covenant, and that the blessings of it were obtained by keeping it. They were not eternal blessings but only the good of the land. They were to have restored unto them all that the army of worms had eaten. This would satisfy a people under the law, but if they were objects of grace, it would not satisfy. Thus God promised them something better. Have you noticed how that God lets fall on purpose a handful all along? Look at Genesis 3:21 and you will see a typical promise; look at Deut. 18:18 and you will find a typical promise; in the book from whence our text comes, we have also one of the typical promises of God. The true Israelite found sweetness in the work of God for giving unto the hungry bread and the thirsty drink. However, they were given a better promise than just the restoration of the fat of the land.

And it shall come to pass *afterward* that I will pour out my Spirit on all flesh. It is useless to point it out to the believer, but it is beneficial to the household of faith to have the mouth of gainsayers stopped, thus let me say that the "all flesh" applied only to God's children. How do you know? Why do you say so? Because on them the promise was fulfilled, on them it had the effect that Joel said it would. These that were the recipients of this blessing had long been under a system of law. It kept saying, Do this and live. Yearly they had to do over again. They

had seen and *felt* the weakness of the law through the flesh and when the pouring out upon them of the Spirit came, it brought them crying out, Men and brethren what shall we do? Today, and for all time to come, lawyers and doctors (Palmerworms, locusts, cankerworms, caterpillars) will eat up everything that a child of God thought that he had. Anybody that is under the law, has not got anything that will hold up when God turns his army loose on them, but that does not keep them from thinking so (Prov. 23:7). This army is turned loose on the children of God. It is often an army both secular and ecclesiastical, for law worshippers will always come under both heads. It will rob the true of what they thought was food and raiment under the law, and it will be food and raiment for them. They will sweep everything away. As it is the nature of goats to eat anything and everything, so these worms (lawyers and doctors) will leave the land clean. But it must be remembered that the children of God can not bring anything to the day of the Lord. As far as the record goes, the ones that received the outpouring of the Spirit did not bring anything with them. They did not say, How can we utilize what we were able to salvage when the law wreaked vengeance on our land? They did say, Men and brethren, what shall we do?

In conclusion, has the palmerworm and the locust and the cankerworm and the caterpillar eaten up all that you thought to have? If so, highly favored art thou, for in due season the harvest will come, even the harvest that Jesus brings. If you still have something to eat and to wear and to make a light with, and you remain in that condition, thy way is to lie down in sorrow (Isa. 50:11).

W. D. G.

VOICES OF THE PAST
"He being dead yet speaketh"

JOHN X. 12

If it would not be asking too much, I wish your views on John x. 12, particularly as to what it was the wolf caught. Your compliance will oblige one who desires to know the truth.
Your unworthy brother in tribulation,

H. Smith

Cerulean Springs, Ky., Jan. 2, 1882

REPLY

The query presented by our brother has been a question with many others, who have been perplexed by the peculiar expression in the preceding verse, in which the pronoun *them* precedes the noun *sheep*, which the *wolf* is said to scatter. In compliance with repeated requests, the late editor wrote on this subject. (See Editorials, volume i., page 679, and SIGNS xxi. 11, xxviii. 18, and xlv. 7.) As all who are interested in the subject may not have access to those articles, it may be well to state that the views therein presented do not conflict with those herein given in the application of the figurative language of the Lord.

The words of the text are a part of the illustration used by our Lord Jesus in admonishing such as could receive his gracious words to discriminate between the false teachings of such as would destroy their peace, and the instruction given by the Spirit of truth, which takes of the things of Jesus and shows it unto them. And although this discourse seems to have been spoken in the presence of many who could only recognize in it the mad ravings of one who had a devil, others saw the glorious manifestation of the power of God, attested by the works wrought by the word of Jesus, which could only be accomplished by divine power and authority. This diversity of opinion did not result from any difference in natural ability among those who saw the works and heard the words of our Lord, but was dependent alone upon his sovereign will in revealing the truth to whom he would. While his teachings were to the natural mind shrouded in unsearchable mystery, and to them that were without he spake not without a

parable, to the favored subjects of his grace it was given to know the mystery and to understand the deep meaning of those parables.

The subject of which this text is a part commences with the seventh and ends with the eighteenth verse of this chapter, in which, under the similitude of the good Shepherd, the Lord presents the contrast between his own care for his people, who are represented as his own sheep, and the indifference to their welfare of all other teachers, who are portrayed in the hireling, whose own the sheep are not. As the unfaithful hireling has no personal interest in the sheep, he is careless of their protection, and abandons them in the time of their greatest need, when the wolf appears for their injury. Not only does this apply in the case of false teachers, who seek only their own advantage in assuming the pastoral care of churches, but it will also aptly illustrate the failure of every refuge of self-dependence, suggested by the tempter to allure the saints from implicit trust in the present grace of God, which brings salvation in every time of trial, as it did in their first deliverance from sin and death.

By the *wolf*, in this connection, is represented any trial or circumstance which may disturb the peace or interrupt the fellowship of the saints. This wolf often scatters the sheep and catches them, so as to cause them much tribulation and distress by his cruel work in separating them by wars, fightings and jealousies among them, making them suspicious of each other, and puffing them up for one and against another. The spirit of love in the good Shepherd, manifested in laying down his life for his own sheep, always leads them to consider one another, to provoke to love and good works, according to the perfect example given by our Leader. Any spirit, therefore, which leads to discord, strife and evil surmisings among brethren, may well be regarded as represented by the hire-

ling who flees at the approach of the wolf; having no care for nor interest in the sheep, the hireling will afford them no protection. So the carnal mind may suggest plausible reasons for the course of conduct which it proposes; but when trouble comes, it will be found that reason cannot command that peace and harmony which is found in obeying the word of the good Shepherd. Then the deception is exposed, and the distressed and helpless sheep, in the power of the wolf, and overwhelmed in trouble, can say, with the psalmist, "Refuge failed me; no man cared for my soul." Truly, in this extremity all conditional hopes prove as represented in the hireling; all flee away in the time of sorest need. Were it not that the good Shepherd knows his sheep, and cares for them too, their case would indeed be hopeless; but even though they wander from the footsteps of the flock, and lose themselves in the mazes of sin and unbelief, he will find them, and restore their soul, that is, give them their lost comfort and rest in himself.

In a more restricted application, the contrast is presented between those hirelings whose object is to secure their wages, (whether in money, or honors, or conformity to their own doctrines or creeds,) and those who are governed by love and care for the flock of God. The former class are by Paul denominated grievous wolves, not sparing the flock (Acts xx. 29), and this characteristic mark will always be found in them. Self-esteem will ever prompt these grievous wolves to seek to have the pre-eminence, regardless of the law of Christ, which is always for the good of the flock. That law is the holy love of God, and is the very opposite of selfishness. Therefore, just to the extent to which a minister, or shepherd, is governed by the law of Christ, he will seek the good of the flock in contending earnestly for the faith and order established by the authority of the Lord, regardless of the consequences to himself. And if the wolf of discord and

confusion threaten the peace of the sheep under his care, he will ever be found defending them, and bearing all their trials with them, even to the prison and to death, considering the example of the High Priest of our profession in enduring opposition and afflictions. In this devotion to the truth is manifested the real care for the sheep which springs from genuine love; not seeking personal advantage or gain of wealth and honor, but having in view alone the interest of the sheep, with the apostle the shepherd can say, "Neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God." Incomparably beyond the brightest allurements of earth and time must be the joy of that shepherd who can at the close of his labors claim, with Paul, "That I am pure from the blood of all men; for I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God."

In this, as in all the parables spoken by the Lord Jesus, the primary design is to illustrate the great principle of gospel truth under consideration. Manifestly the principle here exemplified is that earnest regard for the good of the saints, which shines in perfect glory in the wonderful devotion of the good Shepherd who layeth down his life for the sheep. Here is the example for us. "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." — 1 John iii. 16. This deduction is drawn by the infallible pen of inspiration, so that there can be no mistake about the correctness of the conclusion. Are we prepared for this test? Carnal self-reliance may claim that we are ready to go with our Lord both into prison and to death; but if not strengthened by the power of God, we shall certainly be found denying him. In his kind providential government he has not called us to endure the fiery trial of bloody persecution; but

we have still to endure the measure of tribulation which is given to each of us. Are we manifesting that meek and lowly spirit which shines so gloriously in the Captain of our salvation? If we are fretful and impatient under the light afflictions given us to endure, how could we patiently bear the loss of all things? And if we have not enough of love to our brethren to enable us to sacrifice our self-conceit in bearing with their views or infirmities, how can we claim to be ready to deny self in following our Lord? It is mockery to pray that the will of God be done, while cherishing the desire in our heart to have our own will accomplished.

Often, when we suppose our motive to be devotion to the cause and doctrine of our Lord, the light of his truth may reveal a principle governing us very different from that self-sacrificing spirit which would lay down our life for the brethren. In blinding our eyes to this great principle of the perfect law of liberty, the wolf of discord, strife and hatred often catches and rends the sheep. Whenever the effect of our conversation or conduct is to alienate the lovers of truth and scatter the flock, we may well apprehend that the spirit leading us is more wolfish than lamblike; and if we are inclined to submit to the introduction of things which gender strifes, it is well to consider whether the motive of the hireling does not prompt our conduct, rather than the spirit of the good Shepherd. In bearing our sins in his own body on the tree, our dear Lord has given the perfect pattern which is our example. In following him we shall be in no danger of encountering the wolf or the lion. These unclean beasts can never go up on this glorious highway. The word of the Lord secures safety to those who walk in this way. No hireling shall be able to betray them into the power of the wolf. "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee: because he trusteth in

thee." — Isaiah xxvi. 3.

(Editorial by Elder Wm. L. Beebe February 1, 1882.)

MINUTES OF PRESBYTERY

May 1, 1965

Pursuant to a call by Shepherd Fold Church, Houston, Texas, for a presbytery to meet on above date for the purpose of ordaining Brothers Jerry Evers, Willie McCorkle, and Jimmy Lindsey as deacons, the following elders and deacons met and organized themselves into a presbytery: Elders R. W. Rhodes, W. W. Fleet, E. B. Ault, E. J. Lambert, C. M. Haygood, and Joe Hamrick; Deacons L. S. Hill and Barney Evers.

The Presbytery elected Elder R. W. Rhodes, Moderator, and Elder Joe Hamrick, Clerk. Brother Murphy presented the candidates to the Presbytery. After due examination of the candidates as to their qualifications, a motion was made and seconded that we continue the ordination.

The Presbytery selected Elder R. W. Rhodes to word the prayer, and Elder C. M. Haygood to deliver the charge. The ordination was conducted by the laying on of hands with prayer by Elder Rhodes; and the charge was delivered by Elder Haygood.

Deacons Jerry Evers, Willie McCorkle, and Jimmy Lindsey were then delivered back to the church by the Presbytery; and received by the church. The right hand of fellowship and God speed was given them by the Presbytery, by members of the Shepherd Fold Church, visiting brethren and friends.

Motion was made that the Moderator and Clerk prepare minutes of the Presbytery; which were read and approved, and the Presbytery dissolved in order, with prayer.

R. W. Rhodes, Moderator
Joe L. Hamrick, Clerk

OBITUARIES

IN MEMORY OF BROTHER LESTER DOSS

In sadness I attempt to write a few words in memory of our beloved Brother Lester Doss. He was born on March 31, 1894, and died March 25, 1965, making his stay on earth almost 71 years.

Brother Doss joined Springfield Church on September 13, 1924. He was faithful to the church and filled his place most every meeting as long as he lived. He was always ready with a helping hand for the upkeep of the church. He was a firm believer in the Doctrine of Salvation by Grace and Grace alone.

Springfield Church bows in humble submission to the Just and Holy will of our Lord,

knowing he doeth all things well. Yet, our hearts are saddened and we shall miss him, though we feel our loss is his eternal gain.

He leaves to mourn their loss, his wife, Sister Maude Doss; one daughter, Mrs. Brice Cocke, Lynchburg, Va.; one foster son, Frank Doss, Gretna, Va.; one sister Mrs. Albert Bolling, Gretna, Va.; one brother, Goldie Doss; and two grandsons.

His funeral was held at Springfield Church by his pastor, Elder O. K. Tench and his body laid away beneath a mound of flowers in Fort Hill Memorial Park, Lynchburg, Va. to await the second coming of our Lord.

Done by order of Springfield Church.

L. R. Willis

LILLIE PEARMAN LUMPKIN

Sister Lillie Pearman Lumpkin was born in Rockingham County, N. C. October 22, 1896 and passed away in the John Umstead Hospital February 16, 1965, after an illness of two years. She spent her entire life in the Mayfield Community. She is survived by her husband, Charles A. Lumpkin; one daughter, Mrs. R. C. Holley, Jr., Danville, Va.; two sons, C. Herman, Route 2, Ruffin, N. C. and John D. Lumpkin, Draper, N. C.; and by seven grandchildren, and three great grandchildren.

Sister Lumpkin united with Dan River Primitive Baptist Church August 24, 1958, and remained a faithful member until death.

In the absence of Elder D. V. Spangler, her pastor, her funeral was conducted by Elder Haywood Wray at Dan River Primitive Baptist Church and she was laid to rest in the church cemetery, there to await the second coming of our Lord. May the Lord comfort her family and loved ones and may we be blessed to say, "Thy will be done O Lord."

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

Done by order of the church.

Lucy H. Davis

JOHN WILLIS TAYLOR

John Willis Taylor, son of William B. and Martha Page Taylor, was born near Pleasant Hill, Missouri, April 27, 1869, and passed away March 8, 1965, being nearly ninety-six years of age.

In his early life he learned and followed the carpentry trade and was considered to have a very special skill in all kinds of wood work, and found delight in adding things of comfort to their home, and also of his many friends.

On June 26, 1918 he and Miss Margaret Moore Startzman were united in marriage and lived at Blue Springs, Mo. on their farm until 1938, when he retired and moved to Pleasant Hill. Two children were born to this union: Elizabeth, who is living in Portland, Oregon; and William Bowen Taylor, who died at the age of one and one-half years. In December, 1959, they sold their home in Missouri and moved to Portland, Oregon, where their daughter could be near them. It was in this city where our beloved husband, father, brother and friend passed on after living a life that was very unusual. He was laid to rest in the burial plot at Pleasant Hill March 16, 1965.

I used the word unusual in this writing as I feel he was a great man, and a big man; though he was small of stature, he was a big man with a big heart and a great desire to help the needy. He and his wife spent several days in my home, which I shall never forget. He was an inspiration to me, and I admired him for what he was. We shall miss him, but we know that the day of one's death is better than the day of one's birth.

May it be the will of our God to reconcile the ones that are left to not mourn as one of no hope. Written by one who is thankful to the great God who works all things well, for the privilege of having known Brother J. W. Taylor.

(Elder) Ernest Attebery

ELDER JAMES HARVEY SMITH

We must bow in submission to the will of God, as it pleased him to remove from our midst our beloved and esteemed minister, husband, and father, Elder J. Harvey Smith.

He was born October 14, 1898, and departed this life January 24, 1965. He is survived by his wife, Alice Rudd Smith, and five children: Mrs. Virginia Scott and Mrs. Nellie Deiner, Elmer, Donald and Wallis Smith; also by one sister Mrs. Nannie Cobb, and three brothers: Edward, Coy and Roy L. Smith.

Being left at a very young age without a mother and father, he was poorly taught so far as the education of men is concerned, yet by the mercy and wisdom of God, he was taught by divine revelation the knowledge of the truth as it is in Christ Jesus, and made willing to stand before the poor and afflicted children of God and declare the unsearchable riches of God.

He united with Bush Arbor Primitive Baptist Church November 11, 1945, and was baptized by his pastor, Elder W. C. King. He was ordained to the full work of the ministry January 30, 1950, and was later called to serve

as pastor of Pleasant Grove, Big Meadow, Lick Fork and Gooch Memorial Churches; and at the time of his death was serving them. During his ministry he was blessed to baptize many candidates, and also assisted Elder King in the ordinance of baptism of his two sons, Wallis Smith and Donald Smith, and one daughter, Mrs. Nellie Deiner; and later participated in the ordination of his son Wallis Smith into the ministry.

He did not look down on the poor, nor up to the rich, but was blessed to live and walk softly and humbly before his brethren, and to live and die in the faith and order of the Primitive Baptist Church. He was one that didn't complain of the afflictions of life in this world, living in that blessed hope of that city, New Jerusalem, which has foundations, whose maker and builder is God. I have heard him sing many times the song, "Jerusalem My Happy Home." At the close of many meetings when he and I were together, his words of prayer would be, "O Lord, give us a peaceful moment in which to die," and I believe that we have this for a witness, because he was taken in his sleep: He had that peaceful moment.

The night he passed away I couldn't sleep; I was troubled and walked the floor. I went to a window, looked out, and saw a peace and quietness in such a way that I could just feel it. After this I felt somewhat relieved, and I laid down and went to sleep. When I was awakened to go to his bedside, I looked into his face and could not shed a tear at that time, because I saw in his face what great rest and peace awaits a soldier of the cross; it was the same peace and quietness I saw when I looked out of my window in the darkness of the night.

His funeral was conducted at his home church, Bush Arbor, by his pastor, Elder W. C. King, assisted by Elders P. E. Ingram, Frank Eggleston, Jimmy Hollandsworth, Kenneth Key and E. F. Oakley. There was evidence at the funeral that he was loved and respected by many; for which I hope we are grateful. His body was laid to rest in the Bush Arbor Church Cemetery under a mound of beautiful flowers. It had been rainy and cloudy, and I desired that I might see the sun shine when he was being buried, and as we left the cemetery the sunshine reflected on the beautiful colors of the flowers. We hope and believe that he is resting from all his toils and labors and is awaiting the coming of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. May those that mourn his passing, and feel the loss of their loved one, be given to feel that it is his gain.

BE IT RESOLVED, That a copy of this be sent the family; one to the *Signs of the*

Times for publication; and one kept for church records.

Written by request of the Bush Arbor Primitive Baptist Church.

Wallis A. Smith

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

God in His infinite wisdom saw fit to remove from us by death our highly respected and beloved Sister Minnie R. Wray on February 17, 1965 at the age of 77 years to her eternal and long awaited home, where sickness, sorrow or death will never come. She united with the church at Bush Arbor at her May meeting in 1938. She was a most faithful and devoted member, always attending as long as her health would permit. The last five months of her life were spent in hospitals and nursing homes, but she always desired the prayers of God's people and asked about the welfare of the church.

Sister Wray was the daughter of the late Mr. and Mrs. Thomas H. Rudd of Caswell County, N. C. Her first marriage was to Mr. John A. McKinney who departed this life in 1937. From this union she is survived by three daughters, Mrs. James Smith and Mrs. Nathaniel Rudd of Yanceyville, N. C. and Mrs. Ernest Minor of Burlington, N. C.; five sons, Virgil A., Raleigh T., Malloy D., Luther O. and Hassel L. McKinney, all of Burlington, N. C.; one brother, George Rudd of Burlington, N. C.; two sisters, Mrs. D. F. Rudd of Burlington, N. C. and Mrs. Woody Moore of Yanceyville, N. C.; one half-brother, Clarence Rudd of Altamahaw, N. C.; 20 grandchildren, 14 stepchildren, and 10 great grandchildren.

Sister Wray was married three times. Her second husband, Mr. James Terrell, lived only a few years. She married Brother Judson O. Wray on August 24, 1957, who survives to mourn her departure. We know of no one who had better doctors' care and love and devotion of her dear husband and faithful children than Sister Wray had.

Her funeral was conducted at Bush Arbor Church by her pastor, Elder W. C. King, Elder Wallace Smith and Elder E. F. Oakley. Burial was in the church cemetery. The floral offering and attendance has seldom been surpassed in this section, showing the high esteem and love for Sister Wray and her family.

May God's blessing be upon her dear husband and children and all who mourn her departure. The Lord has given and has taken away. Blessed be His name forever.

Done by order of Bush Arbor Church at her May meeting 1965.

W. C. King, Moderator
Earl S. Rudd, Clerk

AQUILA (BUNK) EVANS

Once more we bow in humble submission to the will of our eternal God in the taking from our midst our beloved brother Aquila (Bunk) Evans.

Brother Evans was born on August 21, 1901, and passed away January 4, 1965. His parents were the late J. Hamilton and Georgia Ann Evans. He was married March 15, 1924, to Alice Graham Evans; and to this union was born one daughter Norma Lee Evans Freeman. He is survived by his wife, daughter and two grandchildren. Also surviving is one brother, Dewey Evans, of Mardela Springs, Md., and three sisters, Minnie E. Gambrell, Emma E. Beach, both of Mardela Springs, and Ruby E. Parsons, of Salisbury, Md.

Brother Evans asked for a home in the Restawico Church of the Salisbury Association and was baptized on October 17, 1964 by the writer.

He had undergone an operation and was a sick man when he was baptized but seemed to have a much more peaceful mind, having followed his Lord in baptism. He gradually grew worse and the Lord was pleased to take him out of his suffering.

The writer visited him many times and always found him rejoicing in his hope of eternal life beyond the grave, giving God all the praise.

Funeral services were conducted by the writer in the Holloway Funeral Home in Salisbury, Md., and he was laid to rest in the Mardela Springs Cemetery. It is the prayer of the writer that his family and the many friends who knew him may be blessed to feel that their loss was his eternal gain.

(Elder) Arthur R. Warren

OREN PARSONS

Oren Parsons was born July 7, 1912, in Van Zant County, Texas, to Oscar and Ollie Parsons. He and the family moved to Hereford, Texas, from Claude, Texas, in 1936, and he resided here until he departed this life March 20, 1965, at the age of fifty-two years.

Oren joined the Primitive Baptist Church at Amarillo, Texas, the first Sunday in April, 1948. He was baptized by Elder Clarence Turner.

Brother Parsons was considered a pillar of the church and was faithful and loyal and dedicated to his belief, never tiring of visiting sister churches in the vicinity, and was a staunch defender of his faith.

He served as church clerk of the Sardis Church in Amarillo from the first Sunday in

September, 1950. The church, seeing his qualifications, ordained him Deacon in April, 1964. He fulfilled the duties of both offices faithfully.

He is survived by his mother, Mrs. E. O. Parsons, Hereford, Texas, two brothers, Grady and T. J. Parsons, both of Hereford; two sisters, Mrs. Maud Tally, Halfway, Texas, and Mrs. Pauline Johnson, Lubbock, Texas. He was preceded in death by his father, a brother, E. J. Parsons, and by a sister Mrs. Faye Reed.

Brother Parsons was stricken with polio when he was four years old, and in his later years spent much of his time reading the Bible. He lived with his mother, and worked as an electrician and refrigeration expert.

There is just nothing that can be said about a scholar of the Holy Testimonies that would not sound like praising the flesh, but none who knew Brother Parsons could say they could not feel the presence of a God-given gift of understanding which this man had. Christ and Him crucified was the theme of his conversation, and the brethren were his meat and drink.

He was permitted to attend several churches, and neither ill health nor distance ever seemed to hinder his traveling many miles to attend the meetings. He was a firm believer that God was the Supreme Ruler over all things, and delved into the Scriptures, through research and connecting verses and books of the New and Old Testaments, so deeply that many could not follow nor understand him. He was never quick to criticize, but was ready at all times, armed with scripture of "Thus saith the Lord" to defend the belief of the Primitive Baptist doctrine.

Brother Parsons ran a sure and steady race, never faltering nor with a shadow of turning from truth, and as the Apostle Paul said, "He fought a good fight." He was not only a great comfort and a loving son to his wonderful mother in the flesh, but she received a great light and understanding from his vast knowledge of the scriptures.

To know Brother Parsons was the feeling of having been graced by God a little more richly because his love for the brethren attracted the return of love. Be not discouraged if you do not possess the gift which Brother Parsons had, because he was sent by his Heavenly Father to help and strengthen, to teach and to learn, to love and be loved by all who loved the truth.

His funeral was conducted by the writer, assisted by Elder C. M. Haygood and Elder Durwood Bradley. If this poor worm of the dust had as much hope of entering that immortal heaven as he has of Brother Parsons having been received into that upper king-

dom, his doubts and fears would be decreased one hundred fold. Brother Parsons has no use for his brace which he wore on his leg anymore because he is in that realm where pain and tears are no more.

Our prayer is that God in his infinite wisdom and love will be the strength of the loved ones left behind, especially his mother who will miss him more than anyone, but who believes in a God that is all wise and almighty and that all things that happen must needs be. A lily of the field has been plucked up by the planter, but a gardener, when the time comes, raises up other flowers to grow and to flourish in the sunshine of His great love, but the lily leaves a fragrance behind for many days to come.

The funeral was held at the Rose Chapel in Hereford, Texas, and Brother Parsons was laid to rest in West Park Cemetery.

Elder W. A. Winfrey

WILLIAM THOMAS RUDD

Brother Rudd was born on April 14, 1888, and departed this life in Yanceyville, N. C. on September 30, 1964, making his stay on earth 76 years, 5 month, and 16 days. He was the son of the late A. D. and Ella Wright Rudd.

Brother Rudd was married on December 25, 1915, to Miss Mary Boswell who is left to mourn his departure, together with three sons, Hurley Rudd, of the home; Eugene Rudd, of Yanceyville; and Hassell Rudd, of Dallas, Texas; one brother, L. D. Rudd, of Burlington, N. C. (who has since his death also departed); four sisters, Mrs. Alice May, Mrs. Myrtle Gross, Mrs. Lola Trollinger, and Mrs. Beulah Whitesell all of Burlington; and six grandchildren.

Brother Rudd united with the Church at Bush Arbor in July 1931, and was a loyal and faithful member. He was a good farmer and businessman. His sufferings were great, having spent many of his latter days in hospitals, but he bore his sufferings patiently. "Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord." We shall continue to miss him here but feel that his spirit is now resting in the presence of his God, whom he loved and served.

His funeral was conducted at Bush Arbor Church by his pastor, Elder W. C. King, Mr. George Bishop and Mr. George Johnston. His body was laid in the church cemetery to await the coming of Christ.

Done by order of Bush Arbor Church April 10, 1965.

W. C. King, Moderator
Earl Rudd, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 133

DANVILLE, VA., SEPTEMBER, 1965

NO. 9

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 9/65
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

ELDER THOMPSON TO
SISTER BARTLETT

Copper Hill, Va. 24079

Miss Ada Bartlett,
Newcastle, Maine
Dear Sister Ada,

By your request I will make an effort to pen some thoughts on the book of Ruth. In chapter 1:1, we note that there was a famine in the land of Bethlehem — Judah.

First we must consider that God was at the helm, bringing to pass a desired end, just as it was in God's purpose in Israel going down into Egypt that he might display his love and mercy to the Israelites, and his power the the Egyptians.

Next we would like to quote Jeremiah 48:11, "Moab has been at ease from his youth, and he has settled on his own lees, and hath not been emptied from vessel to vessel, neither hath he gone into captivity; therefore his taste remaineth in him, and his scent is not changed."

Now let us examine the scriptures and we will find that the people that God loved have been perplexed with infirmities such as recorded in Hebrews 11:36, 37, "And others had trials of cruel mockings and scourgings, yea, moreover of bonds and imprisonment:

They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted and were slain with the sword; they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins; being destitute, afflicted and tormented."

So according to Paul's experience and those of God's children that had gone on before, they have been emptied from vessel to vessel, and could not rest in their own strength, but are brought as David of old, Psalms 116:3, 4, "The sorrows of death compassed me, and the pains of hell gat hold upon me; I found trouble and sorrow. Then called I upon the name of the Lord; O Lord, I beseech thee, deliver my soul." We hope to get back to David later.

We must conclude that it was in the providence of God that Elimelech went to sojourn in the land of Moab. Let us consider that God has a people in every kindred and tongue and people and nation. So it seems that God had at least one of his children in the land of Moab.

O, but what a mysterious way to us it was in bringing Ruth out of the land of her nativity into the land Judah. As we remember that Naomi had two sons and they took them wives of the women of Moab, to wit Orpah and Ruth. So in a space of time they both lost their husbands. It seemed to Naomi that she had lost all she had, but at this point Naomi had heard that God had visited his people in giving them bread in the land of Judah, and she said unto her daughters-in-law return to your mothers. Then she kissed them and they lifted up their voices and wept. It seems that both wanted to go with Naomi to her people. And again they lifted up their voices and wept, and Orpah kissed her mother-in-law, but Ruth

clave unto her, and said to her, "In-treat me not to leave thee or return from following after thee: for whither thou goest I will go; and where thou lodgest I will lodge: thy people shall be my people and thy God my God." But yet she did not know how dear Naomi's people would be to her. So they both journeyed to Bethlehem; and they said, "Is not this Naomi? And she said unto them, Call me not Naomi, call me Mara: for the Almighty hath dealt very bitterly with me. I went out full, and the Lord hath brought me home again empty: why then call me Naomi, seeing the Lord has testified against me, and the Almighty hath afflicted me?" These people knew that Naomi had a husband and two sons. Now she was back with only a daughter-in-law.

But we can see in the providence of our God through Naomi being brought home empty and afflicted, the purpose of the Almighty was being manifested that Ruth, the Moabitess, was in Bethlehem, and she was so much loved by Boaz and was received so graciously by the rich and the laborers. Boaz said to her not to go into another field neither go from hence but abide here fast by my maidens. After he spoke so kindly to her she fell on her face and bowed herself to the ground and said unto him, "Why have I found grace in thine eyes, that thou shouldest take knowledge of me, seeing I am a stranger?" But Boaz had heard of her faithfulness toward her mother-in-law and had left her mother and the land of her nativity, and "come unto a people which thou knowest not heretofore. 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."

Ruth said, "Thou hast comforted me and hast spoken friendly to thine handmaid." She was bidden at mealtime to partake of the bread and the food very kindly. Also, Boaz spoke to the young men to allow her to glean in the field,

"and let fall also some of the handfuls of purpose for her."

So in the record we can see many types that I will not now take space to mention.

So she took what she had gleaned to her mother-in-law. She asked Ruth where she had gleaned, and she answered the man's name with whom I wrought today is Boaz.

You will please note in Ruth 2:20, Naomi said, "Blessed be he of the Lord and also the man is near kin unto us, one of our next kinsmen." So we can see in the 1st and 2nd chapters that there was a love existed between Boaz and Ruth. And Boaz took Ruth to be his wife and she bore him a son and they called his name Obed, and he was the father of Jesse, the father of David. So we see that Ruth was the great grandmother of David.

David became King and a very noted man, but the most outstanding experience in his life was that the spirit of the Lord came upon him. (I Samuel 16:13) God did so wonderfully bless David, but David had some sore trials along the way. We can know according to his testimony in 1st Samuel 27:1, "And David said in his heart I shall now perish one day by the hand of Saul."

We may consider the life of David and will find that he went through much tribulation. I feel sure he could say with Job 13:15, "Though he slay me yet will I trust him." Also with Jonah 2:4, "Then I say, I am cast out of thy sight, yet will I look again toward thy holy temple." Also Isaiah 22:22, "The Lord is our judge, the Lord is our lawgiver, he will save us."

We find in Zechariah 12:10; and 13:1, that he speaks of a day that there shall be a fountain opened to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem for sin and uncleanness. Now let us go to Matthew 1:1, "The book of the generation of Jesus Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham." We may go also to Matthew 1:18 and

read the remainder of the chapter; and also the 2nd chapter. We will find just why he left the shining courts of heaven and came into this sin cursed earth to make an offering. This offering was not to man, but to God for man, for those that God had given grace in his Son before the world began.

The prophet Isaiah spoke in 53:5, of things to come as though they were. He said, "He was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities. The chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed."

Paul speaking of the patriarchs of old in the 11th chapter of Hebrews 13, 14, "These all died in faith, not having received the promises but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country." 2nd Peter 3:13, says "Nevertheless we according to his promise, look for new heavens and a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness."

And we poor worms of the dust that have this hope, through grace can say with one of his servants, "What is man that thou art mindful of him?" We are as the poet in his expressions:

"Nothing in my hand I bring
Simply to the cross I cling;
Naked, come to thee for dress;
Helpless, look to thee for grace;
Black, I to the fountain fly;
Wash me Saviour, or I die!"

According to the history given, Abraham's day was around 1900 years before the birth of the child Jesus. Yet Jesus said in John 8:56, "Your father Abraham rejoiced to see my day: and saw it and was glad." All of God's children before Christ came, were looking forward to that day that was mentioned so many times by the prophets. In Zechariah 14:8, it is said, "In that day living waters shall go out from Jerusalem; half of them toward the

former sea; and half of them toward the hinder sea; in summer and in winter shall it be."

So we can see plainly of those before him, that Christ, the son of David, the son of Abraham, was their Saviour the same as ours, according to our hope.

Sister Ada, hope your mother's leg is entirely healed by now, and that you are both well and are given to rejoice in the love of our God, our Saviour, from time to time. I have desired to write your mother while she had to sit around taking care of her leg. My time is so full I find little time to write; I am sorry.

I hope you may find, at least, one sentence in this letter that may be of some comfort to you. I realize I am a very poor writer.

Will you share these few thoughts with your mother? Hope she, too, may find a little comfort somewhere in this letter.

The wife sends her best.

Yours in fellowship,
B. O. Thompson

Pollock, La.

Dear Brethren in Christ:

It is time to renew my subscription to the *Signs of the Times*, and I am sending \$3.00 for another year.

I enjoy reading the experiences of the saints, the editorials and the good sermons of our preaching brethren which you have published. The Lord has blessed us with some very able ministers, for which I am very thankful; and I am grateful that the Holy Spirit led me to the Old Baptist people. I united with them at White Water Church and later came to old Good Hope Church where my dear mother and father are laid to rest.

I do not get to attend church as often as my heart wishes, for I am so far away from those of our faith; but my heart and mind are there always.

May the Lord bless and keep you with all spiritual blessings, is my prayer I hope for Christ's sake. From one in hope of eternal life.

Mrs. Viley Cogdill

1511 Oak Street,
Kenova, W. Va.

Dear Editors:

I am a new subscriber to the *Signs*, but in years gone by have borrowed many copies to read. I became so engrossed in the June issue that I hardly laid it down till finished.

"Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity." I feel that the brethren can dwell together even if they are miles apart. We read in Isaiah 41:17: "When the poor and needy seek water and there is none, and their tongues faileth for thirst, I the Lord will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them." No where on earth can man make and fulfill such a promise; nor can man provide water when there is none. Man is only man regardless of his title or station in life. We cannot look to man for spiritual help because only God can give the utterance that enables us to "open the mouth boldly", and unless we can open the mouth boldly in defense of God's salvation by grace, we do not speak the utterance of the Spirit, and it would be better if we kept quiet.

His promise endureth forever, and He will hear; He will supply; He will not forsake us, and the "river of God" will water us. "He shall feed his flock like a Shepherd." I fear that sometimes we ask or yearn for things out of season; and usually when we eat food out of season, it is dried or canned. Therefore we should wait upon the Lord; we should be still and know that He is God, who bringeth to pass all things in due season whatsoever he has purposed, according to his divine will.

May the *Signs of the Times* continue to send out the utterance of the Spirit, for by that we have our spiritual food.

Humbly submitted by,
J. M. Bailey, Sr.

AS I WATCH THE SNOW FLAKES FALL

I arose this morning to see the fields covered with snow, even the rough places looked so white and smooth. I think of the scripture, "Though your sins be as scarlet, they be as white as snow." It was so pretty, I stood wondering if I would ever see the great white throne that John saw.

As I watch the snow flakes fall, I think of precious Brother Elder Harvey Smith, from whom the Lord called his spirit home only a few days since. I can see him in my mind as he spoke from a text he loved so well (Isaiah 55:10), "For as the rain cometh down and the snow from Heaven." And if not deceived, I felt the Gospel raining down and the snow covered the earth; for everything was beautiful.

These thoughts may be mine alone; but seeing the grieved hearts at our union meeting this snowy fifth Sunday in January has caused me to realize the mutual love and fellowship we shared for our beloved Brother. I wish that I could tell you the thoughts and precious memories I have as I think of his humble walk, and watch the snow flakes so softly fall.

I feel I shall never forget our last afternoon together. It was a Heavenly place to me, not knowing our earthly ties would soon be broken. We parted in love and fellowship and a better understanding than we had before. When we can feel the love that flows from heart to heart and breast to breast, we are drawn together as one people. The snow flakes fall together, and I cannot tell one from the other.

My heart was grieved when I heard the Lord had called his spirit home

from his sleeping body, where there was no evidence that a muscle had moved in pain. I thought of his prayer I so often heard him say, "O Lord, give us a peaceful moment in which to die." Truly the sincere desire of his heart was answered.

As I watch the snow flakes cover the earth, my heart is filled with sympathy for his daughter in the flesh and sister in bonds of love, who awoke that sad morning upon the bed of affliction, singing praise to God and knowing in her heart that her beloved father had passed on to that peaceful sleep in Jesus, where it will be as but one night before the elect come into their inheritance of Heaven and immortal glory.

As I think of his lovely family who walk today with a heavy heart in humble submission to His righteous will, my prayer is that they be comforted beyond all the gracious deeds human hands have been blessed to do.

May all the honor and glory go to our Lord and Saviour; for I know if Elder Harvey Smith lived today, he would rebuke me if I attempted to give him any praise.

He preached the doctrine of election by divine grace with power that cometh down from heaven, as the rain cometh down and the snow from heaven. This truth will stand when this poor mortal shall cease to watch the snow flakes fall.

Clifton C. Robertson
Route 1
Reidsville, North Carolina

AN EVERLASTING COVENANT

"Although my house be not so with God, yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure; for this is all my salvation, and all my desire, although he make it not to grow." (2 Samuel 23:5)

This beautiful Scripture came before

me in my sleep one night recently, and the word covenant stood out more convincingly than all the others, and it has lingered with me with much sweetness. My first thought was, What is a covenant? Well, it is an agreement or a bargain between two or more persons. This covenant here under consideration is the greatest that was ever made, it being one between the Father and the Son, who gave His life a ransom for many, a free and unmerited gift. He shed His precious blood for the remission of sins, not the sins of all that dwell upon the earth, but the sins of all chosen in Him before the foundation of the world, those given to Him in this everlasting covenant of grace ordered in all things and sure. All His purposes are embraced in this covenant according to the good pleasure of His will, not by the subservient will of man or reformation, but by an effective work of God, an effectual calling.

While we are still under the law we cannot please God, for He decreed that men by wisdom should not know Him. We are by nature the children of wrath, completely indisposed, in opposition to good works, and unless our good works are done in obedience to God's will they are as filthy rags. All good things were preserved in this covenant of grace for all believers unto salvation, and our only evidence that we have a part in this is we work out what God works in, for our nature is enmity against God. Only those ordained to eternal life can believe, and the ordination is of God, not because He foresaw the end from the beginning, but for the manifestation of His glory.

Abraham's faith was imputed to him for righteousness. "For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory; but not before God." There is only one God, one faith, and one baptism, so if we glory let us glory in the Lord, the Lord of lords and King of kings. I believe when David said, "This is all my salvation, and all

my desire" that he believed without a shadow of a doubt that Jesus was his only hope of salvation, and it was made complete in the covenant, and his desire was to walk in newness of life and sing a new song. (Ps. 18:2) "The LORD is my rock, and my fortress, and my deliverer; my God, my strength, in whom I will trust; my buckler, and the horn of my salvation, and my high tower."

David realized when he said, "although he make it not to grow" that his salvation was made complete, finished, nothing to take from nor add to, perfected in God's Son, Jesus. God's sovereignty is not deniable according to the teaching of the Bible, and our finite minds cannot in any way look upon God and godliness, so with Paul we say (I Cor. 1:31) "That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord."

Beadie Meads
609 W. Colonial Ave.
Elizabeth City, N. C.

LETTER FROM ELDER STOKES

1029 Daniel Street
Jacksonville, N. C.

Dear Brother and Sister Ruston,

It was such a pleasure to hear from you once again and I am so sorry to be so late in answering your letter. I thank our Heavenly Master for his goodness and mercy to both of you and the other saints in Canada.

Brother George, there is seldom a day that passes that my mind isn't carried back to you people, and I am made to give thanks to God for the opportunity to know you dear people who have been made to love the doctrine of Salvation by Grace; people who have a Godly conversation, and who love to talk about the great things our Heavenly Father has done for us. In such a frame of mind, I am carried to I. John 3:1, "Behold, what manner of

love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the Sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not." Surely we must say with the apostle Paul that it came by revelation.

Brother George, the Lord has been so good to us. By His mercy I have traveled about 17,000 miles since my visit in Canada, going back and forth to the churches that I endeavor to serve, plus my appointments. We have had three to come home confessing how great things the Lord had done for them. Also, there seems to be more under the conviction of sin. We hope He may open an effectual door for them that they too might be given the liberty to come home.

I enjoyed your article in the *Signs* for March. The verse of scripture above the one you wrote on has arrested my mind. Micah 5:4, "And he shall stand and feed in the strength of the Lord, in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God; . . ." Should the question be asked as to whom this prophet was talking about, the words preceding will furnish the answer: for they announce the birth of our Lord and Saviour in Bethlehem, and called him the ruler of Israel, "whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting." The eternal God of mercy and peace. The eternal King of kings and Lord of lords. The one that was to be born of a virgin as Isaiah had already prophesied. Micah refers to him as the shepherd of his people and tells of the work he was performing for them. First He shall stand. Concerning this we find Isaiah saying (46:10) "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." Jeremiah speaks (49:19) "Who is that shepherd that will stand before me?" None other than Christ, who shall plead the case of sinners before God as the wonderful counselor, prince of peace. Again (Rev. 3:20) this shepherd says, "Behold I stand at the door and knock." What door? The door of the law, wherein he was made under the

law, sent to redeem his people from the curse of it, and also to feed them. Next, not only shall He stand, but feed. This is the great pastor who is the bishop of our souls. As He stands and feeds, He causes us to rest in His work. He leads us; restores his people as they go astray. He heals them when they are sick; defends and secures them in their distresses. He does this diligently and attentively because He has lost none.

We hear and read of shepherds who lie down and love to slumber. Even the most dutiful and sedulous shepherd sometimes unbends because he must have moments and hours of relaxation during which his vigilance for the sheep is suspended. Not so with Christ, His eyes are ever upon the sheep.

David spoke of him in Psalm 121. "Behold, he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep. The Lord is thy keeper: the Lord is thy shade upon thy right hand . . . The Lord shall preserve thee from all evil: he shall preserve thy soul." And he said in Psalm 49:8, "For the redemption of their soul is precious, and it ceaseth for ever." He is able and powerful, for he shall feed in the strength of the Lord. He has conquered all the foes of the church as John speaks in Revelation 1:18, "I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death."

As he was on earth he had power to forgive sin and to heal all manner of diseases, and to call by name whom he would *and they came* unto him. Even he called Zacchaeus saying, "make haste"; and to Matthew at the receipt of custom saying, "follow me", and they obeyed him. Is his power any less now? The world would say yes, but those who have heard his voice would say no.

God gave him power over all flesh that he should give eternal life to as many as the Father had given him. It is a happy and wonderful feeling to be able to feel the nearness of this

shepherd: to know that He has power and is able to save to the uttermost those the Father gave him.

How often we are surrounded by enemies. Some visible; some invisible. If our eyes were open at all times we would be convinced that we are not for an instant safe, but we are kept by the power of this great shepherd who feeds his sheep with food that is convenient for them.

John spoke of this shepherd (John 10:11), "I am the good shepherd: the good shepherd giveth his life for the sheep." And in 10:27-30, "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. I and my Father are one." We cannot always comprehend this. Our faith is small and we draw the conclusion we shall one day perish; at other times we are able, by his spirit, to realize it and feel secure. Then we can say with David as he spoke in the 23rd Psalm, "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures: he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul: he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake." David knew, as well as we know, that death and hell, and sorrows and trials can do no harm because of this great shepherd who cares for his people. Paul was taught this when he said, ". . . I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day." (2 Timothy 1:12) He shall feed in the majesty of the name of the Lord his God. It does not refer to temporal and worldly majesty, this he did not praise.

He was born in a stable and laid in a manger. Isaiah says he was a man of sorrow, he was crucified as a slave with a malefactor. He has no form

nor comeliness, nor any beauty that we should desire him. Yet, John says, "and the word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth." (John 1:14). There were eye witnesses to these things and to his majesty.

Paul speaks of the excellency of the power which is of God, and had not Jesus this very power? Yes! How mildly, how kindly he exerted himself. He came down like the rain upon mown grass, broke not the bruised reed, and quenched not the smoking flax. He heard the cry of a beggar by the wayside and commanded he be brought to him. He raised the widow's son and presented him to his mother. Grace poured forth from His lips to His sheep in that day; also in our day. The woman heard him say, "thy sins are forgiven thee."

This is the shepherd that says, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." (Matthew 1:28) This is He to whom the spirit was given without measure. This is the great Shepherd, and His will was to perform the Father's will; this He did. He STILL feeds his sheep and carries them in his bosom, always close to his heart. How wonderful, how great is this Shepherd!

I feel I have taken up enough of your time. The subject is unlimited. Give my love to all, and may God bless you both and all the saints, and may this Shepherd continue to stand and feed His sheep.

In fellowship,
D. B. Stokes

THE SPIRIT AND SOUL AND BODY

"And the very God of peace sanctify you wholly, and I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ." (I Thess. 5:23)

For some time, I have been giving

consideration to writing my views on the above Scripture, and, the Lord willing, I will now offer my comments thereon, particularly with respect to what is meant by the word "spirit". It has been given different meanings; by it some understand one thing and some another. I know that the soul, that immaterial essence or entity common to all men, is called the spirit, but to me the spirit in this passage of Scripture is mentioned as distinct, but not separate, from the soul. Three entities are apparently indicated, and not just two. In Heb. 4:12, we read: "For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit . . ." In this passage, it certainly would appear that the soul and spirit are distinguishable, in that they are divisible by the essential Word of God or the Son of the Highest.

Now it is believed that the spirit mentioned in the text is the internal principle of grace, a holy principle, spiritual life, implanted in the soul by the Holy Spirit, thus quickening the soul into spiritual life. This is regeneration in the strictest sense of the word, signifying the new birth. Further, the spirit is a spiritual nature, a spiritual seed, the new creature, the new man born of the Spirit, and that cannot sin. "Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God." (I John 3:9) But the old man, the flesh or corrupt nature, will continue to sin until this carnal nature is dissolved in death. The regenerate man does not live under the dominion of sin as in his unregeneracy, and he will never sin so as to be utterly lost, so as to perish eternally. "And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish . . ." (John 10:28) This life will be preserved in the saints unto the coming of Christ in His glory with all the holy angels, and with the souls of the re-

deemed in glory, according to the Scriptures of truth. It is infused in time and the elect will enjoy the fullness of it in eternity.

Pertinent to the explanation of the subject, this Scripture is quoted: "That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit." (John 3:6) Flesh here refers to the carnal, corrupt, vile nature of man. In the born-again man, it is contrary to his spiritual nature: hence the warfare between the flesh and the Spirit. (Gal. 5:17) The spirit mentioned secondly denotes the principle of grace or new man that is seated in the soul.

"The spirit is the new man
That's formed in the soul;
He delights to serve the Lord,
And heaven is his goal."

Simply stated, the regenerate man consists of spirit, soul, and body while the unregenerate man lacks the spirit. However, both possess a carnal nature as indicated above. In his Epistle to the Romans, chapter 7, verse 14, Paul said: "For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin." He also stated (verse 25): "So then with the mind (spirit) I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh (carnal self) the law of sin." So the carnal nature of man is not changed "by the washing of regeneration;" he is simply given a new nature, a new spirit and a new heart pursuant to election, by the Lord "To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved." (Eph. 1:6) This acceptance sounds much better to me than the trite Arminian invitation to "accept Christ as your personal Saviour," as if He is offered to be accepted or rejected at will any time, any place, by the alien sinner; as if universal redemption were true, which it is not, and everyone has the innate power or ability to accept Christ, which is not the case. The Bible does not say anything about "accepting" Christ. However, it does speak of His being received. (John

1:12 and Col. 2:6) He is received when He is revealed in and to those chosen in Him and given Him by the Father to be redeemed by His blood. And He is believed. (2 Tim. 1:12)

We are taught in Holy Writ that we shall be like Christ, but this, of course, does not mean that we shall be equal with Him, or possess Deity, the essential nature of the Triune Jehovah which cannot be communicated to men nor angels, which are all creatures. Christ must have the pre-eminence in all things. "For in him dwell all the fulness of the Godhead bodily." (Col. 2:9) He is Spirit, soul, and body, for He possessed a soul and was clothed with a body prepared for Him like our own, sin excepted. "And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." (Phil. 2:8) And I believe that there is something in a regenerate person that corresponds in a measure to Christ as God, as Spirit, for in 2 Peter 1:4 we find these words pertaining to those given like precious faith: ". . . partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust." Christ was a Spirit before He became incarnate, before He assumed a human nature, for He was ever with the Father, who is a Spirit. O how sweetly He is spoken of in the 8th chapter of Proverbs: "The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old . . . Then I was by Him, as one brought up with him: and I was daily his delight, rejoicing always before him . . ." These endearing words of a precious Saviour bring tears to my eyes and joy to my heart. He is the delight and the hope of those given to Him to redeem in the covenant of grace before time. He is formed in them the hope of glory, according to Scripture.

In Romans 8:10, we read: "And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin; but the Spirit is life because of righteousness." The body here

apparently refers to the physical or material body, this mortal body which has the sentence of death in it, and at the appointed time will die by reason of sin. It is the vile body that will be changed and fashioned like unto the glorious body of Christ at the last day, and not the "body of this death," the body of sin or corrupt nature mentioned in the 6th and 7th chapters of Romans, which body will be destroyed as to its being in death. By the Spirit here it is believed that the soul is meant. It is life because of the imputed righteousness of Christ who is our life and our righteousness and liveth in us (Jer. 23:6 and Gal. 2:20), if we be His. And it is life because quickened into divine life by the Holy Spirit when the principle of grace is implanted therein as stated before. "For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God. When Christ who is our life shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory." (Col. 3:3, 4) What sweet, savory words to those who love His appearing!

In treating of the text, this Scripture is adduced: "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh (carnal nature), but after the Spirit. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." (Rom. 8:1, 2) By the Spirit mentioned firstly is meant either the Holy Spirit by which the sons of God are led, or the principle of life formed in the heart in regeneration, which principle derives from the Spirit of life in Christ who is the source of all life. The term law has different meanings in the Scriptures. It is a broad term importing more than the precepts of the moral law given by Moses which is commonly understood by the law other than the law of the land. In the law dispensation, there was also the ceremonial law promulgated by Moses consisting of types and shadows, the rites or liturgy of the Jewish system of wor-

ship, and the middle wall of partition dividing the Jews and the Gentiles, which law was abrogated when the gospel dispensation was ushered in.

In Romans 3:27, reference is made to the law of faith. And in Psalm 19:7, we read: "The law of the LORD is perfect, converting the soul: the testimony of the LORD is sure, making wise the simple." This could not refer to the moral law or ten commandments, called the ministration of condemnation, for it condemns and binds, shutting up in prison as it were and showing no mercy; it rather refers to the perfect law of liberty (Jas. 1:25) or the Gospel in which Christ proclaims liberty to the captives to the law of Moses. Christ is the sum and substance of the Gospel which is called a doctrine. It is the doctrine of grace by which we are saved through faith, the doctrine of Christ (2 John 9), and the doctrine of faith to be believed by the election of grace down through the ages. In a word, the law of the Lord is the law of love, and we are told that faith worketh by love.

At last, the body, which is the temple of the Holy Spirit, will be quickened thereby, coming forth to the resurrection of life. (John 5:29) So shall the redeemed of the Lord, in spirit and soul and body, ever be with Him in glory.

In hope of a glorious resurrection,
C. W. Vass
409 New York Avenue
Elizabeth City, North Carolina

Rt. 4, Box 479
Rocky Mount, N. C.

Dear Brethren in Christ:

I have just finished reading my *Signs* and enjoyed it so much. I am giving you my new address so that I will not miss getting a copy. I live by myself, and it is so much company that it seems as if I see the ones who write those good letters. I will be seventy years old the 3rd of August, if the Lord sees

fit for me to see that day. I united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Nashville, N. C. the fourth Saturday in February, 1915; and in August, 1931, I moved my membership to Pleasant Hill as I was living near there.

I have been blessed for many years to get to church somewhere most every weekend. I hope that I am thankful to the Lord that my friends, the brethren and sisters, have been so good to me. I don't feel that I deserve these good things, but I do know that I love the brethren and sisters, and that meeting with them means so much to me. That is my greatest pleasure. With best wishes to all.

A little sister, if one,
Mrs. J. B. Price

CIRCULAR LETTER

The Upper Country Line Primitive Baptist Association, meeting with the Church at Dan River, Rockingham County, N. C. on July 17, 18, and 19, 1965, extends greetings and Christian fellowship to our correspondents, visiting ministers and brethren, sisters and friends.

We feel thankful to the Lord for the many blessings made manifest in our annual gatherings over the years past, and we humbly beg of Him a continuation of His love and mercy, not only in our association, but among His people everywhere. The worshipers of the Lord are enjoying the blessed privilege of meeting and worshipping at such times and places as they may choose, except in certain sections in foreign lands. In this country, there is no law nor decree regulating or forbidding

such meetings. But in recent years, movements have been started to set up a system of religious unity, so-called, and to consolidate in one body all professing Christians.

But the true followers of the blessed Redeemer are given access, by the Holy Spirit, to that fountain of divine wisdom which enables them to distinguish between truth and error. Error is a mighty weapon in the hands of Satan. Persecution is a fruit of error. The Saviour knew, and the apostles knew, that persecutions would follow and torment God's chosen people while they sojourn here; and that the enemies of truth would follow the example set by Satan in his first act of deception, in the Garden of Eden.

Paul in his second epistle to Timothy said: "But evil men and seducers shall wax worse and worse, deceiving and being deceived;" and in Matt. 24:24, Christ speaking to His disciples: "For there shall arise false Christs and false prophets and shall show great signs and wonders, insomuch that if possible they shall deceive the very elect." But that possibility is forever nullified, as will be shown by reference to many portions of Scripture, including the 53rd chapter of Isaiah, in which is set forth the lowly estate of the Saviour, yet to be born, and the reasons why He was rejected and despised of men and the evil manner of abuses inflicted upon Him preceding His crucifixion. But in the 11th verse Isaiah shows the fulfilment of His final and glorious victory: "He shall see the travail of His soul and shall be satisfied." There could be no satisfaction if only one of the chosen should be lost.

Now truth administers reproofs, corrections, and chastisements, seasoned

with divine love. In Revelation 3:19, Jesus, in His message to one of the seven churches of Asia: "As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten." These chastisements enter into and become a part of the cross which the Christians must bear, and the cross becomes easy to carry when its purpose and usefulness is understood. An old hymn opens with these lines:

"Tis my happiness below
Not to live without the cross."

The many blessings we now enjoy in our coming together in our associations, our church meetings, and other informal gatherings are, as Peter expresses it: "According to His abundant mercy." And there is nothing I feel more deeply each day of my life than a desire to give the Saviour of sinners all the glory, honor and praise; for if I am a part of that remnant that shall be saved, He alone is due more than I will ever be able to render unto Him.

Now as this association closes, and we take the parting hand, may we have faith to believe that the Lord was in the place, to our comfort and to His glory.

M. T. Smith

SALISBURY ASSOCIATION

The Salisbury Association is appointed to convene with the Salisbury Old School Baptist Church, located on Church Street, Salisbury, Maryland, on October 20 and 21, 1965, at 10 o'clock E.S.T.

Our ministers, brethren and friends are invited to meet with us.

Maude Truitt Laws, Church Clerk

KEHUKEE PRIMITIVE BAPTIST ASSOCIATION

The Kehukee Primitive Baptist Association is to be held with Kehukee Church, the first Sunday in October, Saturday before and Monday following, October 2, 3, 4, 1965.

Elder I. S. Conner was chosen to preach the Introductory Sermon, and Elder W. E. Grimes, his alternate.

The church is located on Highway 125, one mile south of Scotland Neck, Halifax County, North Carolina.

We hope our brethren and sisters will visit us.

Elder W. E. Grimes, Moderator
Elder E. C. Harrison, Clerk

VIRGINIA CORRESPONDING MEETING

The next session of the Virginia Corresponding Meeting is appointed to be held, the Lord willing, with the New Valley Church at the Mt. Zion Meeting House, Wednesday and Thursday, October 13 and 14, 1965; beginning at 10:30 E.S.T.

Mt. Zion Meeting House is located about one mile east of Gilbert's Corner on U. S. 50. A cordial invitation is extended to our brethren and friends to meet with us.

Leslie D. Duke, Clerk

STATEMENT OF NORFOLK CHURCH

Dear Brethren, Sisters and Friends,

In December 1964 the Norfolk Primitive Baptist Church found themselves in need of assistance to erect a new church building, and let their need be known by letters, and other news media. Our brethren, sisters, and friends responded with contributions, which we will ever be grateful and thank God for, however, the contributions plus what we had fell far short of what was needed to accomplish the task. Therefore, we had no other alternative but to seek to remodel our present building. With the contributions, what we already had, and what we received from the sale of our lot we could remodel and be free of debt.

Since our request was made expressly for help to build a new church, it was felt that the donors were due an explanation concerning the use of their gift. If the donors feel that they do not wish to contribute to the rebuilding of our present meeting house, and will let it be known, by the grace of God we will refund the money.

Done by order of the Norfolk Primitive Baptist Church in conference Saturday night before the third Sunday in June, 1965.

Elder C. N. Bunn, Moderator
Ruby E. Coward, Clerk

CONTENTNEA ASSOCIATION

The next session of the Contentnea Primitive Baptist Association convenes with the church at Meadow, Greene County, N. C., beginning Friday before the second Sunday in October, 1965, and continuing through Sunday.

E. M. Smith, Clerk

CONTENTNEA UNION

LEXINGTON-ROXBURY ASSOCIATION

The Lexington-Roxbury Association is to be held, if God so wills, at Halcottville, N. Y., Wednesday and Thursday, September 15 and 16, 1965. Those coming on Tuesday take the Denver Road at Kelly Corners, then take the first left road to the third house, called Windy Acres, the residence of Mr. and Mrs. John Shultis. Those coming on Wednesday will go directly to the meeting house at Halcottville. Will those coming on Tuesday please notify Mr. and Mrs. John Shultis, Kelly Corners, N. Y., a few days ahead.

Lovers of the truth are invited.

A. J. Slauson, Moderator

SEVEN MILE ASSOCIATION

The Seven Mile Primitive Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the church at Liberty, to begin Friday before the third Sunday in September, 1965, and continuing through Sunday. The church is located in Harnett County, N. C., five miles West (to some extent Southwest) of Benson, N. C. Inquire in or around Benson, and look for pointers.

An invitation is extended to our correspondents and other brethren and friends to meet with us.

W. D. Godwin, Clerk

BLACK CREEK ASSOCIATION

The eighty-ninth session of the Black Creek Primitive Baptist Association is appointed to be held with the church at Pittman's Grove beginning at eleven o'clock Friday morning before the fourth Sunday in October, and continue through Sunday.

The church is located about two miles east of Kenly, N. C. on highway 222 between Kenly and Fremont. All lovers of truth and especially our ministering brethren are cordially invited to meet with us.

W. E. Turner, Clerk

CONECUH RIVER ASSOCIATION

The Conecuh River Association will be held, the Lord willing, at Union Spring Church the 2nd Sunday in October and Friday and Saturday before this year. The church is on County Road 6 between Brundidge and Spring Hill, Pike County, Alabama.

A. C. Carter, Clerk

The next session of the Contentnea Union is to be held, the Lord willing, with New Bay Church, Onslow County, N. C., the fifth Sunday in August and Saturday before. The church is three miles South of Jacksonville, just off Highway 17.

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

W. W. Stallings, Jr., Clerk
Rt. 3, Tarboro, N. C.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE
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(To July 1, 1965)

Mary Hellings, N. J.....	\$ 2.00
Miss Elizabeth Walker, Can.....	4.00
Mrs. G. E. Rogers, Can.....	51.00
Lelah R. Hill, Calif.....	5.00
Fannie D. Wiles, Va.....	3.00
Mrs. Bertha Chamberlain, N. C.....	2.00
Elder Louis Stewart, Miss.....	1.00
Mrs. C. T. Braswell, Va.....	5.00

Danville, Virginia September, 1965

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BUSINESS OFFICE

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

Elder David V. Spangler
R. F. D. 1, Box 539, Beechwood Lane
Danville, Va.

Elder John D. Wood
P. O. Box 186, Manassas, Va.

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Elder W. D. Griffin
39 Welsh Tract Road, Newark, Delaware
Elder E. J. Lambert
306 Richardson St., Winnsboro, Texas
Elder George Ruston
Dutton, Ontario, Canada

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SPECIAL NOTICE: In giving receipts to those renewing their subscriptions to the *Signs* at the Pigg River Association, I found that the carbon paper was turned up side down on two of the receipts, which left me without a copy of the receipts, and I am unable to give proper credit for these two renewals.

Will those who renewed at that association please notice their expiration date on the September issue to see if their expiration date has been properly extended. If not, please write me at Box 186, Manassas, Va., giving name and address, and whether the renewal was for one or two years, so that proper credit can be given them.

John D. Wood

EDITORIAL

JONAH THE PROPHET

We find ourself, at this time, when we should present our views to the readers of the *Signs* in the form of an editorial, thinking upon the prophet Jonah and his wonderful testimony to the truth of our God. From reading his testimony, we conclude that Jonah was a man of like passions as we are, changeable, and easily depressed. His name signifies a dove, a lover of quiet rural scenes rather than the clamorous resorts of the populous cities, but the command of God came even to him, "Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city." What consternation and distress such a command must have brought to quiet, peace-loving Jonah. His testimony among his *own people* was that God "was a gracious God, merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth thee of the evil." (Jonah iv. 2.) Thus Jonah had a sweet testimony of the love and mercy of a gracious God in his own country, when God gave him his commission to arise and go to Nineveh. Jonah shrank from such a commission, he was a Jew, and Nineveh was a Gentile city. It was the last

place that he, a Jew, would want to go. He knew Nineveh was a very wicked city, yet the thought of God sending a prophet to the Gentiles was very distasteful to him a Jew, therefore he fled to Tarshish. It is written, "Jonah rose up to flee unto Tarshish, from the presence of the Lord." David in Psalms cxxxix. says, "Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence?" But Jonah here would flee from the presence of the Lord, which implies that Jonah's mind was opposed to God's command, yet such is God's purpose toward Jonah that though he would flee from God's command, God's kindness follows him, and his power overshadows him, and he could say, as David, "If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there: if I make my bed in hell, behold thou art there." Thus God's power was manifest, for "The Lord sent out a great wind into the sea, and there was a mighty tempest in the sea, so that the ship was like to be broken." This disturbed the ship's crew, and they cried every man unto his god, and cast forth the wares that were in the ship into the sea to lighten it of them, yet while they were filled with fear, Jonah lay in the sides of the ship fast asleep.

Thus far Jonah must have been self-satisfied, he had chosen an easier way. Before he took ship at Joppa he had perhaps spent sleepless nights fighting against God's command, but now he could sleep soundly while all the others were alarmed. At last, the shipmaster, in his extremity, seeing their prayers of no avail, finds Jonah, that strange man, fast asleep. As strange to himself as to others, he could sleep soundly while others trod the deck full of fear and consternation. "So the shipmaster came to him, and said unto him, What meanest thou, O sleeper? arise, call upon thy God, if so be that God will think upon us, that we perish not." They cast lots, and the lot fell upon Jonah, and Jonah tells them who he is, and that he fears the God

of heaven, who made the sea and the dry land. "And he said unto them, Take me up, and cast me forth into the sea: so shall the sea be calm unto you." The men dreaded to do this, for it seemed to them like murder, and so they rowed hard to bring the ship to land, but they could not; then instead of calling on their gods, they cried to the Lord for mercy, confessing that the Lord had done as it pleased him. So they cast Jonah into the deep, and the sea was calm unto them. God's sovereign power had not taken second place in anything that had transpired. It is true he had permitted Jonah to resist his command, proving to Jonah, and even to us, how longsuffering our God is. God's providence was all the time over Jonah, over him in the ship, and over him when cast overboard. "Now the Lord had prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights," and Jonah was carried to the bottom of the mountains, with the weeds wrapped about his head. Here Jonah cried to the Lord and prayed out of the fish's belly, and here Jonah became a "sign." Had he not been brought there by God, then our Lord would never have referred to him as he did, on at least three occasions, in the gospels. This timid man was being taught in God's school, and was made willing in the day of God's power to go and preach the preaching that God had bidden him. What a blessed prayer this dear man uttered, a prayer full of deep experience. True, the men cast him overboard, but he, in God's school, knew God had done it, and he could cry with David, "All thy waves and thy billows are gone over me." In his prayer he made confessions; he said also, "They that observe lying vanities forsake their own mercy." To our mind this does not refer to the world, or worldly religion, which is a religion of self-righteousness, they do not follow lying vanities, for at their best state they are altogether vanity, but it refers

to God's children, who, like Jonah, turn away from the truth to vain things. Thus Samuel warned Israel, 1 Samuel xii. 21, "And turn ye not aside: for then should ye go after vain things, which cannot profit nor deliver: for they are vain." Israel of old often followed after lying vanities, as in another place it is recorded, "Notwithstanding, they would not hear, but hardened their necks, like to the neck of their fathers, that did not believe in the Lord their God. And they rejected his statutes, and his covenant that he made with their fathers, and his testimonies which he testified against them; and they followed vanity, and became vain." Today, as of old, many turn aside from a "thus saith the Lord" and lean to their own understanding, and, in doing, so, forsake, or turn from, their own mercy, mercy which stands not in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God. Here let us say to the praise of our God, that while they forsake, or turn from, their own mercy, that mercy does not forsake them, which truth Jonah lived to prove.

Again the command came, "Arise, go unto Nineveh," with this remarkable injunction, "and preach unto it the preaching that I bid thee," and Jonah went with a clear testimony, for it was God's word sent to that city, and the city believed from the greatest to the least. In this astounding result of his preaching, Jonah stands alone in the Old Testament, and in this he stands as a "Sign" of a greater than Jonah, all to whom he was sent, repented and obtained mercy from God. In the heart of all to whom he was *sent* there was a "who can tell," and in the heart of all to whom Jesus is *sent* there is a "who can tell," and God does spare them, from the least to the greatest, for Jesus' sake. Thus Jonah passed through trying scenes to bring him where he was "made willing" to walk alone through that great city, preaching its destruction, preaching that which God bid him. Some have

said Jonah preached destruction unless they repented, just as the self-styled Jonahs do now, but that is not so. Jonah was told to preach, "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown." This was not a conditional matter, there was no mention of repentance in his testimony. Jonah said it would be destroyed, and he felt its destruction would be good proof that he was a prophet of God. One can therefore imagine his consternation and anger when God saw fit to spare the city. He was angry, for his testimony was made to look like foolishness itself. Many of those whose lot it is to preach know how foolish they have at times felt, and how, to human reason, their testimony has been foolishness. This experience was very mortifying to poor Jonah, whose reputation would be gone if that great city were spared, and he would rather die than suffer such humiliation. Jonah could not understand why God had mercy upon Nineveh, neither could the Jews understand why Jesus had mercy on Gentiles, publicans and sinners, and as the Jews of Christ's day, Jonah felt he did well to be angry. What a wonderful example of God's mercy for the Jews to think of in Christ's day, he spoke to them of it, but to no avail, and they hated him for his kindness to poor sinners.

Again the Lord does not leave Jonah to himself, but says, "Doest thou well to be angry?" This time Jonah did not reply to the Lord, but sat down on the east side of the city, until he might see what would become of the city, and there he made him a booth. Jonah undoubtedly had a self-righteous spirit, and might have said to poor Nineveh, Stand by thyself, for I am holier than thou. While poor Nineveh was humbled in the dust, Jonah sat under a booth of his own making, finding shelter there from the heat of the sun. "And the Lord God prepared a gourd." God has before prepared a fish, now he also prepares a gourd, and made it to come up over Jonah, that it might be a shadow

over his head to deliver him from his grief. So Jonah was exceeding glad for the gourd. "But God prepared a worm when the morning rose next day, and it smote the gourd that it withered." And it came to pass, when the sun did arise, that God prepared a vehement east wind; and the sun beat upon Jonah's head and he fainted, and again he wished to die. Again God said, "Doest thou well to be angry?" "And he said, I do well to be angry, even unto death." Then the Lord brought home that lesson, that Jonah had been sorry for the gourd, which came in a night, and perished in a night, and said he, "Should not I spare Nineveh, that great city, wherein are more than sixscore thousand persons that cannot discern between their right hand, and their left hand; and also much cattle?"

Thus this strange man Jonah was taught in God's school, and found through all his anger and rebellion that God cannot be changed by the anger of man, and that he is more merciful than man knows how to be. We love to speak of God preparing a fish to swallow Jonah, but he also prepared a gourd, and he prepared a worm to smite it, and we are sure that there are no sent servants of God but have to be taught in the same school as Jonah. It is not pleasant to have the weeds wrapped about our head, to have the earth with her bars about us forever, but that is the way, if we must preach "Salvation is of the Lord." Whatever be the great fish that God has prepared, whether it be religious bodies, secret societies or modern society, it will vomit all such up when they have learned the truth from God, their only teacher, that salvation is of the Lord. Many will be the lessons afterwards that God will give them, and many will be the gourds that he will blast, sometimes as they separate themselves in a self-righteous zeal which comes in a night and will go in a night, when God prepares the worm

of mortification to strike their gourd. The number of gourds that God's children would shelter in is legion. Sometimes being very angry against brethren, forgetting that such anger is against God. Following after their lying vanities, they forsake their own mercy, yet we repeat again, their mercy does not forsake them, all through their course God's sovereign hand will maintain his work, so that from the greatest to the least they will be spared. The Jews who were angry, like the elder son, who was angry, and would not come in to partake of the feast which was given his younger brother, as recorded in the parable of the prodigal son, found shelter under a righteousness of the flesh given to them by Abraham, in the ordinance of circumcision, in which the Jews gloried and found comfort, rejoicing that they had Abraham to their father.

It came in a night, during the patriarchal dispensation, and it was smitten in a night when that worm, that dieth not, struck their gourd, destroying all in which they had gloried, leaving unto them their house desolate, for one had said, My God shall cast them off, and they shall be wanderers among the nations. When that came upon them, the legal ordinances, that sheltered them, were dissolved, and they were subjected to the vehement east wind of desolation and woe, exposed before all people to the judgments of an angry God. Many are the thoughts that present themselves as we meditate upon this wonderful subject, and we shall have attained what we desire if we stir up the minds of our readers to think on these things, but let us not lose sight of the place that Jonah occupies, for the resurrection of our Lord was foreshadowed in the experience of the prophet. The fish could not assimilate the body of Jonah, neither could this earth hold Jesus, for he arose and became the first fruits of them that slept.

Thus in preaching Jesus and the resurrection they gave to that wicked gen-

eration of the Jews the "sign of the prophet Jonah," and they declared that he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved. Each time a believer was baptized he gave the "sign" to that generation wherever he was. He is buried in the water, so that he disappears from all who behold him and he rises again a miracle of the grace of God. Thus baptism is a sign of the church of God, "an outward and visible sign of an inward and spiritual grace," and presents a sign before men of the burial and resurrection of our Lord and all those that are his. As Nineveh, that great city, repented and was spared, the Lord Jesus came to give repentance unto Israel and the remission of sins, and all the true Israel from the greatest to the least shall be saved.

G. R.

(Since Eld. Ruston did not feel to write an editorial for this month, we re-publish the above which was written by him and published in the November, 1936, *Signs*—J. D. W.)

VOICES OF THE PAST "He being dead yet speaketh"

I CORINTHIANS 12:8-11

"For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; to another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; to another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another divers kinds of tongues; but all these worketh that one and the self-same Spirit, dividing to every man severally as he will."

Sister Nancy Webb, of Kansas, requested our views on the above subject in her letter of November 9th, 1875; but, like many other similar requests, it has failed to receive a response for lack of time and ability on our part.

The apostle, in our understanding of this subject, is explaining to this Gentile church the oneness of the Spirit by which the true church of God is dis-

tinguished from all other religious organizations, as the one only spiritual body of which the Lord Jesus Christ is the Head. "There is one body and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all. But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ." — Eph. iv. 4-7. All the gifts bestowed on the church of God are to identify her as the church of God; while all other religious bodies, claiming to be the church or churches of Christ, have to supply what they profanely call *gifts*, from other sources, and all such pretenders are under the lead of some other spirit or spirits.

As the true church of God is but one body, she is animated and vitalized by but one Spirit. "It is the Spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing." — John vi. 63. The apostle is speaking of spiritual gifts in the church of God, of which he would not have the brethren ignorant. The Spirit that animates the whole church as the body of Christ never actuated any man to speak depreciatingly of Christ, or to call him accursed. Nor can any man say that Jesus is the Lord but by the Holy Ghost. That is, no man is competent to be a witness of Jesus by all that he can learn in the schools or literary institutions of this world. He must be born of the Spirit and taught by the Spirit before he can possess any one of the gifts which God has bestowed on the church of the First Born.

Now of the gifts of the Spirit, which Christ received for and gave to the members of his church when he ascended up on high and led captivity captive, there is an ample and rich variety and diversity. Among them were some apostles, prophets and evangelists, and pastors and teachers; for the perfecting of the saints, (not for making saints, or evangelizing the world, as false evangelists claim to do) for the

work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, (not for edifying the body of anti-christ, or any other than the body of Christ) until all the chosen and redeemed members of that body are brought (experimentally) in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ. — Eph. iv. 8-12. All these varied manifestations named in the text submitted are by the same Spirit, and their varied administrations are by the same, and recognize the same Lord; and their diversified operations are of the same God which worketh all in all. That is, the same God worketh all these diversified operations in all those to whom they are given. In all these there is a manifestation of the Spirit of God; and "the manifestation of the Spirit," in the bestowment of these gifts, and the causing their efficient operations in the church, "is given to every man" on whom they are manifested; not for his private or individual benefit alone, but "to profit with all." As the gift of sight to the eye, of hearing to the ear, of speech to the tongue, are not given for the exclusive benefit of these organs respectively, but for the benefit or profit of all the body to which these organs themselves belong.

Now for a clearer illustration we come to the text on which we were requested to write. "For to one is given by the same Spirit the word of wisdom." That is, to one member of the body of Christ — all the members in the church are not indued with the same amount of wisdom by the word; but the gift of wisdom in spiritual understanding is, like the light of the eye, for the benefit of the whole body or church, and it is a special gift to the church. Wisdom was given to Solomon to build the temple, and to administer the government of Israel, but the benefit of his wisdom was shared by the whole commonwealth. "To another

the word of knowledge." Knowledge and wisdom are not always found in the same individual. All the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hid in God the Father and Christ. — Col. ii. 2, 3. "And Christ Jesus is of God, made unto the church wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." — 1 Cor. 1. 30. But there is a wide difference between the wisdom of this world and that which is from above; the former is earthly, sensual and devilish: but the wisdom which is from above is first pure, then peaceable, gentle, and easy to be entreated, full of mercy and good fruits, without partiality, and without hypocrisy. — James iii. 15-18. The wisdom which is from above is the gift of God, and like all other good and perfect gifts, this gift of wisdom must come to us from above, from the Father of lights, with whom there is no variableness nor shadow of turning. — James i. 17. And as both knowledge of spiritual things and heavenly wisdom are hidden in God, none can possess them unless they be taught of God; and when the word or gift of wisdom or knowledge is bestowed on any of the members of Christ, it is for the benefit of the whole body or church of Christ. "To another faith by the same Spirit." It is true that wisdom and knowledge and faith are given in measure to every member; but there are special gifts in the church, divinely adapted for the confirmation of those who, being weak in the faith, are perplexed with doubts and fears; hence the strong are commanded to bear the burdens of the weak, and so fulfill the law of Christ, by strengthening the weak hands and confirming the feeble knees. "To another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit." This endowment is in the *plural* number, and may relate to healing both in a temporal and a spiritual sense. To the apostles, at least, was given the gift of healing those who were literally sick, and many instances are named in the word of wonderful cures by them

performed. And an apostle has said, "Is any sick among you? let him call for the elders of the church, and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord; and the prayer of faith shall save the sick, and the Lord shall raise him up," &c. — James v. 14, 15. Whether that gift is now in the church or not, has been a question with many; but all will confess that it was in the church in what is called the apostolic age. But it is our firm belief that it is still in the church; but it being a special gift of God, by which the prayer of faith is uttered by the Spirit, it is not subject to the will of even those on whom the gift rests. There are very many instances in which the elders of the church and others of the saints have been led by the Spirit to pray in faith for the healing of the sick; and every prayer indited by the Spirit is offered in faith, and being inspired by the Spirit, must be according to the will of God, and will as certainly be granted, as it is certain that it is directed by the Spirit. If we ask in prayer for this, or for any other favor, and are denied, it only proves that we have asked amiss, and have not been led by the Spirit that maketh intercession according to the will of God. Our prayers have not the power to induce God to do anything which he did not before design to do, and it is a mercy to us that they have not; but his Spirit in the saints, which knoweth what is the will of God, maketh intercession for us and in us, according to the immutable and eternal will of God, and with groanings which we cannot utter.

In the spiritual application of the gift of healing, we think all the saints will admit there are gifts in the church peculiarly adapted to the healing of those who are of a heavy heart, to the faint, the weak, the languid, the bruised and the lame. But none possess the ability or skill to "give strong drink unto him that is ready to perish, and wine to those that be of heavy hearts." —

Prov. xxxi. 6. All will prove as valueless as Job's miserable comforters, if they are not qualified by the special gifts of healing by the same Spirit by whom all other gifts are bestowed and made efficient for the use and edifying of the body of Christ.

"To another the working of miracles." This, like all the other gifts by the same Spirit, is a divine qualification. It cannot be purchased with money. This was clearly demonstrated when Simon offered the apostles money, and thought the gift of God might be bought. — Acts viii. 18-23. To the apostles and others in the primitive days of the church the gift of miracles was given, and many miracles were by them performed; but that gift was not given to all the members of the church, for Simon, though he coveted the gift, had no part nor lot in *that* matter.

There are thousands who at this day condemn Simon for thinking that the gifts of God could be bought with money, while they themselves entertain the same thought in their hearts, and indulge in the same presumptuous sin.

"To another prophecy." this gift not only inspired holy men to predict coming events, but embraced spiritual instruction in general; but whether for predicting things to come, or to edify the saints by exhortation or expounding the scriptures, it was by the Spirit, and for the common edification of all the church.

"To another discerning of spirits." There are in the church many who seem slow to discern spirits, and who are too easily imposed upon by such as assume, by transformation, the appearance of angels of light; but there are others who seem peculiarly gifted in detecting those who come in sheep's clothing, while inwardly they are ravening wolves. We are commanded to try the spirits, whether they be of God, and a rule is given by which to test them, as we have shown in a recent article on the subject. Every spirit that confesseth Christ, is of God, while all

other spirits are anti-christian. While some are too soon captivated by those who have a form of godliness, but deny the power thereof, the Spirit has furnished the church with special gifts for detecting and exposing such spirits as deny the power of godliness, and readily recognize the Spirit of truth whom the world cannot receive. This gift is of great importance in the church, and we should praise God that he has supplied the same by his Spirit.

"To another divers kinds of tongues, and to another the interpretation of tongues." It would extend this article to too great a length, were we to write elaborately on the gifts of tongues. When the Holy Ghost descended on the apostles, and those who were waiting with them on the day of pentecost, and filled the whole house where they were sitting, there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and sat upon each of them. "And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance." — Acts ii. 1-4. There was something astonishingly wonderful in this gift of tongues. By this gift these uneducated Galileans, who until this gift came on them like a rushing, mighty wind from heaven, had never known but one language, now spake with other and flaming tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance so distinctly that the citizens of about fifteen different countries and languages heard them in their own mother tongue in which they were born. None can dispute that this gift of tongues was by the Spirit, and that it was for the general benefit of the whole church of God. But the ability to understand and interpret the words spoken with tongues of fire, or which were like as of fire, is equally a gift of the Spirit of God. None but the same Spirit which inspired prophets and apostles to speak and write, can enable us to understand or interpret what God has spoken by them.

"But all these" gifts, operations and

administrations, "worketh that one and the self-same Spirit, dividing to every man severally" (that is, to every man in the church) "as he will." The Spirit is not governed in the distribution of its gifts in the church by the will of men, but they are given according to God's own sovereign will; for we are told God has set the members in the body as it hath pleased him. "For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members, 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 all been made to drink into one Spirit."

This whole chapter (1 Cor. xii.) is a treatise on the spiritual gifts with which God has indued his church, and the wise distribution of the gifts to all the several members, to act in harmony and unison for the common benefit of the whole body. "For the body is not one member, but many." It is indeed but one body, having but one Spirit, one life, one hope, one head, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God, one Father, and one complete set of members. The natural organization of the human body is used by the apostle in this chapter to illustrate the spiritual organization of the body or church of God. First of all, Christ is given to be the Head over all things to the church, which is his body. This body of Christ has but this one head. The dragon and the beast that rose up out of the sea had many heads, as popes, kings, priests and bishops; but the body of Christ is filled with the fullness of him that filleth all in all. A body having more than one head would be a frightful monster; and a head having more than one body would be frightful. Or a body with more members than belong to a perfectly organized body, would be as imperfect as though it were deficient in members. Imagine a body with more than two arms, hands, feet or eyes; how strange and out of proportion. But as God him-

self has set all the members in the body, the church, his work is perfect; in it there is no lack, no redundance.

To each member God has given its appropriate office, or gift. We cannot see with the ear, or hear with the eye or hands, or walk on the hands. "If," says Paul, "the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand I am not of the body, is it therefore not of the body? And if the ear shall say, Because I am not the eye I am not of the body, is it therefore not of the body? If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where were the smelling? But now hath God set the members every one of them in the body, as it hath pleased him. And if they were all one member, where were the body? But now are they many members, yet but one body. And the eye cannot say to the hand, I have no need of thee; nor again the head to the feet, I have no need of you." "Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular, and God hath set some (members) in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues."

Having extended our remarks perhaps to too great a length, we will close with a few brief reflections. We learn from this subject that there is but one head to the church as the one body of Christ; that all who compose the one church or body of Christ are chosen of God, and baptized into this one body, and set in their respective places in the church, and indued by him with such gifts as he is pleased to bestow; and all by the one and self-same Spirit, and all for the self-same general purpose, which is for the edifying of the whole body of Christ. Not for the purpose of edifying the world or antichrist, nor for making and adding to the church members which God himself has not set in the body. As Christ is the head and the church is his body, there must be a vital union between the

head and the body — between Christ and the church. The life or vitality of both head and body depends on this sacred union; for should it be broken, the head separated from the body, both head and body would die: Christ would cease to be the head, and the church could no longer be the body or members of Christ. But because he lives, his body and members must live also, for the church is his body, his flesh and his bones. "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." — Rom. viii. 38, 39.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe May 1, 1876.)

OBITUARIES

MRS. BERTIE SIRMAN DRYDEN

Mrs. Bertie Sirman Dryden was born April 28, 1883, and departed this life January 28, 1965. She was the daughter of John William and Sarah Sturgis Sirman; and was united in marriage to Mr. Kinzer Dryden, who died many years ago.

Sister Bertie, as she was known among the church members and friends, was received into the Salisbury Old School Baptist Church, Salisbury, Maryland, and was baptized by the writer the 5th Sunday in June, 1946. She remained a faithful member until called away by death.

We have never known a more faithful and loyal member of the church than Sister Dryden. She adorned her profession by an orderly walk and a Godly conversation. She was faithful in attending the services, and active in all the duties of those who profess the name of Christ. When the writer was unable to attend the services, she usually kept him informed as to the welfare of the membership; and reported in detail the minister's sermon.

Those who are loyal and faithful to their church and pastor, are very much missed by all who knew them, and our beloved sister certainly was numbered among the faithful. We shall miss her, but she has left precious evidence that she has died in the Lord; from which none ever awake to weep.

She is survived by three sisters: Mrs. Ruth Twilley, Salisbury, Maryland; Mrs. Mary

Shockley, Hebron, Maryland; and Mrs. Elnora S. Sistare, Hollywood, Florida.

Her funeral was conducted by the writer and Elder W. D. Griffin at the John B. Parsons Home, Salisbury, Maryland.

Elder D. V. Spangler

ELDER HARVEY SMITH

In loving memory of our highly esteemed brother, Elder Harvey Smith. He was born October 14, 1898, and departed this life January 24, 1965, making his stay sixty-six years.

He was married to Alice Rudd December 26, 1920, and to this union were born five children, of which he had the pleasure of baptizing three. They are Elder Wallace Smith, Brother Donald Smith and Sister Mellicie Smith Diner. He was a native of Caswell County, and moved to Burlington, N. C. February 24, 1924, where he lived until his death.

He joined Bush Arbor Church in November, 1945, and was ordained a minister in 1950. He served four churches at the time of his death: Big Meadow, Stem, Pleasant Grove, and Lickfork since 1956. We of Lickfork and our sister churches have suffered a great loss. Words will never tell how deeply we are hurt, but knowing our heavenly Father's will must be done, and knowing he can do no wrong, may the grace of Christ and the Father's boundless love rest upon us and make us submissive to his will. No one will ever know how much this dear brother meant to us: a kind and humble servant of God, he stood on the rock that cannot be moved, feeding God's little ones from the Master's table, and declaring the word of God until the end. His generous kindness and his personality was indeed a rare one. He was firmly established in the doctrine of salvation by grace, and believed in good works as evidence of faith. He endeared himself to all classes of people, young and old, rich or poor alike. He was never one to murmur or complain, and always seemed perfectly reconciled to whatever his lot might be; and many times in his prayers he would ask the dear Lord for a peaceful moment to die. I feel he was bountifully supplied.

This dear brother not only preached the gospel, but lived it in his daily walk and conversation. He is now released from all trials and sorrows of this life, to be forever with the dear Saviour he loved so much. How often have I heard him sing his favorite song, "Jerusalem, my Happy Home." The life this dear brother lived will be an inspiration to all that knew him, and to his dear family who loved him so. We shall miss his wise counseling and encouraging words.

Brother Smith's funeral was conducted at Bush Arbor Church, where he had been a faithful member. His body was laid to rest in Bush Arbor Cemetery to await the resurrection morning, when it shall be fashioned like the dear Saviour's body. "The Lord giveth and the Lord taketh away; blessed be the name of the Lord." We trust that the One who doeth all things well, will give us grace and strength to carry on without him, having the assurance that our loss is his eternal gain.

WHEREAS, The church at Lickfork has lost a faithful and devoted pastor, therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, First, that we bow in humble submission to our Heavenly Father's will; Second, that we extend to the family our heartfelt sympathy; Third, that a copy of these resolutions be sent for publication to the *Old Faith Contender* and the *Signs of the Times*; one mailed to the family and one be recorded in our church minutes.

Done by order of the church.

Willie W. Lee, Church Clerk

NOAH JACKSON PRESTWOOD

Noah Jackson Prestwood was born November 5, 1872, and died July 21, 1964, at the age of more than ninety-one years. He was born in Pike County, Alabama, but moved to Roeton, just across the line, in Coffee County, Alabama, and lived there the remainder of his life.

He was first married to Delia Johnson, and was blessed with fifty years of companionship and four children, all of whom survive and live at the family home at Roeton, Brundidge, Alabama. In addition to four children: Lewis, Garrett and George Prestwood and Mrs. Inez Prestwood Haisten, ten grandchildren, thirty-two great grandchildren, and five great great grandchildren survive.

After the death of his first wife, Brother Prestwood married Bessie Connor Johnston, who was a wonderful companion for twenty-one years, and who survives him. In his business life Brother Prestwood was a plantation owner, a merchant, a cotton ginner, a turpentine operator and a banker. He was a director of the First National Bank of Brundidge for fifteen years, and its vice-president for eight years.

Brother Prestwood joined the Primitive Baptist Church at Corinth in 1906. He was ordained a deacon in 1908. When Corinth Church disbanded, he moved his membership to Union Springs Primitive Baptist Church, where it was until his death. He was an outstanding Father in Israel. He was a liberal provider for his church and other churches in the association, for the Conecuh River As-

sociation, and for the local and visiting ministering brethren. He and his wife were blessed to be able to attend his own church or a sister church almost every Sunday until his passing. We know that the family, his friends and the Primitive Baptists have suffered a great loss, but we feel to know that our loss is his eternal gain.

Written by one who would love to, but feels unworthy to be counted as his brother in the faith.

A. C. Carter

MITTIE HODGES FLEMING

It is with a sad heart that we attempt to write the obituary of our dear mother, Mittie Hodges Fleming.

She was born June 3, 1876 and passed away September 6, 1964, making her stay on earth 88 years, 3 months and 3 days. She was the eldest daughter of Jesse Hodges and Mary Ann Robertson Hodges of Martin County. Her family moved to Washington, N. C. when she was a young girl and she lived there until her marriage to Marcellus Fleming of Greenville, N. C. on January 10, 1900.

She leaves to mourn her passing a son, Jesse Marcellus Fleming, Jr., two daughters, Miss Mary Ruth Fleming and Mrs. Hazel Fleming Jackson all of Greenville, N. C. and five grandchildren and two great grandchildren.

Mother united with the Great Swamp Primitive Baptist Church with our father on the fourth Sunday in August, 1922. She was a true believer in the Doctrine of Salvation by Grace and not of works. She always attended her church meetings as long as she was able.

Mother had been in failing health for two years prior to her death but was confined to her bed only one week before she passed away. We feel our loss is her gain, for she fought a good fight, kept the faith, and there is laid up for her a crown of righteousness.

Her funeral was conducted in the Wilkerson Funeral Home Chapel by her pastor, Elder Marvin E. Garner assisted by Elder E. C. Harrison of Williamston, N. C. Her body was laid to rest beside our beloved father in Greenwood Cemetery under a beautiful mound of flowers and in the presence of relatives and friends, to await the Resurrection Morning when Jesus will call, "Come ye blessed of my Father inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

Tho' you are away, your tender love lives with us each day,

And your memory we shall cherish in our hearts forever.

We know that God's wisdom and perfect love is for the best,

So he has claimed you Dearest Mother to a home of rest.

Written by her devoted daughters,
Mary Ruth Fleming and
Hazel Fleming Jackson

JESSE NASH VIA

Jesse Nash Via was born in Patrick County, Virginia, February 21, 1898, the son of William A. Via and Adeline Via. He was called from this life July 23, 1964.

He is survived by his devoted wife, Nannie Lou Via; three sons, A. Neal Via, Grant Via and Jessie O. Via; six daughters, Mrs. Katy V. Johnson, Mrs. Clinton Spencer, Mrs. Glenn Pickeral, Mrs. Herbert Roberts, Mrs. H. D. Ingram, Mrs. Bobby Hancock; two brothers, Bob Via and John Via.

His funeral was conducted at Union Primitive Baptist Church by Elder Leonard J. Brammer assisted by Elder Amos I. Hash. His body was laid to rest in the Via Cemetery.

Brother Via joined the Church at Union the fourth Saturday in June, 1959 and was baptized the next day with his wife. He was elected treasurer and served as assistant clerk. Brother Via was interested in the welfare of the church and filled his seat when he could. He was honest and you could depend on what he said. He was straightforward in his personality. He believed in Salvation by Grace and Grace alone. We feel that he died in the faith that was once delivered to the Saints and feel that he had a sweet hope in his breast that the Lord would raise his sleeping dust when He shall come in the clouds of glory. We believe that Brother Via's last few years here were his best days. I, as his Pastor, miss him very much. We know that he, together with us, must heed the call.

May the Lord give us at Union strength to look to Him for all our help.

Written by his unworthy pastor,
Leonard J. Brammer

OBITUARY AND RESOLUTIONS

Our dear sister in Christ, Harriet (Bird) Thornton, was born August 2, 1886, in Putnam County, W. Va., and died March 3, 1965. She was a daughter of the late Deacon C. M. Bird and Sarah A. Bird. Sister Thornton had been in ill health for a number of years, but through God's mercy her last hours of suffering were of short duration. She died in a hospital in Ohio. She died in the blessed hope of immortality: she was given a sweet hope in the blood and imputed righteousness of Christ in early life. She united with Providence Primitive Baptist Church, Lincoln Coun-

ty, W. Va. in July, 1920, and was baptized in August by Elder W. I. Wade. She was a faithful member, always attending the services of her church when health permitted. Her life was adorned with many graces, being humble and unassuming. She was well established in the doctrine of grace. She was a good wife, a kind mother and a good neighbor; and she will long be missed by all who knew her.

She was first united in marriage to John P. Oxley, to which union four children were born, (one daughter Violet preceded her in death). Surviving are Jasper of Wheaton, Md.; Bernard and Raymond, Hurricane, W. Va. Several years after the death of her first husband she was married to T. Jeff Thornton, to which union five children were born: Leonard, Milton, W. Va.; Buford, Hurricane, W. Va.; and Howard, Middletown, Ohio; Mrs. Edith Johnson and Mrs. Catherine Coyner, Middletown, Ohio. Surviving also are the following step-children: Fleet Thornton, Beckley, W. Va.; Elwood Thornton, Quincy, W. Va.; Everett Thornton, Hurricane, W. Va.; Mrs. Elva Sloan and Mrs. Leva Byrnside, Quincy, W. Va.; one sister, Mrs. Lelia Edwards, Hurricane; two brothers, B. B. Bird, Huntington; and Elder H. J. Bird, Hurricane; 47 grandchildren; 44 great grandchildren and a number of near relatives.

Funeral services were conducted in Hurricane by Elder V. B. Linn, and with singing of hymns as she had requested. Burial was in the Bird Cemetery on the old home farm.

RESOLVED, That we the Old School Baptist Church called Providence, desire the grace of resignation to bow us in humble submission to the holy will of our God, witnessing that our grief is softened with the balm of conviction that for our sister all is well, believing that she is at rest. Be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of these resolutions be made a part of our church records; a copy be tendered the family, and a copy be sent the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Done by order of the church in conference.

H. J. Bird, Moderator
V. L. Byrnside, Clerk

It was my blessed privilege to walk with Sister Thornton for a short time in this life in the communion of the spirit of love in Christ. Her hope was grounded in the finished work of our Redeemer God. To the family and her many friends that mourn her passing, may I say that we weep not as we would for those who have no hope. I feel that she has entered into that blessed rest, to await the call of her Master. Let us bow in humble submission to the will of our sovereign God, in whose providential hand are all events.

V. B. Linn

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 133

DANVILLE, VA., OCTOBER, 1965

NO. 10

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 10/65
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

Copper Hill, Va.

Dear Editors:

I am enclosing a copy of a letter from Sister Dunlap. I wrote her and asked permission to send it to you for your consideration of publishing it in the *Signs of the Times*. She gave her consent. I consider her experience very rich.

Sister Dunlap stated in her reply to my letter that she had re-read many of the old *Signs* since their association, and had rejoiced with those who told their experiences; and enjoyed so much many able writings by our ministers, and if someone should get a small part of the enjoyment from reading hers that she had in reading said experiences, she would be glad.

Yours in a precious hope,
B. O. Thompson

THE LETTER FROM SISTER DUNLAP

South Harpsell, Maine

Dear Elder Thompson:

First, let me thank you for coming so far to speak to our little group. Our hearts were made glad because of the testimony you gave of the great works

our God can perform in bringing one out of darkness into the light of the gospel of grace. What a power it takes to separate one from the fascinations of this world, the natural desires for wealth, position, and friendships, and make him willing to spend time and energy for a cause often hated by his neighbors, acquaintances, and sometimes by his own relations.

Your preaching made my soul rejoice as I recognized the language of a child of our Father, a brother who spoke in words I understood, who worshiped at the same altar, and brought the offerings of humility, a broken and a contrite heart, reverence and gratitude to God for saving grace and mercies untold.

Thank God that preachers are still being raised up to bring the glad tidings that put a song in our hearts, and confirm our faith.

The evening meetings were so precious to me. I am glad some are given the talent to talk beautifully of their experiences. I envy those who can speak freely and I always feel sad and depressed when I reject the opportunity to give a reason for the hope that is within me. I feel that I am not given liberty because I am not worthy to speak his name; and that is true.

I have not fed or clothed, or taken in one of these my brethren on so many occasions, and if I have kept any of his commandments, it is because He has kept me from breaking them.

But I will try to keep my promise and write something of my experience, which I can never find words to tell. As a girl I often went to the Bowdoinham Old School Baptist Church with my mother, who was a member. I knew

what they believed, and sometimes I rather enjoyed the preaching. One incident of my childhood showed perhaps that I felt even then a love for the people of God. At the time of our association when we had some members staying with us, I was asked to go on an errand which was not at all distasteful to me, but I couldn't bear to leave those people: I wanted to hear what they were saying, and I wept as if my heart was breaking.

By the time I went away to college, however, I had decided that the Old Baptists were old fashioned, and just accepted what had been passed down to them; and I began to regard the Bible as a collection of legends, and not necessarily true. I studied and argued for evolution, and went to different churches in the city trying to find something I liked. I wasn't successful. One thing I remember vividly, in chapel each morning the different professors would lead the service and I listened attentively to find out if any of them believed in the grace of God instead of works. I was always disappointed. I attended one of the weekly prayer-meetings, but no one sounded sincere and I did not like it, and I did not join any of the so-called religious organizations. After graduation, when I started teaching, I tried going to the Free-will Baptist Church and taught Sunday school for awhile; and responded to a call on one occasion to rise and accept Christ as my Saviour, but passed up the invitation to join the church as I told the minister I didn't want to join any but my home church.

My attempt to accept Christ brought me nothing but condemnation. I obtained no satisfaction from that experiment and had no feeling of fellowship for the church. Soon after this I began to think seriously that I should decide either to join one of the churches that were so busy trying to save souls, or to keep away and accept the Old Baptists' belief. I prayed that I might be shown the way, and I was much trou-

bled because I was so undecided.

One Summer when we were holding our yearly association at the home church, my mother was preparing to go to the first meeting. I had no intention of going, and was working around the house when my sister came up to me and asked me if I didn't want to go. I decided that I might as well. Elder McConnell was to preach that morning, and as he walked up the aisle to the pulpit the thought came to me that if a man from a great city like New York could believe in the things the Old Baptists believed, there must be something to it. I listened intently as he began to speak. With great humility he told of his unworthiness to stand before the people of God and try to preach the unsearchable riches of His kingdom, and that he could do so only if enabled by the Holy Spirit. As he went on to tell of salvation by grace, not of works, I found that he was reiterating the same truths that Elder Beal had been preaching for so many years. I began to feel that he was speaking to me, telling of the searchings and prayer in the heart of a child of God — prayer put there and answered by the Holy Spirit. A wonderful glow filled the church and shown around the members. A love for the gospel he was preaching came into my soul; a love for those people gathered there. My prayer had been answered and I knew this was my home.

Can anyone ever tell adequately of that miracle of revelation, of that first love, the joy and peace, the thankfulness and the praise when the Spirit descends to write His law upon the heart? I felt I was a new person, raised from the dead. For a long time after this it seemed sinful even to read a newspaper, or touch the keys of a piano: all pleasure in worldly things was taken away.

At the next meeting I tried to tell the church of my experience, and was received. As Elder Beal was old and felt unable to perform the baptism, it

was decided to wait until Elder Keene could come up from North Berwick before the baptism. I had two wonderful experiences when walking home from an evening meeting one night: The western sky was glowing with colors alive with the power and the glory of God, and my feet seemed not to be touching the earth, and my heart was singing His praises. On another night as I was lying in bed awake, a great light shone from the roof of my chamber and descended to where I lay. No words can express the power in that light, the presence of an Infinite Being. I felt I should die if the light remained. Tears streamed from my eyes and I couldn't breathe. I felt His love toward me a sinner, and I was nothing and less than nothing. I felt then there is a God in heaven so powerful, so wise, to whom the wisdom of man is foolishness; and He has a people to whom He reveals himself. What an unspeakable gift!

After the baptism, during a visit with an aunt who had been a member for many years, I was lying in bed one night when spirits seemed to be floating around the bed. Then a great cloud settled over the bed, a cloud so filled with His power and glory, His love and mercy, that All I could think of was, "My God, and my God." The cloud lifted and I felt that I could never take one step again without offending. After awhile I got up and walked to the window. It was moonlight and the great trees on the lawn were pointing to heaven, a halo around their tops shining with praise to Him.

Another experience came as I was walking early one morning in front of my home. The air was thick with fog, and all of a sudden I knew He was there in the mist, and I wanted to fall on my face and worship Him. The things that come into the heart at times like these no one can know unless he has been there too. No longer any doubt of a God ever present, powerful beyond any imagination of man, ruling the

universe and doing his will among the inhabitants of earth and heaven.

After returning to teaching, I was greatly blessed to be able to attend services in New York where Elder McConnell and Elder Dodson were preaching; and later in Hopewell, N. J. where Elder Vaughn was pastor. The meetings and associations there were sweet to me, as were our meetings here at home.

I have had seasons of darkness and gloom, and others of joy and rejoicing, but always there is a love that draws me to my church and my brethren; and I realize how good God has been to me, the very least and the most unworthy, if one at all.

So I have a hope that I may sign myself your sister in a precious fellowship.

Minerva F. Dunlap

CHRISTIAN BEHAVIOR

"But, if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth." (1 Tim. 3:15)

Christ has delivered us from the law of sin and death, therefore we owe complete allegiance to him — as "being under the law to Christ." (1 Cor. 9:21) "The people of God, who are purchased with such a cost and set free by such power, are constrained by a sense of deep love to live a Godly life."

The first lesson we learn in the school of Christ is self-denial. (Matt. 10:37-39, 16:24-28)

The heart of religion is living our profession. A dead profession is worth nothing. "This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God might be careful to maintain good works. These things are good and profitable unto men." (Titus 3:8) "And let ours also learn to maintain good works for necessary uses, that they be not unfruitful." (Titus 3:14)

Notice the religion of the dead professors: "They profess that they know God, but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate." (Titus 1:16)

Working for life or blessings is a fruitless task and lost labor. But working from life is a glorious privilege and sets the seal upon the reality of our profession and evidences a living experience of the power and grace of God in his predestination and purposes. (see James 2:14-26)

Notice this command which is applicable to the Children of God: "Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee." (Mark 5:19) Beware of Satan's temptations to take the Sovereignty of God and present it in such a way that would discourage us even to the extent of being unconcerned about our duty in keeping his commandments and precepts, and to charge our negligence to the sovereignty of God by such expressions as this: "When the time comes I will join the church." This is true, for there is a time for all things in the secret purposes of God. Yet, who are we to attempt to follow the secret will of God as a rule of our life and conduct?

Let us be concerned with exhortations in the Scriptures: "And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God." (Romans 12:2) This is the *revealed* will of precept and commandment that we should be very careful to seek after and follow. There are many exhortations that the Apostles were given to write. They were given for the welfare of the church. "But if ye bite and devour one another, take heed that ye be not consumed one of another." (Gal. 5:15)

"Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit

unto unfeigned love of the brethren, see that ye love one another with a pure heart fervently." (1 Peter 1:22) "And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves: for charity shall cover the multitude of sins." (1 Peter 4:8) The church should "stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the Gospel." (Phil. 1:27; also see 2 Cor. 13:11, Rom. 12:15)

The Brethren are exhorted to help the poor, and to contribute to the needs of the Pastors. (Rom 12:13, 1 Cor. 9:7-14) As to ministerial support, I would like it to be understood I am certainly against salaried and the hireling system so popular in the religious world. (John 10:10-15) A minister is a servant of his flock. (Matt. 23:11) He is under Christ and is set over the flock to lead and oversee them. (Acts 20:28, 1 Tim. 3:5, John 21:15-17)

The minister should not be greedy of filthy lucre. (1 Tim. 3:3) The ministry is not for lazy persons and any minister who will not work with his own hands to care for the necessities of his household is not worthy of the name of a minister.

Of course, it is the duty of the church to help the pastor so that he can direct his labors to the spiritual welfare of his flock, freely giving his time, strength, health, etc. We should watch over one another for good, and bear with one another our weakness. "We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak." (Rom. 15:1) The Children of God should walk in newness of life, and should be faithful to attend church meetings. (Hebrews 10:25)

Dear ones, the life we manifest is of vital importance. It proves whether we have a profession or possession of true religion. One cannot hold to the world with one hand, and hold to the church with the other. The people of God in the Old Testament were a separate people from the other nations around them. Therefore, we are in the

world, but not of the world.

We request the reader to read the 9th chapter of Ezra, and we quote a portion of verse 2: “. . . so that the holy seed have mingled themselves with the people of those lands . . .”

It is the work of Satan to entangle the children of God into his net of the pleasures of this world. He tells them, “this is all right, there is not any harm in this, etc.” Little by little our minds are taken away from God and godliness to the extent that we seldom open the Bible. Oh! how many hours do we spend with our minds taken up in the pleasures of this life. What profit has all this vain pleasure been to us? May we be given the spiritual mind and Grace to choose “that good part.” (Luke 10:38-42) Pleasure seeking is a temptation of young followers of Christ. (see Luke 8:14, 12:19, 1 Tim. 5:6, 2 Tim. 3:4) Satan promises everything, as he tempted Christ, but gives nothing. (Matt. 4:11)

As we read the book of Ecclesiastes, we notice the general teaching of it is to expose the vanity of all worldly enjoyments. Furthermore, it shows that a person's happiness does not lie in natural wisdom and knowledge, nor in worldly wealth, nor in civil honour, power and authority, nor in the mere externals of religion; but in the fear of God and the worship of him. The fear of God encourages man to a free use of good things of life in a moderate way with thankfulness to God.

In his search for the true and best way to use this world for our good and profit was not found in worldly wisdom. (Eccl. 1:12-18) It is not to be found in carnal pleasure. (Eccl. 2:1-3, 7:6) It is not found in great possessions. (2:7-11) (Here is where Satan tempts us to put temporal interests before worship.)

May God keep us from coveting the vain things upon this world. (Read Acts 5:1-11, Luke 12:15, Eph. 5:3) May we follow this exhortation: “And they that use this world, as not abus-

ing it: for the fashion of this world passeth away.” (I Cor. 7:31) It behooves God's people to live a life of Godliness. It is profitable unto all things. (see Tim. 4:8)

Dear reader, please look up the Scripture references. These are a few of the great precepts and commands laid down for our good for the directions of our lives while we live here in this world. “And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work.” (2 Cor. 9:8)

“And this I pray, that your love may abound yet more and more in knowledge and in all judgment; that ye may approve things that are excellent; that ye may be sincere and without offence till the day of Christ.” (Phil. 1:9-10)

(Elder) C. M. Haygood
Ballinger, Texas

RECEIVES COMFORT FROM OUR WRITERS

Rt. 1,
St. Charles, Kentucky

Dear Editors:

“And unto one he gave five talents, to another two, and to another one; to every man according to his several ability.” (Matthew 25:15) After a long time the lord of these servants came and reckoned with them; and to the one that had five talents, and the one that had two, he said, “Well done thou good and faithful servant.” Then the servant that had the one talent said that he was afraid, and went and hid the talent in the earth.

Sometimes I wonder if some of his little, trembling servants do not try to hide that one talent they have: They love His appearing, and long for more evidence; they love the word, but think maybe it does not mean them, and try to hide it from the church. The one talent was just as important as either of the other two's talents.

What great comfort we get from the *Signs of the Times*. Brothers and Sisters write for our good paper. We love to hear from those who have been given a talent to "feed my sheep."

I am sending a good letter from a dear one who is traveling along with us. All we have is just a little hope, which is sometimes so wonderful, and sometimes almost gone.

Our Christian love to each and every one of you.

W. B. and Mona McGregor

LETTER TO SISTER MCGREGOR

1302 Walnut Street,
Benton, Ky. 42025

Dear Sister Mona (McGregor):

In your letter last week, some of it I just couldn't answer. When you spoke of this creature having a talent to write about things concerning the truth as it is in Jesus our Lord, the Christ, our Master, the King of Kings, the precious Redeemer of the Elect of God, who am I that I should even express myself in my ignorance concerning those marvelous truths, and to claim that I see, and that I hope and believe these Bible truths, and have a right by the workings of God's grace, to handle and express myself, as you know I continually do when among our friends.

. . . David was blessed to write in the Spirit of our God to the church of the living God, and he could sing the songs of grace. His experience, dear Mona, is our experience: when nature is under control and the Spirit of Truth is given us to see the beauty of Zion, and walk about Zion and go round about her, and tell the towers thereof; and mark well her bulwarks and consider her palaces, to tell it to the generation following. That generation is the generation of Jesus Christ, the Son of David, the Son of Abraham, as Matthew expresses it in the first chapter of his Gospel.

What a privilege it is to write to His children, God's children, about these beauties; what a privilege it is to express our thoughts to one another; and how relieved we feel when we can talk with those we fellowship about these things — It's rest to us; its peace to us.

Saturday night, January 23rd, Elder Paul Poyner and wife visited in my home, and others came in to hear him talk. Sunday following we met at the Soldier Creek Church. It was not our regular meeting day, but the icy roads had kept us from meeting for a few Sundays; and we phoned around to the different churches in adjoining counties, and had several from the New Providence Church and the Mayfield Church to come and be with us. Elder Poyner spoke to the comfort of us who believe in God's Doctrine: made believers, as we hope, by the working of His mighty power. For it is of Him that we are in Christ Jesus; and it is the work of God that we believe in Jesus whom He hath sent.

That belief creates a zeal in us, an earnest desire to worship God, and give him not only the tenth, but all our praise, all our heart, mind and soul; and all glory.

In hope, Mona,
Effie Bowden

THE CRY AND THE ANSWER

1718 Chamagnolle Road
Eldorado, Arkansas

Dear Editors:

What am I? "It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps." "The way of man is not in himself." Why was I born into this world? for in my meditations I see myself so wicked and sinful, it seems I am good material for a sword of the Lord. Yet he uses and directs us after the counsel of his own will.

As we go along the carnal highway

of life, we go moaning, asking in our weak and depraved strength for mercy. At times it seems this asking does not get any further than our lips, but when the sweet presence of the Holy Spirit comes to us in our lonely hours of meditation, we sigh in our very souls, "Oh, Lord be merciful to us." We cry as it is written in Habakkuk 2:11, "For the stone shall cry out of the wall, and the beam out of the timber shall answer it."

A poor alien sinner is lifeless and helpless until he is made to cry from his wall of sinfulness by the regenerating power of almighty God, then the answer comes from the beam out of the timber, the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. If not deceived we are given to enjoy this when given spiritual light and understanding. This may not be worth anything to anyone, but the sweet consolation we have from it, we do not have words to explain.

"The stone shall cry." What a positive declaration! "Out of the wall." How often do we cry for deliverance from the enclosed walls of our sinfulness. Who is it that shall answer?: the beam out of the timber — God. It is a sweet morsel of heavenly food to the sin burdened child of God, and can only be enjoyed from the fountain from which all blessings come.

You will find enclosed \$5.00 for two years' renewal to the *Signs*. May the Lord's blessings be ours to enjoy in this low ground of sin and sorrow, and ours at last to be around the throne of the one and only God forever.

Yours, an unworthy creature,
J. J. Davis

PROPHECY

Prophecy tells of future events coming to pass before they come to pass. This is called prophesying. This is the work of prophets, chosen for this work. In the Old Testament there were sixteen of these prophets, beginning with

Isaiah and ending with Malachi. These men all spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit within them.

In the days of Isaiah, Israel was in a deplorable condition. There are a few verses in Chapter One I want to briefly notice. In verses 2 and 3, we find these words: "Hear, O heavens, and give ear, O earth; for the Lord hath spoken, I have nourished and brought up children, and they have rebelled against me. The ox knoweth his master, and the ass his master's crib; but Israel doth not know, my people doth not consider."

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

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

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

Now to verse 18: "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord; Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow. Though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." A question: How is this change to be accomplished? According to my

understanding, this change was accomplished by the shedding of the blood of Jesus Christ at Calvary. The blood of animals or birds could not take away sin.

In verses 19 and 20, we read as follows: "If ye be willing and obedient, ye shall eat the good of the land. But if ye refuse and rebel, ye shall be devoured with the sword: for the mouth of the Lord hath spoken it." The fact that the Lord spoke these words, we may rest assured they will come to pass as spoken.

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

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

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

In the Scriptures previously quoted,

we have learned that the old covenant has become obsolete. He taketh away the first that "he may establish the second." (From memory)

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

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

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

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

to pass that the Scripture (prophecy) might be fulfilled.

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

The words "They were eating and drinking" in verse 38, to me are very significant. I have never been in what is called a night club, and I am glad and thankful I have not. But from what I have heard about them, it is a place of eating and drinking; and these places are kept open till late hours at night, to give these pleasure lovers more time to continue on in their sinful ways; not knowing that the pure eyes of the Lord see all this evil, and some time, we know not how soon, these evil people will be taken away as were the people in the days of Noah and the flood.

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

Now let us pause for a moment to meditate. We can hardly picture in our minds what a time like this would be

like. Yet we know a state of tranquility will exist. Compare this with the conditions under which we are living today and note the difference. Today we are in peril or danger. It looks as though wicked men have invented their last destructive weapon. A weapon which, if used, would destroy all life upon the earth. And it would be used were it not for the fact the Lord is going to cut short the work of these wicked and depraved creatures.

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

Now verse 22: "And except those days be shortened, no flesh should be saved, but for the elect's sake those days shall be shortened.

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

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

In Revelation, Chapter 22 and verse 16 we find these words: "I, Jesus, have sent mine angel to testify unto you these things in the churches. I am the root and the offspring of David, and the bright and morning star." I understand it was the apostle John who was sent to testify of these things in the churches. He was the angel.

The book of Revelation completes the

Bible. Nothing is to be added to the words written therein, nor nothing taken from them.

A. T. Benson
Delmar, Del.

NATURE AND FAITH

We wept — 'twas *Nature* wept — but *Faith*
Can pierce beyond the gloom of death,
And in yon world so fair and bright
Behold thee in refulgent light!

We miss thee here, yet *Faith* would rather
Know thou art with thy Heavenly Father.

Nature sees the body dead,

Faith beholds the spirit fled;

Nature stops at Jordan's tide,

Faith beholds the other side;

That but hears farewell and sighs,

This, thy welcome in the skies.

Nature mourns a *cruel* blow;

Faith assures it is not so.

Nature never sees thee more;

Faith but sees thee gone before.

Nature tells a dismal story;

Faith has visions full of glory.

Nature views the change with sadness;

Faith contemplates it with gladness.

Nature sorrows, *Faith* gives meekness —

"Strength is perfected in weakness."

Nature weeps, and dreads the rod;

Faith looks up and blesses God.

Sense looks downwards; *Faith*, above;

That sees harshness, *this* sees love.

Oh! let *Faith* victorious be,

Let it reign triumphantly!

But thou art gone! — not lost, but flown;

Shall I then ask thee back, my own?

Back, and leave thy spirit's brightness?

Back, and leave the robes of whiteness?

Back, and leave the Lamb who feeds thee?

Back, from founts to which He leads thee?

Back, and leave thy Heavenly Father?

Back to earth and sin? Nay, rather

Would I live in solitude!

I *would* not ask thee, if I *could*;

But patient wait the high decree

That calls my spirit home with thee!

— *Elizabeth Webb*

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A DELIGHTFUL VISIT

Rt. 3, Box 431
Martinsville, Virginia

Dear Brother and Sister Wood:

I long so much of the time to talk with some of the brethren, or write to them to ease my troubled breast.

I just had to write a short letter in regard to the wonderful time we had together in the home of Brother and Sister Rice Akers, Ferrum, Virginia, from the Pigg River Association held at Rocky Mount, Virginia; with much natural food, along with so much spiritual food.

The wonderful talks, and the experiences from Sister Wood and Brother Akers, seem a heaven here below for a poor sinner like me. So much of my time I am groping in darkness, just trying to hold on: it seems that all hope is clean gone at times. But that power of the most high God, as Sister Wood said, moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform: He always comes to a little child's rescue when worldly things confront us.

I am so thankful for his mercies and the manifestations of his love while we live in this world, because there is nothing we can do. In Philippians 2:13, Paul says, "For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." He makes his people a willing people in the day of his power. In Jeremiah 31:3, it is written, "The Lord hath appeared of old unto me, saying, Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee." I am so glad that in Matthew 11:25 Jesus said, "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes." etc.

We had such a wonderful association, with good singing; and God's gifted ministers spoke of the wonderful things of God, the Saviour. I surely was fed all three days. I ask the prayers of you and Sister Wood for my family and me.

A brother in hope of eternal life,
Raymond L. Brammer

(We heartily agree with what Brother Brammer has said above. Most of the evening was spent in Brother and Sister Akers' home talking of "good things"; and it is so pleasant and comforting to be together when we are blessed to spend the time this way. The things we talked about that evening would be distasteful to those who know nothing about the work of God in his people in bringing them out of darkness into the light of the knowledge of the truth of what He has done for them. Some are gifted to talk of these things more than others, but all listen with intense interest when others are speaking of them. It is especially good to be led to talk of these things when there are some present whose hearts are yearning for a word of comfort and confirmation that their exercises are of the Lord. This we found there that evening, and we will not soon forget our visit with Brother and Sister Akers.

— J. D. W)

UNION MEETING

The Lord willing, the Union Meeting of the churches of the Predestinarian Old School Baptists of California will be held with the Bakersfield Church, on Alpine Street, near Baker Street and California Avenue, in the Oddfellow's Hall, on October 29, 30, and 31 (Friday, Saturday and fifth Sunday in October).

For information call Sister Bertha Wright, 108 Circle Drive, Bakersfield, Calif. Phone EX 9-0429. Or phone 331-5210, West Covina, Calif.

Walter B. Wilson, Clerk

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BUSINESS OFFICE

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

Elder David V. Spangler

R. F. D. 1, Box 539, Beechwood Lane
Danville, Va.

Elder John D. Wood

P. O. Box 186, Manassas, Va.

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Elder W. D. Griffin

39 Welsh Tract Road, Newark, Delaware

Elder E. J. Lambert

306 Richardson St., Winnsboro, Texas

Elder George Ruston

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EDITORIAL

SERMON BY

ELDER E. J. LAMBERT
LIBERTY HILL CHURCH
UNION PARISH, LA.

"BECAUSE HE LOVED YOU."

(Deut. 7:7, 8)

If not deceived, we are mindful that it is a blessing of God to be again in your midst; and we trust that we appreciate it from the depths of our heart. We are thankful to God that he has thus blessed us, and we trust he will further bless us to preach to you the unsearchable riches of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, for your comfort and edification; and to the praise of the matchless name of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost.

I have been so mindful of late of how precious time is: too precious to be wasted upon things that are natural; things which pass away with the using. Such a precious time it is as we are gathered together in attempting to worship God, with the desire to worship him in Spirit and in Truth. Time is so precious that we pray that God will grant us to be truly together in one mind and one Spirit, worshiping the one God; and that he will lift us up together — the speaker and the congregation — from the things of this life, to meditate upon things eternal; and that this may be a heavenly spot in our memory.

As Brother Turner was praying, my mind was taken up with a portion of Scripture I have never attempted to speak upon. It is found in the seventh chapter of Deuteronomy, verses 7 and 8: "The Lord did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people: but because the Lord loved you, and because he would keep the oath which he had sworn unto your fathers, hath the Lord brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you out of the house of bondage, from the hand of Pharoah King of Egypt."

This was the aftermath of the deliverance of the children of Israel from Egyptian bondage by the mighty and loving hand of God. This deliverance of Israel from Egypt, across the Red Sea out of the clutches of the enemy, is highly figurative, and a certain symbol of the experimental deliverance of the Lord's people from day to day, all through the many times that have gone by; and including the present.

We would like, the Lord willing, to take this Scripture, as the Lord will bless us, and speak to you the truthfulness of it; and its firmness. We want you to take cognizance of the fact that the writer here says that 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 nations, but because the Lord loved you. In this statement the Lord comes first. If you will notice, in the beginning of Genesis it says, "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." It would not be doing violence to this Scripture to set it with the subject first, and say, "God created the heaven and the earth in the beginning." God did the creating.

In St. John we read, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." This tells of a different beginning, or of a different creation. The first was natural, the second spiritual; the first was timely, the second eternal; the first was earthly, the second heavenly; the first corruptible, the second incorruptible; the first was mortal, the second immortal. So God is the God of creation; he is the God of Providence, and the God of grace.

(I am glad to see that there are some young people here tonight. In our section of the country, at the last two or three meeting times at our home church, the majority of the congregation was young people. It makes me glad to see you boys and girls.)

We want to define GOD for you. May I bring forth this definition; and may God grant it in your hearts and minds, to know the meaning of GOD. He gives that meaning in one assertion in the Scriptures. We do not need to go to Webster for the meaning of the term God. He said through one of the prophets, "I am God, and there is none else; I am God and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." That is God — it takes that to be God.

If a person tells you, (and he means what he says,) that he believes in God, he believes in one who is sovereign; in one who is immutable, never changing; in one who is the controller, super-

ruler, and performer of all things. To the extent that he does not believe this, to that extent he does not believe in God. There are lords many and gods many, but unto us there is but one true and living God. This true and living God is the one who set his love upon us, who chose us — and not that we chose him.

I recall an assertion in the Scriptures where one made this remark: "If it seems evil unto you to serve the Lord, choose you this day whom ye will serve." I want to ask you this, "Does the doctrine of your own individual choice enter into the matter of worshipping God? In that case you would have to bring yourself into this condition: You would have to affirm that it seems evil to you to serve God. If you can affirm that it seems evil to you to serve God, then you are at liberty to choose between gods — between false gods; between the lords many and the gods many.

But the one who said this also said, "But as for me and my house, we will serve the Lord." Oh! how great God is. Have you ever been able to measure him? Have you ever been able to set a limit upon him? Have you ever been able to come to the high calling? Have you ever been able to comprehend him? No! a thousand times, No! You can never comprehend God; but I tell you one thing, God comprehends you. In the midst of this very fact, this is the God of the Bible: He is the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob.

The writer in Deuteronomy said, "The Lord did not set his love upon you, nor choose you because you were more in number than any people, for you were the fewest of all people; but because the Lord loved you." As far as the choice of his people is concerned, that is God's business.

In the prayer of Jesus recorded in the 17th chapter of St. John, he said, speaking of himself in the third person, "As thou has given him power over

all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as the Father hast given him." Jesus had power over all flesh: it was given him by the Father for the specific purpose that He, the Son, should give eternal life to — How many? as many as the Lord had given him. Yea! that choice was by God first. God chose his people.

God set his love upon his people. This is affirmed from the beginning of Genesis to the conclusion of Revelation. Any other doctrine is an un-scriptural doctrine. You know that John, in meditating upon that grand theme of love, said, "We love God because he first loved us." Do you know of any other reason? Was it, dear people, because you decided to love him? Oh no! not that. Your decision was to love yourself. That was your carnal nature — the nature of every one that is born of natural parents. Their seed comes from the natural, their family head, Adam. In Adam all died. Yea, they all serve self, and they all worship self; they all choose self, and have selfish aims and ambitions; and they do not choose God. But, thanks to almighty God, He did choose his people. You know, Jesus said to his disciples, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you."

I want to bring your attention to the fact that Jesus in choosing his disciples, went to where they were. Some were fishing; and he went to them and said, "Come, follow me." "Come and I will make you fishers of men." Jesus went exactly to where they were. He did not give it as a proposition to a multitude of people, and say that whosoever will might come and be my disciple. That was not the way Jesus did it — that was not the way God did it. I'll tell you how God did it: like his Son did it: Jesus went to where these people were, and though some of them were fishing, he told them, "I will make you fishers of men."

I dare say that those whom He called out, he called from their vocations of

life — not that they chose it as a vocation. Everyone who has run that has not been sent; everyone who has been called by money; everyone who has been called by man; everyone who has been called by any power other than God, preaches the power that sent him. Let me hear what he preaches, and I will tell you exactly who called him to preach. If he preaches the power of money, I will say that money called him; if he preaches the power of man, I will say that man called him; if he preaches the power of anything other than God, I will say that is what called him. But if he preaches God; if he proclaims that God is the creator of the heaven and the earth; if he preaches that God is the one who performs all things for his people; if he proclaims that God chose his people, that God set his love upon his people; if he proclaims that the reason he loves God is because God first loved him, then I believe that God called him to preach. Why? because he is preaching the power of God.

I tell you something else: when I hear them speaking of Jesus Christ; when I hear them calling upon Jesus Christ's name, I want them to go ahead and tell me how far Jesus goes — how far his power goes. Then I'll know whether or not he is talking about the Jesus Christ that is talked about in the Scriptures. If he tells me that Jesus is trying to save everybody, but that the Devil is coming along and getting the most of them, I tell you that is not the Jesus Christ we read about in the Bible.

The angel told the truth when he said to Joseph, "Fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost; and she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus for he *shall*" (give an opportunity for all to be saved? absolutely not!) "save his people from their sins." Then do not preach Jesus to be like that. I used to preach it, because that was exactly the

kind of Jesus I then believed in. But when God made me to know that Jesus is powerful to save, from then until now, I preach a Jesus powerful to save. The language the angel spoke is true, "For he *shall save* his people from their sins." No half-way doing it, but He shall do it.

I want to tell you that the Lord has set his love upon you; not that you have set your love upon him. We love God because he first loved us. He told his disciples, "Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you." After He set his love upon you, the Scriptures say that he draws you: "I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee." Who does the drawing? the answer is, God. Do you believe that any person whom God has ever drawn, failed to come to him? Absolutely not! I believe in the power of God to draw; I believe that he draws with a cord that is just as powerful as he is. And that cord with which he draws, is his everlasting love. That is characteristic of his love — it is everlasting. "I have loved thee with an everlasting love."

I want to tell you about this God: He never changes. If he has ever set his love upon you, it has always been upon you; and always will be. No one can ever take that love from off you, because his love is from everlasting to everlasting, and never changes. That people whom he set his love upon, and whom he chose, is Israel.

I have heard it affirmed that it says here, that God did not choose you because you were the greatest number, but because you were the fewest: It does not say that. It says that you are the fewest of all people; not that he chose you because of this.

(We were talking in the home of Mr. and Mrs. Everett this evening about some of the conditions that exist in some places, where it seems that so few believe this precious truth: the sovereignty of God, and the wonderful merits of Jesus Christ and his power

to save.) Being the fewest of all people is not why he chose you. He said, "Because I have loved thee." The love of God is the reason, and the only reason his love has been set upon us; the only reason he has chosen us; and the only reason Jesus Christ died for us.

Let us quote St. John 3:16, "For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." What does this show? It shows that he loves a people. Now go with us to the ninth chapter of Romans, and we read a Scripture written hundreds of years before Jacob and Esau were born: "So it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy." It was said that Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated. This was written before they were born, in order to show that it was not because of the things that Jacob had done. It is not because of the things that He foresaw in you, or that you would do, but because he loved you.

"For God so loved the world," What world? What great and what manner of love is this! It is so high you cannot go to the height of it; it is so deep you cannot go to the depth of it; and it is so wide you cannot go to the breadth of this great love. In this love for the world, he gave his only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. You will notice in Acts 14:48, that of those Gentiles who believed the preaching of the ministers of Almighty God, it was said, "And as many as were ordained to eternal life believed."

Jesus, speaking about himself being the good Shepherd (and an effectual Shepherd), said that he calls *his sheep* by name, and leads them out. "And they follow me; a stranger they will not follow, for they know not the voice of strangers." To some he said, "Ye believe me not because you are not of my sheep. As I said unto you, My sheep hear my voice." I tell you that the per-

son who does not hear the voice of Jesus, is the person who proves he is not one of His sheep; because where Jesus has spoken, there is the word of a King. And the Scriptures say that where the word of a king is, there is power.

You remember the word of King Jesus the time he called Lazarus forth from the grave. Lazarus was just as dead naturally as any who are dead in trespasses and sins, are dead spiritually. It would be just as sensible for us to go out into this cemetery and tell those dead folks to arise and walk, as it would be for us to try and preach to dead alien sinners. Those who are dead in trespasses and sins could not understand any more what we said, than if we should go out and talk to the graves, and ask those who are in them, to come forth. It would be just as meaningful for us to do it. But you know that Jesus went to Lazarus and said, "Lazarus, come forth." And the result was that Lazarus came forth.

I heard a man in the pulpit say a few years ago, "The trouble with the world today is that there are so many Lazaruses that Christ has called forth from the grave, that are still lying dormant in the grave." Do you believe it? Absolutely not! Why? because where the word of a king is, there is power. King Jesus had such power. Where was that word then? it was in Lazarus in the grave. What did it cause? it caused him to come forth. What was it that caused him to come forth? the power of the word of a King.

When that saint came forth from the grave, the mighty power of Jesus was made known to those around about them. Do you believe in the power of Christ to save? Did you ever hear a person preach that there is no person or thing under the sun (nor all persons, nor all things), that could do one thing toward your salvation — your eternal abode, but Jesus Christ? that he was a perfect and complete Saviour? Have you ever heard that preached? I

tell you, if you have, you heard the truth.

I believe that when Jesus came into this world, that his being here was for a purpose. That purpose was to do exactly what the angel told Joseph it was: To save his people from their sins. You know, he sojourned here almost thirty-three years, not to do away with, nor abolish the law, but to fulfill it to a jot and tittle — every bit of it. Not only that, he took your sins and mine, if I be in that family, and bore them, and paid the penalty. He shed his blood on Calvary's tree for the remission of the sins of all the people of God. Everyone for whom he died shall live in eternal bliss forever; everyone for whom he lived, shall live eternally in heaven — without the loss of one. Do you believe this? If you do, you believe in Jesus Christ. That is what you must believe; that is life eternal. Jesus said, "This is life eternal."

People ask, What is life eternal? and they begin to imagine and to speculate as to what it is. Some think it begins beyond this life. I want to tell you that it does not wait until beyond this life to begin. It begins here in time: It is when you are born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible. Jesus defines it — look for yourself — in the 17th chapter of St. John: "This is life eternal, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent."

May I ask, Do you know Him as the only true God? Do you know Jesus Christ whom he has sent? I have a faint hope . . . Yea, I hope it has been rooted in my heart and soul for many years, to know God and Jesus Christ. What do I mean by this? I mean that when I learned God, that God revealed himself to me as being sovereign, as being holy, as being all wise, as being all powerful, as being everywhere present and nowhere absent, as being the ruler of the heavens and the earth; and at the same time he revealed to me

that I was nothing and less than nothing, and vanity. There was set such a great gulf between God's power and my inability; God's wisdom and my foolishness; God's holiness and my sins, until, with all the efforts I made to establish my own righteousness, I could not establish one bit of it. Could you? I could not appease the wrath of an avenging God; and felt that Hell would be my doom, and that justly so: that I would be cut off, and that without remedy. I felt then that should my soul not be sent to Hell, God would not be just — because he would have to send me to Hell to be a just God. Have you been along there? if you have you have known God.

The first lesson that you have, the first experience in life eternal, is a terrible experience. It is a sad experience. When people come forth born of natural parents, they come forth crying, do they not? You mothers never heard a chuckle or a laugh to be the first sound of a new born babe, have you? Why, because it is not natural: it is natural for it to come forth crying. It is also natural for a child of God, that is born of the Spirit of God, when he first comes forth, to manifest he has life by crying. It is something over which you do not have control. You have come to the point and place you have given up hope: there is no hope for you in this world, or the world to come. Have you ever been there? Oh, Lord! that is terrible; but I tell you that is good for you. It is the cry coming from one what is born of the Spirit: God is revealing himself to you as being a God of vengeance, a God of wrath, and a God of justice.

I want to tell you of another experience I had, that was the sweetest that ever came upon me. I was led by the kind providence of Almighty God into a little village, where I came under the sound of a minister of the gospel. God blessed that man to preach to me as he did Ananias to Paul; as he did Peter to Cornelius; as he has his min-

isters all through the line of life. He preached a perfect Saviour that night. He preached to me that there is a Jesus who saves to the utmost; that he did not need our help. He preached a Jesus who was a complete Saviour in himself; and was so perfect that everyone for whom he lived and for whom he died, would have eternal life. He preached that kind of Jesus to me. I have often wished that I might be blessed as an artist, so that I could paint the picture I saw that night; that I could paint a picture of that character that spanned the gulf between the wisdom of God and my foolishness; the holiness of God and my sins.

I saw that character in my mind's eye as he reached down in the pitfalls of sin and perdition; I saw him take up Hell deserving creatures just as vile as I; I saw him wash them whiter than snow with his blood, without any effort on their part; I saw him land them on heaven's shore. From that day until this I have never doubted the power of Jesus Christ to save. I thought I had preached Jesus before; but I never had. I thought I had seen him; but I never had. I did not know anything about him. But I will tell you, from that time to this day, I have been preaching a Jesus who is mighty to save. I have been preaching one that when he reveals himself to you in that terrible far off condition when you are without hope in the world, the command comes to you: "Come unto me all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest; take my yoke upon you, and learn of me: for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light."

That is what comes from King Jesus. For when we are in the pitfalls, and are suffering the horrible, agonizing pains of death, he comes to us in his love, and in his mercy. He beckons us to come to him, and says, "Come all ye." Not part of them, because of

everyone who is in that category, he has never left one out: he never has excluded one; and never will.

Everyone whom he calls, hears the voice of the blessed Son of God; and when he calls, they come. They come forth because they have no where else to go. Many followed him because of the curiosity of his healing; and for the loaves and fishes. When Jesus began to speak this truth about eating his flesh and drinking his blood, many said this is a hard saying, and went away from him. Turning then to his disciples, he asked, "Will ye go away also?" What was the answer? I tell you dear child of God, it is the answer of every trembling sinner who has been wrought upon mightily by God's wonderful mercy: "To whom shall we go? thou hast the words of eternal life."

"Come all ye." When these words are spoken in power in the depths of the soul of every trembling child of God, what an easy matter it is, and what a great burden is laid aside when we come to Jesus. We are yoked to him at his command, when he says, "Take *my* yoke upon you." He did not call it *our* yoke, but *my* yoke. Here was a yoke that Jesus must bear: he must bear it for his people, and for his people alone. When he bore that yoke, it was so rough that it nailed him to the cross; so painful, that in the garden it caused him to sweat as it were great drops of blood; it was so terrible, that while on the cross he said, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" It was a yoke he must bear; it was a yoke he must wear.

Did you ever see an unwilling horse, or a balking horse hitched up with a horse that would pull the whole load? I used to on the farm. I remember having a team like that once. My daddy fixed the double tree so that one horse could pull the whole load: it was fixed so that the trusty horse pulled the whole load, and the other horse was hitched to him. Everywhere the horse that pulled the load went, the other

went. That is how we are yoked to Jesus: Jesus bears the blunt of the yoke. He pulls in the fiercest battle, but we are yoked to him: He is pulling the load. No wonder he said, "My yoke is easy, my burden is light," He is doing all the work for you.

He said, "I must work the works of him that sent me while it is day, for the night cometh when no man can work." What a great work was upon him! what a great work he accomplished! Oh! what great love he had for us. He said, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love, therefore with loving kindness have I drawn thee." Jesus said, "No man can come unto me except the Father which sent me draw him; and he that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out." Do you believe that the Father half-way draws a person? Absolutely not! He draws them all the way. If you come to Jesus, you have been drawn by the cords of his everlasting love; and the promise is that you shall not be cast out.

What a wonderful thing that the Lord has set his love upon you! The Psalmist said that He has set him on high; and, Oh! how high He has set the people of God. He has set you so high that the cares of this world will never take that love from you. He has set you so high that the son of perdition, the angels of Satan, those of whom the Saviour spoke, "Ye are of your father, the devil," — the devil and all his children — cannot rob you of one blessing that God set for you — because he has your name upon it.

Dear children of God, there is not a step in your walk; there is not a word in your tongue; there is not a thought in your mind, but what God knows it altogether. He understands it, and should you see it as God sees it, you would say, "Oh! how beautiful it is. How beautiful is the whole of it." Why is it that we do not consider it beautiful? because we can only see it fragmentarily. We can only see and grasp it with finite minds, and we cast

finite judgment upon it — wrong judgment. There is one whose ways are as far above our ways as the heavens are above the earth: his judgment is right, and his judgment is true. Whatsoever he doeth is right: we are not to question him. We are to realize that the potter hath power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor; and that we are the clay and God is the potter.

I want to say this in conclusion: I thank God for having blessed me to live with a people who believe in Him as being sovereign; as being God of all things. Blessing me to dwell with the people whose mouths praise God from whom all blessings flow; and who are not ashamed of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, realizing that it is the power of God unto salvation. I thank him for having blessed me to dwell with his people upon the earth.

"The Lord did not set his love upon you, nor choose you because you were more in number than any people, but because He loved you." Thank you; and Amen.

(The above was taken from a tape by Brother and Sister C. C. Barron, Spearsville, La. and is edited for publication. — J. D. W.)

VOICES OF THE PAST

"He being dead yet speaketh"

WHAT ARE THE RELIABLE EVIDENCES THAT WE HAVE PASSED FROM DEATH UNTO LIFE?

Perhaps there is no subject in which the feeble, fearful, trembling, tempted and doubting children of God feel a greater interest than to know what are the scriptural evidences of being in a quickened and regenerated state; as there can be no subject in which they feel so much concerned. One brother writes that he would be in despair if it were not for one bright spot in his life,

alluding to the time when Christ was first revealed to him as his Savior, but recalling to mind his happy frame on that occasion, his hope is frequently revived. In reflecting on this remark we have felt inclined to enquire, Can it be possible that the brother has never had but one reliable evidence in his long life, that he is a subject of saving grace? We know that it is very natural for us to revert to our first experience when doubts and fears assail our faith and hope in God. We do not object to this calling to mind God's former loving-kindness unto us, as evidences of his saving grace. Jeremiah remembered the time of the wormwood and the gall; from which God had graciously delivered him, and his hope was thereby revived. But is it right to overlook all other evidences and rely only on the first displays of God's love and mercy to us? To such exclusive reliance we object, because it underrates and overlooks the daily experience of the saints, which although in many instances they may not be as vivid and satisfactory to us as the first, are equally important and reliable, and should therefore be as fully appreciated, not only for the comfort of the saints, but also for the praise of the glory of God.

Because it tends to a repudiation of all subsequent evidences as being less conclusive and reliable, or worthless. How many have hung down their heads despairingly, because their first experiences were not so distinctly marked as those of others of whom they have heard or read; and although they can keep even pace with others in every subsequent step of their religious travel, are all their lifetime in bondage, through fear that they have started wrong, and therefore all subsequent experience has been but a delusion.

It may be that the general practice of our churches in the examination of applicants for baptism and membership, has been faulty in making the first exercises of the candidate far more important than other exercises. While

we love to hear related the more wonderful displays of God's power and grace in bringing sinners to a knowledge of the truth, we should also listen very attentively to "the still small voice," which has whispered peace and salvation to the trembling ones. According to our own observation for more than fifty years in the church of Christ, those who have been the most fearful and trembling, have proved the most watchful and prayerful among the followers of Christ. Some have made us doubt the genuineness of their evidences, by the extravagant marvelousness of what they have related, while others who could scarcely say they had a hope, have showed such evident marks of the spirit of humility, self-abasement, and fear of being a disparagement to the church, that they have taken every step with the greatest fear and trembling, have given us the more satisfactory evidence of the work of grace wrought in their hearts by the finger of God. But we need not advert to observation, nor to feelings of satisfaction, for we have a more sure word of prophecy or instruction, to which we do well to take heed.

The scriptures of truth do not leave us uninformed as to the heaven-stamped and sealed evidences of a quickened state. Let us examine some of them. The case of Philip and the Eunuch, (Acts viii. 26-39), is in point. Here is an application for the ordinance, and the great question, What doth hinder me to be baptized? is asked. The man of God who was full of the Holy Ghost, is amply qualified to decide this matter, which concerns all others as well as the Eunuch. How does Philip settle this question? Whatever impediment might be in the way to hinder the Eunuch, is still in the way of all others, and whatever qualifications entitled him to the privilege, are equally applicable to all others who possess them. Philip did not say, If you can distinctly call to mind your first religious exercises, if you saw the flaming gulf open

to receive you; and all your sins were distinctly presented to your terror-stricken soul; if you were held in that distressing state a certain length of time; and can distinctly tell how you felt, and what you thought during this time of bitter anguish of your soul, and if you know just when, and where, and how you were delivered, and how you felt at that time; and if you do not now feel too unworthy, to be numbered with the saints. These were not the questions proposed, nor the prerequisites demanded. If they had been it would have debarred thousands of the precious children of God from that holy ordinance, and perhaps the Eunuch himself would have been rejected. But observe, the only question was as to the then present state of the Eunuch, and not a question was asked in regard to his former exercises of mind. "If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest." Shall any one now dare impose any other requisite than that which the Holy Ghost through Philip then required? That which applied to one, equally applies to every subject of grace.

But let it be remembered that the question implied more than a formal profession of belief. It is not enough that the natural judgment or understanding should assent to the truth, for it is with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. This belief must come from the heart, not the head; for the law of Christ is written in the hearts of the children of God. A new heart is given them, for the old heart is destitute of the faith of the Son of God; and a new spirit is put within them, for their faith is the fruit of the spirit; if, therefore, the candidate believes with all his heart, it is an infallible testimony that he has received this new heart, and a new spirit is given him. Now, according to this example, we insist that the church and the administrator should be satisfied that the candidate has passed from

death unto life — is born again, and has that full belief in Jesus Christ as the Son of God, which can only result from the faith of Jesus Christ dwelling in his heart.

There are many who without any change of heart, without any love to God, or knowledge of their own lost and helpless condition, with no saving knowledge of God, of Christ, of the way of salvation, may say I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and speaking after the manner of men, they do; that is, they have a traditional belief; knowing no reason why they should disbelieve what they have read or heard others say; but in the case of the Eunuch, there were strong circumstantial evidences that God had wrought this faith in his heart. His mind was directed to the scriptures; he is found reading the book of the prophet Isaiah; he is buried in deep thought; he is earnest to understand the scriptures. He has a thirst for a knowledge of him of whom the prophet wrote, and although a man of high standing, and in great authority, he had a childlike humility, and desired that some one of clearer understanding in divine things should guide him. The minister of Christ is gladly received into his chariot; he has a hearing ear, and an understanding heart, and as he hears of Jesus, as preached by Philip, in his heart receives the testimony, gladly receives the word, and most unwaveringly believes that this Jesus is the Son of God, of whom the prophet testified.

Another evidence of his heavenly birth is given in his desire to take on him the yoke of Jesus, to follow him in the ordinance of baptism. Absorbed in thought as he heard of Jesus, and transported with new light upon the subject and theme of prophecy, and attentively listening to the preaching of Jesus by Philip though he was at that time, he did not pass the baptismal waters unnoticed. "See here is water!" Never before had water presented such attrac-

tion to his eyes. Wonder, ye heavens! what heavenly beauty this faith discovers in that water; the footprints of his Savior; the bright example for all his children are seen. Did water ever before seem so lovely? The Savior's high command, "If ye love me, keep my commandments," is applied with power. O what a joyful privilege it would be, he may have thought, if I were worthy to follow Jesus in that delightful ordinance! Nay, I cannot be denied, unworthy though I am. Thou man of God, "See here is water! what doth hinder me to be baptized?"

Indeed, we know of no authority in the scriptures for attaching more importance to past than to present evidences of our having passed from death unto life.

The apostle John says, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." Not because our first evidences were so clear, or strongly marked. Not because we have acted so well our part; not because our natures have become better than they were before, nor because we feel that we are now worthy of a place in the house of God, and communion with his saints; but simply because we love them, and desire to be with them.

And Paul says, "For as many as are led by the spirit of God, they are the sons of God." The test is not laid on what is past; but what is present. If we are led by the spirit of God, it will lead us to Jesus; to his work; to his laws, his ordinances, and to his people. It will make us feel that we are very, very unworthy of his favor, and to admire and gaze and wonder at the manner of love which God hath bestowed on us that we should be called the sons of God.

Another present and reliable evidence that we are the children of God, is that "God dealeth with us as with sons." "If ye endure chastening," then have ye the evidence. "But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers,

then are ye bastards and not sons."

How many present evidences are found in the scriptures of our sonship, and heirship, as sons of God and heirs of glory; and who shall tell us that any one, or all of these are less reliable than the first that we ever received?

We would by no means depreciate or undervalue the first evidences which were given us in our new birth; for without that birth we should be forever destitute of all the other evidences. But if we cannot find in our first experience the extraordinary exercises that some others can, we are fully warranted in relying on those which our God has seen proper to give us. If because we cannot tell when, where, or under what circumstances we were born into the natural world, would we be reasonable in concluding that we never were born? The very fact that we are now alive, is sufficient evidence that there was a time when we began to live. If, to-day, we love God, it is because he first loved us. And if we ever have loved him, the evidence is the same, for we could not possibly love him from any other cause.

There is one other evidence we will name, and that is, If we are involved in the Christian warfare, then have we the same evidence of a heavenly birth that Paul had. Until we were born of God the whole current of our nature ran in one way; our element was sin; it was sweet to our taste, and we drank it as the ox drinketh water. There can be no war where there is but one party. In the Shulamite we see as it were the company of two armies. So in every Christian is seen two opposite determined hostile parties. The one is born of the flesh and is flesh; and he held his palace in peace, without opposition, until another party came to occupy the same house, or person. That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the spirit is spirit. These are opposite one to the other; for the flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh, and so

terribly does the battle sometimes rage, that we cannot do the things we would. All who are born of God, but no others, will, so long as they are here in the flesh, find a law in their fleshly members warring against the law of their mind, which will at times bring them into captivity to the law of sin which is in their members. All the doubts and unbelief that ever assailed or troubled a Christian in regard to his interest in Christ arises from his fleshly nature. Doubts, fears and temptations, unbelief and desponding fears, are the artillery of the flesh and of Satan, planted against the law of their mind; but however the faith of God's people may be stormed, faith shall most assuredly triumph ultimately, for God giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ. Dead fish will float down with the current; only the living fish will stem the tide. Those who never have any conflict, can never know the joys of victory. Those who have no temptations cannot appreciate deliverance. And those who have no clouds must live in a very dry pasture.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe June 15, 1866.)

OBITUARIES

LEWIS JACKSON POTTER

Brother Lewis Jackson Potter was born in Franklin County, Virginia, May 20, 1876, and was called from this life February 13, 1965, making his stay on earth almost eighty-nine years.

He was married to Nannie Elizabeth Kirk July 10, 1904, and to this union ten children were born, two dying in infancy. He leaves to mourn his passing his wife and eight children: Willard Potter and Mrs. Clara Jones, Martinsville, Va.; Benjamin and Ralph Potter, Penhook, Va.; Mrs. Ruby Reynolds, Cliff, Gean and Hoover Potter, Rocky Mount, Va. Also one sister, twenty-three grandchildren and fifteen great grandchildren, and a great host of friends.

He united with the Primitive Baptist Church at Chapel, Franklin County, Va., August 29, 1915, and was baptized September 12, 1915. He was ordained deacon August 19, 1933.

Brother Potter was a firm believer in the doctrine of salvation by the grace of God,

and was faithful to attend his church, never having to miss many meetings. His funeral was preached at Lynch's Funeral Home, Rocky Mount, by Elder J. P. Helms and his pastor, Elder O. K. Tench; and he was laid to rest in the family cemetery near Penhook. His spirit has gone to God who gave it.

May God richly bless and comfort all who mourn.

Elder O. K. Tench, Moderator
Mary Brown, Clerk

MRS. H. G. McLEOD

Mrs. H. G. McLeod passed away February 10, 1965. She was a resident of Atlanta, Texas, for ten years, but was a native and resident of Pine Island, Louisiana, for many years.

She is survived by her husband, H. G. McLeod, Atlanta, Texas; seven daughters: Mrs. Maudie Stephenson and Mrs. Mary Moore, of Shreveport, La.; Mrs. Martha Nell Taylor, Bossier City, La.; Mrs. Ester Innis, Perryton, Texas; Mrs. Henrietta Braswell, of the Philippine Islands; Mrs. Vada Lois Van-Moeckerque, Woonsocket, R. I.; and Mrs. Jane Ann Casas, Pala Alto, Calif.; two sons: Ernest McLeod, Port Arthur, Texas; and Paul McLeod, Oil City, La.; four sisters and one brother; and thirty-six grandchildren and four great grandchildren.

She was a wonderful wife and mother and raised a devoted family. She was a lover of the old Baptists, and her home was a lodging place for them; and many people throughout the South visited their home.

I would say to those that are left behind, to weep not as those who have no hope, for Mrs. Mary certainly had a hope beyond this veil of tears. We feel that our loss is her gain. Funeral services were conducted by the writer.

Elder Loyd Wall

SYLVANUS CARTER

Deacon Sylvanus Carter was born in Franklin County, Virginia, near Republican Church on February 21, 1894, the son of Thomas Carter and Elizabeth Greer Carter, both members of Republican Church.

He married Virgie F. Dodson on November 15, 1914.

He offered to the Church in May 1941, and was gladly received, as was his companion who also offered on the same day. They both were baptized in July, 1941, by Elder Emmett Bryant at Old Union Church in Smith River Association.

His church saw the gift of a deacon in him, and he was ordained deacon January 17, 1948, serving faithfully until his death. He

was chosen clerk of his church November 17, 1945, and filled that duty until taken from us by death.

He died on October 27, 1964, as a result of injuries received in an automobile accident on October 24, 1964. His funeral was conducted at his home church, Republican, on October 29, 1964, by Elder William Holland, Elder Amos Hash, and the writer, his pastor. He was interred in his home cemetery.

He is survived by his wife, Virgie Dodson Carter; two daughters, Mrs. Boneta Corley, Chesapeake, and Mrs. Elaine Nuckols, Rocky Mount; five sons, J. Lauren Carter, Rocky Mount; T. Donovan Carter, Ferrum; A. Otis Carter, Cockeysville, Maryland; Leon V. Carter, Reisterstown, Maryland; and Maury L. Carter, Orlando, Florida; and one brother, Thomas G. Carter, Bassett, Va.

Brother Carter is missed by all, family and church. His brethren and friends are left behind to mourn, but not without hope, for we verily believe God called him. He was faithful to both his family and his church, and we desire grace to say "Thy will be done", and to be made to know that God will care for us.

Submitted by,
J. P. Helms

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

We, the church at Pleasant Grove, wish to bow in humble submission to our merciful Heavenly Father, who doeth all things well, in removing our esteemed Sister Addie Smith-ey from our midst.

Sister Smithey was a faithful, devoted and humble member.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the church has lost a faithful member, whom we miss very much; that a copy of this resolution be spread upon our church records; a copy sent to the family, and a copy sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Done by order of Pleasant Grove Church at her regular session November 14, 1964.

Elder Harvey Smith, Moderator
Mrs. R. F. Walker, Asst. Clerk

MEMORIAL TO ELDER J. HARVEY SMITH

Since our last meeting God has seen fit to remove from us by death our highly esteemed and beloved Brother and Pastor, Elder J. Harvey Smith. He passed away peacefully in his sleep January 24, 1965. "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth: yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labors; and their works do follow them."

Elder Smith was chosen pastor of Pleasant

Grove Church at our regular conference meeting in March, 1952, and served ably and acceptably for more than twelve years. His greatest pleasure was in mingling with and seeing his brethren. He was known and loved from the mountains to the seacoast: he had traveled and preached in many states one Lord, one Faith, one Baptism; salvation by grace and grace alone, Christ being the way, the truth and the life; and that there is "No other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved."

The services of Elder Smith were in great demand, serving four churches and preaching funerals far and near. The weather was never too cold or too hot, or a family too poor in material things for him to offer his services — visiting the sick, the old and infirm who were deprived of going to church. He was an humble man, ready to spend and be spent.

May God's blessings be upon each of us to bow in humble submission to His holy will, together with his lovely and devoted wife, Sister Alice Rudd Smith, their sons and daughters, and all who were near and dear to this precious soldier of the cross who has finished his course; and whose spirit has returned to God who gave it, awaiting the glorious resurrection when his body shall come forth from the grave, to be made like His glorious body, and be gathered home where sickness, sorrow, or pain will be felt no more; and where Jesus is crowned Lord of Lords, the King of Glory forever and ever.

Written by,
Sister Robert F. Walker, Asst. Clerk

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

WHEREAS, It pleased our Heavenly Father to call Elder Frank F. Eggleston home, we desire to bow to His holy will. He was born May 1, 1887, and passed away July 11, 1965. He was united in marriage to Eva Pruitt, of Ruffin, N. C., April 8, 1917, by the late Elder J. F. Spangler; and to this union two daughters were born: Mrs. Lucille Humphries and Mrs. Ralph B. Jarrett, of Collinsville, Va.

Elder Eggleston was baptized into our fellowship fifty years ago by the late Elder A. B. Philpott, with his membership at River-view Church. He was ordained to the ministry shortly afterwards. He loved his brethren and traveled far and near to visit his kindred in the Lord. His last sermon was on the day of his death at the Staunton River Association July 11, 1965, reading for his text Isaiah 2:4.

His funeral was conducted at Dan River Church by Elder D. V. Spangler and J. R. Hollandsworth, his pastor. A large congrega-

tion was present to show their respect; and there were many beautiful flowers.

Written at the request of the Pigg River Association while in session at Rocky Mount, Virginia, for publication in their minutes and the *Signs of the Times*, by his pastor.

Elder James R. Hollandsworth

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

WHEREAS, Our God in his infinite wisdom has taken from us our beloved brother and Moderator, Elder Randolph Perdue, on October 6, 1964, at the age of ninety-four; and

WHEREAS, Brother Perdue was held in high esteem by the members of all the churches composing the Pigg River District Primitive Baptist Association, he having united with Bethel Church in July, 1895, and ordained to the full work of the gospel ministry in October, 1912. He served as pastor of several of our churches, including Bethel, Rocky Mount, Martinsville, Chestnut, and Little Creek, during his ministry. In 1916 he was chosen Moderator of the Pigg River District Association, and served most acceptably in meekness until past ninety years of age, when he was given assistance, but was Moderator as long as he lived; and

WHEREAS, Brother Perdue was highly esteemed in the business world, and held in great respect by all who knew him, therefore

BE IT RESOLVED, That we bow in humble submission to the will of our Father in taking him from our midst; and that we give thanks to Him for the gift of our brother's ministry amongst us for more than fifty years. And be it further

RESOLVED, That this token of our esteem be spread in our Minutes; and that a copy be given the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Done by the unanimous desire of the churches composing the Pigg River District Association during her session at Rocky Mount Church, Rocky Mount, Virginia, in 1965.

Elder C. E. Turner, Moderator
Elder John D. Wood, Clerk

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

God in His infinite wisdom and mercy has called to His beloved embrace by death Sister Minnie Peebles Parrish. Sister Parrish was born November 10, 1893, and departed this life January 9, 1965.

She was married to W. Clark Parrish July 1, 1914, and to this union were born eight children. Her husband and seven children survive.

In October 1934, Brother and Sister Par-

rish united with the church at Bunker Hill and were baptized together. Sister Parrish served the church for several years as church clerk.

Sister Parrish was greatly afflicted in her late years but bore her afflictions with much patience. Her faith in the blessed Redeemer never failed as was manifested in her love for the church and the doctrine of salvation by grace.

In sorrow and with a deep feeling of loss, we, the church at Bunker Hill, bow in humble submission to the divine will of our heavenly Father. Our heart's desire is that the mercy and love of God will sustain us who are left in this world of sorrow.

Funeral services were conducted for her by her pastor, Elder Z. L. Rhue, and Elders D. R. Pyrtle, John R. Gatewood, J. T. Prescott and Jabez J. Rhue. Her body was laid to rest in the Bunker Hill Cemetery.

Done by order of Bunker Hill Primitive Baptist Church.

One copy to the church, one copy to the family, and one copy to the *Signs of the Times*.

Elder Z. L. Rhue, Moderator
G. B. Hawks, Clerk

TRIBUTE OF RESPECT

Brother Frank Amason, age 90, died in an El Dorado hospital, May 1, 1965. He was born in Calion, Arkansas, January 9, 1875, the son of Jesse Thomas and Rebecca Murphy Amason. Brother Amason was a lifelong resident of Union County, was a retired farmer and a member of Bethel Church, Union County, Arkansas.

He is survived by four sons: Curtis Amason, Minden, La.; Brother F. E. Amason, Mc-Niel, Ark.; C. W. Amason, El Dorado, Ark.; Thomas W. Amason, Pine Bluff, Ark.; two daughters: Mrs. F. C. Davis and Mrs. Dick Himes, both of El Dorado, Ark.; four sisters: Mrs. Martha Smith and Mrs. Jesse Murphy, both of El Dorado, Ark.; Mrs. Alto Lee of Shreveport, La.; and Mrs. Winnie Davis, Little Rock, Ark.

May the Lord comfort his family and loved ones and may we be blessed to say, "Thy will be done, O Lord", for we wish to bow in humble submission to God's holy will, always looking to Him for mercy and guidance.

The funeral was conducted by Elder E. J. Lambert, May 2, 1965.

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

Done by order of conference.

Elder E. J. Lambert, Moderator
Mrs. Jean Burns, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 133

DANVILLE, VA., NOVEMBER, 1965

NO. 11

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 11/65
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

A BEAUTIFUL HYMN

I am weary of straying, Oh! fain would I rest,
In the far distant land of the pure and the blest,
Where sin can no longer her blandishments spread,
And tears and temptations forever are fled.

I am weary of hoping, where hope is untrue,
As fair but as fleeting as morning's bright dew,
I long for that land whose blest promise alone,
Is changeless and sure as eternity's throne.

I am weary of sighing o'er sorrows of earth;
O'er joys glowing visions that fade at their birth,
O'er the pangs of the loved that we cannot assuage,
O'er the blightings of youth and the weakness of age.

I am weary of loving what passes away,
The sweetest, the dearest, Alas! may not stay.
I long for that land where these partings are o'er,
And death and the tomb can divide hearts no more.

I am weary, my Savior, of grieving thy love,
Oh! when shall I rest in thy presence above!
I am weary — but oh! let me never repine,
While thy word and love and thy promises are mine.

— Author unknown to us.

"GIFT TO BELIEVE"

2303 Lee Field Road,
Dallas 29, Texas 75229

Dear Elder and Sister Wood:

Perhaps you will not remember my being present at your home church at the association in 1960, on Highway 50 out of Washington, D. C.; also at Frying Pan Church prior to that. I was visiting my daughter and family who were stationed at The Pentagon at that time. We enjoyed both meetings very much; and saw and heard in person the Elders whose writings I had read, and hoped some day to see. Wonderful!

. . . I enjoy reading the *Signs* very much, and especially have we had good reading the last several months: Elders Curry, Hall, and many others; and always the Editorials. You are so blessed to select the most nourishing food, it seems to me, in publishing these articles. I am sure the responsibility of publication is very heavy on all concerned; but to me God never makes a mistake, and it is through His purpose you were just as Jonah and others were, brought up to this work, and by the grace of our God you are doing a wonderful job of it. It is wonderful to think of, and to believe that ones have been brought up to do the wonderful service of God, and then to see its effects, as is true of the *Signs*.

I am so selfish sometimes when I see such gifts of service by our brothers and sisters for the church's benefit, as to wish I could contribute a little bit; but not so of me. I am then humbled to be satisfied with the gift *to believe*, if indeed I do believe.

Hope to see you both again sometime along the path of life. I enclose check for another year's subscription.

Sincerely,
Mrs. Pearl Lee

SEARCHING FOR EVIDENCE

Eagle Lake, Florida 33839
Box 178,

Dear Editors:

It is time to renew my subscription and I am enclosing three dollars to renew another year.

I do so enjoy reading the news it contains from all parts of the globe on which we make our stay from birth to the grave. Do these letters contain any great thing the writer has performed? No! they usually speak of the unworthiness of the writer, complaining of the sins that dwell in the mortal body; and often speak of the hope that has been planted in them by the Holy Spirit of God.

Why do we read? and what do we look for? It is the evidence that dwells within: we long to search our own self to see if the things they speak of dwell in us: the evidence hoped for, not the things that are seen. If the witness and the evidence dwells in us, then it is news from a far country; and we feel to be made partakers of these wonderful things, knowing there is no good thing that belongs to this mortal man, only that which has been planted by the Holy Spirit — written in his mind and printed in his heart, which makes us know we are sinners and stand condemned by the holy and just law of God. We search for evidence that sin is condemned in our flesh. I feel that each one who reads the *Signs* and believes, and searches for this witness, does know that sin is condemned in the flesh.

Oh! my dear friends, instead of being puffed up and proud, you see what a miserable wretch you are. And, like Paul of old, we are made to cry, "Oh! wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" We long for those things not seen, but hoped for; and when we feel this witness, we love those who also speak of these things — their hope that they

have passed from death unto life, because they love the brethren.

I have written this only trying to search and find the witness, and see if I know whereof these precious friends write.

A sister, I hope,
Mrs. D. C. Turner

OTHERS HAVE SAME TRIALS

Rt. 3, Box 180
Crossett, Arkansas

Dear Editors:

Am sending renewal for the dear paper. I enjoy reading the *Signs* so very much. Sometimes when I am in the valley of despair, and it seems there is no hope for a sinner like me, the postman will leave the *Signs* in the mailbox, and I start reading it right away; then I can see that others pass through these valleys also. It seems that I stay in a valley of darkness most of my time. But sometimes my hope is bright, and I am on the mountain top, so to speak, but it doesn't last long.

I enjoy the Editorials and the "Voices of the Past", and also the letters from the writers who can so ably explain the wonderful words of life. It is a wonderful gift to be able to write such comforting words to those who are downcast, and feel their unworthiness as keenly as I do.

Yours in hope of eternal life,
Mrs. Lela Mae Flemister

CIRCULAR LETTER

The Virginia Corresponding Meeting of Old School Baptists in session with New Valley Church at the Mt. Zion Meeting House, October 13 and 14, 1965, sends Christian greetings to the churches and associations with which we correspond:

Another year with all its joys and sorrows has passed and gone, and we

are one year nearer our eternal home than when we last met in an associational gathering. Some of our dear ones have been called away since our last association, and they will assemble with us no more here, but we hope through the grace and mercy of our covenant God, to meet them on the bright and sunny side of sweet deliverance in the happy, peaceful world of glory, where there will be no sad partings, no farewell tears, but all will be joy and peace and love. There all the ransomed of the Lord will be sweetly employed in praising and glorifying his holy and infinitely adorable name a whole eternity long.

“When we’ve been there ten thousand years,
Bright shining as the sun,
We’ve no less days to sing God’s praise
Than when we first begun.”

As it is written in 1 Corinthians 2:9 and 10, “Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath entered into the heart of man the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.” No, our finite minds cannot comprehend the infinity of the great Jehovah: we can only say, as did the Apostle, “Oh! the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God. How unsearchable are his judgments and his ways past finding out.” We cannot by searching find out God, as the worldly-wise in their human-effort system teach their children they can; and that they are learning the religion of the Lord Jesus Christ, whereas God says, “Not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord.” And again, “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.” “So it is not of him that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy.”

Then, dear brethren, let us praise God for his mercy, for it is everlasting. Whom he loves he never leaves: and Christ, “Having loved his own, he loved them to the end.” “I have loved

thee with an everlasting love, therefore with loving kindness hath he drawn thee.”

So it is alone through his grace, and mercy, and love that we poor, weak, helpless, sinful creatures of Adam’s fallen posterity, are brought to the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus; “And not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he hath saved us by the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost.”

In Isaiah 61:10, we read, “I will greatly rejoice in the Lord, my soul will be joyful in my God, for he hath clothed me with the garments of salvation, and hath covered me with the robe of righteousness. This is the heritage of the Lord’s people, and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord.” So we, dear kindred in Christ, as a church, as a people, are the only people who do not claim something towards our salvation by our own works; but we give all the praise and glory for all of it to our God, where, and to whom it belongs.

Now, dear brethren, may God in his mercy keep us from falling, and feed our souls on the riches of his grace while we live here in the flesh, and eventually receive us to himself in glory for Jesus’ sake. Amen.

H. F. Triplett

LETTER TO
SISTER ETTA MERIGOLD
OF WHITEFIELD, MAINE

Dear Sister Merigold:

After reading your letter in the May issue of the *Signs*, I felt drawn to you for the truth’s sake. It is so good when one’s mind is turned to their friends, (the household of faith), to tell them of the sweet blessings they have received at the Lord’s hand: the privilege of assembling together with those far and near who trust alone in the mercies of God our Saviour. Yet each one is fearful that he is deceived and has

deceived the brethren; but we can only walk by faith, and not by sight. When love is stirred within us as we read another's experience, often we find our hand reaching for the pen to talk to them by letter. I hope you will understand the meaning of this attempt, being strangers in the flesh, yet, if not deceived, we are sisters in Christ.

We heard a sermon this morning by our pastor, Elder H. G. Brown, on the great mystery of godliness found in the 7th chapter of Hebrews. It is precious to our souls to listen when it pleases our Lord to open up our minds to understand the Scriptures. These great mysteries cannot be told, but with just a little understanding, we stand in awe as we are given to meditate, and view Jesus the Lord of Lords and King of Kings. We feel it is enough as our hope mounts, and we feel the whispers of His love, and know He is mine, and I am his: all our fears and cares and troubles seem to go away for the moment, and we are strengthened to travel on the way; and to beg for grace to enable us to run with patience the race that is set before us.

But, as you said, such seasons come and go, and much of the time we are in the wilderness, and are filled with cares and toils of this life. Some of the time we are reconciled to God's will; while at other times all feeling sense seems to be gone, which makes us fear that we are wrong.

"Lord decide the doubtful case;
Thou who art thy people's sun,
Shine upon thy work of grace,
If it be indeed begun."

John, while shut up in prison, sent to inquire, "Art thou he that should come, or look we for another?" And Jesus said to go shew John again those things that you see and hear: the lame walk, the blind see, the deaf hear, and the poor have the gospel preached unto them. So John was not told plainly; but the things we feel, see and hear when we are given ears to hear, eyes

to see, and hearts to understand, answer the inquiry. Then we feel and are sure that he is the Christ, and that these things are of the Lord. If so, we will never perish, and we are enabled to go on our way, trusting and looking to Jesus, who is the author and finisher of our faith.

Please forgive all amiss. Write again as the Lord directs you. We love our dear paper which brings us so much good reading.

Yours in a sweet hope,
Carrie Campbell

SKEWARKEY UNION

The next session of the *Skewarkey Union* is appointed to be held with the Flat Swamp Church the 5th Sunday and Saturday before in October, 1965. Elder W. E. Grimes was appointed to preach the Introductory Sermon, with Elder E. C. Harrison, alternate.

The church is located about three miles west of Robertsonville, N. C. We cordially invite all interested persons to come and visit with us.

Elder D. Peele, Clerk
Rt. 2,
Williamston, N. C.

CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE INDIGENT FUND

(To September 1, 1965)

Mrs. Nola Day, N. C.....	\$ 1.00
Mr. and Mrs. H. M. Anthony, Tex.....	100.00
Leroy Reed, Idaho.....	1.00
Mrs. David Farnie, Va.....	1.00
Mrs. E. A. Bagwell, Ala.....	7.00

BLACK CREEK UNION

The next session of the *Black Creek Union*, the Lord willing, will be held with the church at Creeches, the fifth Saturday and Sunday in October, 1965.

The church is located on Highway 42, between the junction of 42 and 37, Johnston County, N. C. All who have a mind to come are cordially invited.

Eli T. Smith, Clerk

Danville, Virginia November, 1965

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BUSINESS OFFICE

R. F. D. 1, Box 539, Beechwood Lane
Danville, Va.

EDITORS

Elder David V. Spangler

R. F. D. 1, Box 539, Beechwood Lane
Danville, Va.

Elder John D. Wood

P. O. Box 186, Manassas, Va.

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Elder W. D. Griffin

39 Welsh Tract Road, Newark, Delaware

Elder E. J. Lambert

306 Richardson St., Winnsboro, Texas

Elder George Ruston

Dutton, Ontario, Canada

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TO

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

R. F. D. 1, Box 539 Beechwood Lane
Danville, Va.

EDITORIAL

HEBREWS 13:20, 21

“Now the God of peace, that brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, that great shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work to do his will, working in you that which is well pleasing in his sight, through Jesus Christ; to whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen.”

Why is it that we always have a benediction at the end of our services? This is not a word that the translators gave us in our version of the Bible, but at the end of each letter (except James) there is a prayer or short benediction. At the end of all Bible prayers there is an amen. This word has a meaning that is not easily set aside. In fact, the theologian that would belittle the word,

or berate those that use the word, does not have the religion of Jesus Christ. It is a word that He used to verify his veracity, and it is a word that was handed down from the ancient people of God to express a wish. This is why that the end of prayer has the “amen” at the end of it; it is for the purpose of expressing a wish, to wit, *So be it*. The promises of God are all yea, and all Amen, unto the glory of God by us. (2 Cor. 1:20) There is not a single promise that is nay. They are all yea and amen through Jesus Christ our Saviour. Since all scripture is given by inspiration of God (2 Tim. 3:16), it would be sacrilegious and blasphemous to say that the use of this word is not of the highest importance in our preaching and writing on sacred topics.

“Now the God of peace.” O, dear child of God, what comfort is found in these words. To read that, to hear that, that he is the God of our peace is indeed rich. It abounds with much promise to him that has known the ravages of war. As far as God the lawgiver, there could never be any peace coming from him to us. If we could have kept all of God’s laws, we would have made peace with him. If this had been true, then this text would not have appeared in the Bible. God has always disproved of sin. I may end up in the housetop alone for saying it, but I’d much rather end up there than live in a house with a brawling woman who would hide behind the purpose of God for their sins. (Prov. 21: 9; Rom. 6:1,2) As long as the sins of God’s people remained unatoned for there could never be any peace. If this does not teach the warlike characteristic of God *against* sin I do not know what it would take. I have said this: If God is pleased with our sins, he perpetrated the greatest fraud in sending His Son into the world to die for sinners, and yet that He was pleased with their sins. For me, I know that this is not the truth. God, as our Lawgiver, was at war against all of his people. This war went on un-

abated until it was atoned for. At no time, from the moment of our disobedience in the morning of time, until atoned for, did the wrath of God abate in the least degree. In our efforts to expound the beauty in the text, it is my desire to not leave a stone unturned in bringing out that "God is our peace." He had been at war from all eternity against sin. I get lost when I get to exploring in the grandeur of the God-head, but it is lost in holy ecstasy, not in gloomy and dismal swamps.

As long as God has been, he has been the God of wrath, the God of war, the God against sin. If this had not been true, how could God have counselled to send His own Son to die to satisfy the wrath of God and the justice of God and to become the God of peace? Too, we must be just as emphatic that he is the God of peace as that he is the God of wrath or war.

For him to cease being a God of wrath, there had to be somebody to atone for the sins of those with whom God was wroth. This Atonement could not be found among the sons of Adam. If it could have been found there, our text would have said, "Now the peace which is by Adam, etc." When the law was given it was given to be kept, not to be defied, not to be despised, not to be nullified by man, not to have any mercy in it. Manifestly, from the time of its being broken, God has been at war against sin. There could not be any peace without a reconciliation. When man fell, he was depraved from the sole of the feet to the crown of the head. He could not keep from sinning; he could not bring reconciliation, seeing that he could not turn and do good. (Jer. 13:23) This rule has never been abrogated by him that made it. Many people, the majority of the human race, have changed it (so they think) to suit their fancy, but God has not changed it, therefore all of the religion in the world that has come by efforts that the sinner conceived and carried

out is not the truth; all the peace that man has brought, whether in the natural realm of existence, in the so-called religious world, even in the church of the Lord Jesus Christ, it is all vain, all useless, all perishable, if it came about by the action of this dead sinning creature.

God moved to bring peace, therefore it is a wonderful text that embraces Him as being the God of peace. What a blessing it is to be given this all-prevailing peace in our experience; what a high and exalted calling it is to be called of God, to preach and to write about the peace that passes all understanding, which peace keeps our hearts and minds through Jesus Christ our Lord. (Phil. 4:7) It is not any small wonder that Paul was determined to know nothing among the Corinthians save Jesus Christ and him crucified. (I Cor. 2:2) God raised Him up and sent Him forth from His bosom to bring peace out of chaos. That was the beginning of the peace of God — the peace which God brought. It is presently the work of God's Holy Spirit to keep our hearts and our minds in this peace. If you understand this peace you will attribute it to men; if it passes all understanding, you will attribute it to God.

"That brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus Christ." It is not a question of *not* bringing Him from the dead, but how could He fail to bring Him from the dead, seeing that He sent Him forth to redeem them that were under the law. Poor frail human beings will never be able to more than grasp the surface of the love of God in this bringing Him forth from the dead. But we must not get the last things first. Order is heaven's first law, and in no place is it out of place as much as it is in expounding the gospel. God sent Him forth to do His will. This will is that all given Christ must be brought into peace with God. God could not be at peace with his own Son had that Son failed in bringing many sons to

glory. (Heb. 2:10) I have said, I repeat it here, that if the common idea about the work of Christ was true (that is, that he failed in saving those given him) that he would not have been received into heaven — yea, he would not have been raised from the dead. Here is that delightful order of heaven: God sent His Son to redeem the chosen people of God, to reconcile them to God and Him to them; to come as the One and only peace-offering, being named the Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace. (Isa. 9:6) While here, He brought peace to His people; and when He died, He brought peace to God and to all the heirs of promise. He did the work that His Father gave Him to do. How peaceful it was with Satan writhing in death, with all the enemies of God as dead men, with the holy and righteous and good law filled to a jot and a tittle. God can not deny himself (Num. 23:19; 2 Tim. 2:13), and, seeing that Christ was the mighty God and the Everlasting Father, *all* of God's power and glory and honor was pledged to raise and bring from the dead His Son and our Saviour.

“That great shepherd of the sheep.” How lovely the scriptures set Him forth in this capacity. This shepherd, this Saviour, was set up from everlasting. (Prov. 8:23) The eyes of wisdom saw His substance from everlasting, and in his book all His members were written, yet they were unperfected, and not manifest, even as Jesus was not yet manifest. But he did not come to become a Saviour, not at all; He was born the Saviour. His delights were with the sheep before they were manifest sheep; he rejoiced among the sheepfold and its occupants before the world had an existence. (Prov. 8:31) Since it is the work of a shepherd to look after his flock, this Shepherd went about doing the work of his Father while it was day, while a Man could work. He did do His Father's work while here, and, at his departure, sent another

Comforter who is continuing on the same line of work, taking the things of Christ and presenting them to the sheep. As the Shepherd, he found them all dead in sin. He gave unto them eternal life according as his Father had given him all power to redeem and to reveal unto them the redemption. (Matt. 11:27; John 10:28; 17:2)

This great Shepherd is often pictured in the saddest of terms. He is often set forth as a hand-wringing shepherd. He is shown(?) unto us as shepherd that would like to lead the sheep by still waters; that would like to have them lie down in green pastures; that would like to lead the sheep in paths of righteousness; that would like to comfort his people with the rod and the staff; that would like to prepare a table for them; that would like to anoint our head with oil; that would like for our cup to run over, but the sheep just will not let him do this. I do not know which is the most unreasonable and unscriptural doctrine, to not be able to make sheep manifestly, or to be able to make them without their help and then lose control over them after that He makes them sheep. It seems good to me to discard both.

“Through the blood of the everlasting covenant.” The translators were not agreed about this word “covenant” some of them thinking that this was the better word, while others thought that the better word was testament. I do not know a word of Greek, but I am inclined to agree with the minority report in this case. The covenant is one thing, but the Testator of that covenant is another. It is true, however, that Moses referred to blood as being the covenant blood; but it would seem, from a careful reading, that this covenant was not the one that is in our text. Too, the writer of Hebrews tells us that sore punishment awaits him that treads under foot the son of God, and counts the blood of the covenant as an unholy thing. (Heb. 10:29) As it was with Moses, and as it seems cer-

tain the writer of Hebrews, they had in mind a figurative sense; so it would seem that way here, to wit, that it is through the blood of Jesus Christ.

We do remember that Jesus is the Testator of a better covenant. Even the first covenant was dedicated with blood. It was the blood of calves and goats used in type for the blood of Jesus. Moses said, This is the blood of the testament which God hath enjoined unto you. (Heb. 9:18, 20) As the types had to die in order for the comers thereto to have blood, just so did Jesus, the Lamb of God, have to die that the comers thereto be made perfect. (Heb. 10:1) A man's testament (will) is not in force as long as he lives. Only after his death does his will come into force. Thus it behoved Christ to die that his testament benefit his people. When he administered the supper to the disciples he called the wine the blood of the new testament.

"Make you perfect in every good work to do his will." Whatever the true meaning of the blood of the everlasting covenant, whether understood in a figurative sense, or that Jesus in sum and substance is the covenant himself, it does not lessen the force of the doctrine that is being taught in the text. The perfection prayed for is not of the creature. Whoever heard of praying for that which the creature can do? You haven't heard that? That is the common ignorance of mankind. Every religion except the Absolute Predestinarian Baptists believe that God is dependent on the creature for the success of his venture and church and kingdom building, and yet they pray like Hercules to God for help in them doing it. This prayer is from the heart of a poor dependent creature. He knows that he must have grace to perform all the requirements of God; that his present salvation is based on God's saving grace. This prayer of the apostle comes to this: May the God of peace, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you perfect in every good work

to do his will. I do not intend to sell out my pen to anybody, and I will say to my brethren that it is not in evil works that God is to enable us to do his will. *We are not doing the will of God when we do evil works.* The writer did not pray for God to enable us to do his will in wickedness. *He did not do that.* Reason how we may, call our loved ones in the Lord what we may, the Lord does not forbid things in his written word and then influence us by his Spirit to disobey that command. God does his will in heaven and in earth, whether it is by the power of His Spirit in our hearts and minds, or by the wielding of His sword. Of one he is the direct and immediate cause, by the other he is simply taking that which is already wicked and using it as it seems good unto Him. Of one thing I am sure. We will never perfectly do his will until the perfect gift (James 1:17) is given to us. And I am sure that this perfect gift is given his people that they may perfectly do his will in every good work.

"Working in you that which is well-pleasing in his sight." Let us go to another notable letter of Paul. "Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling; for it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure. (Phil. 2:12, 13) How often have we heard it said that "God works the will and the do in you, but you must work it out." Only an ignorant one (letter ignorant as well as grace) would make an application like that of the work of God in his people. They either have forgotten, or they never did know, that God works effectually in his subjects. (Eph. 3:7; I Thes. 2:13) The prayer is seeking for God to make us perfect in *every good work*. How many good works? I did not say, dear critic. But the prayer of Paul begs for grace from the God of all peace that the children of God be perfected in

every good work *to do his will*; not just begging for grace that will work it in the children of God, not that at all, but begging for grace that they be made perfect in every good work to do his will. That is the prayer. That is the prayer of every dependent sinner; but, regardless of the niceties of speech-making to God in prayer, the prayer of others do not mean that they are helpless and dependent. Now link up this prayer with Paul's charge to the Philippians. His charge to them is to work out that which God has wrought in, and this prayer is to the God of peace that he would make them perfect in every good work to do his will, working in them that which is wellpleasing in his sight.

The text heretofore has set forth God as doing great wonders through the Lord Jesus Christ. However, have you noticed that it is God the Father that has done all this first for the Son? He sent forth his Son, He sent angels to administer to him; He raised Him from the tomb. This was as the manifest Son of God. This is in keeping with the expression: Thou art my Son; this day have I begotten thee. (Psalm 2:7) Earlier in this article it has been noted that the Son was ever with the Father. This being true, He could not have been begotten, but in His relationship with His people it truly can be said that He was begotten of God. Then the writer prays that the wonderful blessings of obedience be given unto the Hebrew brethren. He prays for that which is wellpleasing in the sight of God. He does not ask God to make them perfect in every evil or sinful work, for this could never be wellpleasing in his sight; and that would apply to him working it in them as well as after it is wrought in and by them.

I sometimes hope that I have a calling from God to preach the gospel; to preach Jesus Christ and him crucified. I feel in my heart and mind that I have told you the whole truth in what I have said about this text. It is my

hope that it was the God of peace that visited me more than forty years ago, breaking down my opposition to His rule over me, and reconciling God to me through my blessed Lord. The answer to this prayer was predicated upon the will of God being executed through the Saviour Jesus Christ. My will was not consulted in the outset, and thus I am not a sharer in glory with him there. Since that day, if this was the day of the Lord with me, I have been willing to follow him, to count it a joy in tribulations, to submit to all the indignities that are heaped upon me; to know that our God is still the God of all vengeance as well as the God of peace, and that whatever it is, He will carry all of his pleasure out; and that now, and forever and forever, all glory belongs to Him.

As the shadows lengthen out and the end of day approaches, I would to God that I die with a hearty Amen upon my dying lips to all that his providence and grace has brought to me; that he has ruled over (not overruled) all his creation to where not a shaft has hit me to ruin, but rather for good; that He has supplied my needs, both natural and spiritual, that He has enabled me to say, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust him," and that, As I have received good at his hand, I expect to receive the same kind of evil that Job did, and that whatever comes, whether good or evil, whether in giving or in taking, that His name is blessed forever more.

W. D. G.

SERMON AT MT. ZION CHURCH
LOUDOUN COUNTY, VA.

August, 1965

"Thou, O king, sawest, and behold a great image. This great image, whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee; and the form thereof was terrible. This image's head was of fine gold, his breast and arms of silver, his belly and his thighs of brass, his legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay.

Thou sawest till that a stone was cut out without hands, which smote the image upon his feet that were of iron and clay, and brake them to pieces. Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver, and the gold, broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of the summer threshing floors; and the wind carried them away, that no place was found for them; and the stone that smote the image became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth." (Daniel 2:31)

"And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever." (Daniel 2:44)

My mind is on a portion of these scriptures, but I do not know that the Lord will be pleased to open the matter up, and give a degree of liberty to speak concerning them. Wonderful things are uncovered in the Book of Daniel, and in considering the subject before us, it would be well to read the entire second chapter when you have time, for these were written by inspiration, and are preserved for our instruction.

The events and circumstances were such in the eternal will and purpose of God, that Daniel was a captive in Babylon; and Nebuchadnezzar the king was given a dream which bothered him greatly, but he could not remember what he had dreamed. Quite naturally he called in his magicians, astrologers, and Chaldeans, and demanded of them to tell what he had dreamed; and then interpret it. These protested that this was impossible; but the king insisted under pain of death — which sentence was about to be carried out against all the *wise men* of Babylon, including Daniel. But when Daniel heard of it, he asked for time, and he would show the king the interpretation. This brought Daniel, (and his three friends, Shadrach, Meshack, and Abednego), before

God for his mercies: and the secret was revealed unto him in a night vision.

It is good to notice what Daniel said in the 28th and 30th verses, after telling the king that the wise men, magicians, etc. could not make known the secret, "But there is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets . . . , But as for me, this secret is not revealed to me for any wisdom that I have more than any living, . . ." This reminds us of the Lord's humble servants, who are never boastful of the great things God does for them; (and if sometimes the flesh gets the upper hand, there is a day of reckoning; and they are humbled.)

Daniel told the king what he had dreamed, as we have read; and then interpreted it as follows: "Thou, O king, art a king of kings: for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power, and strength, and glory. And wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven hath he given into thine hand, and hath made thee ruler over them. Thou art this head of gold. And after thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee, and another third kingdom of brass, which shall bear rule over all the earth. And the fourth kingdom shall be strong as iron: forasmuch as iron breaketh in pieces and subdueth all things: and as iron that breaketh all these, shall it break in pieces and bruise. And whereas thou sawest iron mixed with miry clay, they shall mingle themselves with the seed of men: but they shall not cleave one to another, even as iron is not mixed with clay. And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever."

As historically proved, here is portrayed four great natural kingdoms, and ten smaller kingdoms which followed the last of the four; as well as

the kingdom set up in the coming of Jesus Christ into the world to do his Father's will.

The first, of course, was the Babylonian, whose chief city was Babylon, with Nebuchadnezzar as king; and Daniel said, "Thou art the head of gold." The second was an inferior kingdom to the Babylonian, the Medes and Persians, of which Cyrus was the king: this was the breast and arms of silver. The third was the Macedonian kingdom, of which Alexander the Great was king. Then we have the Roman Empire, the last of the four, which was strong as iron but mixed with clay, and was divided. We yet see the kingdoms or successors represented by the toes which did not cleave together.

But we are much more interested in the kingdom which was set up in the "days of these kings", which was separate from, and far more important than any other kingdom; and which should never be destroyed, nor left to other people. It was a kingdom whose power was in the Stone which was cut out of the mountain without hands, which grew and became a great mountain, and filled the whole earth.

It was in the days of the Roman Empire, — the days of the Caesars, you will recall, that Jesus came into the world; and it was a distressing time for the Jews in Palestine. They were under tribute, ruled by and crushed under the heel of the Romans. But the Jews believed, as was abundantly told in the Scriptures, that the Messiah was coming; yet they did not know the real purpose of his coming. Their only desire was that he should restore the kingdom of Israel, that it should be as it was in the days of David and Solomon; and this would require a great leader, a great warrior. But this they did not find in Jesus; and since he was not what they expected, they had no need of him.

Certain qualifications must be had before one could see in Jesus a beauty that they should desire him; and be-

fore he could be recognized as the Christ, the Son of God. It was true in that day; and equally as true ever since then. The Jews as a nation, did not have it. And it is noticed that even his own disciples, though they had the revelation that he was the Christ, the Son of the living God, and rejoiced in him, seeing what others did not see, yet there were many things they did not comprehend until Jesus opened their understanding, and until they received the Holy Ghost on the day of Pentecost.

"In the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed." History records that many kingdoms have arisen, and had glory in their own day; and then fell. Perhaps China is the oldest existing, but there has never been a kingdom of this world which has not fallen and been left to others. And we may expect from prophecy that all natural kingdoms, whether secular or semi-religious in character, shall fall in their own time.

But we are considering a kingdom which God should set up, which shall never fall or be destroyed. It is a kingdom not of this world, as Jesus plainly said; and meaning, as is evident, that it is not dependent on the wisdom of men, on armies and artillery, or money. It is not dependent on anything that is natural and mortal, or it too would be destroyed.

Another thing which is exclusive with this kingdom, is that it, "shall not be left to other people." Other kingdoms have been absorbed when they fell: swallowed up by new kingdoms, new kings, presidents, etc. — and they are left to others. But this kingdom will not fail, will not be swallowed up by, or left to other people.

Of whom is this kingdom composed? To whom does this kingdom belong? Since it is not a natural kingdom, it is not dependent upon worldly things. It is a spiritual kingdom, and is composed solely of those who are born of the Spirit of God. The kingdom belongs

to Jesus Christ, who said, "My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence." If it were a kingdom of this world, it would necessarily need the things of a worldly kingdom; but it has no need of these, for they have a King who does all his pleasure, who speaks and it is done, commands and it stands fast. This is their King: the Rock hewn out of the mountain without hands, which shall break in pieces all other kingdoms.

From history we know that many kingdoms and governments have fallen; and many such things are in the making now. I don't know when, nor what the end is going to be; of course I don't. I am not given to see ahead one moment; but, by the grace of God, we are given faith sometimes to stand still, and to recognize as true, that when the Lord gave men the spirit of prophecy concerning these things, whether they come in our day or later, they shall surely come; and all at the Lord's time. Sometimes we feel afraid of the Soviet Union, or China, but do we not know that they are in the hands of God? that every kingdom, every king, every president, and everything else in authority in this world, is in the hands of God, who said he would set up a kingdom that would never be destroyed.

(Isn't it wonderful, brethren, for us to have a little hope, a little evidence, that we are brought into this spiritual kingdom, which is above and beyond the world? We know that something has taken place with us which is not known by outsiders; yet it is so assuring that we know God has been with us and has given us faith and hope, so that we know, whether we live or whether we die, we are in his hands. This is the God that set up this kingdom.)

What is this kingdom? I don't have to tell you that it is the church of

God — the kingdom of God in this world. When was it set up? in the days of these kings — when the fulness of time was come. Then God sent his Son into the world, and the kingdom was set up. There were many things given as types and shadows under the law, or foretold by the prophets, which came into full bloom in their own day; when the "wheel" of God's predestination, his eternal purpose, had so revolved that the very moment came. Jesus came exactly as the Spirit of God in his people said he should come. We are glad that there was not a single promise, not a single prophecy concerning his coming, and the setting up of his kingdom, but actually came as was foretold.

We see the kingdom being set up in the preaching of John the Baptist, declaring that the kingdom of heaven is at hand. We see Jesus submitting to baptism, saying, "It becometh us to fulfill all righteousness." It was necessary for Jesus to "begin to be about his Father's business", and to fulfill everything that the law demanded of everyone of those who were made lively stones in the kingdom. This was the work of Jesus — to do what his Father sent him to do. This kingdom shall continue on and on until every member that was chosen by the Father to make up this kingdom, shall be brought in, from the first one in the world to the last one; and though all other kingdoms shall be destroyed, this one shall have all of her citizens brought together in the resurrection of the dead, when all shall be conformed to the image of Christ, as they were predestinated to be, and then enter into heaven and immortal glory: thus clearly indicating that it shall never be destroyed.

Though this kingdom has been assailed from the beginning: by Herod, by the king of Rome, by devotees of heathen gods, by devils of all stripes, yet it has not been consumed: for it cannot be destroyed. "And the kingdom shall not be left to other people." What

does this mean? Simply that there are specific people only that can ever belong to this kingdom: they were chosen by God the Father in his Son before the world began, and they shall come into this kingdom. Of these Peter said, "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ." He that understands this, understands the only way that the citizens of this kingdom are members of it. They are citizens by birth, for except they are born of the Spirit they cannot see this kingdom: except they are born of water and the Spirit, they cannot enter into the kingdom of God. Unless and until they have these things revealed to them, as did Peter and the other brethren, they cannot know that Jesus is the Christ the Son of God; nor know that the church is built upon a Rock, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

The church is built upon this rock, the Lord Jesus Christ; upon a sure and safe foundation — a foundation that God sent from heaven. It is not built upon men, nor by men; not upon Peter, which many talk so much about. This is the same Rock that followed the children of Israel in the wilderness; the same Stone that the builders rejected, which became the head of the corner; the same Stone that God prepared — cut out of the mountain without hands, to break in pieces and consume all other kingdoms. This Stone, Jesus Christ, is the head, and the church is his body — a beautiful figure of the kingdom: it shall not be destroyed, nor left to others.

(How wonderful it is to have assurance of these things; but, since we have these treasures in earthen vessels, we sometimes have doubts and fears in the earthen vessel part of us: our flesh. Yet often our flesh is subdued, and we know that our Redeemer lives: he lives to grant repentance to his people, and faith, and hope, and charity.

When we can see Jesus at the right hand of his Father, we say, Glory, glory, unto him who has given us grace, and brought us out of great darkness and many tribulations, into the marvelous light of the Son of God; and has put us on the Rock, revealing that the church is in the world today, and is safe and sound and sure, regardless of how many false doctrines, how many false kingdoms, or how much heathenism is thrown against it, it will stand: It cannot but stand, for the church has the shielding of God — he is around about them as a great wall, — a wall of fire, carrying out his eternal decree for them.)

"The kingdom shall not be left to other people," for it is composed only of the chosen of the Father. This may sound pretentious, but if one will search the Scriptures, he will find that this is shown throughout the whole volume. When Jesus said, "All that the Father hath given me, shall come unto me," of whom was he speaking? Those that the Father gave him, of course. Who were they that the Father gave him? all that he chose in his Son before the world began, whose names were written in heaven. These were in the eternal will and purpose of God, although not developed until the time that each should be born into this world; and their spiritual parenthood was just as sure as if they already had actual existence before the world began for they were chosen by the Father in his Son before the world began. They had their standing in the eternal purpose and will of God who brings to pass all things: so that my father and mother came together, and your father and mother: our grandfathers and grandmothers, and on back; to the end that every child that was destined to be born, has been or shall be born in his own time. We may talk about birth control and restrictions: every one that God determined before the world shall come into the world. Likewise, every one that God chose in his Son, shall be

brought into this kingdom, for God knows them: he knows every one of his people.

Many think that it does not make too much difference about doctrine, or church, saying that we all believe in God and in Jesus the Saviour. "What difference does it make?" some ask, "we are all going to the same place: you go your way and I will go mine." This is false, my brethren. There is but one way; there is but one kingdom; and there is but one doctrine of God our Saviour. The ways of men cannot be substituted for the way of God; and it should be remembered that God is not mocked.

The kingdom of God has had all manner of opposition from the beginning, which seems to grow stronger day by day. But the astonishing thing is that it matters not how great and strong the so-called spiritual kingdoms are, or other kingdoms and organizations are; how much they may join house to house, or field to field, saying, we are many millions now, and coming together we will be more millions, so that the whole world may be proselytized; it matters not how much this may go on, they have yet to reckon with God who has power over them. "For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he that now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way." (2 Thes. 2:7) God will preserve them until the time comes in his will for all these kingdoms to be destroyed; for Daniel said, "The great God hath made known to the king what shall come to pass hereafter, and the dream is certain, and the interpretation thereof sure."

Here is a kingdom composed only of those born of the Spirit, who are in the world, but not of the world. These have something that the world cannot give; or cannot take from them. In 1 Peter we read, ". . . To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious, 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." Any religious organization, calling themselves Christian or otherwise, that has to resort to human armaments, to fight what they call the fight of faith, are deceived, and are deceiving the world that follows them. This kingdom is a spiritual kingdom; and Jesus said that if his kingdom were of this world, then would his servants fight — they would take up swords and spears; but the church fights not this kind of battle. "For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." They fight this battle only as they have the whole armour of God given them. They are built up a spiritual house, or lively stones; not dead stones. They are lively because they have been born of the Spirit of God: they are taught something, and know how they ought to live and walk, for God is gracious to them, and works in them both to will and to do of his good pleasure.

Peter also wrote, "Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded. Unto you therefore which believe he is precious; but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner." How we love to read, "It is contained in the scriptures." The prophets wrote it; Peter quoted it; and John and James, and Jesus quoted the prophets. Sion is the church: a chief corner stone was laid in Sion — the stone rejected of the builders became the head of the corner; and it is declared that there is salvation in none other. Pilate said that he found no fault in him; but Jesus was crucified; and he arose from the dead, showing it was impossible to destroy the church. Political pressure was

brought to bear when the mob cried, "If you let this man go, you are not Caesar's friend." Which all shows the strength of this kingdom which cannot be destroyed.

"But he that believeth on him shall not be confounded." Experience shows that when we are given faith to believe on Him, we are not confounded by the doctrines of the world. The things we practiced when we believed we could do what we thought was required of us, no longer give us concern: we no longer mistake these things for the only way of salvation, for we are given grace and faith to believe in the finished work of Jesus, and He is precious to us. What an empty profession is often made when men say they believe in Jesus. My own experience tells me that what I am saying is true. The only way a person can know Jesus, is for Jesus to be revealed in him. One can never learn Him in the schools of men. True enough, men can teach the historical part, and the so called "story of the Bible," but they can't impart the truth that makes Jesus precious. This is done only when He reaches down to where one is dead in trespasses and sins, brings him up, and gives peace and joy. Then He is precious.

"And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence." Jesus is really this to unbelievers. Yet we hear Him much talked about. There is a vast difference between talking about Jesus, and preaching Jesus. When Jesus is preached, the only name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved, is preached; when He is preached, his doctrine is preached: such as, "All that the Father hath given me shall come unto me." Or, "No man can come unto me except my Father which sent me draw him." Whenever the doctrine of Jesus and his Apostles is preached, Jesus is a stumbling stone, for his doctrine is not that way that seems right to men. It is a dreadful thing for professors to stumble at the word; yet this is what many do as

they wrest the scriptures to their own destruction, as Peter wrote. When one comes to your door and wants to show you the way of salvation; to point out the kingdom of heaven and how to get there, they forget, (rather do not know) that Jesus has already redeemed all who shall ever enter heaven, and that he has his own way of revealing it to them, and all that they ever need to know. He is a stone of stumbling, and will always remain such to those who know not the Lord.

Now let us think of another scripture for a moment. "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." (Romans 9:22, 23) Will any charge God with being unjust? The kingdoms of this world will stand as long as it is God's will for them to stand — both the natural kingdoms, and the so-called spiritual kingdoms: the great organizations of which the scriptures speak; and concerning which Paul comforted the Thessalonian brethren, saying, "Let no man deceive you by any means: for that day shall not come, except there be a falling away first, and that man of sin be revealed, the son of perdition; who opposeth and exalteth himself above all that is called God, or that is worshipped; so that he as God sitteth in the temple of God, shewing himself that he is God." And further, "For the mystery of iniquity doth already work: only he who now letteth will let, until he be taken out of the way. And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord will consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming."

Were it not the Lord's work, it might be considered marvelous that the doctrine that Jesus and the Apostles taught, has been preserved in the midst of the flood of false doctrines; and that

this kingdom has not been destroyed ere this. How true it is, “. . . the earth helped the woman, and the earth opened her mouth, and swallowed up the flood which the dragon cast out of his mouth.” And though the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, she is still preserved; and her children have the promise, “Lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world.” This little, humble kingdom — humble so far as the component members are concerned, fearful, trembling, but having a powerful God and Saviour fighting their battles for them, is far from being overthrown; and the promise is that it shall never be destroyed, nor left to other people.

Now a few more thoughts concerning this kingdom. Have you been concerned that the church has been troubled with some who have “crept in unawares” to “spy out our liberty”; or that many of the Lord’s people have been caught up in divisions and false doctrines; or that the Lord has a people in every nation, kingdom, tribe and people — a multitude of whom are not made known to the brethren in the church? If so, you have the assurance of the Apostle that the “. . . foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his.” And the assurance of the Saviour, “I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine.” Peter preached the same doctrine on the day of Pentecost when he said, “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.” All of these were provided for in the ancient will of God; and those who are provided for, and what is provided, is manifested by the work of the Spirit in each of them, as He takes the things of Jesus and shows it unto them.

There is much, much more embraced in the subject, but we must forebear, except to say that it will be a glorious time for the citizens of this kingdom

when the warfare is over, when their mortality shall be swallowed up of life, and they are conformed to the image of their Saviour, and brought into the fulness of those things that God has provided for them.

(The above is the substance of a discourse at Mt. Zion Church in Virginia. It was taped, but condensed and edited for publication instead of attempting to write an editorial. — J. D. W.)

VOICES OF THE PAST

“He being dead yet speaketh”

GIDEON’S ARMY

THREE COMPANIES — EMPTY PITCHERS
— LAMPS, &C.

In reply to brother Isaac McCarty, of New London, Iowa, we will give such views as we have upon the figurative import of the text recorded in Judges vii. 16, which reads thus: “And he divided the three hundred men into three companies, and he put a trumpet in every man’s hand, with empty pitchers, and lamps within the pitchers.”

The records of the Old Testament we are informed are given for our instruction, and contain a shadow of good things to come, things in which the saints of the present dispensation have an interest. The people of Israel whom God redeemed from Egypt, and with a strong hand and outstretched arm brought out of the house of bondage and through the sea, and through the wilderness into the promised land, were undisputably typical of the spiritual people which were chosen of God in Christ, and redeemed from the bondage of the law, the pollution and guilt of sin, and brought by his almighty arm into the gospel rest which was prefigured by the land of promise. The propensity of Israel to murmur, fret and rebel, and when not under the chastising hand of God to go into idolatry, clearly portrays the wandering and rebellious propensity of the spiritual tribes of the Lord to depart from his precepts, wax fat and kick, when

left to develop their carnal proclivities, for the trial of their faith. As Israel were often chastised for their rebellion and idolatry by being driven before their enemies until thoroughly made sensible of their own weakness and entire dependence on God for deliverance, so the children of God are frequently reduced to the greatest extremities, and with deep contrition to call on God to deliver them from their distress.

The connection of our text shows that Israel had done evil in the sight of the Lord, and had been delivered by the Lord into the hands of Midian for seven years; and when they were sorely oppressed by their enemies, the angel of the Lord appeared unto Gideon, the son of Jonah, and commanded him to demolish the altar of Baal, and cut down the grove; and this exasperated the Midianites and the Amalekites and the children of the east, and they raised a mighty army, and came down upon the people of Israel with a host that was like the sand for number, and encamped against Israel. Israel, now humbled under the chastening hand of God, in their distress called on God for deliverance; and God, by his angel, appeared again unto Gideon, and promised to deliver Israel by his hand; and having strengthened him for the work, gave him special instruction how to proceed. To all human appearance the whole combined forces of all the tribes of Israel could make but a very feeble and fruitless resistance to such a mighty army; but God had determined, instead of augmenting the army of Israel, to reduce the handful which were with Gideon, from thirty-two thousand men to the number of only three hundred, lest Israel should boast that by their power or valor they had achieved the victory. Truly God is jealous for his own glory, which he will not give to another, nor his praise unto graven images. God's method of strengthening the heart and hands of Gideon, and Gideon's misgivings and fearfulness,

are well illustrated in his dealings with his children in every age. We all know something of the doubtings, fearings, trembling and slowness of heart to receive and rely upon the kind and gracious promises of our God. But when he strips us for the race, or harnesses us for the battle, then we can, through him, run through a troop or leap over a wall, and do valiantly.

We may trace this subject far, and compare God's dealings with Gideon and Israel with the experience of all the saints in their numerous conflicts with their enemies and their triumph over them; but there appears to us a still deeper and more striking application of the figurative import of the part of the subject presented in the text proposed for our more especial consideration.

From the allusion to this subject, Isa. ix. 4-7, we conclude that Gideon, in leading the little band of God's elect or chosen people to triumph over the Midianitish hosts, was a figure of Christ, as the Captain of our salvation. The removing the yoke and burden and staff and rod of oppression of Israel by Gideon, was attended with confused noise in the Midianitish camp, and garments rolled in blood; not by swords of steel or weapons of carnal slaughter used by Gideon and his men, but by confusion in the enemies' camp, which set every man's sword against his fellow; and this confusion and consternation was occasioned by what was to them the confused noise of three hundred trumpets breaking suddenly upon their astonished ears, and simultaneously with the noise, the fearful glare of light from three hundred lamps, which carried dismay and terror to their quaking hearts. So when our spiritual or anti-typical Gideon, the "child born, the Son given, the Wonderful, Counsellor, the Mighty God, the Prince of Peace," should vanquish all the enemies of his cause and people, it shall answer to the figure and be with burning and fuel of fires. When

“that wicked shall be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the spirit of his mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming.” — 2 Thess. ii. 8.

If we are right in taking Gideon in this figure to represent Christ, then the three hundred chosen men, elected by God himself, may represent the chosen people of God under the three dispensations, including patriarchs and prophets under the two former dispensations, and the apostles and saints of the gospel dispensation. This divides the Lord's host into three companies, as they are represented by a multitude of corresponding figures. When Jacob, on his journey, came to the land of the people of the east, he saw a well in the field, and lo, there were three flocks of sheep lying by it, for out of that well they watered the flocks. But it was a fountain sealed, a spring shut up, so that they could not be watered until the flocks were gathered, and the stone removed. The stone, or tables of the law, shut up from the flocks the waters of life, until Rachel (the figure of the gospel church) brought up her father's flock, and then the stone was removed and the flocks were watered. — Gen. xxix. The division of the Lord's chosen people is represented in the three companies, by Abraham, Isaac and Jacob; by Noah, Daniel and Job; by Shadrach, Meshach and Abednego, in the burning furnace, and the form of the fourth in their midst, whose form was like the Son of God; in the sign of the prophet Jonah, the three days and three nights he was in the whale's belly, and the three days in which Christ said he would build the temple, the three days he was in the heart of the earth; with many other parallel figures, all of which show that the great battle of the Lord, in which the mighty hosts of the worshipers of Baal or other idols shall be vanquished and go to confusion together, and the wicked shall be consumed by the spirit of the mouth of our great Captain, and

destroyed by the brightness of his coming, as the Midianites were by the sound of the trumpets blown by the mouth of Gideon, and reiterated by those who were with him, who were “called and chosen and faithful,” and whom Gideon commanded to look at him, and do as they saw him do, should agree with this figurative number.

“And he put a trumpet in every man's hand.” Not in the hand of every man of Midian, or of Amalek, nor even every man of Israel; but every man of the three hundred whom God had chosen for that service. The proclamation of the gospel of the grace of God is often spoken of in the scriptures as the blowing of a trumpet. Two trumpets of silver, of a whole piece, were made at God's command by Moses, to be blown for the gathering of the people of Israel, and for the journeying of the camp. A jubilee trumpet was sounded to announce the year of release to the captives of Israel. “And it shall come to pass in that day that the great trumpet shall be blown, and they shall come which were ready to perish in the land of Assyria, and the outcasts in the land of Egypt, and shall worship the Lord in his holy mount at Jerusalem.” — Isa. xxvii. 13. “And he shall send his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds from one end of heaven to the other.” — Matt. xxiv. 31. The trumpets used by the three hundred chosen men of Gideon did not divide nor scatter Gideon's men when sounded by command of and in harmony with the sounding of the trumpets of their illustrious leader; but it scattered and confused their enemies. So the gospel of the Son of God, when sounded at his command, and precisely as the chosen trumpeters witness the sounding of it by their glorious leader and commander, will always gather those who have an ear to hear what the Spirit saith to the churches; but “if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare for

the battle?" The gospel is the sharp sword which proceedeth out of the mouth of him who in righteousness doth judge and make war. This is the "sword of the Lord and of Gideon," and it will surely carry confusion into the camp of the enemies, and ultimately set every man's hand against his fellow, as in the days of Midian. The sword of the Lord, as we have said, is not a carnal weapon made of steel, but it is quick (vital) and powerful, sharper than any two-edged sword; it is mighty through God, for it divides asunder between joints and marrow, soul and spirit, and it is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart. Such a sword, a "Thus saith the Lord God," is put in the hand of every soldier of the cross; but it cannot be used with good effect only at the proper time.

The apostles, after receiving the commission, were commanded to tarry in Jerusalem until they were endued with power from on high. Had some of Gideon's men blown the trumpet before Gideon gave the signal, they might have done mischief; but, "Look on me, and do likewise. When I blow with a trumpet, I and all that are with me, then blow ye the trumpets also on every side of the camp, and say, The sword of the Lord and of Gideon." So says our spiritual Leader: Look on me, observe my example, do as ye see me do, obey my commandments, and follow in my footsteps.

Observe, the trumpets were furnished and put in every man's hand by Gideon, as were also the empty pitchers and the lamps. Trumpets have a variety of sounds: some are shrill and piercing, some are smooth and soft, others are harsh and grating in their sound: some are to announce an approaching conflict, calling the people to arms, and some are to proclaim a jubilee of release to prisoners and captives; but for every purpose the trumpet must give a certain sound. Should every man furnish his own trumpet, they would not be likely to harmonize

in sound. Some of those that were used by Israel were made of rams' horns, others of silver, and all adapted to the purpose for which they were to be used. The trumpets put in the hands of Gideon's three hundred men fitly represented the gifts of the Holy Spirit, which our spiritual Gideon has bestowed on every one whom he has called and chosen to grapple with the powers of darkness, and stand in defense of the faith which was once delivered to the saints. And let it also be well observed that the trumpets in the hands of Gideon's men were only understood by the men of Gideon; but made a confused, unintelligible noise in the ears of the Midianitish camp. The same trumpets that cheered and strengthened the hands and hearts of the men of Gideon, carried consternation and death to their enemies. So the same apostolic gifts that are "a savor of life unto life to them that are saved, are a savor of death unto death to them that perish." "Blessed are they that know the joyful sound." The preaching of Christ is to the Jews a stumbling block, and to the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, (as were Gideon's men,) Christ the power of God and the wisdom of God."

The empty pitchers may represent the servants of God, who in themselves are but dust and ashes, moulded by the potter, and formed into vessels of honor or of dishonor, according to the pleasure of the potter; in themselves empty, and having no power to either cheer Israel or confound the enemy; but he who has formed the vessels to honor has committed to them a sacred treasure, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us.

The lamps, that were concealed from the view of the enemy by the empty pitchers, until the pitchers were broken to let the light shine forth, is clearly illustrated by the apostle, 2 Cor. iv. 5-7: "For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord, and ourselves

your servants for Jesus' sake. For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. But we have this treasure (of light) in earthen vessels, (as Gideon's men had their light in earthen vessels, and for the same purpose, too,) that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us." And as the mighty hosts of Midian, of Amalek and the people of the east were overwhelmed and destroyed when Gideon caused the light to shine out of the darkness of the empty pitchers, even so will the Lord consume anti-christ or that wicked with the spirit of his mouth, and destroy them with the brightness of his coming. — 2 Thess. ii. 8. God's chosen ministers, who take forth the precious from the vile, are "as God's mouth." — Jer. xv. 19. Of the Spirit of the Lord, it is said unto the Zion of the Lord, whose light is come, and on whom the glory of the Lord has risen, "My Spirit that is upon thee, and my words which I have put in thy mouth, shall not depart out of thy mouth, nor out of the mouth of thy seed, nor out of the mouth of thy seed's seed, saith the Lord, from henceforth and forever." — Isa. lix. 21. The light in Gideon's pitchers, and the Spirit and words of the Lord, which are a light to our way and a lamp to our feet, God has put in the mouth of Zion's seed, as Gideon put the lamps into the empty pitchers of his men, and made them to be as his mouth, in declaring his words and in putting forth the precious from the vile.

Although we have extended our remarks to a great length, we cannot well forbear to add a few further reflections on the subject, especially in regard to the useful instruction it presents to the soldiers of the cross of Christ. Neither the pitchers, the lamps or the trumpets, or even the men, had any power to subdue the mighty hosts that were encamped against them. The

blowing of the trumpets, the breaking of the pitchers, the shining of the lamps, and the crying, "The sword of the Lord and of Gideon," all would have been ineffectual, had not God himself directed the whole matter. It was at God's appointed time and in his own way that this great army was to be put to flight, pursued and destroyed. How often, when Zion appears to languish, and the enemy is spread out like grasshoppers, filling the whole land, that unbelief suggests, "The Lord has forgotten to be gracious," and scoffers say, "He is slack concerning his promises," and our trembling hearts inquire, "By whom shall Jacob rise, for he is small?" But we forget that the battle is the Lord's; and when we are made to triumph it will always be in such a way as shall constrain us to say, "Thanks be unto God, who giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

See the well-drilled chosen handful of men, receiving from God their instructions through Gideon; how very important that they receive every word of the instruction, and obey to the very letter. "Look on me," said Gideon. Should they for a moment turn their eyes from Gideon, they would be terrified at the sight of their enemies, and if they looked at their own feeble numbers, or to their lamps in empty earthen vessels, the sight would be appalling; but as the eye of the servant is to his master, they were commanded to look alone to their leader, and away from everything else. So we find it enjoined on all the saints to be "Looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith." "Behold, when I come to the outside of the camp it shall be that as I do, so shall ye do. When I blow with a trumpet, I and all that are with me, then blow ye the trumpets on every side of the camp, and say, The sword of the Lord and of Gideon."

To-day hosts of earth and hell are encamped against the little flock of our Immanuel; their number is like the

sand for multitude, their implements and munitions of war are cruel and deadly, embracing all that earth and hell can supply, and they defiantly challenge the armies of the living God, saying, Who is like unto the beast? Who is able to make war with him? And their mouth is open in blasphemy against God, to blaspheme his name and his tabernacle, and them that dwell in heaven. "And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." — Rev. xiii. Like "the lily among thorns, and as the apple tree among the trees of the wood," the little flock, unto whom it is the Father's good pleasure to give the kingdom, the church of God is seen. "And I looked, and lo, a Lamb stood on the Mount Zion, and with him a hundred and forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written upon their forehead." "And I saw as it were a sea of glass mingled with fire; and them that had gotten the victory over the beast, and over his image, and over his mark, and over the number of his name, stand on the sea of glass, having the harps of God, And they sing the song of Moses, the servant of God, and the song of the Lamb, saying, Great and marvelous are thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are thy ways, thou King of saints." — Rev. xiv. 1, and xv. 2, 3.

When Gideon required encouragement to allay his fears and inspire him with courage, God sent him to listen to a dream related by a Midianite, and interpreted by his fellow in the camp. But how simple the dream. The dreamer did not relate that he saw in his dream the bright artillery of heaven displayed, and the bolts of vengeance hurled in a storm of awful wrath, no fearful display of superior numbers, or of terrible death-dealing engines of warfare; but a simple, harmless cake of barley bread, which a hungry soldier might welcome with joy; but in the

interpretation it was portentous of evil to their hosts: it tumbled into the camp, and came into a tent and smote it that it fell, and overturned it, that it laid along. But the interpreter saw in the ominous cake the sword of Gideon and Midian's discomfiture. The little flock of Jesus are looked upon by their proud and scornful enemies now with as little dread as they would feel at the sight of a barley cake; but God has said, "Not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts."

The wisdom of men would suppose the army of the Lord should be greatly augmented, so as to be able to vie with the numerous forces of the enemy; but God in his wisdom caused the number, small as it was, to be reduced from thirty-two thousand to three hundred men, lest they should say, "Mine one hand hath saved me," and thus rob him of the glory of their salvation. So men are now beating up for volunteers to make what they call the Lord's army strong enough to evangelize the heathen and convert the world; but all their volunteer recruits will be dismissed and sent home, like the surplus men of Gideon, before the final triumph shall be accomplished, and the naked arm of God, uncovered by human aid or instrumentalities, shall be made bare in the eyes of all the nations, and all the ends of the earth shall see the salvation of our God. — Isa. lii. 10.

(Editorial by Elder Gilbert Beebe, June 1, 1876.)

OBITUARIES

MRS. GRACIE PRICE NEWNAM

Sister Newnam, aged 65 years, passed away June 8, 1965. A native of Henry County, Virginia, she was married to Mr. Joe Price of Reidsville, North Carolina, on February 7, 1915. Two daughters to this union survive: Mrs. Carl Hurst and Mrs. Elwood King, both of Reidsville. Mr. Price died February 19, 1959.

She united with the Reidsville Primitive Baptist Church in November 1935, and was baptized by Elder O. J. Denny who was pastor at that time. On March 24, 1960, she united

in marriage with Brother J. Edgar Newnam of the Dan River Primitive Baptist Church. Sister Newnam showed her faith by her works. She was interested in the welfare of the church of her membership, and was always present when meeting times came, and was a regular attendant at meetings among other churches of like faith.

The church at Reidsville, in deep sadness, mourns the passing of Sister Newnam, and extends sympathy to her family and many friends. But David, in the 116th Psalm, verse 15, comes to our relief in such cases: "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints."

Other survivors of Sister Newnam are a sister, Mrs. Allen Price; a brother, Walter Turner, both of Reidsville; two half sisters, Mrs. Nina Bivens, of Reidsville, and Mrs. Channing Post, Tampa, Florida; two half brothers, L. H. Turner, Gulf Breeze, Florida; and J. A. Turner, Greensboro, North Carolina; and her bereaved husband, Brother J. Edgar Newnam.

Her funeral was conducted at the Reidsville Primitive Baptist Church by her pastor, Elder D. V. Spangler, and Elder W. C. King. She was laid to rest in Greenview Cemetery to await the second coming of the Lord.

Written at the request of the church of her membership.

Approved at the August 1965, meeting of the Reidsville Primitive Baptist Church. A copy is for the family of Sister Newnam, a copy for publication in the *Signs of the Times*, and a copy for our church records.

M. T. Smith, Acting Church Clerk

JOSEPH W. DUNN

God in his infinite wisdom saw fit to remove from our midst another one of our beloved members, Brother Joe Dunn, who after several years of declining health passed away in the Calhoun County Hospital, Hampton, Arkansas, July 14, 1964, at the age of almost 78 years. He was a native of Calhoun County, Arkansas.

He was married to Ruth Ella Watson January 6, 1909, at the home of her father, the late T. J. Watson. Sister Dunn preceded him in death. To this union was born one daughter, Mrs. Avris Shook, and three sons: Claude Dunn, Cecil Dunn and Cornelius Dunn, all of Tinsman, Arkansas. Also, brother Dunn had seven grandchildren and three great grandchildren.

Brother Dunn and Sister Dunn joined the Pilgrim's Rest Primitive Baptist Church, Fordyce, Arkansas, August 19, 1939, and were baptized the following day by Elder J. T. Everitt. A few years later the church at White

Water was reorganized and they called for their letters and became charter members of said church. Elder W. W. Taylor was called as the first pastor.

Brother Dunn attended his meetings as long and as regular as his health would permit. He was a devoted companion, a loving father, and a meek and humble brother in Christ. We have lost a precious brother but feel that our loss is his eternal gain.

Funeral services were conducted at White Water Church by his pastor, Elder W. A. Speer, and Elder J. T. Everitt, and his body was laid to rest in the Church Cemetery to await the final resurrection.

Written by, I hope, a brother in Christ.

Ross Watson

RUTH ELLA (WATSON) DUNN

Sister Dunn was born August 10, 1886, and passed away in her home from a heart attack July 16, 1962, making her stay here on earth almost 76 years. She was united in marriage to Joseph W. Dunn January 6, 1909, and to this union was born one daughter, Mrs. Avris Shook, and three sons: Claude Dunn, Cecil Dunn and Cornelius Dunn, all of Tinsman, Arkansas. Also, Sister Dunn had six grandchildren and three great grandchildren. Sister Dunn and her husband joined the Pilgrim's Rest Primitive Baptist Church, Fordyce, Arkansas, August 19, 1939, and later moving her membership to White Water Church near Tinsman, Arkansas, becoming a charter member of her home church after its reorganization. Elder W. W. Taylor was called as the pastor.

Sister Dunn was a wonderful person who suffered many heartaches, but was always able to meet anyone with a lovely smile and a cheerful countenance. She was devoted to her family and to her church. She will be greatly missed in her community, but we trust that our loss is her eternal gain. May we bow in humble submission to our God who doeth all things after the council of his own will. May he comfort and sustain the bereaved family.

Her funeral was conducted July 17, 1962, by Elder W. A. Speer, her pastor, and Elder J. T. Everitt, and interment was in the Watson Cemetery at her home Church, near Tinsman, Arkansas.

Written by her cousin, and I hope a brother in Christ.

Ross Watson

MRS. SARAH E. DeHART

Mrs. Sarah E. DeHart was born April 14, 1883, and departed this life July 18, 1965.

Sister DeHart was married to Darius I. DeHart who departed this life in 1915; and

to this union were born two sons and one daughter: Herman I. DeHart, Noel E. DeHart and Mildred F. DeHart who survive. There is one grandson who survives.

She united with the Charity Church of the Smith River Association of Virginia in 1920, and was baptized by the late Elder J. D. Cockram.

Sister DeHart had lived for the past 32 years in Philadelphia, Pa. with her son Noel and daughter Mildred who were so faithful to her in taking care of her during the years of her illness. They were also very good to her in taking her to the meetings of her faith and order, where she enjoyed so much meeting the brethren and friends she loved so dearly; and to listen to the doctrine preached that she believed. She attended the meetings as long as her health would permit. Her walk in life spoke for itself of her belief in the grace and mercy of her God.

The writer had visited her in her home and will remember for a long time that look of faith in her face, and her hope for a better land beyond the cares of this world.

Funeral services were conducted by the writer in the Kirk and Nice Funeral Home in Philadelphia, Pa., on July 21, 1965, and she was laid to rest in the Forest Hills Memorial Park. May it please the Lord to reconcile the children, and all who knew and loved her so dearly, to her passing, and to feel that their loss is her eternal gain, is the prayer of the writer.

Elder Arthur R. Warren

SISTER ELIZABETH SLAUSON

Sister Elizabeth Slauson, beloved wife of Elder Amasa J. Slauson and daughter of the late Almira and Morrison Secor, both faithful members of Olive and Hurley Church, departed this life at their home in Kingston, New York, on June 20, 1965.

She was 86 years of age and had been a very faithful member of the Olive and Hurley Church for over 60 years, one that was deeply led and of good report within and without the church, a gracious sister who kept from being overcome by evil but who overcame evil with good.

In November, 1931 she became the second wife of Brother Amasa J. Slauson, who several years later was ordained to the ministry and she proved to be an excellent companion and helpmate, who treated his children and grandchildren with love and kindness as though they were her very own, and they, during her long sickness of over seven years, showed by their constant thoughtfulness and kindness that her love and esteem were fully reciprocated. She was step-mother to Mrs. Howard Green, Mrs. Edwin Kittle and Howard Sla-

son, also aunt to Mrs. Elvin Benson whom she raised from a child and loved. She is also survived by eight grandchildren and eleven great grandchildren of Elder Slauson's.

The funeral service was held on Wednesday, June 23, at the Olive and Hurley meeting-house, where she had worshipped for so many years, and where her husband is pastor. Elder W. D. Griffin, of Welsh Tract, and the writer officiated. Elder Griffin spoke to the comfort and edification of those present from Acts 17:28 and Ephesians 2:1. The writer read two of her favorite hymns, "Death is no more a frightful foe," and "My dearest friends in bonds of love," and spoke from Philippians 1:21.

Her many years of sickness and suffering made her ardently long for that rest that remained to the people of God. Two days before she died she told her dear husband that the Lord had really made it known to her that she was going home. She asked to see the girls whom she so dearly loved and early the next morning she went to be forever with the Lord.

May God, who doeth all things well, bless her companion and the others she so dearly loved with strength for their day, and as they remember the love and sweet fellowship they enjoyed, cause them to know assuredly that it is an earnest of that which is to come, into which their loved one has entered. Her body was laid to rest in the Margaretville, New York Cemetery, to await the second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, "Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself."

Elder George Ruston

SISTER ETHEL COVINGTON

Sister Ethel Covington was born July 12, 1809, and died August 13, 1965. She was the daughter of the late Joshua and Sister Annie Powell, and widow of Charles N. Covington. She is survived by one son C. Newton Covington, one daughter Mrs. Guy Banks, one brother Herman Powell and one sister Mrs. Louis Richardson, all of Salisbury, Md.

Sister Covington was a devoted wife and mother and very good friend, always putting the needs and comforts of others before hers, even to the impairment of her own health.

She asked for a home with the Nassango Church and was baptized by the Pastor Elder David Spangler.

We had many lovely talks together. She had for many years enjoyed attending the meetings and hearing the preaching but said after she came to the church she could not

find words to express how much the fellowship and the feeling of having a home with these dear ones meant to her. She was faithful to attend the meetings not only of Nas-sango but anywhere she had a way to go as long as she was able.

We shall miss her sweet smile and lovely conversation as we have these long months of her illness but feel our loss is her eternal gain.

In the absence of her pastor her funeral was conducted by Elder Arthur Warren in the Salisbury Old School Baptist Meeting House, and interment in Parson Cemetery, Salisbury, Md.

Written by one who loved her,
Ethel Holloway

MRS. R. W. RHODES

Mrs. R. W. Rhodes was born on February 2, 1895, and departed this life August 27, 1965.

Surviving are her husband, Elder R. W. Rhodes; three sons, Joe W. Rhodes of Alexandria, La., Edward L. Rhodes of Little Rock, Ark., and Virgil Rhodes of Spearsville, La.; six daughters, Mrs. Mable R. Welch of Houston, Texas, Mrs. Dee Holloway of Strong, Ark., and Mrs. Blanche Rockett, Mrs. Coy Bennett, Mrs. Ralph Bennett, and Mrs. Clyde Barron, all of Spearsville, La.; two brothers, two sisters, 26 grandchildren and six great grandchildren.

Elder and Mrs. Rhodes were married on December 10, 1910. She joined the Missionary Baptists in early life, but showed a change in belief around 1920-1923, because she stopped going to the church where her membership was. She mentioned to Elder Rhodes that she did not have any desire to go; and she has mentioned to the writer that her heart was with the Primitive Baptists.

She made the Old Baptists feel welcome in her home. This was a very valuable blessing to her husband, Elder R. W. Rhodes.

The brethren around here mourn with Elder Rhodes. We pray that God will enable Brother Rhodes to be reconciled to His will, and enable him to press on for the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus.

Her funeral was conducted by the writer assisted by Mr. Roy Gardner, Elder W. W. Taylor and Elder D. E. Turner, at New Hope Primitive Baptist Church near Spearsville, La. Her body was laid to rest at the cemetery by the church.

W. W. Hudson, Jr.

MRS. DOVIE CRAWFORD

Mrs. Dovie Crawford was born August 18, 1896, and departed this life on September 3,

1965. Survivors include her husband, L. R. Crawford; seven sons, Alfred, Doyle, Sam and Glendon, Crawford, all of Abilene, Texas; Rufus Crawford of Hope, Arkansas, Lester Crawford of New Orleans, La.; and Dawson Crawford of Dallas, Texas; and two daughters, Mrs. Marshall Summers of Seminole, Texas, and Mrs. Ralph Faine of Memphis, Tenn. Surviving also are twenty-one grandchildren, and five great grandchildren.

She joined the "Limited" Primitive Baptists earlier in life, but she had been attending New Hope Primitive Baptist Church near Patmos, Arkansas, for the past several years. The writer has detected that Mrs. Crawford's countenance showed that she believed in an allwise God who has determined and purposed all things, and that man does not earn his blessings in this life by any of his own deeds, but that they rest upon the free grace of God, and that all of our blessings were determined beforehand by this Great God. Her expression also showed that she rejoiced in the wonderful subject of the Resurrection of the Body.

Her funeral was conducted by the writer at Shover Springs M. Baptist Church near Hope, Arkansas.

W. W. Hudson, Jr.

MRS. LEROR C. ALBRITTON

Mrs. Leror Albritton was born in Dateville, Alabama, on April 1, 1891, and departed this life on August 29, 1965. On October 1, 1911, she was united in marriage to Joseph W. Albritton. Brother Albritton departed on November 26, 1948.

Sister Albritton united with Liberty Hill Primitive Baptist Church (near Farmerville, La.) around 1920. (The church records were burned in 1945.) She was blessed to attend the Church regularly, and now will be missed by Liberty Hill brethren. The writer has reasons to believe that Sister Albritton was firm both in doctrine and order, and considered her "strong in the faith".

She is survived by her mother, Mrs. Mary L. Cartlidge of Rayville, La.; five sons, William A., of Downsville, La.; Henry, Cecil and Marvin, all of Farmerville, La.; and James of Amarillo, Texas; two daughters, Mrs. Lettie Fellows of Dryden, New York, and Mrs. Leror Iles of Kinder, La.; and by six brothers and three sisters, 18 grandchildren and two great grandchildren.

Her funeral was conducted by the writer and assisted by Elder R. W. Rhodes, at Liberty Hill Church. Her body was laid to rest at the cemetery by the church to await the glorious resurrection.

W. W. Hudson, Jr.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

'The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon'

VOL. 133

DANVILLE, VA., DECEMBER, 1965

NO. 12

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 12/65
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

CHRIST THE SUN OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

(Malachi 4:2)

When the Sun of righteousness arises
With healing in His wings,
How divinely soothing is the balm,
Which He with Him brings.

Happiness divine He doth graciously
Upon His saints bestow,
And at last they will surely be
Secure from every foe.

His felt presence they much desire,
In this vale of tears,
For in this world they are subject
To many doubts and fears.

But in the regions of sacred bliss,
Doubts and fears will be o'er,
And by the action of the Lord,
Tears will be no more.

For He will wipe away all tears,
As in the Scriptures told;
Supremely happy Christ's will be
While His glory they behold.

His beauty they will ever adore,
And never weary grow;
Their toiling will all be o'er,
Eternal rest to know.

Indeed, sweet will be the rest
That remaineth to the weary,
When freed from sin and sorrow,
And all that maketh dreary.

With the glorified saints above,
May we find that rest,
And by the Sun of righteousness,
Be for ever blest.

C. W. Vass
Elizabeth City, North Carolina

SERMON BY ELDER J. P. HELMS
AT THE
PIGG RIVER ASSOCIATION
1965

Again the Pigg River Association has met according to appointment. By rotation I stand before you for the purpose of trying to introduce by what is known as the Introductory Sermon. No man ever stood before you less qualified for this task than I. I realize to some measure that this is the last time I shall ever have the privilege of addressing you in this capacity. During the association here in Rocky Mount seventeen or eighteen years ago, my mother passed away on Friday. I have been blessed to attend all the associations that have been held with this church.

My desire is, above everything else, I have your prayers that God might bless me to proclaim the riches of His grace as I feel it was proclaimed when this association was organized at Little Creek Church in the year 1825.

I have been trying to think of something that I might read to you this morning. Recently I heard a man read a portion of the 4th chapter of Paul's letter to the church at Rome, and who began speaking by saying that he wanted to tell us what God would do, and what he would not do. That amazed me, because I have been made to believe, and I desire to earnestly contend for what *God has done*; and to affirm that what He has done, *is done forever*.

Last Sunday afternoon our present moderator, Elder Turner, was blessed to preach, and he spoke of one thing that has rested somewhat on my mind; and I will turn to the 5th chapter of Romans, and read one verse: "There-

fore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." If I could be blessed to affirm and to bear record of this eternal truth, I would be blessed of the Lord of heaven and earth, to proclaim the riches of what He has done for his people.

The world is crying what He will do, if we will let him. But I want to lift up my voice here at the opening session of the old Pigg River Association, concerning what He has done — not what He will do, but what he has done for poor, unworthy worms of the dust. Here stands a living witness of his amazing mercy, because if justice had been dealt out upon me, I would not be here on this occasion.

In my early days in the ministry I remember something in particular in reference to this scripture. I had found where it reads, "Being justified by his blood," and I thought the Lord blessed me in a little measure, to preach the atoning blood of Christ for his people. The following week something attracted my attention and I turned to this scripture I have read; and it didn't read to suit me. I wanted to punctuate it differently, for this wouldn't do; but I found out soon that I was the one that needed punctuating, and not the scripture.

I have read to you, "Therefore being justified by faith." We might pause, and ask, How far reaching is that? Farther than ever the tongue of an individual will be able to tell; farther than the mind of an individual sinner will ever be blessed to fathom. Justification is a doctrine that belongs only to God's humble poor. You know that the head of the government in the State of Virginia, or our national government, can pardon a criminal, and the criminal will come home free from the law; but, let him be a rogue or a murderer, the stain of that thing is in him, for he comes home a pardoned rogue or murderer. But here is something that makes one as clean as though nothing had ever stained him. In other words, something

that has cleansed us entirely, and brings us into a wonderful condition. I confess that I can only say I hope that He was born for me; I can only say that I hope He lived for me; I can only say that I hope he died for me — and not only died for me, but arose for me. And from time to time over a long period, he has visited me, and assured me that he had finished the work he came to do; and that when he bowed his head upon the cross and said, "It is finished," salvation in its entirety for the here and hereafter, was wrought out for everyone of his children. This is so far reaching that it embraces all of his children whether infants or aged, whether in the Old School Baptist Church or some other denomination: all of his children are embraced in it.

What is under consideration when the word *Faith* is used? I know it is often spoken of as something we can cultivate, something we can add to, or lose, as though it were a commodity. But let me assure you that if you had all the wealth in the universe you couldn't buy enough faith to put out a chigger's eye: and you know how much that would be.

What is faith? The best definition I have ever found, is contained in this Scripture, "Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen;" and then tells the effect of faith when it is granted to an individual. I tell you that it will make him believe in God. By faith the first man that ever fell under the sentence of death at the hands of his brother, offered a more acceptable sacrifice than his brother. Why? it says, by faith. How did Abraham believe God? by faith. That faith that is once delivered to the saints, is not offered but given you: When the Babe was laid in the manger, there was the gift of God in its entirety. Paul said in the 4th chapter of Romans, "Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed." It is impossible to find hope

where there is no faith. If we have faith, the Lord has us; we haven't got him.

I want to talk to you about something we don't get ourselves. Long ago a colored man said, "If you can get something, you can also lose it." So I want to tell you that my hope is that the author and finisher of faith, the first and the last, the Alpha and Omega found me, (not that he did not know where I was), as he did one of old, in a waste howling wilderness, and brought me by his own hand; brought me to the place I was made to cry unto him, because all of my own works had failed. And I was made to know that faith is the gift of God in its entirety. No wonder the Apostle Paul, in bearing testimony here and there, always adds it to grace: By grace through faith. It is impossible to have one if the other isn't there, for every gift, every good gift, every perfect gift comes down from above in the person of the Lord of glory; and he takes up his abode in your heart. He illuminates in such a way that he gives you eyes to see, and a heart to understand. Don't tell me you have to believe to have faith, for belief is the effect of faith; and not the cause of it, by any means. Faith is the gift of God, it is not of works lest any man should boast. This certainly ought to set and seal all the work mongers in the universe.

I might say here that in my first going to the association as a messenger from old Republican Church, there were between twelve and thirteen hundred members of this association; now there are not quite eight hundred. What took place? Have the witnesses that God chose to stand and bear record failed? No! for there is no failure with Him. God's purpose is being carried out in this association, as it is everywhere. Sometimes I have been made to think, and to point my finger at myself, and say, You have failed. Yes, I admit I am a failure, but I am so thankful that I can tell you of one that never has,

and can never fail; and that one is the author and finisher of every bit of faith that has been or ever will be here upon the earth.

The God that created the universe, who was made manifest and laid in a manger, when it was said to those on the hill that night, "This shall be a sign unto you, you will find him wrapped in swaddling clothes, laid in a manger," in him was all the gift that God had ever promised throughout all ages to his people. What more do we need today, than Him? He is the only one that ever said he would bring his children from the North, and say to the South keep not back; and that he would bring his sons and daughters from afar, even from the ends of the earth.

I know I have been among you for a long time. When I was ordained there were seventeen Elders above me on the list, and now I am at the head of the list — seventeen have gone on before; and soon according to nature I will be called to quit the walks of men. But the outstanding thing among our people has always been, and will always be contained in the language of Revelation, "The Lord omnipotent reigneth." Not only does he reign over this or that, he reigns and rules over all things that are. And sometimes I can bear record, because I am given an eye to behold it: that not a leaf has ever quivered, not one has ever fallen that isn't in keeping with and according to the eternal will of God. God has appointed the coming of every one of his children into the kingdom, for there is only one way to come, and that is by the new birth: not by being born naturally, for that which is of the flesh is flesh, and that which is of the Spirit is spirit.

"Being justified." This man that stands before you has a hope that he is justified fully from everything that ever has, or ever can come against him. In the 8th chapter of Romans it is written, "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect; it is God that

justifieth." Who, therefore, can bring any charge before the court of heaven against you. God doesn't look at you as men: my hope is that he looks at me through the Lord Jesus Christ. All of my righteousness: every bit that I can lay claim to as mine, is as filthy rags. Unless our righteousness exceeds the righteousness of the hypocrites and Pharisees, we are gone. How then are we to escape? By faith: "Therefore being justified by faith." Justified before whom? before God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Doesn't he hold everything in his own hands? Is there anything you can think of that is not under his control? Has he ever been surprised? Has he ever come short one iota of his eternal will being done? I feel that if anything has been wrought in me, it is, That God has all the power there is in his own hands. Don't undertake to tell me to fear the Devil — I have long since learned that he doesn't hold the keys to his own kingdom: he can't do anything without the God of heaven and earth. If it is according to God's will, it is going to be done; and if it is not according to his will, it won't be done.

So Jesus came, born of a woman according to the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God. It was according to God's will that he was crucified: he was crucified between two thieves, and gave up the ghost. He was laid in the tomb three days and nights, all according to the counsel of a covenant keeping God. Don't say that man had anything to do with it. We see a movement in Rome, trying to free those from the charge of crucifying the Lord of Glory, as though man was the author of it. But I want to tell you that, regardless of what you may think or say, all of it was according to the eternal will of God. Without his crucifixion, without his death and resurrection, where would you and I be? By him we live, and by faith stand justified before God.

It is more than I can understand; and

I go with my head bowed down most of the time: if I could only know, — if I could have more evidence, has been my cry all these years. I realize that I soon must pass into the great beyond with a little hope which I received long ago in a cabin close to the Town of Rocky Mount. I am resting and abiding upon this one thing: that He came to me where I was. I had finished my work — all of it, for I had come to the place where there was no more praying, no more promises — I had failed in everything. I have tried again and again to tell about it; and I think of what my old grandfather, in his last hours, told me: "I must go into the great beyond with a little hope, which sometime I have been ashamed to tell." Here stands another one who must go and face his Maker, with the hope that the Lord of Glory suffered for me — fulfilled every law and all of its demands for me in such a wonderful way, that I stand today, (not will be tomorrow; but now,) justified by faith; so that in the sight of God I stand as pure and holy (not in the flesh, but) in the Spirit as the God of heaven is. Can you receive that? Oh, I know your groans, I know your fears: I know all about them; but nevertheless when we can see Jesus, we see him making an offering for all of our sins, not part of them: putting them away by his own death upon the cross; and being raised for our justification, assures us that our hope is not in vain. God has appointed so many hills for us to climb, so many ravines for us to go into the depths, but in the end the glory land is awaiting for you — already prepared.

So away with the idea of telling what God will do and what he won't do. I want to tell you that everything is made ready for you; and you with all of your vileness according to your own judgment, will find where Paul gloried in suffering persecutions: and doubts and fears were his portion. Yet in spite of all that, he was justified fully and

freely: so he stands justified before God. So, Old School Baptists, in spite of all that you are surrounded with, in spite of all that you may think or do, if God is for you, nothing can be against you.

Last Sunday Elder Turner was blessed to bring a message to me that lifted me clear up, and made me to realize in a measure, that in spite of all that I am, God loved me, and gave himself for me. He didn't send anybody else — he came himself in the person of his Son: by whom we stand justified — not tomorrow, not some day that is coming, but justified now freely from all sin and iniquity.

If we could only be given to realize this eternal truth, the nights wouldn't be so long sometimes: I wouldn't have to roll and tumble so much; nevertheless you many rest assured that your salvation and everything is prepared for you. Sometimes we can get a little comfort out of the scripture where He said, "Come ye blessed of my Father inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

So God has made everything ready for you; and in all you are doing here, he is making you ready for it. I often try to tell Old School Baptists what is expected of them. This grace, this faith given you does not make you a boastful character of what you have done; never makes you boast of anything you have ever done or thought of in your life. But when we are given to think aright, we cry, "Glory to God in the highest." Yes, we glory in God, and we are glorified in him; for whom he did predestinate, all them he called; and whom he called he justified; and whom he justified he glorified. "What shall we then say to these things, if God be for us who can be against us."

Let it be remembered by everyone of you, that I stand in your presence, the presence of deacons and elders, and plead my inability, but tell you that God is able, not to do something, but has done it: has finished it, and pre-

pared heaven with all of its glory for you — and is preparing you for it day after day. Oh, if I could preach like I thought I had learned almost fifty years ago, I would be something; but instead of getting bigger, I am shrinking up; instead of knowing more, I tell you ministers I know less than I knew long ago. The growth in grace and knowledge of the truth, brethren, never has exalted one to know more than the least of you, but it brings us all down on one level. I stand before you trying to preach to you the riches of God's grace, when I feel deeply that you know more about it than I do.

I am going to give way here, but I would leave this thought with you: God is not going to do anything more for one of his children. When he yielded up the ghost upon the cross, and said, "It is finished," the atonement was made; and when he arose from the dead, he sealed it. Not only did he seal it, but he is attending to his own affairs today: There is not a home in the mountains of Franklin County that he is ashamed to come to, or ashamed to introduce himself to you and make you know what a vile wretch you are — and what a glorious Saviour he is. How well I know this! I could go now, though the cabin is gone, to the very spot — if I could only feel what I felt that day, and hear what I heard that day, there wouldn't be so much doubt with me: I heard a voice, and it affirmed that He created heaven and earth; and that He was my Saviour. There was life in that word — there was power in it; and for a little while there was no doubt in me.

But it wasn't long before something else came: doubts arose; and doubts have been my portion, it seems, all these years. But I affirm to you, children of the most high God, that the sacrifice was made long ago: you don't have to make it; you don't have to help. It is not by a little grace and a little works: it is either all grace, all grace by faith, or there is none.

Where is He now? He is seated at the right hand of God. What is He doing now? He is making intercession for us. Oh, how often I feel the need of his intercession: He still stands between us and the judgment, the righteous judgment of God; He stands between Him and us, and nothing is ever charged against us.

(The above was the Introductory Sermon by Elder J. P. Helms at the Pigg River Association, held with the church at Rocky Mount Virginia, in August, 1965. It was recorded, and is edited for publication.

"By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God," is what the brethren of the churches of this association have believed from the beginning; and it was good to hear the oldest Elder among them confirming that they still believed the same things now — after one hundred and forty years. Elder Helms relates some of his experiences in being brought into the knowledge and love of the truth. — J. D. W.)

(Since the above was prepared for publication, Elder Helms has been called home, at the age of eighty-five. An obituary will be prepared soon. — J. D. W.)

CIRCULAR LETTER

The Lexington-Roxbury Old School Baptist Association in session with the Olive and Hurley Church at Halcottsville, Delaware County, New York, Wednesday and Thursday, September 15 and 16, 1965, sends love, fellowship, and greetings to the several churches and associations with which we correspond.

Dear Brethren in the Lord;

We are faced with the duty of writing a Circular Letter to brethren who are vitally interested in a doctrine which is ageless and extends from eternity unto eternity. This doctrine serves as a guide in our journey through this wilderness world. As we attempt to write we feel our own shortcomings and inability to write of ourselves. We are an empty vessel, and sinful flesh cannot bring honor to God.

The third Chapter of Ecclesiastes first verse says "To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under heaven." If this isn't predestination, then what is it? God had a way of salvation laid out for His people before the foundation of the world; not a plan as one may plan something, but never get around to do it. God laid out the way for all things from the beginning of time until the end. This is clearly stated in Ephesians first chapter, verses 3 to 6.

According to Genesis first chapter God created the heaven and earth on the first day, and on the sixth day He created man in His own image, male and female. Adam was formed from the dust of the earth and God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam and He took a rib from Adam's side to make woman, who should be the mother of all mankind.

There are two generations mentioned in the Bible. The first the generation of Adam. The second the generation of Jesus Christ. Jesus' side was pierced by the cruel spear of a Roman soldier and from it flowed blood and water. The blood and water is the spiritual life of His people, "But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all." This is so clearly stated in Galatians 4th chapter, verses 26 to 31. Jesus said unto His disciples in St. Mark 14, verse 24, "This is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many." In 1st John chapter 1, verse 7, we read: "But if we walk in the light as he is the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin."

"Black, I to the fountain fly;
Wash me, Saviour, or I die!"

When we first come to the church, there is an awakening to God's word, after, in the fullness of time, we have had a new birth to the generation of Jesus Christ.

We (those of us preordained to be

His) have weak hands and feeble knees. The church of the Lord Jesus Christ shelters and nourishes us, while we grow stronger on the spiritual food provided by her husband the Lord Jesus Christ. We feed, as newborn babes, and desire the sincere milk of this word, that we may grow thereby; "If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious." (1st Peter 2nd chapter, verses 2 and 3).

As we grow in spiritual strength we find that there is no peace with ourselves. True we have periods of joy. We are carried up to the mountain top in spiritual joy, and view some of the wonders of God's graciousness to His people; and are made to sing:

"Amazing grace! (how sweet the sound)
That saved a wretch like me;
I once was lost, but now am found;
Was blind, but now I see."

Then the page is turned and we see our vile sinful selves and we sing:

"O Lord! how vile am I;
Unholy and unclean!
How can I dare to venture nigh,
With such a load of sin!"

Our warfare with the man of this world, (for he had first abode in this earthly house,) continues, for the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to pulling down of strongholds; (2nd Corinthians 10th chapter, 4th verse). We find we are fighting powers and principalities; not flesh and blood.

Then we find ourselves down in the valley beset by Satan. Satan never takes a vacation. He is ever out to tempt God's people. He follows right at our heels, dogging our footsteps, while in the valley of tribulation. God has set Satan's bounds and he can go only so far. We feel shut up spiritually and cannot bring forth, and go along crying to the Lord for mercy and sustaining grace. We pray to God to remove our stony heart and give us a heart of flesh to hear the gospel with a hearing ear and an understanding heart. God's

word is a heart warming doctrine to His people. For if preaching doesn't warm the heart we get very little spiritual enjoyment from it.

We know not how long we have in our sojourn here. As we travel on our way we meet brethren of like precious faith. We are happy to have them with us on our journey. As we go along we share our spiritual thoughts and hopes, trials and tribulations, leaning with one another on the staff of His promises and sustaining love through Christ our Lord, for He it is that sustains us all. We each bear one another's burdens. The older fellow travelers are an encouragement, and examples for us. They are fathers and mothers in Israel to the younger ones that have just come into the fold. They point the way and warn of pitfalls, and admonish us when we err. We have these wonderful brethren and sisters in the faith for a time, then we reach the point in our travels where they must leave us and go to that place of rest and be with the Lord forevermore. They have reached their destination in this worldly travel. We must continue on, however, and mourn our loss of them. We feel they are much better off, having completed their sojourn in this veil of tears, but miss their companionship and heart-felt love we had for each other in Christ Jesus. We continue on our way meeting new brethren, but still remembering the ones who have gone on. God's chosen ones travel on beset on all sides by pitfalls and stony places, and the wiles of Satan, but God's people have been circumcised from vain and worldly things.

We pray for strength to be kept in the strait and narrow way, "Because strait is the gate and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it." (Matthew 7th chapter, 14th verse.)

As Adam had a garden provided for him in Eden so God has provided a garden of holiness for His people in the generation of Jesus Christ. In the Song

of Solomon Chapter 5, first verse, we read, "I am come into my garden, my sister, my spouse: I have gathered my myrrh with my spice; I have eaten my honeycomb with my milk: eat, O friends; drink, yea drink abundantly, O beloved." The older the Lord's people get the more they begin to bear evidence of a spiritual fruit as recorded in the 4th chapter of Solomon's Song 16th verse, which reads, "Awake, O north wind; and come thou south; blow upon my garden, that the spices thereof may flow out. Let my beloved come into his garden, and eat his pleasant fruits." This chilly north wind makes God's people cling closer to the fold and have no interest in this sinful world.

When we arrive at our destination, and we have finished our travel in this world, we can truly feel that, "He hath made everything beautiful in his time: also he hath set the world in their heart, so that no man can find out the work that God maketh from beginning to the end." (Ecclesiastes chapter 3, verse 11.) God has put the world in the heart of the first generation of the first Adam. And none, but those who are called by grace have a desire to seek and find out the work that God maketh from beginning to end.

"He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come Lord Jesus."

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

(Written by Woodrow W. Bellinger.)

P. O. Box 313,
Bryson City, N. C.

Dear Editors of the *Signs*:

I enclose check to renew my subscription to the *Signs of the Times*; and a two year subscription as shown.

I enjoy reading the *Signs* very much, and the doctrine it stands for. I believe in the predestination of all things, and an all-wise and all-powerful God, who works all things after his own will.

I do not get to attend church very much, since I live too far from a church to attend very often. So the *Signs* is the most preaching I get, and I enjoy it very much.

May the Lord bless you in your work. I believe I know I love the brethren, and that I am one of the least, if one at all.

H. D. Jacks

PSALM 85:10

"Mercy and truth are met together; righteousness and peace have kissed each other."

The prophets of old were blessed to write of events which would take place in the future. The language used is written as though the events were in the present time. Notice Isaiah 9:6: "For unto us a child *is* born, unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." The language in this text is as though it were both present and future.

In the mind and purpose of God, the Salvation of His people has always been sure and secure; and the building was complete even before the foundation was laid. In the mind and purpose of God, the Church has always been glorious, spotless, undefiled, etc. even before it was in existence. "and in thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them." (Psalms 139:16) "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." (2 Tim. 1:9) We may say that before the world began God had a purpose to save His people. Therefore in the mind and purpose of God, His people were saved before they were in existence.

In due time this Salvation is made manifest to God's people. In due time they are born into this world and travel the path that is laid out for them. In other words, things are made manifest in due time which God has purposed even before the foundation of the world. God is not surprised at events which are presently taking place, because He has always known and purposed all things. "The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be: and that which is done is that which shall be done; and there is no new thing under the sun." (Ecc. 1:9) "That which hath been is now and that which is to be hath already been; and God requireth that which is past." (Ecc. 3:15) ". . . I am God, and there is none like me, Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the *things that are not yet done*, saying My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure: calling a ravenous bird from the east, the man that executeth my counsel from a far country: yea, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass; I have purposed it, I will also do it." (Isaiah 46:9-11)

As we think of the meeting together of mercy and truth, we think of the meeting together of mercy and justice. God is an holy, righteous, and just God. He is the lawgiver. This law is holy, and it was broken. The penalty of this broken law is death. "Sin is the transgression of the law." (1 John 3:4) "The wages of sin is death." (Rom. 6:23)

"And the Lord God commanded the man, saying of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof *thou shalt surely die*." (Genesis 2:16-17) Adam stood as the federal head of the human race. When this law was broken, the death sentence passed upon mankind. (see Rom. 5:12) In other words, we all sinned in Adam. We were not in existence, but our life was in Adam.

As Adam died, the whole human race died. The justice of God demanded perfection. The law must be kept to a jot and tittle. When the law was broken, justice was offended, and the penalty was death. Justice demanded that the penalty be meted out. When the penalty is suffered (which is death), then justice is satisfied.

We know that Adam did not die a corporeal death at the time he broke the law or commandment that God gave him. He died to the innocent state which he was in before the fall. Now he is guilty. The death sentence is passed upon him. "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) He died in trespasses and sins. (Eph. 2:1)

Not only is the corporeal death sentence passed upon mankind, but this eternal death sentence (which is hell) is passed upon mankind.

As we think of natural death, we think of a separation between the body and the spirit of man. As we think of hell or the second death (Rev. 20:14), we think of the eternal separation between man and God.

To be with God is to dwell in light, and to be separated from him is to dwell in darkness. "Yea, the light of the wicked shall be put out, and the spark of his fire shall not shine." (Job 18:5) In Isaiah 50:11, we read about those that kindle a fire, compass themselves about with sparks, etc. This light, which is the self righteousness of man, shall be put out.

". . . to whom is reserved the blackness of *darkness* forever." (Jude 13) ". . . to whom the mist of *darkness* is reserved for ever." (2 Peter 2:17) "Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand, depart from me, ye cursed into *everlasting fire*, prepared for the devil and his angels." (Matt. 25:41)

The wrath of God causes this fire. "How long, Lord, wilt thou hide thy-

self for ever? Shall thy wrath burn like fire?" (Psalm 89:46)

This death sentence has passed upon mankind. The justice of God demands it. Now if God would change his mind and decide not to execute this sentence, then justice would be trampled upon, and he would not be a just God. He would not be an Holy God. Holiness demands perfection, and therefore it demands the satisfaction of justice.

Man cannot satisfy or appease justice by any of his works or deeds. "But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God . . ." (Gal. 3:11) He is cursed and he cannot remove this curse. Therefore he must die.

Man is indebted to justice and does not have any means to pay the debt. In other words, man does not have any means, strength, or ability, etc., to free himself from this bondage.

"The Lord looked down from heaven upon the children of men to see if there were any that did understand, and seek God. They are all gone aside, they are all together become filthy: there is none that doeth good, no, not one." (Psalm 14:2-3) The nature of man is to run after that which is evil. We read that man in his best state is all together vanity, and trust that we have been taught this truth by the Spirit of God. (Psalm 39:5) Therefore, the ways of man offends the holy law of God. "Thou lovest righteousness, and hatest wickedness: . . ." (Psalm 45:7) "But your iniquities have separated between you and your God and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear." (Isaiah 59:2) "For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all." (James 2:10)

Man is traveling the road to destruction, and he is dead. When the death sentence is passed upon one, he is considered a dead man in the eyes of the law. When the time comes, the sentence is executed. All died in Adam, or we may say that the whole human race died in Adam. There is none holy, in

fact, all are unholy. There is none righteousness, not one.

"For I say unto you, That except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the Kingdom of heaven." (Matthew 5:20) The righteousness of God's people is not produced by any deeds of the flesh. This is the righteousness of Jesus Christ which is imputed to His people. "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) (see Gal. 2:21; 3:6)

The law of God was offended by the transgression, therefore we may say that His wrath was kindled. "For we are consumed by thine anger, and by thy wrath are we troubled." (Psalm 90:7) ". . . shall thy wrath burn like fire." (Psalm 89:46)

As we consider the death sentence and the condition of mankind, we can see that salvation is only possible through the righteousness of Jesus Christ. Jesus stood in the room and stead of his people. He paid the debt by his own blood. He satisfied justice by dying for his people. "He was delivered for our offences and raised again for our justification." (Rom. 4:25)

"And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses; blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross." (Colossians 2:13-14) A governor may pardon a criminal, but he cannot remove the guilt. A brother may forgive the trespasses of another, but he cannot remove the guilt. As we think of this point of doctrine that God forgives the sins of his people, we note that the guilt was removed through the blood of Jesus Christ.

God loved His people even when they were dead in sins. His holy law was

offended, yet he loved his people. As we think of mercy, we think of love. "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy." (Rom. 9:15) It was the love of God which moved him to send Jesus to remove the guilt of his people. (John 3:16)

At the cross there was a meeting together of mercy and truth. God has always loved His people and is a merciful God. But His people had offended his holy law, and were not fit to enter into heaven. Sinners shall not enter into heaven. Why? Those whose sins have been atoned for by the blood of Jesus are not classified as sinners. They are considered a holy people. Therefore, God had mercy upon his people by sending Jesus to satisfy the just demands of the law. Then, justice was satisfied by the death of Jesus. He died that we might live. He has saved his people from the wrath to come. (Rom. 5:9; 1 Thes. 1:10)

Jesus not only died a natural death upon the cross, but he also suffered the pain, sorrow, and agony of hell which is justly due mankind. The wrath of God was poured out upon him, "His soul was made an offering for sin." (Isaiah 53:10) He drank this cup. He said that he must drink it. We think of this as the cup of suffering. (see John 18:11)

As God he could not die, but as man he could die. He said, "my soul is exceeding sorrowful even unto death." He sweated as it were great drops of blood which fell unto the ground." He prayed, "if it be possible, let this cup pass from me." This shows the weakness of the flesh. The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak. Angels came and ministered unto him. (see Matt. 26:36-42; Luke 22:39-44)

Jesus is the only man that kept the law, and he kept it to a jot and tittle. He fulfilled the law. As the surety and representative of God's people, Jesus fulfilled the law in the stead of his people. His righteousness was imputed unto them. "He will magnify the law

and make it honourable." (Isaiah 42:21)

I believe that the people of God who have been quickened and made alive are the only ones who have any true knowledge of this death that Jesus suffered. The Scripture states that darkness was upon the face of the earth from the sixth to the ninth hour. I believe that this is a type of the darkness that Jesus felt in his soul! It was needful that he be forsaken by God. This caused him to cry out: "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" (Matt. 27:46) My brethren, have not you experienced this in a measure?

"Righteousness and peace have kissed each other." The blood of Jesus cleanses the sins of his people and satisfies justice. He made peace through the blood of his cross. (Col. 1:20) The righteousness of Jesus Christ is imputed unto his people, and they experience peace with God. Jesus said, "My peace I leave with you." (John 14:27)

Jesus has completed the work of salvation, and has put all things under his feet. "But we see not yet all things put under him." (Heb. 2:8) He died for his people and he lives for them. "I am he which was dead, but behold I am alive for evermore." (Rev. 1:18)

"If he were on earth he would not be a priest." (Heb. 8:4) What a wonderful subject! We have an high priest who ever lives to make intercession for his people. "By one offering he has forever perfected them that are sanctified." (Heb. 10:14) The blood of Jesus "speaketh better things than that of the blood of Abel." (Heb. 12:24) The blood of Abel cried vengeance, but the blood of Jesus speaks peace to a poor sinner.

What a wonderful subject to think upon: the sacrifice of Jesus. He shed his blood for all his people — meaning for those who had already died, those living then, and for those who were yet to be born into this world. For those who had already passed on, we quote: "These all died in *faith*, not having received the promises, but having seen

them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth." (Heb. 11:13) These went into heaven by promise. The promise was that a Redeemer would come and redeem Israel from her sins.

There are things that God's people must experience. One is led into these experiences by the Spirit of God. In other words, the Salvation of God must be made manifest to His people in due time. "But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel." (2 Tim. 1:10) The purpose of God in saving His people through His grace is made manifest in an acceptable time. It was made manifest when Jesus died for His people. It is made manifest to an individual when Jesus is revealed to him as his Saviour.

One must experience the sufferings of Jesus. We must suffer with him in order to have "fellowship with his sufferings" (Phil. 3:10) "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." (Gal. 2:20) It is the Spirit of God which dwells in the hearts of His people. This Spirit teaches the Lord's people to sing the new song which only the redeemed can learn. The theme of this song is that Salvation is by the Grace of God.

In due time all of God's people must experience this death sentence and have it pronounced upon their conscience. "We had this sentence of death in ourselves . . ." (2 Cor. 1:9) "A time to kill, and a time to heal, . . ." (Ecc. 3:3) One who is dead in sins follows the course of worship that all natural people do. He runs after evil, and takes darkness for light, bitter for sweet, etc. He does not have any true knowledge of God, and does not even know him-

self. He does not know that he is a wretched sinner until something is done for him. He glories in his works, his ability, etc. In fact, he worships the works of his own hands. (Isaiah 2:8) He has not been brought to the judgment seat of Jesus Christ.

When the eyes of one are opened, he is given to see himself as he never had before. He realizes that he has broken the holy law of God, and finds that his righteousness is as filthy rags. He tries to do better, but finds that his state grows worse. His strength fails him, and he finds that he is in debt and does not have anything to pay. Darkness covers him and within this comes despair. He feels the sentence that pronounces death, and there is a cry that comes from the heart: "Guilty, guilty." He does not have any defence to justify himself. He realizes this death is what he justly deserves. "Therefore is judgment far from us, neither doth justice overtake us: we wait for light; but behold obscurity, for brightness, but we walk in darkness. We grope for the wall like the blind, and we grope as if we had no eyes; we stumble at noon day as in the night; we are in desolate places as dead men. We roar all like bears, and mourn sore like doves: we look for judgment, but there is none: for salvation, but it is far off from us. For our transgressions are multiplied before thee, and our sins testify against us: for our transgressions are with us; and as for our iniquities, we know them." (Isaiah 59:9-12) Please read the rest of the chapter.

One who has experienced this realizes that he stands in need of mercy. Since he does not have any defence, his only plea is for mercy. If he should die in this state, hell would be his doom, and justly so. He knows that the sentence passed by justice is death. *In due time, he experiences the meeting together of "mercy and truth."* "Thou shalt arise, and have mercy upon Zion: for the time to favour her, yea the set time, is come." (Psalm 102:13) Notice

that he is in a state of darkness and is walking in the valley of the shadow of death. He is in the pit of sorrow, despair, etc., but he is delivered from this condition. Since he has experienced such a wonderful deliverance, there are songs and praises that come forth from the heart.

What causes one to be delivered from such a low state? It is the power of God. It is the Spirit of Jesus which applies the blood to the conscience, and this application speaks peace and pardon which brings joy to the poor sinner. The spirit says in effect: "Thy sins have been washed away in the blood of Jesus." "Your debt has been paid, etc."

"Righteousness and peace have kissed each other." When you were under deep conviction, you learned that your righteousness was as filthy rags in the sight of God. You learned that there was no "soundness in your flesh." In this condition, your soul was in deep trouble, and you could not find peace.

But, you experienced peace within your soul when the Spirit of Jesus applied the blood to your conscience. "Mercy and truth are met together." What a wonderful mercy; It seemed your case was hopeless, yet through the love and mercy of God, he delivered your soul from corruption. It is written, "Thou hast delivered my soul from the lowest hell."

The Spirit spoke peace to your soul and clothed you with the righteousness of Jesus Christ. Therefore you do not go in your own strength, but walk in the strength of the Lord. "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*." (Phil. 3:9)

God performs the work that is necessary for your salvation. He sent Jesus to redeem you from the curse of the law. He quickened you and made you alive to spiritual things, and leaves the spirit of Jesus to dwell in your heart. He gives you faith to believe in

him. This Spirit guides you into the way of truth. He gives you fresh courage to press on in spite of difficulties. The righteousness of Jesus is imputed to you. "I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them." (Ezekiel 36:26)

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

221 Boone Road,
Leaksville, N. C. 27288

Dear Editors:

My last issue of the *Signs* reminds me that my subscription has run out, so enclosed is a check for another year.

My wife and I enjoy the letters of the saints of God: they speak for me, I feel, much better than I ever could. For through them I relive so many of my experiences. So often I feel that it won't be too long before our blessed Lord will return to take "his own" to ever to be with him. I have a hope that I shall be in that number saved by his grace, and kept by his power.

May He bless and keep the Editors of this paper, and his children wherever they may be. My wife and sister in hope, joins me in expressing our love and fellowship to you brother editors, and the saints of the Lord everywhere.

Yours in hope,
Warford N. Tilley

"THE EVERLASTING GOSPEL"

"And I saw another angel flying in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters."

I believe that every chosen child of God at sometime, (an appointed time of God), will have this gospel preached to him. But before this comes he is going along at ease with himself, with no fear of God in his heart, but rather glorying in his own righteousness. But when this terrible appointed hour, which words cannot describe, this hour of judgment is come, he finds himself before this holy and righteous God with nothing to defend himself with, but must confess that he is completely undone, and a hell deserving sinner.

This loud voice, so loud that he can't shut it out, or get away from it, (not necessarily loud audibly, for sometimes it is a still small voice), but in the sense that it is not possible for it to go unheard or unnoticed) reaches unto every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people — to every chosen object of his love, with a distinct sound to them that have been given ears to hear. (1 Cor. 14:7) "So shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth, it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I send it." (Isaiah 55:11) This voice says, "Fear God for the hour of his judgment is come."

Now, seeing that He hath mercy on whom he will have mercy and whom he will he hardeneth, and that none can resist his will, can one reply to this God, or against him, saying, "Why hast thou made me thus?" or "Why doeth he yet find fault?" No, but this vessel of mercy afore prepared unto glory, this heir of promise, in the process of being born again, is having his eyes opened to see himself a sinner and justly condemned. "For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God," and can only cry, "Have mercy on me a sinner." For, having God's law written in his heart and in his mind, he realizes he can do nothing within himself.

When he realizes that the hour of judgment is come upon him, he cries for mercy. And his eyes are opened to

see Jesus, (Luke 24:31), "And to worship him that made heaven and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters." For God, "Hath in these days spoken to us by his Son whom he hath appointed heir of all things, by whom also he made the worlds."

This is the everlasting gospel, dear child of God, for it delivers you from the power of darkness and translates you into the kingdom of his dear Son. (Col. 1:3) It is everlasting, for by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified. Jesus promised, "I will not leave you comfortless; I will come unto you." And, "I will pray the Father and he shall give you another comforter that he may abide with you forever." (John 14:16)

Not only do we have this witness within, but we are given evidence here in the persons of our called ministers. These humble servants of God who are lifted up from time to time upon the mountains, and have their feet shod with the preparation of the gospel, are enabled to bring good tidings to the fainting soul, and publish peace. Then they cry unto Zion, "Thy God reigneth."

"For the spirit itself beareth witness within our spirit, that we are the children of God." When the child of God is feeling cast down, there is no sweeter news or better tidings than the assurance that his God is reigning and ruling, and that all things are being brought to pass according to His holy will.

May the Lord comfort his people by these words. I am persuaded that if one has heard this everlasting gospel, beginning with the fear of God, which is the beginning of the wisdom of God, this same Jesus that sent his angel, his ministering Spirit, into your heart, will not leave you comfortless. "Being confident of this very things, that he that hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ."

Speaking of the Lord's angels, Paul

wrote, "Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?" (Hebrews 1:14)

Paul Morton,
2482 N. Main Street,
High Point, N. C.

WORD FROM

ELDER GEORGE L. WEAVER

Dear Pastor and Sister Wood:

Another Summer has come and gone, and I have been shut up in Cleveland, deprived of the enjoyment of meeting with my brethren; but I was with you in spirit, joying and beholding your order. And a feeling of comfort came over me that they were preaching the truth that "Jesus began to do and teach"; for I knew that is what all desired to hear. And I rejoiced, though I was a thousand miles away, over my "spiritual radio", which I hope Jesus has given me. I rejoiced with joy unspeakable and full of glory, that the Elders had spoken to the people, not the wisdom of men, but what Jesus had sent, — not from a paper in their pocket, but by the Spirit of the Lord who has sent them. "Thou shalt go to all that I send you, and whatsoever I command you, thou shalt speak."

Brethren, did you hear me singing, "How sweet the name of Jesus sounds in a believer's ear?" One has to be born again in order to understand the things of the Spirit. Several of my brethren have written me, but I have not been able to answer them. Some days I cannot see to write. I have not been bed-fast, but shut up at home. I cannot go any place unless my dear daughter takes me; and for about two months this Summer she was having operations on both feet. We thank the good Lord that she walks again; and I have some hope of seeing you again, which is in the Lord's hands.

I was pained much when I heard of the death of Elder J. P. Helms. He was like a father to me, and we were very close for fifty years. Another prop has

been taken from me, but I thank God for our relationship. I was glad to hear that my pastor, Elder Wood, was able to attend his funeral.

In hope,
George L. Weaver,
3415 Westbury Road,
Shaker Heights, Ohio 44120

(Elder Weaver is a member of Frying Pan Church in the Virginia Corresponding Meeting. We have missed his visits the last year or two, for he has been active in traveling among the brethren. We are glad to know of his spiritual exercises, and that his daughter has recovered from the trouble with her feet. His age is past ninety, but is young in his desire to be with his brethren again. He is always glad to hear from the brethren. — J. D. W.)

ENJOYED THEIR ASSOCIATION

1302 Walnut Street,
Benton, Ky. 42025

Dear Editors:

A few lines to thank you dear brethren for sending the paper to me when my time had expired. I am enclosing check for renewal of my own and that of my niece.

I would not want to be without the paper. I might not always agree with everything, but I still want to know what others believe on certain subjects, and get their views and compare them with what I see in the Scriptures.

Our Soldier Creek Association met Friday before the second Sunday in October for a three days' meeting, and we were privileged to enjoy all three days in peace and fellowship. Our preaching brethren were Elders W. Y. Chandler, J. N. Darnall, R. L. Biggs, H. G. Brown, and our own moderator, Elder Paul Poyner, and Elder O. W. Perkins, moderator of our Union Meeting. We were blessed to have preaching in Brother Basil Hutchen's home, and in Elder Poyner's home at night. These two homes were open for visitors who came to be with us. All material blessings were supplied, as well as the truth as it is in Jesus was preached. If the Lord has indeed has given us pure minds, surely the pure minds were

"stirred up", our hope renewed, and our drooping spirits revived.

We know we are flesh, and we look forward to our meetings with fear that they are only our own appointments, and not the Lord's, fearing that He, being the sovereign ruler over all things, will leave us to ourselves, to teach us we can't sing without him, can't pray or preach without him. But surely His presence was felt, and His mercy extended to us who were met in his name. We have learned that we can't meet in our own strength, nor in the name of ourselves, or our preachers.

We are bound to give thanks to Him who gathers his children together and spreads a table before them, and a banner of love over them. Then surely, as we have received Christ we will walk in him.

I am, I hope a sister in truth for Jesus' sake,

Effie Bowden

"NEVER LONELY"

1360 1st Street,
Chehalis, Washington 98532

Dear Editors of the *Signs*:

I take this means to notify my brethren that my blindness has reached the stage when I can no longer read a letter or a card, and ask them all to send me no more seasonal or greeting cards. I am of a nature that it aggravates me to have someone say, "See what a beautiful card", when I can see no more than a red blotch or a mucky background. I can walk without being led, and get about my home alone. For this I am thankful.

My God is very good to me and often sends me visitors from afar, who, like myself, believe in one God only. If anyone desires to send me a card of beauty, please reconsider and send me a letter speaking of God's mercy and goodness, which may be read to me: thus bringing both joy and comfort.

I once read six or seven religious magazines, and read them with pleasure and profit. I can no longer read, not

even my Bible, which I miss greatly. I am furnished by the government a record player or book reading machine, and may obtain records free of charge from time to time from the library of records for the blind. This is pleasant, but most of the records are secular. I have been able to get part of the New Testament, and may be able to get more when it is available. My health is about as usual: I spend more time in the bed than I do up. I am often alone for short periods, but I am never lonely: for it is at these times mostly that He presents himself with a smiling face of grace and mercy. This is a great mystery to me, when I consider what he is, and all that I am not.

Yours in hope of His mercy,
Effie Parke

1639 Cowen Drive,
Scottsbluff, Nebraska 69361

Dear Editors:

It is time for me to send my renewal for the *Signs of the Times*; which I enjoy very much, and look forward to its coming, — which is prompt.

My eyesight is clearer now than several years ago; for which I am truly thankful, and praise God from whom all blessings flow. I attribute my long life, (will soon be eighty-three), to the goodness of God . . . My sins cause me much sorrow and anguish of soul. I sometimes repeat stanzas from old hymns:

"O for a glance of heavenly day
To take this stubborn stone away,
And thaw with beams of love divine
This heart, this frozen heart of mine."

May we seek God in time of trouble, with full assurance that he will hear and answer our earnest pleadings for his love and mercy.

In hope of a glorious resurrection,
Dora Greathouse

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(To October 1, 1965)

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James Carter, N. C.....	5.00
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BUSINESS OFFICE

R. F. D. 1, Box 539, Beechwood Lane
Danville, Va.

EDITORS

Elder David V. Spangler

R. F. D. 1, Box 539, Beechwood Lane
Danville, Va.

Elder John D. Wood

P. O. Box 186, Manassas, Va.

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Elder W. D. Griffin

39 Welsh Tract Road, Newark, Delaware

Elder E. J. Lambert

306 Richardson St., Winnsboro, Texas

Elder George Ruston

Dutton, Ontario, Canada

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TO

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R. F. D. 1, Box 539 Beechwood Lane
Danville, Va.

EDITORIAL

ECCLESIASTES X. 19

"A feast is made for laughter, and wine maketh merry: but money answereth all things."

It has been requested that we write upon the above Scripture, particularly the latter part, which we will do with whatever light the Lord may grant unto us. We shall not dwell upon worldly feasting, nor the laughter of fools, which is compared to the crackling of thorns under a pot. Neither is it our intention to dwell upon natural wine, nor money, the love of which is the root of all evil. Rather we shall try to present what is our understanding of the above text. Wherever God, the Holy Ghost, begins a work of grace in the heart of man there will be trouble and distress, a state very different from

what to-day is called getting religion, which when one has, he feels happy, and often openly declares that he is all right with God. Such religion at best is a lie and is not of God. The work of the Spirit is to convince of sin, therefore there is sure to be a burden of sin, more or less, and a mourning over sin. Wherever there is a religion that began without a burden of sin, distress and sorrow, it is not the work of the Spirit, but proceeds from the flesh. To the one who is in soul-trouble it will seem as though God has found him out and has set a mark upon him. So full and complete will the teaching of the Spirit be, that the soul will confess through dire necessity that, "Salvation is of the Lord." Jesus the mediator of the new covenant, is the only one who can do them good, and the Spirit takes of the Word and they hear it. "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." Thus such an one is encouraged through the Holy Spirit taking the word of his grace, and they are made to look to the Lord and hope in him. This world will be a wilderness of woe from which the redeemed of the Lord would flee. By the Spirit's guidance they seek a city that hath foundations, which is Zion, the city of God, the mountain of his holiness.

It will be the discontented, the distressed and those who are in debt that the Spirit will lead, for he has said, "They shall come with weeping, and with supplications will I lead them." There the glorious Lord will turn their mourning into joy and will comfort them and make them rejoice. This comfort comes by the Spirit directing their hearts into love of God the Father, who, while they were yet sinners sent his beloved Son into the world to save sinners. He also shows them that though they fear hell and damnation God in his love has freely given them heaven and salvation. Therefore it is written, "And in this mountain shall the Lord of hosts make unto all people [Jew and Gentile] a feast of fat things, a feast

of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined." Then their mouth is filled with laughter and their tongue with singing. Thus the ransomed of the Lord are set in safety from him that puffeth at them. While feasting on God's love and mercy they can laugh the enemy of their souls to scorn and despise him, and in the confidence of faith they can laugh also at the folly of their doubts and fears. "A feast is made for laughter, and wine maketh merry." This is a feast of fat things, a feast of wine. The word of God which holy men of old wrote as they were moved by the Holy Ghost was like water clear as crystal, very pure, but by the presence and power of Jesus this water is made wine to his people. Their doubts and fears subside and they are completely blessed. When the brethren of old feasted with Joseph they were merry with him, and how can saints to-day help but make merry when they taste of the love of their heavenly Joseph, which, like the blood of the ripened grape, is sweet to their taste. It maketh glad the heart of man. Thus those who hunger and thirst after righteousness are filled and they forget their poverty; but it has pleased the Lord in his divine plan that it will not be always a feast, laughter, wine and making merry. It would not do always to be feasting on heavenly bounties and enjoying the felt presence of the Savior, there must be a walking by faith and not by sight.

"Money answereth all things." After feasting if there is no money one would lapse back into the condition of poverty in which he was prior to the feast; in fact, money is necessary for feasting. Worldly men and women could do but little feasting and drinking of wine without money, it answereth all things. Just as there is a currency in all lands, so in the kingdom of heaven faith can truly be called the money of the kingdom; with that in hand the thing desired is obtained. There could have been no feasting on heavenly bounties or

drinking of wine from the true Vine without faith; this precious money is absolutely necessary, and without it it is imposible to please God. Every man who went into the vineyard received his penny a day. By this currency the Elders obtained a good report. It enabled them to embrace the promises, walk in the fiery furnace, stop the mouths of lions, open prison gates, subdue kingdoms and receive their dead again to life. It "answereth all things." Now, just as in all lands there is the true coin and counterfeit, so there is true faith and faith (so-called) that is counterfeit. True faith must come from the heavenly mint, and is the gift of God. Each of the redeemed family receives from their heavenly Father just as much (and no more) as he has willed they shall have. Each in the vineyard received at the end of the day a penny, and whatever the day may have been they each will receive the amount the Master determines. If it be a day of sorrow, or of darkness, or sin-sickness and self-loathing, yet at the end faith is increased by the Master's good will. For unto him that hath shall be given. Just as money is needed for necessities of life, so where faith is, the trial will not harden the one under it, but soften and humble him, causing him to look to the Hand from whence it comes, and in all prayer, praise, sorrow (godly sorrow), repentance, believing, receiving, glorying and resting, faith, the currency of heaven, must be in constant use. It is the possession of this money that keeps every heir of heaven from legal bondage and death. Of Abraham it is written that being not weak in the faith he considered not his body now dead, neither the deadness of Sarah's womb; he staggered not at the promise through unbelief, but was strong in faith, giving glory to God, being persuaded that what he had promised he was able to perform. Thus faith answers all things. It is the only currency that will "buy the truth, and sell it not; also wisdom, instruction,

and understanding." Sin-sick, laboring souls need food and healing. Jesus said, "Believe ye that I am able to do this?" The answer was, "Yea, Lord." He replied, "According to your faith be it unto you." They need the bread of life; faith procures it. When the brethren go to our spiritual Joseph for bread because the famine is sore in the land, they go with money in their hands, which is returned in their sacks' mouths, from which we see that faith is increased in the using thereof. Now the money of any country is known by the image and superscription it bears. Just as the Roman coin handed to Jesus bore the image and superscription of Cæsar, so this heavenly money bears the image of our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the embodiment of love. Its superscription is "The faith of God's elect." It will not pass in the devil's domains. It will meet with persecution and rough usage there, but in the kingdom of God it will answer all things.

G. R.

(The above was an editorial by Elder Ruston published August 1, 1924. We republish it because we enjoyed reading it again, and because he was not disposed to write at this time. — J. D. W.)

VOICES OF THE PAST
"He being dead yet speaketh"

JESUS THE END OF PROPHECY

When the cry, "It is finished!" was uttered by the dying Lord of life and glory, that declaration included all that was written in the law and in the inspired testimony of the prophets, and proclaimed the fulfillment of the eternal counsel of God in which he was chosen to be the Savior of his people from their sins. There was no further need that he should be manifest in the flesh as the perfect Servant whom God upheld by his own omnipotence. He had honored every demand of the holy law, and infinite justice could ask no more.

It is important that the saints should ever remember that there is no revelation given in the Scriptures for any other purpose but to testify of Jesus. While there is incidental reference to the affairs of time, as the setting up of empires and their overthrow, it is only as such incidents are used in showing the glory of our Lord in his control of all events for the manifestation of his eternal purpose in the preservation of his elect, spiritual people unto that great salvation to which they were ordained in Christ before the worlds were made. To those carnal Jews who disputed his doctrine he said, "Search the Scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life; and **THEY ARE THEY WHICH TESTIFY OF ME.**" — John v. 39. So, when John would have worshiped the angel by whom he was shown the things of Jesus, the angel said unto him, "See thou do it not; I am thy fellow servant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus; worship God; for **THE TESTIMONY OF JESUS IS THE SPIRIT OF PROPHECY.**" — Rev. xix. 10. While believers are settled in this truth there is little occasion for them to be troubled by the devices of the adversary, who is ever ready to rob them of their rest in the assurance of faith by ingeniously wresting the words of inspiration. The natural mind esteems the strife of nations as of far more importance than the mourning of a conscious sinner; but in the judgment of God there is not an unuttered groan but that is gathered in the golden vials wherein are preserved before his throne the prayers of all saints. — Rev. v. 8; viii. 3. He sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers. He brings princes to nothing, and makes the judges of the earth as vanity. He turns man to destruction, and says, Return, ye children of men. Thus, those things which are highly esteemed among men are accounted nought by our God; and those whom men consider the offscouring of all things are precious in the

sight of the Lord, even as his peculiar treasure, and as the jewels of a crown unto him. As he gave the wealth, honor and power of Egypt for the ransom of national Israel, so he has accounted all that is valued among men as vanity in comparison with that grace which he has bestowed upon his spiritual Israel.

Not even the natural reason of the saints can comprehend this divine mystery of electing love. Constantly they seek in themselves some attraction by which this choice of God was drawn to embrace them; and their wily adversary finds an easy way to annoy them by referring to their conscious destitution of merit as evidence of their delusion in hoping in the grace of God for deliverance from the bondage of corruption. They can never overcome this temptation by reason. In this contest, as in all their experience, they must always confess that it is alone by grace that they are saved. Boasting is excluded by the grace of God which is revealed only through that faith which is the fruit of the Spirit freely given to them by the same eternal love which chose them in Christ before the foundation of the world. By that divine choice it was determined that they should be holy and without blame before God in love. If they were in themselves blameless before the holy law of God there would be nothing more than simple justice in this appointment. They could ascribe no praise to the riches of grace for that which would thus be their just judgment. But the glorious mystery of this divine appointment consists in the fact that it pleased the Lord to choose guilty and condemned sinners in whom was no merit, that they by the blood of Jesus should be cleansed from all sin, and that they should be holy and without blame before him in love. It must not be forgotten that this complete justification of the justly condemned sinners thus chosen, is infinitely more than the pardon of their sins. By this inconceivable

grace the demand of justice is not less fully satisfied than the mercy and love of God. Not only are the subjects of this election freed from the penalty of their sins, they are also fully delivered from the sins by which they were polluted. Now, no more guilt can be found in them than in their sinless Redeemer. In view of this great grace which is revealed in Christ Jesus it is not difficult to understand that he is the first cause and embodiment of all the revelation which God has given in the Scriptures, as well as the Beginning of the creation of God, and the center and object for which all things are and were created.

From the consideration of the infinite character of this salvation which is in Christ, it is not strange that in all the law and the prophets Jesus is the sum of what is recorded. Because it pleased God to hide these things from the wise and prudent, the efforts of men to find out God by searching have always proved vain. Many very learned and elaborate theories have been devised, in which human wisdom has sought to find the fulfillment of prophecy in events which men consider important among the nations of this world; but it is not for the instruction of men in natural things that God has given the guidance of his Spirit to prophets and apostles. Not only the written words of prophecy but all the history of the dealing of God with his people under the patriarchal and Mosaic dispensations, must be seen as the testimony of Jesus, or their essential significance is not understood. Hence, all those labored dissertations in which men have claimed to find by study the interpretation of Scripture prophecy, however consistent they may seem to reason, have only served to expose the folly of those who have devised them. It is a common result of these scientific devices to find the whole significance of the prophecies which they study fulfilled in the natural history of the children of Abraham. It is almost univers-

ally taught by them that there is yet to be a restoration of the Jews to the land of Palestine, and they are to be established there in the observance of those privileges and ordinances which were given them by Moses. Without attempting to discuss this conclusion, it is sufficient for those who look to Jesus for salvation to consider that this exposition directly controverts the declarations of the Lord himself and his inspired apostle. Jesus says, "For all the prophets and the law prophesied until John." — Matt. xi. 13. Peter says, "To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins." — Acts x. 43. Hence, if all that was witnessed by the legal and prophetic dispensations was in Jesus fulfilled, it is evident that the establishing of those prophetic observances again would signify that another Messiah must come in their fulfillment. This is certainly a denial that Jesus is the end of the law, and that the salvation which he wrought is perfected in his obedience and offering of himself once for all.

Certainly none who trust in the grace which was revealed in Jesus can look for another Mediator to come from God. Unless that righteousness of God which dwelt in Jesus is sufficient for the justification of those for whom he laid down his life, there can be no hope for any sinner. But the same failure by which his people were forbidden to hope, would also hold the Captain of our salvation under the condemnation of divine justice. Surely this blasphemous suggestion cannot for a moment deceive the tempted believer.

Since man became a transgressor of the holy commandment of his Creator, the enemy of righteousness has ever sought to pervert the truth which God declared in the law as given to man in his primitive innocence. To this end proud reason is directed to search the heights and depths of human wisdom for some understanding of the things which are made, which is different from

that given by divine inspiration. Carnal enmity against God is ever ready to bow down to any idol in which it finds the sinner exalted as holding his destiny in his own power, and in which there is nothing of the humiliating doctrine of salvation exclusively by the grace of God. Man does not object to rendering adoration to such gods as are found in his own imagination; but he has never devised an idol superior to himself. The pride of his heart is flattered by the imagination that his god is altogether such a being as himself, and in worshipping that god he is only ascribing honor and glory to himself. Thus self is the ultimate object of all natural worship, whether it be called, Heathenism, or Catholic, or Protestant Christianity. Man is prone to worship some object, and his pride forbids that he should yield his own conception of that object so long as he is guided by his natural mind. Hence, every thought of God even in the imagination of an enlightened sinner, is entirely out of the way. None can know him but as he is revealed in the heart by his own holy Spirit. Certainly those from whom it has pleased God to hide this knowledge can never attain to it by their own researches.

Since rational men commonly accept the truth that they are practically sinners, and confess that they must be changed in order to be made holy, they are not disposed to reject any doctrine which represents them as having power to avail themselves of the chance to secure that change at their own will. Thus, in the recent gathering of teachers of all the religions of the world at Chicago, when they compared their doctrines, they found that there was no essential difference between Pagan idolatry and the popular christianity of America. All agreed that the good works of the creature were the essential price to be rendered in securing the favor of God. The professed teachers of christianity were as far as the avowed heathen from understanding that sin-

ners are saved by the blood of Jesus from all sin. Yet they could not perceive the folly of seeking to convert those from whose heathen religion they confessed their inability to discover that their own doctrines materially differed. Even sound natural reason should suffice to detect such absurdity.

In the light of the testimony of inspiration, all the teachings which are consistent with the perverted notions of the depraved mind of man are thereby manifested as utterly false. There could be no occasion for the gift of inspiration to teach that which is within the power of the mind of creatures to attain by study. Not even by the most diligent examination of the inspired Scriptures can man acquire the ability to know that there is salvation in the name of Jesus. Paul says, "Ye know that ye were Gentiles, carried away unto these dumb idols, even as ye were led; wherefore I give you to understand, that no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed; and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost." — 1 Cor. xii. 2, 3. In calling upon him for deliverance from sin every believer does say that Jesus is the Lord. In this confession the witness is given that the Spirit of truth dwells in the helpless suppliant. "For he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." Thus, it is conclusive assurance that a sinner is led by the Spirit of God when he knows that there is salvation nowhere else but in the gracious name of Jesus. His very prayer ascribes omnipotent sovereignty to Jesus as the one Lord of life and glory.

When the pride of man prompts him to seek for knowledge of future events in the record which is given in the Scriptures, there is likely to be more anxiety for selfish honors and the praise of men than desire to see Jesus exalted as the glorious One to whom all the prophets give witness. There have doubtless been cases since John was on

the isle that is called Patmos, when the saints have manifested a disposition to worship the messengers by whom they have received the testimony of Jesus. And when walking according to their natural minds the ministers of Christ are not offended by receiving such worship. Certainly their transgression will in every such case bring upon them the rod of sore chastening; yet the fleshly ambition of men constantly aspires to have the highest place in the estimation of their fellows. When the saints are governed by this carnal mind they cannot see that Jesus is the Sun in the gospel heaven, from whom the whole light of revelation shines in the illumination of prophets and apostles, and he is the great embodiment of all revealed truth, as he is "Alpha and Omega, the first and the last." There is no liability of the saints looking for any other fulfillment of any prophecy when they see Jesus. All earthly considerations are forgotten in his heavenly glory, as the light of a dim candle is lost in the full blaze of the noonday sunshine. Jesus is then revealed in his own divine radiance, and from his face the created earth and heaven are fled away; and there is found no place for them. As "He is before all things, and by him all things consist," so he is the one source of all assurance and comfort to his ransomed people. The saints can never be deprived of the spiritual blessings which are treasured in him so long as they can see Jesus in whom all fullness dwells.

(The above was an editorial by Elder Wm. L. Beebe July 18, 1894.)

OBITUARIES

JOHN DOAK SIMMONS

Brother Simmons was born in Caswell County, North Carolina, May 25, 1888, and departed this life on August 18, 1965, at the age of 77 years, 2 months, and 13 days. He was the son of the late William H. and Mrs. Emma Barker Simmons. He is survived by his wife, Mrs. Mamie Miles Simmons; four daughters,

Mrs. Myrtle Allred and Mrs. Sue Brooks, Route 2, Elon College, N. C.; Mrs. Eva Coble, Route 1, Graham, N. C.; and Mrs. Doris Simpson, Route 1, Elon College, N. C.; four sons, Edgar, Doak, Claude, and Earl Simmons, all of Route 2, Elon College, N. C.; one sister, Mrs. Lucy Terrell, Route 2, Elon College, N. C.; three brothers, Berry and Roach Simmons, Route 2, Elon College, N. C.; and Philip Simmons of Durham, N. C.; 19 grandchildren and 3 great grandchildren.

Brother Simmons united with the Church at Bush Arbor at her June meeting, 1917, and was a most faithful and useful member. He was appointed assistant clerk of the church in 1922, and was appointed clerk at May meeting, 1933. He served until February 1961, at which time he requested to be relieved of serving as clerk because of his age and infirmity.

Brother Simmons was a hard working industrious farmer. The Lord greatly prospered him in spiritual and material blessings. He suffered much in his last days, but was blessed with patience to wait upon the God he loved and served.

May God's blessing be upon his dear wife who so faithfully administered to him, and the children, grandchildren, and all who feel this great loss, yet we feel it is his gain. "Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord." (Rev. 14:13)

His funeral was held at Bush Arbor Church by his pastor, Elder W. C. King, and the Mr. Bill Traylor. His body was laid to rest at Concord United Church Cemetery to await the coming of our Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, who will call his sleeping body to arise together with all the redeemed family of God, to be made like Him and to see Him and be satisfied forever.

Done by order of Bush Arbor Church in conference October 9, 1965.

Elder W. C. King, Moderator
Earl S. Rudd, Clerk

LULU VAUGHN FRIESS

Sister Lulu V. Friess was born September 18, 1882, in Fairfax County, Virginia, and died March 4, 1965. She was the daughter of Louis H. and Charlotte Hunt Robey.

Her husband died many years ago, leaving her with one Son, Paul, who preceded her in death. She is survived by one brother, Louis Irving Robey, of Arlington, Va., and by seven nieces and nephews.

Sister Friess united with Mt. Zion Church, Loudoun County, Virginia, in July, 1951, and was baptized the 4th Sunday in August, 1951,

by the writer. She was a firm believer in the doctrine of salvation by grace alone, and was outspoken in her convictions and opinions. She traveled considerably among the brethren, and had many friends among them. She is greatly missed by all who knew her.

Funeral services were conducted by the writer at the Pumphrey Funeral Home, Silver Spring, Maryland, and she was laid to rest with her husband in Mt. Olivet Cemetery, Washington, D. C., to await the coming of the Lord and the resurrection of the dead.

John D. Wood

SISTER MILLIE A. HARRIS

As ordered by the Primitive Baptist Church at Norfolk, Virginia, I will endeavor to write in memory of our beloved Sister Millie A. Harris.

She was born to Joseph and Louisiana Turner, February 9, 1884, and was called from this life July 18, 1964. She was united in marriage to the late William Jesse Harris and from this union five children were born. Three preceded her in death, leaving two daughters to mourn her passing, Mrs. Mildred Parker and Mrs. Edna Harris, four grandchildren and four great grandchildren.

A funeral service was conducted by her pastor, Elder C. N. Bunn. She was laid to rest in Oak Grove Cemetery, Portsmouth, Virginia, under a large arrangement of beautiful flowers, to await the call, "Come ye blessed of my father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."

Sister Harris was a firm believer in salvation, a gift of God by the shed blood of Jesus. She was made willing to declare what great things God had done for her when she was received into membership by the Norfolk Church, December 17, 1939. Baptism was the following month by her pastor, Elder R. B. Denson. Sister Harris' walk, conversation and faithful attendance at meetings proved the love she had for her brethren and sisters. Singing the songs of Zion and hearing the truth proclaimed was her joy. Many times during services when "Jesus, the way, the truth and the life" was being declared, she would speak aloud saying, "that's the truth." Although we will not hear her voice here again, her memory will remain with us, for all those who knew her loved her.

This writer feels that Sister Harris had been taught long ago that it is far better to depart and be with Christ Jesus than to remain in this world with all its sin, trials and tribulations.

We desire to extend our deep felt sympathy to her family and all who mourn. May they

be made to feel their loss is our dear sister's eternal gain.

Ruby E. Coward, Clerk

ROBERT T. WRIGHT

It has pleased our Heavenly Father to call from the walks of this life, Mr. Robert T. Wright, age 64. He is survived by his wife, Sister Bertha Wright; one daughter, Bettie Dallam, Rolling Hills, California; four sisters, Myrtle Stokes, Esther Nicholson and Lottie Wright, all of Oklahoma; and Reda Broudrick of Paso Robles, Calif.; and by five brothers, Clint, Dewey, Vester, Jesse and Clyde Wright all of Oklahoma; and two grandchildren.

The last enemy, death, came to our beloved friend at his home, April 21, 1965. Mr. Wright, a native of Oklahoma, had resided in California 24 years. He was loved by his many friends at Bakersfield as an honest and respected citizen. We believe that God who doeth all things well blessed him with a love for the Old Baptists, although he was not a member. He showed a kind welcome in his home to the brethren. Our desire is that the Lord of all mercy will reconcile Sister Bertha Wright to his holy and righteous will.

Elder T. R. Jefferson conducted the funeral services at Green Lawn Memorial Park, Bakersfield, California. ". . . we shall all be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye at the last trump: for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed." (1 Cor. 15:52) We extend to the loved ones and family our heartfelt sympathy.

Walter B. Wilson

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

We the church at Pleasant Grove wish to bow in humble submission to our gracious Heavenly Father in removing by death a beloved, dear sister, Lea Harrelson. She was a faithful and humble member, an example of Christian humility. Therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, That in the passing of our dear Sister Harrelson, we feel our loss very keenly; but bow in submission to one who doeth all things well. And

BE IT RESOLVED, That we extend to the family our heartfelt sympathy: May God's blessings be upon each of us who mourn her passing, together with the family and all to whom she was near and dear. And

BE IT RESOLVED, That a copy of these resolutions be spread on our church book; one sent to the family; and one to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Done by order of the church at her regular conference meeting in June, 1965.

Elder Kenneth Key, Moderator
Robert Walker, Clerk

RESOLUTIONS OF RESPECT

WHEREAS, The Lord in his infinite wisdom and mercy saw fit to remove from our midst August 23, 1965, our beloved sister, Minnie Boaze Myers, at the age of 83 years,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, That we bow in humble submission to God's holy will. Strawberry Church has lost a devoted and faithful member, who joined this church December 6, 1902, and was baptized by the late Elder G. W. Hundley. For over sixty-two years Sister Myers was faithful to her profession. She always looked forward to her meeting days. It was only divine providence that kept her from traveling forty miles each first Saturday and Sunday.

She will not only be missed in the home, church and neighborhood, but by all who knew her. She was a good wife, mother and neighbor. Always ready to help anyone in need. While we are deprived of her presence and godly conversation here, we feel it is her eternal gain; for she was removed from her bed of suffering which she bore patiently for over five months, to a land of rest. Pages could be written of her sterling qualities. If ever she knew an evil thought, she spoke no evil word. Her humble life of service should be an inspiration to us as we journey along in this evil world.

Sister Myers was tenderly cared for by husband, nurse, and twelve children. Special mention is made of the son and daughter at home who were there all the time and saw that every need was supplied for Mother.

Her funeral was conducted at Wrenn-Yeatts Funeral Chapel, Danville, Va., by her pastor Elder R. S. Payne, among a large gathering of brethren and friends, after which her body was laid to rest in Highland Burial Park, under a mound of beautiful flowers; there to await the coming of her blessed Saviour.

RESOLVED, That the church extend their love and sympathy to the bereaved family; and may God's blessings be upon her dear husband, children and all who mourn her departure. The Lord has given and the Lord has taken, blessed be his holy name.

RESOLVED AGAIN, That a copy of these resolutions be recorded on our church records; a copy sent to the family, and a copy sent to the *Signs of the Times* for publication.

Done by the order of Strawberry Church in conference September 4, 1965.

Elder R. S. Payne, Moderator
Josephine Dodd, Clerk