

Signs of the Times

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

1429 Howlett Street
Hillsville, Va. 24343

*Jesus, before thy face I fall,
My Lord, my life, my hope, my all;
For I have no where else to flee;
No sanctuary, Lord, but thee.*

*In thee I every glory view,
Of safety, strength, and beauty, too:
Beloved Saviour, ever be
A sanctuary unto me.*

*Whatever woes and fears betide,
In thy dear bosom let me hide;
And, while I pour my soul to thee,
Do thou my sanctuary be.*

*Through life and all its changing
scenes,
And all the grief that intervenes,
'Tis this supports my fainting heart,
That thou my sanctuary art.*

*Apace the solemn hour draws nigh,
When I must bow my head and die;
But O, what joy this witness gives,-
Jesus, my sanctuary lives.*

*He from the grave my dust will
raise;
I in the heavens will sing his
praise;
And when in glory I appear,
He'll be my sanctuary there.*

Medley.

CONTENTS

EDITORIAL	2
Elder Jerry B. Farmer	
CORRESPONDENCE	6
ARTICLES	6
Elder Wayman Chapell	
VOICES OF THE PAST	8
George Ruston	
Mary Ellison	
Elder Silas H. Durand	
Elder J.C. Philpot	
MEETINGS	20
CONTRIBUTIONS	21
OBITUARIES	22
Elder Richard H. Campbell	
Sister Iris Dove	
Gladys Holley Stegall	

 EDITORIAL

“And Ruth said, Entreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God: where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried: the Lord do so to me, and more also, if aught but death part me and thee.” Ruth 1:16-17.



Elder J. B. Farmer

These are some of the sweetest words recorded in all of scripture to me. I wonder, what makes it so? Is it that these words are the words of my own

heart? Is it that I have had a part in the feelings, desires, and hopes of one of the Lord's saints who lived so long ago? Is it that I have been given a deep and abiding love for the church, the people of God? I dare not claim any of these things for myself, other than to say I have a hope that it could be true. For I know that I am not worthy of any of all of the mercies, or any of all of the truth that God has revealed to His people. Nevertheless, I have been given a great desire to follow along after the children of grace wherever they are led – to rejoice with them and to suffer with them all the days of my life.

We see Ruth, the Moabite, in a situation where all her earthly plans and natural desires of a home with her husband and family had been dashed. Her husband, the son of the widow Naomi, had died and Ruth was childless. Her mother-in-law, that she loved so much, had heard that the Lord had visited His people in giving them bread, and was going forth from Moab to return to her home in Bethlehem. Naomi told Ruth and her sister Orpah to return to their people and their gods. We see Ruth torn between her natural love for her own natural family and her spiritual love for Naomi. In her father's house she would find acceptance and her natural needs met. But with Naomi, she had no certain dwelling place, and no promise of anything she would need. By grace, and against nature, Ruth chose to follow along after Naomi. We see her

made destitute of the world's goods, and of the world's protection, and altogether at the mercy of the God of heaven and earth. Nevertheless, she followed Naomi by faith and not by sight.

Ruth's sister in law, Orpah, whose husband had likewise died, at first said she also would cleave to Naomi. But when it was explained to her that there was nothing for her if she should follow Naomi, she returned to her father's house and her gods. I cannot help believing that she is typical of the worldly-minded persons. They seem to have a love for the true church, but when persecutions come, or when there is no hope for gain there, the natural mind prevails and they turn away to follow after the flesh. There is nothing in the true church that will satisfy the natural mind.

Ruth's experience makes me think of Moses when he was come to years, how he refused to be called the son of Pharaoh, but chose rather to suffer affliction with the children of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. He also by grace went against nature. It also makes me think of what the Lord said to His disciples. *"If any man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and even his own life also, he cannot be my disciple."* I am made to believe that this is the true experience of grace for each of God's chosen people. This world is not their home, be-

cause they are strangers and pilgrims here. They are blessed to seek a city, not made with hands, whose builder and maker is God. And they by faith, which works by love, follow on after the Lord.

Ruth, being a creature made subject to vanity, as we are, could not see the future, or the great things that were laid up in store for her. She must have, by grace, pressed on by faith from day to day to find what was ahead, to the glory of God. Ruth and Naomi were brought safely along the way and came to the little town of Bethlehem. It was the beginning of the barley harvest. None of these things were by chance. The timing of the death of Naomi's husband, Elimelech, and the timing of the death of her sons were of the Lord. The timing of their departure from Moab and arrival at Bethlehem in the beginning of the barley harvest was perfect. And Ruth's hap to light on the part of the field belonging to Boaz, of the kindred of Elimelech was no accident. Everything came to be in such a way that the children of God through the ages would understand, without a doubt, that God had worked the whole matter for the good of Ruth and to His glory. We are taught that *"all things work together for good to them that love God, to them that are the called according to His purpose."* And so it is, and so it is evident in the travels of this little one.

And it was no happenstance

that Boaz came to his field and noticed the damsel, Ruth, as she gleaned there. I am made to believe that Boaz was blessed with a great love for Ruth before he ever saw her face. I trust I have been brought along a little in this way of experience. I can remember, about forty years ago, when I first heard of the old Baptists and of their humble, honest and loving ways, how my heart burned with love for them. And I thought within myself, (but I hope and trust the Lord heard me) if only I could meet and know these people. Nevertheless, listen to the words of Boaz. *“And Boaz answered and said unto her, It hath fully been shewed me, all that thou hast done unto thy mother in law since the death of thine husband: and how thou has left thy father and thy mother, and the land of thy nativity, and art come unto a people which thou knewest 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.”* I am made to believe that this is the true experience of grace. The Lord’s people are given grace for grace. By grace, they are given faith to walk in the light, and by grace they are given to speak the truth in love. And by grace they are rewarded in their good works, as was Ruth. *“O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps.”* The

children of God are not blessed for their good works, but blessed in their good works, which are of Him. *“For all the promises of God are in him yea, and in him, Amen, unto the glory of God by us.”* There are no negatives in the gospel of grace.

I believe that Boaz was given a great love for Ruth that passes natural understanding. That love for Ruth was proven by the many manifestations of his care for her. He made her dwelling place sure. Boaz told her to glean in no other field, but to abide there fast by his maidens. He put his protection over her. He commanded the young men not to touch her. He made provision for her. Boaz commanded his young men to *“let her glean even among the sheaves, and reproach her not; and let fall also some of the handfuls of purpose for her, and leave them, that she may glean them, and reproach her not.”* I must believe that the Lord has blessed and will bless His people exceedingly abundantly above all that they are able to ask or to think, as He did to Ruth.

Because of the love Boaz had for Ruth, he desired to take her for his wife. In that day, upon a man’s death, his possessions could be redeemed or claimed by a near kinsman. Naomi, the widow of Elimelech, and her daughter-in-law Ruth were eligible to be redeemed by the near kinsman in the family. To receive Ruth for a wife meant that Boaz had

to redeem the possessions of Elimelech, which included Naomi and all that pertained to her deceased husband. There was an obstacle for Boaz to overcome if he should marry Ruth. The nearest kinsman had first rights for the redemption, and Boaz was not the nearest. So Boaz met the nearest kinsman in the gate of the city, and took ten elders of the city for witnesses. Boaz made it plain before all that the nearest kinsman had first rights of redemption, but that Ruth, the Moabitess was part of the purchase. Boaz said that if the nearest kinsman would not redeem it, he would. Upon learning that Ruth was a Moabitess, the nearest kinsman refused to purchase the possession. Because to take her, since she was a Gentile, would mar his inheritance.

I believe there is a wonderful teaching here for the Lord's people. It appears that the nearest kinsman represents the law. Under Jewish law it was forbidden for a Jew to marry a Gentile. If one should do so, he would take a blemish to himself and be subject to reproach from the devout Jews. The Gentile was considered a sinner, who should not be touched, much less married. So, the nearest kinsman could not do his part. No flesh is saved or redeemed by the law, neither can it be. The law was not given to save, but rather to be the ministration of condemnation and death. But salvation is by grace. Jesus came to save sinners. He looked past national and cultural

boundaries and saw the vessels of mercy that God had loved with an everlasting love. He loved them, sought them out, came unto them, gave Himself for them, made provision for them, redeemed them and took their reproach to Himself. He purchased His people from the curse of the law with His blood, and forever removed their sin from them, never to be remembered against them forever.

Ruth, who was despised by some because of her nativity, but beloved of others because of her faith, became the mother of Obed, the father of Jesse, the father of David. And we know that they were all in the lineage of the Lord Jesus Christ. We see that God, in His great wisdom has chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things that are mighty. He has done this so that no flesh should glory in His presence. It is written, "*He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.*"

This, I trust was written in love and in hope of eternal life.

J.B. Farmer
10-24-2010.

The Lord willing, I will mention a little experience I was given, that stayed with me for days until sitting down to write this. I was filling the bird feeder and became concerned about the birds that are ground feeders (mostly doves) that cannot get onto the feeder itself, but must

gather the little that falls to the ground while the other birds are feeding. Because of this, I dropped some handfuls purposely on the ground for the doves so they might find more when they came to feed. Then the scripture appeared concerning Boaz's instruction to let fall also some of the handfuls of purpose for Ruth, who was gleaning in his field.

CORRESPONDENCE

Vera N. Potter
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November 15, 2010

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Dear Brother Horton:

Please extend my subscription for two more years. I enjoy reading the Signs, especially the experiences. Thank you and the editors for your efforts.

I traveled many years where there were no meetings of the predestinarian order and the Signs was a great blessing to me. It still is.

In hope,
Vera (Nell) Potter

ARTICLES

CIRCULAR LETTER
LITTLE VINE OLDE
PREDESTINARIAN PRIMITIVE
BAPTIST ASSOCIATION
THIRTY-THIRD ANNUAL SESSION

In presenting a circular letter it is not our desire to present something new, nor to bring something forth that you have not already been taught by the Holy Spirit — the one that shows you the things of Christ — John 14:26. The scriptures remind us that there is no new thing under the sun — Eccl. 1:9. It is our desire however, that in this thirty third annual session of the association, that the spiritual rest, that is laid up in the finished work of the Lord and Savior, be manifest throughout. May God grant that our greetings and farewells be in peace and that the assembly, the order, and the words spoken be to the praise and glory of our God.

It is refreshing to experience the blessing of being gathered together with brothers and sisters of like faith and doctrine, desiring to again hear and speak of the wonderful works of our elder brother, the Lord Jesus Christ. This is the wonderful blessing that we know as "*fellowship*" — a word boundless in its meaning and beauty to those who experience it. It is the sharing of the things of our God and more. There is a sense

that our fellowship extends to every brother and sister in every location and in every age, But there is a special warmth in the personal fellowship of a congregation and the ingathering of brothers and sisters.

Yet this doesn't detract from the fellowship you often feel for those saints that were inspired to write the scriptures, nor even those ministers or church brothers who have already passed from this life. It is not unusual, in our quieter moments, to find ourselves feeding on sermons we have heard in the past or, reflect on the comforting words of a familiar hymn learned long ago or, brought up short in fondly remembering a gentle exhortation of a brother or sister who has already been called from this life. And we see the scriptural example, "*And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayer.*" Acts 2:42.

But fellowship is considered primarily for the church in the present. There was a reason for the apostle exhorting the church in "*Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is...*" Heb. 10:25. But the scriptures go even further than this exhortation in expressing the graces that are evidenced by our fellowship. The crowning beauty and full-

ness of our fellowship, one with another, is that it manifests our fellowship with God. See 1 John 1:3,4. "*That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with the Son Jesus Christ. And these things write we unto you, that your joy may be full.*"

Elder Wayman Chapell

ST. JOHN 1:1-9.

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

The same was in the beginning with God.

All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.

In him was life; and the life was the light of men.

And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not.

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John.

The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe.

He was not that Light, but was sent to bear witness of that Light.

VOICES OF THE PAST

1 CORINTHIANS XV. 58.

“Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.”

A sister in Ohio has requested that we write on the above Scripture. It is evident from her letter before us that she is distressed by the indifference to truth and godliness manifest among some professing, to be Old School or Primitive Baptists. God forbid that we should sit in judgment upon our brethren, or lightly esteem those for whom Christ died, for our most precious moments have been when sitting at the feet of the brethren and the banner over us was love. We have listened to the heavenly theme of salvation by grace, and have seen Jesus, exalted, and have loved the brethren so that we felt we could give our life for them. Then we felt our heart was fixed, and, like Ruth, we were steadfastly minded. We were sure these people were our people. Beloved brethren, *“Charity suffereth long, and is kind;” there can only be true steadfastness where there is faith that works by love. Blessed souls they are who are possessors of this*

love: God’s love. Such are easy to be entreated, and possess a willing mind. They want to be found in the Way, the good old way. This love constrains them, so that their walk and conversation are becoming; it “doth not behave itself unseemly.” Where this precious love is shed abroad in the heart there is a right conception of truth and godliness, for it *“rejoiceth in the truth,”* and the word of God is their criterion. It beareth all things, believeth, hopeth and endureth all things according to the word of God. One with such love may be deceived for awhile by those who profess love to them, but the true test is, What think ye of the Beloved, and what is his word, his work, to you for do not I love them that love thee? We are not commanded to love everybody, nor to fellowship anything contrary to God’s word. If there are brethren for whom we have professed love and fellowship there can but be a desire in our hearts for them and their welfare, and a questioning as to the spirit that we ourselves possess. Are we prompted by love? Has love through all our actions run? We hear of many up and down this land denying this doctrine or subscribing to that, but we never hear of a poor sinner who has suffered under the condemnation of God’s holy law, and God’s grace has reached him, lightly speaking of grace. We mean the grace of God that bringeth salvation and teaches the denying of ungod-

liness and worldly lusts. In the living of this grace there is a sure defence of the truth. Paul says, "*Be ye steadfast.*" Where love is, there is the best ground for brethren to be rooted steadfast in the apostolic doctrine. "*Unmoveable.*" There are many things calculated by Satan and his angels to move the child of God. Bonds and afflictions abide them, but Paul says, "*None of these things move me.*" Faith looks beyond the things that are seen, it has respect unto Him who has promised knowing that he who has promised is able to perform. Some today are not asking for the old paths where is the good way, but rather are departing from them, and are inclined to try and remove the ancient landmarks, but the Lord still reigns, and in his purpose there has always been a sifting of his people. In that sifting the chaff will go, but not a grain of wheat will fall to the ground. Sometimes there is a shaking by various winds of doctrines but that which is steadfast cannot be shaken, therefore remains. The church is being sifted today; there are those in it who do not belong there, for by their fruit ye shall know them. While some are denying the doctrine, others hold the form of sound doctrine whose lives are unbecoming, and in some cases, we fear they appear to hide behind predestination. Remember the accountability of men and devils is just as truly set forth in the word as the predestination of God. and he who

would hide behind predestination in his wickedness is out of the secret. There is in this day in many places a conformity to the spirit of this world, and wherever this is so the understanding becomes dull in the things belonging to godliness. The conscience is less tender and the affections cold, sin is not the burden it once was to the soul, and there is little crucifying of the old man and his deeds. Again, in this day there is an absence of spiritual conversation as brethren assemble together, and often worldly topics, foolish talking or jesting take its place. Paul says, "*Be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind.*" We are called to glory and virtue, and in learning of Christ there is of necessity a putting off concerning the former conversation, the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts.

But to return to our subject. Throughout the whole of the fifteenth chapter of first Corinthians Paul is dwelling, upon the resurrection of the dead. There were some among the Corinthian Church who said there was no resurrection of the dead. Such denial, if true, would remove all "*hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began.*" Therefore Paul begins by declaring what he had delivered unto them, and states that his testimony was according to the Scripture. He makes mention particularly that he

had testified of Christ's burial and resurrection, and then mentions many witnesses, including himself, and he informs them that the greater part of the said witnesses were still living, while some had fallen asleep. From the substance of the whole chapter it is easy to discern that the closing verse is an admonition to the brethren to be steadfast in the doctrine, especially in the resurrection of the dead. To us the resurrection is a glorious, soul-cheering theme, too high for mortals to comprehend and too profound for controversy. We believe in the resurrection of the dead, both of the just and the unjust, and while it doth not yet appear what we shall be, yet we hope we are not deceived when we say that there is that within us that says, like Paul, *"That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death; if by any means I might attain unto the resurrection of the dead."* There are two ways of denying the resurrection: one verbally, that is, with our mouths, and the other by our walk and testimony in divine things. From verses thirty-three and thirty-four we have reason to think there were those in the Corinthian Church who denied the resurrection in their corrupt and unrighteous walk. Whilst there are none to our knowledge among the Old School Baptists who deny the resurrection verbally, yet there are those who deny it in their

walk and conversation. The scriptural record is simple, and is sufficient condemnation to any who might verbally deny the resurrection, but it is our intention in this article to warn the brethren against such who say that Christ lives, yet deny him in their lives. Paul says, *"I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received."* Has there been anything delivered unto us? Have we received the truth that Jesus died, and that he died for our sins, and that he was buried and arose the third day for our justification? If we have received this we have received the word of truth, the gospel of our salvation, and we have in us evidences of a new birth, also of a deliverance from the law and its penalties by the body of Christ. We have evidence of the resurrection powers, for we have risen by the operation of the gospel in us from under the condemnation of the law to the liberty wherewith Christ makes us free. The Scripture fits us then where Paul says, *"If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above,"* and it can truly be said of us, *"Old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new,"* so there is now a new man in Christ Jesus. There may be those who would say that the resurrection power manifest in this new man is all the resurrection he will know. Whosoever they are they certainly place themselves in the same error as Hymenreus and Philetus, who concerning the truth

have erred, saying that the resurrection is passed already, thus overthrowing the faith of some. There is a resurrection still ardently desired by the new man, which we hope to show as we proceed.

This new man is distinct from the old man, for it is a heavenly creation, created after God in righteousness and true holiness, yet it is the sinner that is born again, it is the sinner that is saved. Let us consider the new man "*according to the scriptures,*" for while our hope is that we shall bear the image of the heavenly, we do not yet see ourselves in this heavenly image. This new man has a mouth, for he says, Thy word was found, and I did eat it, &c. What is this mouth? it is not the mouth of the natural man. He has a nose with which he smells the heavenly fragrance of the vine with its tender grapes; it delights to smell the unction of grace. He also has eyes with which he sees Jesus crowned with glory and honor; he also sees his calling. He has an ear also that hearkens to the truth and hears the voice of the good Shepherd, but it knows not the voice of a stranger. He has a heart that is a new heart and it is with this heart that he believes unto righteousness. He has hands with which he gathers the handfuls of purpose that fall for him in the gospel field; he also clings to Christ, the blest angel of life, saying, I will not let thee go except thou bless me. He has feet that walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

With these feet he can run and not be weary, and walk and faint not. None of us can describe what this new man really is, but we know and can positively testify that as is the heavenly so are they that are heavenly (present tense), and we thank God it is written, As we have borne the image of the earthy (which image we have borne and are bearing), so shall we also bear the image of the heavenly. Lest any should say we have separated the new man from the sinner we will proceed further. This mortal body is the dwelling-place of the new man. Paul says we have this treasure in earthen vessels, also bearing about in our body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life of Jesus might be made manifest in our body. By the quickening of our mortal bodies by the Spirit dwelling in us there is a painfulness, an anxiety, a questioning and a declaration, "*O wretched man that I am,*" &c. Paul tells of an experience in which he saw things unlawful to be uttered, and he says, Whether in the body or out of the body I cannot tell. Many of the saints have had experiences similar to Paul, but while here in this time state they are in the body. There are also joys experienced, so that our whole body is filled with praise, and our mouth utters what our heart feels, and our eyes shed tears of joy. All this is not an expression of the old man, but of the new, and the sinner is the new man. The old man is crucified, for they that are Christ's have crucified

the flesh with the affections and lusts. There is not one sinful inclination of the sinner but what the new man mourns over and would have it otherwise. This makes him long for cleansing blood, and he deplors his vileness, and will ever do so as long as he bears the image of the earthy. If the mind of man could be put in a beast it would not be satisfied, but would aspire to be equal with man, yet having the mind of man he would feel more humiliation because he had a beast's likeness, which humiliation would not cease until he was in the likeness of man. So it is with us, for this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality, and until this comes to pass the saying that is written is but a "saying." But when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the "saying" that is written, "*Death is swallowed up in victory,*" and this victory is through our Lord Jesus Christ. "*Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.*"

Elder George Ruston

WHEELING, West Virginia.

DEAR BRETHREN: - I am sending sister Ellison's letter, subject to your approval. She sent it to me, but I had some fears of sending it to you, fearing it would take too much space. To me it seems a wonderful letter. I feel very thankful for the gift of the SIGNS. I find much good reading in it, and love it for the truth's sake. My life is a busy one, and I long for more time to read and write; indeed this is my whole desire. My Bible, Baptist papers and hymn books look very inviting, to me, but I cannot feel to let the necessary housework go undone, as far as my health will permit me to pursue it.

I am, I hope, your sister, although very unworthy,

FLORENCE PULTZ.

TOPEKA, Kansas.

DEAR SISTER: - I was so overwhelmed by distracting sorrow and distress I seemed to have forgotten the omnipresent God, and had no thought to call upon him as an ever-present help in time of trouble. But while so forgetful of him, he showed me, as I humbly hope, that he had not forgotten me, by speaking these words in my ear: As the days of a tree so shall the days of my people be. Then, in the midnight darkness and loneliness, in the midst of an

ever-changing throng of a speeding train, I lay back in my seat, and with closed eyes, oblivious to all about me, a picture was spread before me such as I have never been able to portray with tongue or pen. The winter just passed has been another continuous siege of distracting grief and tribulation, and my mind reverts to the view I then had, and I have wished I might express to those of *“like precious faith,”* and also of like trials and conflicts, some of the thoughts those words have brought to my mind. Being spoken to me as they were, I thought they were Scripture, but the only text I can find is in Isaiah lxxv. 22: *“They shall not build, and another inhabit; they shall not plant, and another eat: for as the days of a tree are the days of my people, and mine elect shall long enjoy the work of their hands.”*

I have thought that the “tree” here spoken of represents Christ, who was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, and as his days so shall the days of his people be. As I lay back, with closed eyes, I seemed to see a little tree in all its verdant, springtime beauty, clothed with leaves and blossoms. In the warm sunshine and gentle breeze it waved and beckoned with its spreading branches, and how sweet to rest beneath its shade, enjoy its fragrant bloom, and reflect on the prospect of fruit to follow. So shall the days of my people be. Where is the similitude of the days of a tree

and the days of the Lord’s people
Let us go back to the early experience of a child of God,

“When converts first begin to sing.

Their happy souls are on the wing;

Their theme is all redeeming love,

Fair would they be with Christ above.”

Oh what lovely blossoms, and what a sweet savor of Christ they send forth as they call and beckon to us *“to come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will declare what he hath done for my soul.”* *“Sing, O ye heavens; for the Lord hath done it: shout, ye lower parts of the earth: break forth into singing, ye mountains, O forest, and every tree therein.”*

The trees of the field do clap their hands, the cedars of Lebanon (the older brethren) bow at his feet, and praise him in fullness of joy, resting in the blessed promise that the Lord will not leave himself without witnesses. Perhaps the little tree had stood unnoticed, apparently dead, until the little leaves began to grow and the signs of life involuntarily began to appear. What rejoicing, now that we see it is not dead, as it appeared, and now we hope to see the sweet fruits of the Spirit evidenced later on, for they shall take root downward and bear fruit upward. But, as the days of a tree, by

and by the sun does not shine so brightly, clouds appear, and oh how dark it becomes. A storm arises, and in the raging the poor little tree sways and bends, the lovely bloom is beaten off and swept away, or covered with earth. The storm passes, and the little tree is left standing, not so proudly, perhaps, but of a more sober dignity, as, the promising bloom gone, the fruit buds begin to appear, and as the fruit increases in the upward branches the root is taking deeper hold in the earth. So are the days of my people.

"It is not long before they feel,

Their feeble souls begin to reel;

They think their former hopes are vain,

They're filled with sorrow, grief and pain."

Cannot every child of God go back in memory to the time they thought they would always go on their way rejoicing in the bloom of their earliest love, believing the enemies of their carnal nature were all slain, and would never vex or annoy them any more. But alas, the little clouds begin to arise, vexations come, and the lovely bloom is beaten off as the sorrows of the world worketh death to the sweet spiritual enjoyment, perhaps leading them as far as Peter, to even deny the Lord, saying in doubt and unbel-

ief, that after all it is only a delusion, and they were deceived and had deceived others. Where now is the blessedness ye spake of? The beautiful promising bloom which looked so pleasant is gone from their view, swept away and buried in the storm of earthly cares and sorrows that has so unexpectedly fallen upon them. *"But the root of the righteous shall not be moved."* The storm passes, and they find themselves still standing in the faith of God's elect, cast down, but not destroyed. Oh then the fruit buds begin to appear, as in humbleness they are brought to see that it is not in their own strength they stand. *"I am the root and the offspring of David."* This is the Root that extends downward in the earthen vessel of mercy. Each can say, O Lord, *"my goodness extendeth not to thee,"* but his goodness does reach down to every vessel of mercy. The strong downward Root holds firm, and will not let them be overwhelmed. They are made to realize that *"the root of the righteous yieldeth fruit,"* which is borne upward in praise and thanksgiving to God for deliverance from the storm. The many storms of affliction and sorrow, trials and tribulations, perils and persecutions break and beat upon the *"trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord,"* until they bow and bend, so shaken in mind they fear they cannot stand; no, not another day.

*"I fear at last that I shall fall,
For if a saint, the least of all."*

Yet when the storm passes, and the Sun of righteousness once more beams forth, then in this light, and not their own feeble sight, they see it is not in their own strength they still stand, but the Strength of Israel has held them. Not by works of righteousness which they have done, not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord. Much more of the cherished fruit is gone. But when blooming youth is gone, and old age comes on, we are made to realize that it is the bitter, gnarly fruit, of self-confidence and fleshly ambition that is being beaten off. It came from earth, and must fall back from whence it came, for *"Every plant which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up,"* but the *"tree of righteousness, the planting of the Lord,"* its fruit shall remain. One by one we see every earthly hope and joy beaten off and swept away, but the fruit of the Spirit, love, joy, peace and fellowship with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ, oh nothing shall ever be able to separate us from that. How gladly we should have the gnarly, poisonous fruits of the flesh pruned away, so that we might shine forth as the morning, with not a cloud to intervene between us and our Rock, who shelters us in this weary land of storms

and trouble. As the tree grows older, as the growth in grace and in the knowledge of truth increases, the poor tempest-tossed child of God seems to gain strength in the storms, often stands more firm, and is not so easily tossed to and fro by every wind of doctrine; does not so lightly bow and bend to the heres and theres, but the sweet fruits of the Spirit are borne upward to him, the Strength of Israel, the Root of David, in the earthen vessel, has kept him from falling, and enables him to say, I can do all things through Christ who strengtheneth me. If it is his will that I shall weather another storm he will give the old trunk, stripped of all the foliage of youthful hopes and ambitions, every branch of earthly aspirations and joys broken off, strength to endure. But oh the weakness of the flesh. How we do shrink and dread when we see the storm coming, though there is a *"needs be"* for it all, and we know that

*"Not a single shaft can hit,
Until the God of love sees fit."*

How we do feel the need of the prayers of all saints, for it does seem at times that this flesh and heart will surely fail. Oh may he, by the power of his might, when the adverse winds do blow, give me strength to still stand in the way, ready for whatever is in the counsel of his will to come next.

"As the days of a tree." How

often have we seen the tall cedars, the sturdy oaks, beaten by the storms of many seasons almost to the ground, nothing left but their bare old trunks, and to all appearance have lived their time and served their purpose, yet they do not quite fall; not yet, their downward roots have not yet parted from the earth, they must wait the appointed time to fall. So shall the days of my people be. Old age is come, the bare old trunk is stripped of every alluring earthly joy, until there is nothing left to live for, and *"I long to lay my armor by, and dwell with Christ at home"* for,

*"Surely like a withered tree,
No fruit to me is found,
Why do I live, O Lord, I cry,
A cumberer of the ground?"*

*"When a few more days I've
wasted,*

*When a few more scenes are
o'er,*

*When a few more griefs I've
tasted,*

*I shall fall, to bloom no
more."*

But not yet. The downward Root has not yet parted from the earthen vessel, and though I often feel, especially in the heart-rending trials I have endured of late, that there is no fruit borne upward from such a withered and weather-beaten old trunk, yet all the days of my appointed time I must wait until my

change come.

One night as I lay thinking of the trials and conflicts of the Lord's peculiar people these words came to my mind with force, *"I see men as trees, waiting,"* and I thought how like a tree is the walk of the Lord's people. None can see men, nor the people of God, walking as trees, untilled out of the town, or world, as was the blind man, by God's own hand, and how short the time until made to see that as the days of a tree, so are the days of the Lord's people. He sometimes lays his hand heavily upon us, showing us what great things we must suffer for his sake, until we cry, *"Have pity upon me, have pity upon me, O ye my friends; for the hand of God hath touched me."* Whom he loves he rebukes and chastens, and it is his chastening hand that makes us look up, until we see clearly every man, every child of God, walking the same path, everyone enduring the same storms and afflictions, for if ye be without chastisement, then are ye bastards and not sons. There is no place of rest for us in the town, or world; we cannot go back there, or tell to any in the town of the things we see clearly. They know nothing of the reproach of the cross, and have no sympathy for the mourning people of God. But to our own house, there we may freely go, sure to find there the sympathy and fellowship we crave. There all speak the same language, weeping with those who weep and rejoicing with

those who do rejoice. Here we see men as trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, walking the same road, buffeted on every hand by storms without and within. The same storms that beat and bend one old tree beat upon all, and though one may feel that the storm has brought him a little lower than the rest ever get, yet all the rest feel the same way: less than the least of all saints. But in this is our fellowship and our love made perfect, and we often find the lowest tree bears the sweetest fruit, as the apple-tree among the trees of the wood. What a comparison. The low apple-tree is the one that bears the fruit. The ones that stand the highest are not always the most fruitful. But *“as the apple-tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons.”* *“Though the Lord be high, yet hath he respect unto the lowly.”* His loved ones among the sons of earth are lowly. A proud look he hates and abominates. The proud he knoweth afar off. But the fruit of his love on the lowly trees is sweet to our taste; yes, sweet, because when we are made to look up we see that his banner over us is love, and know that, *“Though I walk in the midst of trouble, thou wilt revive me.”* *“Thy rod and thy staff they comfort me.”*

As the days of a tree, so are my people. As the tree falls, there shall it lie. It falls to earth, and returns to the dust as it was, and so shall it be until the bright morning of the res-

urrection, when the Lord shall bring again in power that which fell in weakness, and will clothe it again in the beauty of holiness, then shall we be satisfied. Every idol that now intervenes between us and our love will be swept away, and we shall see his face, and never, never Sin. No more storms of darkness and sorrow falling upon us, no more crying of pain and anguish, no more griefs and heartaches, no more trouble and mourning, no more losses and crosses, no more wars and fightings, the conflict will be over, our warfare ended, and God himself shall wipe the tears from off all faces, for, *“As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you.”* Then shall we see him as he is, and be like him. *“As the days of a tree [He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief] are the days of my people.”*

Submitted to the discretion of the editors, and through them to the people of God, walking as trees, toiling, sorrowing, rejoicing, the half of which can never be told.

One of the least,
MARY ELLISON.

PSALMS 139:17.

How precious also are thy thoughts unto me, O God! how great is the sum of them!

FRAGMENTS

When God worketh in us to will, and has not yet worked in us to do, we are in a sad, desolate, self-loathing condition. Our desires then are to do that which is good and absolutely free from selfishness and sin, but *“how to perform that which is good we find not.”* It may give us a little rest from trouble to know that the apostle Paul expressed the same condition concerning himself, but it will not drive the trouble away. The things that we would do, that we have a desire for, we do not think we have any right to do. *“We would but cannot pray;”* *“we would but cannot repent.”* We feel not merely that we cannot say the words of prayer, but the words, in our mouth, would not be prayers. It seems that it is not our right to pray; it is not our right and privilege to repent; it does not belong to us to be baptized. We have no right to the promises and commands and blessings of the gospel. These things belong to the Lord’s people. But when the Lord *“works in us to do,”* then we realize a sacred mystery. We have done these things, and yet have not done them. They have been done in and for us. We take the works of Jesus as ours; we walk in them; they are wrought in us, and it now becomes a blessed privilege to work them out, to manifest them openly in our walk and conversation.

How wonderfully the apostle

here Comes along the road we have trodden, reminds us of our *“consolation in Christ”* in past days, of our comfort of love and of the mercies of God, and before we are aware we seem to be telling ourselves how we ought to be of one mind, seek the things of others, and not our own, and So manifest in what we say and do the mind that was in Christ Jesus, which the same apostle says we have. (1 Cor. ii. 16.) The humility of the mind of Christ is spoken of as it is manifest in his coming under the law, making himself of no reputation, and becoming obedient to all its demands against his people, even to the shameful death of the cross. Then his exaltation above every name, so that everything in heaven and in earth and under the earth bows the knee in acknowledging allegiance to his name and obedience to his will.

What power the sun has in the heavens, and what power the heavens have over the earth. Oh, that this great, broad, high atmosphere of the truth of God might Come down to Die and enfold me, and enlighten and enrich my soul with its holy power. Oh, that my thoughts and desires might continually reach up into the infinite depths of those gospel heavens, even to the Sun of Righteousness, whose circuit is from one end of the heavens to the other, and whose heat and light reach throughout its whole extent. My desire is that those heavenly powers and blessings might so control this

earthly nature of mine that holy things may grow out of it, and be manifest in my life; that the corn and the wine and the oil might come forth from the depths of my soul, where God, I hope, has sowed them, and so the life and blessings of Jesus be manifest in my mortal flesh; that I might have the assurance that God is working in me to will and to do, and so feel it my blessed privilege to work out in my daily life and walk my own salvation so graciously wrought in me, and so render obedience to his holy will.

What wonderful control the heavens have over the earth, which lies so helplessly, so quietly, so passively and obediently under their power. What precious fruits are brought forth out of the earth's bosom by the Sun, which has his tabernacle in them. As the earth lies under that glorious heavenly control, and is responsive to it, so the Lord's people, the new earth, lie under the power of Jesus, *"whose glory covers the heavens."* *"He comes down upon them like rain, and as showers that water the earth."* Then his sunshine warms them into sweet obedience, and the plants of his grace are put forth, and the flowers appear on the earth, and the precious fruits of the Spirit are perfected.

And they are ready to *"do all things without murmurings and disputings,"* working out their salvation with fear and trembling. There certainly are times when this vile, re-

bellious nature of ours is held under control by the Spirit, and we have a little rest from its troublesome disputings and murmurings. Much of our time we are mourning and worrying because we are so vile, or else because we cannot have our own way. With some this sad, rebellious winter state of the soul seems to continue much of their time. But there are times when they can feel that this command is upon this unruly nature: *"The Lord is in his holy temple; let all the earth keep silence before him."*

Elder Silas H. Durand
MAY, 1903.

"And I will give her her vineyards from thence, and the valley of Achor for a door of hope; and she shall sing there, as in the days of her youth, and as in the day when she came up out of the land of Egypt."-Hosea ii, 15.

Now the "valley of Achor" signifies the "valley of trouble." It was the valley in which Achan was stoned, And why stoned? Because he had taken the accursed thing; because his eye had been captivated by the Babylonish garment and golden wedge, and he had buried them in the tent. This may throw a light on what the "valley of Achor" is spiritually, Perhaps you have been guilty of Achan's sin; you have

been taking the accursed thing; have been too deeply connected with the world; have done things which God's displeasure is against, Let conscience speak in the bosom of each. The consequence has been, that you have got into the "valley of Achor!" Trouble, sorrow, and confusion are your lot, and you do not know whether the lot of Achan may not await you there.

Now it is in this "valley of Achor," or sorrow, confusion, and fear, that the "door of hope" is opened. But why "in the valley of Achor?" That we may cease to hope in self; that a sound and true gospel hope may enter within the veil as an anchor sure and steadfast, and there be no hope but in the precious blood of the Lamb, and in a sweet manifestation of that blood to the conscience. This is the "door of hope" through which the soul looks into the very presence of God; sees Jesus on the throne of grace, the sprinkled mercy-seat, and the great High Priest "able and willing to save to the uttermost." Through this "door of hope," by which Christ is seen, the soul goes forth in desires, breathings, hungerings, and thirstings after him; and through this "door of hope" descend visits, smiles, tokens, testimonies, mercies, and favours. And thus, there is "a door of hope," no longer

barred, closed, and shut back, but thrown wide open in the bleeding side of an incarnate God. Here is a renewing of visits almost despaired of; of joys that seemed never to return; of hopes almost extinct; of consolations remembered, but remembered almost with fear, lest they should have been delusive. *"She shall sing there, as in the days of her youth, and as in the day when she came up out of the land of Egypt."*

Elder J. C. Philpot

MEETINGS

SPRINGFIELD PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH

As per precepts and examples as set forth in the written word of God, Springfield Primitive Baptist Church looked out among themselves and recognized a certain gift. They therefore called for a presbytery to be formed November 13th, 2010 at 6:30 p.m. at Springfield Primitive Baptist Church, Gretna, VA, for the purpose of examination of this gift, Brother Bobby R. Pickral and if found qualified to be ordained to the full work and service as deacon.

All Elders of our faith and order present were invited to sit in the presbytery and all deacons were asked to sit together. The meeting opened by prayer by Elder Junior Conner, Elder Marvin Brumfield was elected as moderator and Elder Cleo Robertson to serve as clerk. Brother Oscar Pickral, acting as spokesman for the church, delivered Brother Bobby R. Pickral to the presbytery.

The qualifications for deacon was read as set forth in scriptures Timothy 3:1-13 by Elder Jimmy Gray. Examinations followed by Elders Raymond Goad, Junior Conner, Jimmy Gray, Marvin Brumfield and Cleo Robertson. The presbytery being satisfied as to the qualifications of this candidate proceeded with the laying on of hands and prayer was offered by Elder Jimmy Gray. The charge was delivered to Brother Bobby Pickral by Elder Junior Conner. He was then delivered back to the church as an ordained deacon.

The minutes of the work of the presbytery were read and adopted, a copy to be placed in the church records, a copy to be sent to the Signs of the Times for publication and a copy to be given to Brother Bobby Pickral along with a certificate of ordination.

Presbytery was dismissed by Elder Cleo Robertson.

Elder Marvin Brumfield, Moderator

Elder Cleo Robertson, Clerk

Springfield Church Nov. 13, 2010.

Deacons present at Presbytery of Brother Bobby R. Pickral.

Brethren:

Fred Murphy
 Randolph Wells
 Richard Lawless
 Ira Powell
 Donald Agee
 William Midkiff
 Oscar Pickral

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR NOVEMBER 2010

Susan Shelton, NC	10.00
Patsy Mitchell, TX.....	5.00
Shelby Stratton, MS	25.00
Mary Lee, NC	5.00
Dorothy Holley, VA.....	5.00
W. H. Norman, NC.....	10.00
Chlonetia Thompson, VA	5.00
Meta L. Mills, AR.....	10.00
Vera Potter, MS.....	5.00
Emmie Grayson, AL	5.00

OBITUARIES

ELDER RICHARD H. CAMPBELL

Elder R. H. Campbell

On the way home from the annual meeting at the Bordeaux church at Nashville the cell phone rang and we were informed that the earthly pilgrimage of our beloved Elder Richard H. Campbell had ended about 1:30 p.m. This was Sunday afternoon November 7, 2010. The congregation at the Bordeaux meeting had been told of his serious condition at the beginning of services that morning, but it was still unexpected. He had developed pneumonia following a long bout with leukemia. Funeral services were held on Wednesday followed by military honors and burial at the West Tennessee Veterans, Cemetery in his home county of Shelby, near Memphis.

Brother Campbell was born October 25, 1923 at Hickman, Kentucky to Primitive Baptist parents—Brother and Sister Luther and Carrie Campbell. Although he was well acquainted with the formalities of church doctrine early in life he did not receive it experimentally until much later. He was baptized into the fellowship of the Memphis 1st Primitive Baptist Church in November 1957. His experience was written and published

in the April, 1965 issue of the Signs of the Times.

He had a successful business career, which was primarily in sales, following his World War II experiences. He was a disabled veteran. Later in his career he and his family owned and operated a business establishment in Memphis—Arts East.

Elder Campbell was ordained to the full work of the ministry in August 1970 at the request of the Memphis church and was serving as pastor at the time of his death. He also pastored the Bordeaux Primitive Baptist Church at Nashville for many years and was the current pastor of Cane Creek Primitive Baptist Church near Rives, Tennessee. During his ministry he traveled widely and was well received in churches across the south and through the lower midwest. He was well known both for his preaching as well as his articles in the Signs of the Times of which he had been an associate editor for forty years.

He is survived by his wife Bettye and daughter Derrie Lynn Hodges, two grandchildren, three great grandchildren as well as a brother and three sisters.

Written at the request of his Memphis home church, in conference. A copy to be sent to the Signs of the Times, requesting publication, and a copy to his wife Mrs. Bettye Campbell. A copy also to be recorded in the records of the Memphis church.

Written by Wayman Chapell and approved in conference.

Elaine Jones, Clerk

SISTER IRIS DOVE

Sister Iris Dove passed away Monday evening, November 15, 2010 at Richfield Nursing Center in Salem, Virginia. She was 80: born May 5, 1930 in Roanoke, Virginia.

She was the youngest of the five children of Brother Luther Dove and Sister Lettie Pickeral Dove. Both were members of Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church.

Sister Iris was a premature baby with cerebal palsey and in all her 80 years never walked.

She was so glad God had spared her with normal intelligence.

She said the happiest day of her life was when God revealed to her that her soul was saved. A few days later she joined the church in August 1964.

We were blessed to visit her for approximately a half hour the day before her passing. It was very obvious she was dying and not able to talk. Yet she continually smiled, a sweet, meek and humble smile.

Her folks, old and feeble themselves, plan to have a memorial service later.

Written by one blessed to travel many miles with her and Sister Frances Robert Dove.

Sister Mamie Rose D. Ferguson

GLADYS HOLLEY STEGALL

I am honored, but do not feel competent, to write an obituary for Sister Gladys Stegall. Sister Gladys was born August 12, 1923 and was called home on October 5, 2010. She was the daughter of Brother Charlie Lester Holley and Sister Susan Brumfield Holley. She was the beloved wife of Brother Richard Stegall, who died July 16, 2002. Sister Gladys is survived by one daughter, Rachel Wimmer, a son-in-law, Mike Wimmer, one sister, Viola Davis, two granddaughters, Michelle Dison and Amy Parrott and three great-grandchildren, Kiera Dison, Micah Parrott, and Spencer Parrott.

Her funeral was conducted at Norris Funeral Services by Elders Mark Terry and Marvin Brumfield. Her body was laid to rest in Highland Burial Park in Danville, Virginia, October 7, 2010.

Some of my earliest memories include Brother Richard and Sister Gladys. They were like an aunt and uncle to my brothers and me. We spent so much time with them at church, listening to Sister Gladys's beautiful voice raised in songs of praise to her Lord. They joined Malmaison Primitive Baptist Church and were baptized together in August of 1962. They were faithful to attend the church services far and near. Brother Richard and Sister Gladys hosted visitors to the Staunton River Association and in-

vited the Brethren to their home for meals, song services and snacks throughout the year. I remember so many sweet visits in their home listening to them and their guests discussing the scriptures and speaking of the goodness and mercy of God. Sister Gladys missed Brother Richard so much, but she continued to attend church services and support her church in every way that she could. During her times of grief and poor health, she affirmed that God did not make any mistakes and always told us how good He was to her.

Sister Gladys was lovingly cared for by her daughter and other family members who helped her, but she was ready to go home. How her family, Malmaison Church, and all of her Brethren who loved her so much, will miss her! In spite of our loss, we do feel that God was merciful in taking Sister Gladys to Himself where pain and grief cannot disturb her

*“Jesus, while our hearts are bleeding,
O’er the spoils that death has won
We would at this solemn meeting
Calmly say. “Thy will be done.”*

*Tho’ today we’re filled with mourning,
Mercy still is on the throne;*

*With thy smiles of love returning,
We can sing, “Thy will be done.*

*“By thy hands the boon was given,
Thou hast taken but thine own;
Lord of earth and God of heaven,
Evermore, “Thy will be done.”*

Although we have suffered a great loss, we feel that it was such a blessing to have known and loved Sister Gladys. How thankful I desire to be for the love and fellowship of this precious Sister! May the dear Lord reconcile us all to His will and comfort all of us who mourn for her.

Humbly submitted by one who loved her,

Joyce Williams Pittman

ST. LUKE 17: 20-21.

And when he was demanded of the Pharisees, when the kingdom of God should come, he answered them and said, The kingdom of God cometh not with observation:

Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, the kingdom of God is within you.

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*How sweet, how heavenly is the sight,
When those who love the Lord
In one another's peace delight,
And thus fulfil his word:*

*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:*

*When free from envy, scorn,
and pride,
Our wishes all above,
Each can his brother's failings
hide,
And show a brother's love:*

*When love in one delightful
stream
Through every bosom flows;
And union sweet, and dear es-
teem
In every action glows!*

*Love is the golden chain that
binds
The happy souls above;
And he's an heir of heaven that
finds
His bosom glow with love.*

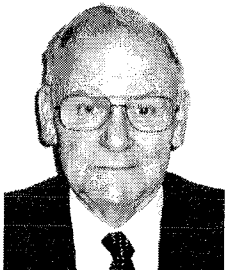
Swain.

CONTENTS

EDITORIAL	26
Elder Cleo Robertson	
CORRESPONDENCE	29
VOICES OF THE PAST	30
Mrs. Frederick W. Keene	
Elder H. H. Lefferts	
Clifford Willbanks	
Elder J. R. Williams	
Elder Gilbert Beebe	
Elder J.C. Philpot	
CONTRIBUTIONS	48

 EDITORIAL

1st Timothy 5:24, *"Some men's sins are open beforehand, going before to judgment; and some men they follow after."*



Elder Cleo D. Robertson

The Apostle Paul writes unto Timothy who he felt to be his son in the faith and ministry and charges Timothy to *"war a good warfare, holding faith, and a good conscience."* As given to him by Christ, the apostle sets forth the doctrine and order for the church of Christ. There were those of that day preach-

ing and following after fables and *"desiring to be teachers of the law, but understanding neither what they say, nor whereof they affirm."* The same is true this day as it was in that day.

The prevailing and popular belief is that all mankind will stand before God in the end of time and give an account of their works. Those who have worked sufficiently witnessing to others of Christ and saving enough souls by getting them to accept Christ will have salvation and those who didn't will be put in hell. They believe that is when the judgment will take place for all mankind. But, the apostle writes that *"some men's sins are open beforehand, going before to judgment."* I believe that this is an important and precious doctrine to the Lord's people. All mankind are sinners. Of this there is no question. Romans 5:12, *"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."* Even the Lord's people were by nature the children of wrath as others until the Lord quickened them together with Christ, for by grace are you saved and not of works. In your experience, the Lord showed you your sinful condition and it was all black and filthy. You could not see anything good. All was darkness and you felt to be the worst of sinners with not even a glimmer of hope. You felt that you were lost and that hell would be

your home eternally. O, such fear and despondency! You cried out with the Apostle Paul, *"O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"* All the reading of scriptures was only condemnation. No one, not even your spouse, parents, or preacher could give you any comfort. You felt as Isaiah wrote in chapter 64:6, *"But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away."* But, the precious, wonderful Lord of grace, truth and mercy doesn't leave His people in that condition. He gives you faith to believe in Him and comes to you manifesting His presence in such a warm, loving, comforting way that you now are given a hope and peace that you would not trade for all that the world has to offer. As a part of the virtuous woman (the church of Christ), your price is far above rubies. With you it is the ninth hour, the hour of prayer, and you are blessed to behold Christ at the ninth hour on the cross as he bowed His priestly head and proclaimed, *"It is finished."* Your sins were opened unto you and gone before to judgment on the cross.

Judgment has already been rendered as evidenced by Romans 5:12 quoted above. Also Romans 3:23, *"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God"* and

Romans 3:10-12, *"As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one; There is none that understandeth, there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one."* Judgment has been rendered that all mankind is guilty. Now, the beautiful, precious truth to the elect is that Christ loved them so much that He willingly came down to where they were under the same law to redeem them from the curse of the law and to satisfy the judgment that was against them. Though He was righteous and holy and no guile was found in His mouth, He bore the sins of those whose names are written in the Lamb's Book of Life in His own body on the tree of the cross. He, who knew no sin, was made to be sin for His elect. He paid in full the debt required of the judgment. The judgment against you, the elect children of God, has been completely satisfied. Christ was smitten with the sword of His Father's divine justice as He bore the wrath of God in the room and stead of His little children. Your sins were opened unto you and went before to judgment.

Not so with the ones who are not His elect. Their sins follow after. In this life they will never know the killing effect of the law applied to their hearts nor experience the awful burden of a sin-sick soul. They will never hear the merciful, comforting

summons to *"Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."* The judgment of guilty is still unsatisfied against them. The execution of that judgment is yet to come. They will experience what John saw in Revelation 20:12, *"And I saw the dead, small and great, stand before God; and the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the book of life: and the dead were judged out of those things which were written in the books, according to their works."* Revelation 20:15, *"And whoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire."* Those whose names were written in the book of life will not experience any judgment at this time because their judgment has been paid by their Lord, King, High Priest, Saviour and Friend. Those judged according to their works out of the books of the law have no one to pay their debt. The Apostle Paul writes in Galatians 3:10, *"For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse: for it is written, Cursed is every one that continued not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them."* These workers of iniquity will experience that which Christ spoke in Matthew 7:22-23, *"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 works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity." They will be cast into the lake of fire which is the second death.

Those that compose the bride of Christ, the church, will hear the sweet summons of the bridegroom, *"Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world."* For Revelation 20:6 says, *"Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power."* The first resurrection is the resurrection of Christ. He said *"I am the resurrection."* He is the first and the last. His people are the body of Christ and therefore had part in His resurrection so that the second death hath no power over them.

"He which testifieth these things said, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus."

Submitted, I hope in love,
Elder Cleo Robertson

PSALM 36 9-10.

For with thee is the fountain of life: in thy light shall we see light.

O continue thy lovingkindness unto them that know thee; and thy righteousness to the upright in heart.

CORRESPONDENCE

Nov. 30, 2010

Dear Brother Horton,

Enclosed is my check for 2 yrs. renewal to the "Signs" and you can use the other as you see fit. I really enjoy the Signs every month.

Thanks so much,
A Little Sister in Hope,
Sallie R. Hodges

12/10/2010

Dear Brother Horton,

Please renew my subscription for the "Signs of the Times" for the coming year. I am enclosing a check for \$30.00 - \$15.00 for the subscription and \$15.00 for a contribution.

It is with sadness that I realize Elder Richard Campbell has gone on and will no longer be one of the "Associate Editors of the Signs", however, I believe that as The Signs continues to be published, we can and will continue to enjoy his writings in the section called, "Voices of the Past".

Elder Richard Campbell served as our Pastor and Moderator of The Bordeaux Church in Nashville for 30 years. We will miss him but realize that he has gone to a better place.

A brother in hope
George W. Hyslip

PSALM 1.

Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful.

But his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night.

And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.

The ungodly are not so: but are like the chaff which the wind driveth away.

Therefore the ungodly shall not stand in the judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous.

For the Lord knoweth the way of the righteous: but the way of the ungodly shall perish.

VOICES OF THE PAST

NORTH BERWICK, Maine.

SAMUEL L. DOUGLAS - DEAR COUSIN: - For some time past I have been feeling very much ashamed of myself for not yet having answered your good letter, but I am a delinquent in letter-writing, as I am in many other things. Your account of the laying of the corner-stone in the new church building was very interesting. I have never witnessed one. It is strange that your name will probably be read hundreds of years hence. But as you say, it were far better that your name be written in the Lamb's book of life than in that corner-stone, and if in your new church Jesus Christ be preached as the chief Corner-stone, elect and precious, then all will be well, and those who believe on him shall not be confounded. You speak of being *"sorry that one so lovable and gifted as my husband should be shackled by the narrow rules of church discipline."* Well, I certainly cannot blame you, for I myself once thought the same regarding the church, and I know it is the general opinion of all other denominations. I shall not try to answer for him, for I have not the ability to do so, but he himself is *"ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh,"* and when you make your long promised visit

to our home I know he will be willing to do so. But I thought it might perhaps be interesting to you to know why I am a Baptist. Well, as you doubtless know, my parents attended the church of England, to which of course we children went; also to the Sunday School, where I was taught that *"in my baptism I was made a member of Christ, a child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven."* This, of course, like many other things in my childhood, was learned as a parrot might learn, neither understanding nor caring what I was repeating. But somehow as I grew older I began to think that this could not be exactly true. I had often seen little babies christened in the church, and I wondered how that the minister sprinkling a little water on the child's face could make it a member of Christ, a child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven. Also my mother used to tell me if I would be a good girl, and obey my parents, and not do any bad things, I would go to heaven when I died, but if I was a naughty girl and did not do as I was told I would go to the bad place. Now I thought it was strange that I might possibly go to the *"bad place"* if *"in my baptism I was made a member of Christ, a child of God, and an inheritor of the kingdom of heaven."* But it said so in the prayer-book, which book I had always thought akin to the Bible, so I did not know what to think. However, these things did not lie very heavily

upon me. Well, as time went on I was told I was *"getting old enough to be confirmed,"* and the next time it was given out in the church that there was to be a *"confirmation"* at such a time, and that those who wished to be confirmed would meet in the vestry for instruction. On certain afternoons, my mother told me I had better go, as I might not have another chance for some time, and I was *"quite old enough."* Even then I had my own ideas about confirmation, but as some of my companions were going, and as there was a prospect of a nice new dress for the occasion, I did not object, but went to the classes. After the confirmation was over we were told it was now our *"privilege"* to partake of the communion, but as I felt that too sacred a thing to be partaken of lightly I would not do so. I had yielded to confirmation, and thought that was bad enough, because I looked upon that ceremony as joining the church, which I felt should not be done by any except those who had been *"converted."* Now what that meant was to me very vague; I knew the signification of the word was *"changed,"* but changed in what way I did not know. I had heard people of other denominations speaking of some who had been converted and joined the church, so I felt it was something about which I knew nothing. I was a gay girl, and, like most young people, fond of fun and all sorts of amusements, going to parties and

dances, of which I was particularly fond, though always taking care to keep in strictly respectable society. There came a time when all these things were vanity of vanities to me. One day one of my companions said to me: *"O Nellie, do you know that there is an Evangelist preaching in the city? and they say there are such crowds going there is often not standing room. I would like to hear what difference there can be in his preaching to draw such crowds, would not you?"* I said, *"Yes, indeed I would."* So we went that evening. After the preliminary exercises were over he took his text from Romans v. 7, 8: *"For scarcely for a righteous man will one die; yet peradventure for a good man some would even dare to die. But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."* It seemed as though one of the Lord's arrows pierced my soul there and then. Before that time I knew I was a sinner, then I felt it. I was entranced, spellbound, conscious of nothing but the sermon, until it was over, feeling almost every word condemned me. I went home with a heavy heart, the burden of all my sins resting upon my shoulders. I was like Christian in the Pilgrim's Progress: my burden was too heavy to bear. I felt that if I did not get rid of it it would sink me to the ground (to hell), but how to get rid of it I could not tell. I went to every meet-

ing, hoping that in some way or other relief would come. At almost every meeting there were those who professed to be converted and would go on their way rejoicing, but not I. I felt that I must be more wicked than they, too wicked for the Lord to hear my prayers and sighs and groans, and the thought was continually with me, "*What must I do to be saved?*" I knew that the answer was, "*Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.*" I thought I did believe. I had always believed there was a God, and a heaven, and a hell, and a Jesus who lived on this earth, and that everything in the Bible was true, but I knew that that "*believe*" must mean something different. I prayed to God to show me what it meant to "*believe*," prayed earnestly, and I even made bold to ask him to show me before the year was out (it was in December). When I first felt the burden of my sins I tried hard to be good, thinking, if I were only good God would hear me and speak forgiveness to my soul, and each morning, as I awoke I would resolve to not break one of the ten commandments that day, all of which I knew well by heart. But alas, there never passed a day that I did not break them in some way or other, and I often felt that I was more guilty of so doing than when I had no care about it. But I had to learn by experience what Paul tells us in Galatians, that "*the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto*

Christ." Also, as we are told in Romans, that "*by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin,*" and also that "*Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believeth.*" I have before mentioned, I had asked God to show me what it was to "*believe*," before the year was out. It was on the 29th of December, as I retired to rest, feeling heartsick, weary, discouraged and well-nigh in despair, thinking that God had turned a deaf ear to my prayers, and that there was no forgiveness for me; I lay down and began thinking, of our meetings and the preaching, &c., then I repeated some of the hymns we used to sing. There were many that I loved, but it seemed to me there were two that I loved best, one of which seemed to be an answer to my soul's longing to know, "*What must I do to be saved!*" I did not know it then, but I have since learned that nothing or no one can give that answer to the weary, longing soul but God himself. Let me quote the hymn:

"Nothing either great or small,

*Nothing, sinner, no;
Jesus did it, did it all,
Long, long ago.*

When he from his lofty throne

*Stooped to do and die,
Everything was fully done;
Hearken to his cry:*

*It is finished, yes, indeed,
Finished every jot;
Sinner, this is all you need,
Tell me, is it not?*

*Weary, working, plodding
one,
Wherefore told ye so,
Everything was fully done
Long, long ago.*

*Till to Jesus' work you cling,
By a simple faith,
Doing in a deadly thing;
Doing ends in death.*

*Cast your deadly doing
down,
Down at Jesus' feet;
Stand in him, in him alone,
Gloriously complete.
It is finished, yes, indeed,
Finished every jot;
Sinner, this is all you need,
Tell me, is it not?"*

When I had finished repeating that hymn I was amazed. I suppose I had sung it hundreds of times, but

I had never before seen in it what I saw then: a complete salvation through the finished work of Christ, and Christ alone. I seemed to see him, with the eyes of my soul, hanging on the cross, bleeding and dying, and I felt that he was my Savior, and that he was dying for my sins, and I said, O Lord, is this what it is to believe on thee, Thou hast said, "*It is finished,*" I do, I do believe it, my trust is in thee, in thee;

and I felt like Esther when she went in, unto the king: If I perish, I will perish trusting in thy word. A calm, restful, frame of mind came over me; I seemed to forget about my sins, and repeated that other beautiful hymn of which I have spoken; it is just as dear to me today:

*"Just as I am, without one
plea,
But that thy blood was shed
for me,
And that thou bid'st me come
to thee;
O Lamb of God, I Come.*

*Just as I am, and waiting not
To rid my soul of one dark
blot;
To thee, whose blood can
cleanse each spot,
O Lamb of God, I come.*

*Just as I am, though tossed
about
With many a conflict, many
a doubt,
Fightings within and fears
without,
O Lamb of God, I come.
Just as I am, poor, wretched,
blind,
Right, riches, healing of the
mind,
Yea, all I need in thee to find,
O Lamb of God, I come.*

*Just as I am thou wilt re-
ceive,
Wilt welcome, pardon,
cleanse, relieve,*

*For in thy promise I believe;
O Lamb of God, I come.*

*Just as I am, thy love un-
known*

*Has broken every barrier
down;*

*Now to be thine, yea, thine
alone,*

O Lamb of God, I come.”

I said to myself, Yes, I have learned by bitter experience that it must be just as I am or not at all. While thinking of those things I fell asleep. In the morning when I awoke the blessed sunshine was flooding my room and everything seemed different; I had had a beautiful, sweet sleep, such as I had not had for a long time, and I felt refreshed and happy. My mind instantly went back to the night before, and I thought, Can it be possible that God has answered my prayer, and that this is conversion, and that my sins are forgiven I hoped so, but was afraid to dare say it was. I then looked for the burden of sin that I had with me when I lay down, but could not find it, it was gone, gone I hope into the wilderness, a land not inhabited, where no human eyes can find it, carried there by our Scapegoat, our precious Jesus. O then what a delightful time I had praising, loving and trusting my dear Savior. I looked forward to those meetings as I had never done to my worldly pleasures.

*“ ’Twas a heaven below,
The Redeemer to know,*

*And the angels could do
nothing more*

*Than to fall at his feet,
And the story repeat,
And the Savior of sinners*

adore.

*On the wings of his love,
I was carried above*

*All sin and temptation and
pain,*

And I could not believe

That I ever should grieve,

*That I ever should suffer
again.”*

I supposed that this state of mind was to be always mine, but I was soon disillusioned, I found sin and sorrow, doubts and fears, temptations and persecutions were mine instead. I had had a Sunday School class for some time in the English Church, which I faithfully attended, although I did not attend any of the other services since I had begun to go to those meetings. When they learned I was attending the latter instead of the church, several of the officials called on me at different times and remonstrated with me, but when they saw they could not deter me I soon found I was given the “*cold shoulder*.” If I met any of them, on the street they were generally very busily, engaged looking in at a shop window or over at the other side of the street, &c., and it was not until scarcely, a teacher in the school would speak to or look at me that I gave up my class. After

those meetings were all over I felt like a sheep having no fold and no shepherd. I longed to cast in my lot with the people of God, but my trouble was to know who they were. I went about from one denomination to another, one Sunday to one place and the next Sunday to another. I read the Bible and studied to try and find which was the nearest to the church of Christ in the days of the apostles, and the more I read the more I felt that the one above all others which I did not want to join was the nearest, and that one was the Baptist Church. I had heard many strange things about them, and when they were spoken of in my presence it was always in a slighting, sneering manner, therefore from my childhood I had been prejudiced against them, and even after I had been to their meetings very many times, and saw nothing either strange or wrong, I thought, Surely there must be something, which they are keeping back. I liked the Congregational minister very much, and went there quite often, and sometimes almost made up my mind to join them, but when I did there would be a misgiving of conscience. On one occasion I was there on communion Sunday, and when the minister invited "*all who loved the Lord Jesus Christ to remain and partake with them of the emblems of his death,*" I kept my seat, intending to accept the invitation, but by the time most all the congregation had gone out I felt I could not

stay, and went out, too; they were not my people. After that I attended a Bible class in the Baptist Sunday School, and occasionally went to their meetings, but not regularly by any means, for I had not yet been "*fully persuaded,*" and did not wish them to have any suspicion of my thoughts. But the time came when I felt I could stay away no longer, and I told the Bible class teacher, who was a deacon, and I believe a truly gracious man, that I wanted to have a home with the people whom I believed were the people of God. He said, "*My dear child, I have been looking for this a long time; I knew it would come sooner or later, and I sincerely welcome you among us.*" I went before the church and was cordially received and baptized, and felt happy in obeying my Savior's commands.

*" O how happy are they
Who their Savior obey,
And whose treasures are laid
up above!
Tongue cannot express
The sweet comfort and peace
Of a soul in its earliest love."*

Some time after this I became acquainted with him who is now my husband, then a very young man, seventeen years of age. I had known but few religious young people, young men especially, and I was struck with wonder and amazement at the gracious words which pro-

ceeded out of his mouth. I felt that I knew nothing, that I was a babe, and he a man in Christ Jesus, mighty in the Scriptures, and I felt in my inmost soul that he was as truly called to preach the gospel as was Timothy of old, although at that time such a thing seemed almost impossible; but since then I have learned that the God who called Isaiah, Jeremiah, John the Baptist, Paul, Timothy and an innumerable host of others from the womb to be his servants, can also open up the way for his servants to preach the unspeakable riches of Christ, which I believe my husband has done, in season and out of season, through evil report and through good report, for almost thirty-five years.

Now, dear cousin, I have tried to relate the way in which I trust God has led me; of the many trials and changes through which we have passed since our marriage, and of the circumstances which led to our joining the Old School Baptist Church, I cannot here speak, as this letter is already much longer than I intended it to be.

With much love to yourself and cousin

May, I remain your affectionate cousin,

(MRS.) FREDERICK W. KEENE.

[THE above excellent letter from sister Keene has been read by us with unusual interest, and we are sure it will be read with equal inter-

est by the readers of the SIGNS. We hope she may very soon be impressed to give us an account of her coming to the Old School Baptists.-ED.]

REVELATION III. 20.

“Behold, I stand at the door, and knock.”

At the command of Christ, the glorious One whom John saw in the midst of the seven golden candlesticks, the apostle wrote a message to each of the angels of the seven churches which were in Asia. Everyone of these seven churches was a Gentile church. Therefore, the messages are especially adapted to the needs and conditions of the gospel church in this age of the world, an age in which the elect from among the Gentiles are being brought into the knowledge of the truth as it is in Jesus Christ. It seems to us, that these seven churches in Asia represent the seven ages of the gospel church, beginning at the end of the time of the apostles and extending down to the end of gospel dispensation, the last age being, the Laodicean period of the church's history. It is at the close of the Laodicean period that the bridegroom is to stand at the door and knock. Beginning with the message to the church at Ephesus, we have given us here a history of the church's travel throughout this day,

or age, of grace. If we had wisdom enough to tell just when the Ephesian age ended and the Smyrna age began, just when the Smyrna age ended and the next began, and so on down to the end of the Laodicean age, we could then tell the exact day and hour at which the Bridegroom shall stand at the door and knock. This can never be done by mortal man. No man, however wise, is able to take the centuries of history and divide them up into periods so as to exactly fit the prophecies of Scripture. To do so would enable such a man to tell at what moment the Bridegroom shall come, would enable him to date the appearing of Jesus to his people. That kind of proceeding would entirely displace faith and put the matter within sight. This can never be in the world, for the people of God must walk by faith, and not by sight. But while we cannot delimit the boundaries of the ages with such exactitude, we can, God helping us, glean some of the spiritual truth contained in these seven messages from Christ to his churches. To begin with, there have been but thirteen apostles, and there never will be any more than these: the twelve apostles to the gospel church, among the Jews, and the one apostle to the Gentiles. Some think that Matthias, chosen to take the place of Judas after his death, was merely a filler- in until Paul appeared, and that upon the coming of Paul into the apostleship Matthias dropped out of sight, thus making

Paul the twelfth apostle. We cannot see the matter in this light. There were twelve apostles to the twelve tribes of Israel. Aside from these, there is one to the Gentiles, and Paul is that one. Now, it was not strange that immediately after the apostles' day certain men should arise claiming to be apostles, and claiming their right to legislate for the church in matters of doctrine and practice. These men were impostors, and there were those of God's people who were not deceived by any such representations on the part of these men. In the first message, which was to the church at Ephesus, Christ commends that church for detecting the false claims of the would-be apostles. "*Thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars.*" There were other things about the church in that Ephesian age which were not to be commended. It had left its first love. This was regrettable, and Christ condemned this falling away from first love; but, on the other hand, the church in that age was endued with patience, it labored in the cause of truth, it did not faint nor become weary in well-doing and it could not endure them that were evil.

The message to the church of Smyrna plainly indicates that age of the church in which it suffered martyrdom for the cause of truth. "*Fear none of those things which thou shalt suffer: behold, the devil shall cast some of you into*

prison, that ye may be tried; and ye shall have tribulation ten days: be thou faithful unto death, and I, will give thee a crown of life." The expression "ten days" is not to be taken as meaning, literally ten days of twenty-four hours each, as we count time, but it signifies a definite period fixed by the Head of the church (it may have been ten years or ten tens of years) during which the gospel church was to be persecuted and suffer martyrdom for the truth.

The message to Pergamos plainly indicates that age of the church succeeding the previous age of martyrdom, a time when the church ceased to be troubled so much by persecution from without, but a time when false doctrine reared its ugly head among the ranks of the professed followers of Jesus. *"Thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam."*

"So hast thou also them that hold the doctrine of the Nicolaitanes, which thing I hate." It is a peculiar mark of church history that purity in doctrine coincides generally with those ages in which the church endured severe afflictions, laxity in doctrine, and the inroads of heresy coincide with those times in which the Church was at rest and more or less at ease.

The outstanding mark of the church in the Thyatira age seems to have been that the woman Jezebel was suffered to teach, that she

called herself a prophetess, and that she seduced the ministry to commit fornication, and caused them to eat things sacrificed to idols. This was an age when the churches experienced great searchings of heart by the Spirit of God, it was a time when those who could not be beguiled by this false woman and who could not receive her doctrine were commanded to hold fast that which they had already received by revelation from God, and to know nothing other than they had been taught by the Holy Spirit. This woman Jezebel does not simply mean a person or individual who was teaching at that time, but Jezebel is a generic name, signifying a diabolical false teaching abroad in the land at that time.

The especial mark of the church during the Sardis age seems to have been that she had a name to live, but was dead. This means that the church was professing to be the church of Jesus Christ, but that for many of them it was nothing more than a dead profession: a religion without a soul, faith without works. As the ages succeeded one another, the opprobrium which at one time attached to being called a "christian" wore gradually away, and it came in time to be a badge of respectability. Therefore many attached themselves to the church and professed to be christians who had never been regenerated by the Holy Spirit, and who were utterly strangers to the actual life and experience of true religion. This was

the condition of things in the Sardis age. Many had the name, but were really dead. However, not so all of them. *"Thou hast a few names even in Sardis which have not defiled their garments; and they shall walk with me in white: for they are worthy."*

This brings us to the Philadelphia age of the church. Like all the other ages which we have briefly and hurriedly outlined, we cannot tell what year it began nor what year it closed, but it was that age which was the cleanest and purest of all the church ages since the days of the apostles. In this period an open door into the sacred mysteries of God was set before the saints and there was such liberty of understanding and of utterance given the ministry of the Word as has not been the case since that day. It was a good time in which to have been alive, but it has passed and the Laodicean period is upon us.

The Laodicean period is the last age of the gospel church; that is, of the gospel dispensation. It is a period when the church is neither cold or hot, but is lukewarm; a time when the love of many waxes cold, when enthusiasm and zeal flag and when spiritual winter holds the church in its icy clasp. We are not a prophet, nor the son of a prophet, but it has seemed to us that the church of Jesus is passing through the Laodicean period right at this time. How long it is to last we cannot tell, but at its close the Bridegroom will

stand at the door and knock. Then, and not until then, will the winter be over and gone and songs of praise and adoration ascend upward to the most high God of our salvation. *"I sleep, but my heart waketh,"* says the bride in the Song of Solomon. Being asleep, she is inactive, there is no spiritual exercise, life is dormant. She is not dead. Her heart is awake. Christ is her heart, and he never slumbers nor sleeps; but there are times when the saints of God sleep, times when they cannot talk nor think nor read of spiritual things, times when they have no manifestation of divine things, and no enjoyment in them. To be in such a case is to be right where the Laodicean church was. At such times only one thing can wake her up, that is the coming of the Bridegroom. At his appearing she awakens into activity. The singing of birds is come and the voice of the turtle, the speech of love, is heard in her land. She says, *"Stir not up, nor awake my love, till he pleases."* No power under heaven can ever stir up nor awaken spiritual animation in the church of the living God until the Bridegroom, Jesus, comes. Let him but knock at the door and instantly she is all aflame with love, wide awake, eager for his coming. Whatever business or cares she may have been engaged in, these are hastily laid aside, forgotten, all earthly cares and considerations drop away when he knocks at the door. *"My beloved*

put in his hand by the hole of the door, and my bowels were moved for him. I rose up to open to my beloved; and my hands dropped with myrrh, and my fingers with sweet smelling myrrh, upon the handles of the lock. I opened to my beloved; but my beloved had withdrawn himself, and was gone." But, at the end of the lukewarm Laodicean church age, when he shall knock at the door, he will not withdraw himself and be gone. No, but then unto all who hear his voice and open the door, that is, unto all his elect people (for none others can hear, and none others can open) he will come in and sup with them and they with him. In other words, right here fits in the Scripture in 1 Thess. iv. 15-18: "*For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive, and remain unto the coming of the Lord, shall not prevent them which are asleep. For the Lord - himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: then we : which are alive and remain, shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words.*" Thus shall the Bridegroom come, and thus shall his saints when he knocketh open unto him, thus shall they sup with him,

and he with them. At his appearing they shall appear with him in glory, shall see him as he is, and be like him. They shall be raised forever above the reach of all terrestrial things. There is but one really soul-satisfying experience which the saints of God have while journeying through this world, and that, is the appearing of Jesus. At such times, "*or ever I was aware, my soul made me like the chariots of Amminadib.*" Such seasons, rare and splendid, are but foretastes of what is to come, of that glorious and wonderful time when we shall awake with his likeness, to be satisfied, not for a moment only, but forever and forever.

Elder H. H. Lefferts

1 CORINTHIANS 13:1-3.

Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have not charity, I am become as sounding brass, or a tinkling cymbal.

And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries, and all knowledge; and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing.

And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing.

The power and wisdom of God is on my mind as a text, and hopefully His power is working in me as I attempt to write a few words to His praise, honor and glory, and for the comfort and edification of His saints.

There are gods many and lords many (Cor. 8:5), but the God I believe in and have a hope in, if not deceived, is the God of heaven and earth, the true and living God, the God who created all things and absolutely controls all things --- times, events, people, etc. He has declared the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure.

(Isa.46:10). And in the ninth verse He said, *“Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me.”* When God sent Moses to Egypt to deliver the Israelites from bondage, Moses wanted to know how to declare who He was to them; and God said unto Moses, I AM THAT I AM: and he said, Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you. (Ex. 3:14). Brethren, this is the God that I desire to declare unto you today.

The world does not know this God: *“For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.”* And Christ crucified is what is preached. Who believes the

preaching of Christ crucified? Unto the Jews it is a stumbling block and—unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them that are called, both Jews and Greeks, it is the power of God, and the wisdom of God. Who are the called? *“For whom he did fore-know, he did also predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first born among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also Justified: and whom he justified them he also glorified.”* From where were they called? From their dead alienated state and from nature’s total darkness. *“And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sin.”* Jesus calls them and they always hear and live. Jesus said, *“The time is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live.”* Jesus gave us several examples of his mighty power to raise the dead while he was on the earth. *“Not only will he raise them up when he comes again without sin unto salvation, but he also raises them up and gives them new life in this time world. God gave him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as the Father gave him. And this is eternal life, that they might know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent.”* (St. John 17:2-3). If we know God and His Son we must first

be given a new life or be born again, and then have a revelation from above. *"All things are delivered unto me of my Father: and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal Him."* (Matt. 11:27). The world does not believe this, for they teach that if any man will only open his heart to Christ that Christ will come in and save him; that they have power to accept or reject an offering of salvation. Even if it was possible for man to open his own heart to God it would be a work; and salvation is not of work but of grace. They profess that they know God; but in works they deny Him. They cannot believe he has finished the work his Father sent him to do, and they believe they must do something to help him. To the worldly the Bible is only a recorded history of a man-child being born into this world, growing up here, performing a few miracles, and then being slain on the cross. This record is true, but if we do not understand, at least in part, the spiritual meaning of these things, then we have not been taught of the Father and we have nothing to base a hope upon.

When Jesus called Lazarus forth from the grave, and commanded he be released, Lazarus was bound in grave clothes and his face was bound with a napkin. The grave clothes represent, at least to me, the law that he was under till the

coming of Christ; and the napkin represents the vail over his eyes that kept him from seeing the glory that was to come. As I see it, Lazarus is a figure of the children of grace. They are kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which is to be revealed at the coming of Christ to them as individuals. Therefore the law is our schoolmaster until that time; but after we receive the faith of Jesus Christ, we are no longer under the law or schoolmaster for we die unto sin. *"For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me and by it slew me. Christ died unto sin once: but in that he liveth he liveth unto God. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord."* I believe the death and resurrection of Lazarus is a type or figure of this death and new life. I repeat *"The time is coming, and now is when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God and they that hear shall live."*

What a glorious thing it is to be given a hope that we are among those who have heard the voice of Christ.

Christ also opened the eyes of the blind, Bartimaeus being among those; and though this was a natural blindness, at least in part we must see the spiritual significance for it to mean anything to us. We are not told when he received faith to believe in Christ but Jesus said unto him Go thy way; thy faith hath made

thee whole: and he received his sight and followed Jesus in the way. Because of his faith no one was able to keep Bartimaeus from crying unto the Lord and so it is with every child of grace. Our cries are heard and in the appointed time they are answered ; for our eyes are opened to see Jesus Christ and what he has done for us; and we are given a hope that we are among those chosen in him before the foundation of the world: and as sure as we receive that hope we follow Jesus in the way. The followers of Christ are called sheep; and Jesus said *“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.”*

Brethren this is a promise with holy power: this is power that the finite, natural mind of man cannot understand; but by God given faith we believe it.

There are those who contend that God has no power over Satan and that there is a constant struggle between them. In the book of Job, however, we find, *“His hand hath formed the crooked serpent.”* Does not God have power over all that he created? Could He not destroy him as easily as he created him? Paul tells us in Romans 13:1, *“Let every soul be subject to the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God.”* In

Job 1:12 and 2:6 we find that God gave Satan power to afflict Job, but limited what Satan could do. Satan could not even touch Job until that time, for God had put a hedge about him. God also puts a hedge about his saints so that Satan cannot do more to them than it pleases God. There were many devils in the poor Gadarene, but Jesus displayed his mighty power by casting them out. Not only did they obey his command, but they had to ask for permission to enter the swine. We know that we have no power against the devils that besiege us from time to time, for they are much more powerful than us; but Jesus drives them out and puts us in our right mind. Then he commands us to go and shew our friends how great things God has done for us. How sweet and peaceful the feeling when we are enabled to do this!

Leprosy is a disease of the body and always breaks out from within, and in the scriptures it is portrayed as sin. Ten lepers met Jesus when he entered a certain village, and they cried unto him for mercy. Jesus sent them away to the priests, and as they went they were cleansed of the leprosy. Only one of them turned back and fell upon his face and glorified God and gave Him thanks. We know that God shows mercy unto all of His creatures and heals them of their natural afflictions as it pleases Him, but we are not told what became of the nine that did not return to praise God: but the one that re-

turned had been given faith to believe, and Jesus said unto him, *“Thy faith hath made thee whole.”* This indicates to me that not only was he cleansed of leprosy, but also of sin. What a lovely picture this is of the children of grace!

Brethren, though we have been made to see the wonderful work of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, there are many times that we are very doubtful and have great fear. We are not alone. John, who had seen the Lord in person and had seen the Spirit descending from heaven upon him like a dove after that God had told him that such a thing would come to pass, also had doubts while in prison, and he sent his disciples to ask, Art thou he that should come, or do we look for another? Jesus answered and said unto them, Go and shew John again those things which ye do hear and see: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them. Brethren, this shows that we must be shown again and again these wonderful things, lest we forget. When Jesus said the poor have the gospel preached unto them he was not referring to the ones who have little or nothing of this world’s riches or goods, but to those who are poor in spirit, for; blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Jesus preached to the poor while here on earth, and now he

calls, qualifies and sends forth his ministers to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ to them through the Holy Spirit. Jesus said, I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you forever; even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. What beauty, love and power is in this gracious promise! Brethren, there is no end of this text. Remember this poor sinner when at the throne of grace, and may the grace and power of God rest upon you.

Clifford Wilbanks

MALACHI 3:6

“For I am the Lord, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed.”

The first verse in this book Malachi, speaks of the burden of the word of the Lord to Israel by Malachi the prophet. Surely the ELDER J.R. WILLIAMS word of the Lord has been, is today and will always be burdensome to the natural man. Rather than comfort, it condemns all of his ungodly deeds and thoughts.

All Israel we believe, are spoken to in this passage, but let us never forget, that all that are of Israel, are not Israel, although He has a people

in every nation, people, kindred and tongue. God's promise of being with us, if His, all the way even to the end of the world, does not pertain to the non-elect, more so than He is everywhere present and no where absent. To His people He manifests His presence from time to time so that they feel His nearness that comforts and edifies.

This unchangeable grace of God is shown to all men in a natural way, or no one would survive, but saving grace is given only to His people, those chosen in Christ before the world began. Then we are made to hold to the above promise that states, "I AM The Lord". I think the "I AM", might well be noticed as this very declaration that was given Moses, to tell the people who had sent him. "*Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I Am hath sent me unto you.*" This God that speaks and it is done, commands and it stands fast, is the same today, yesterday and forever, for the I AM indicates an always present God, no past, no future, as with us in nature. Heb. 13:8, "*Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and today, and forever.*"

The people of God can rejoice in every dispensation of time, that they worship a God that changes not. What if He did change for any reason, could you be comforted that He once loved His people, could you be reconciled that He chose a people, would there be joy in His promises? All of the worship of Him

must, and let us stress must, rest in the belief that He changes not. Therefore the hope of His people is grounded, not in the fact whether He'll change, or not, but have they from before time, been chosen in Him.

Tim. 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.*" From before the world was until the Apostle Paul wrote these precious things was a long time, but not long enough for any change in God, neither is there any change yet, or will be till time is no more.

Already saved and called His people before the world was. Didn't wait to see their works, never waited for any effort on their part, could not ask their wishes or if they would accept Christ, as we hear so much of today. None but God was here.

Predetermined He would save His people, would call with a holy calling, not according to their works, but according to His own purpose and grace, causing them to walk in good works that He before ordained they would walk in them.

Can we not see then, if all of God's works are according to His own purpose we could never understand any of them or alter any for all were fixed before the world was or He is changeable.

Then does any work large or small, fit into the blessings God be-

stows on His people? If so, no blessing is certain until the creature acts. Does God wait for a person to act? If so He would have to change if the creature does. He determines the walk of all or the walk of none. He is no half way God nor can He be.

"For I am the Lord I change not," the blessings along with all other things pertaining to God must be certain.

"Therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed God will never change; but men will always change; daily hourly, minutely, because they are men" There would be no comfort to me if there was a chance of Him failing to accomplishing just one of His promises.

My destiny would have long ago changed if my actions changed the purpose of God. How do you feel?

My heart tells me I because He changes not and cannot because He is God, that all is well with His Kingdom.

Therefore because He controls all things the destiny of His people is secure as well as the destiny of the non elect is certain. As sure as there will be night and day these precious promises are true and His children shall see God for He changes not, therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed.

In hope of that City,
Elder J. R. Williams

THE OBJECT OF OUR PAPER

Our brethren of the Old School of Christ will bear in mind that this humble sheet is devoted to the Baptist cause, as we believe the Baptist cause to be the cause of God and that its columns are designed to be used as a medium for the circulation of bible doctrine and general information.

The dear people of God who remain steadfast and unshaken in the apostles' doctrine are at this day greatly scattered through the country, and in many instances where one or more of them are found they are supposed to be the only ones remaining of the same faith and order. Indeed, they are often themselves *driven to the conclusion of Elijah: "They have digged down thine altars and killed thy prophets, and I am left alone, and they seek my life."* In their scattered situation it affords them peculiar pleasure to hear from one another. *"As cold waters to a thirsty soul, so is good news from a far country."*-Prov. xxv. 25.

It is certainly good news to the scattered pilgrims to hear of the numbers in different parts of the land who still adhere to the doctrine and practice of the primitive church. In days of old, "they that feared the Lord spake often one to another;" and the exhortation of the apostle is, that we "exhort one another, and so much the more as we see the day approaching."

Elder G. Beebe

“Who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will.”-EPHESIANS i. 11.

By these words the apostle brings before our eyes God’s omnipotent power as carrying into effectual performance the counsel of his own will towards the objects of his distinguishing favour. An especial blessing is couched in this. Next to a believing view of the purposes of God’s grace, and a sweet persuasion of our interest in them, nothing is more strengthening and encouraging than a realising apprehension of the power of God to carry them into full execution. Feeling, as we do, our own miserable helplessness, sinking under the pressure of our daily weakness, mourning over continual failures, and grieving on account of perpetual backslidings, encompassed by foes, and distressed by fears, how strengthening it is to our faith, thus tried to the utmost, to believe that he who has purposed has power to perform. This persuasion of the almighty power of God was the support and strength of Abraham’s faith, which bore him up in the face of seeming impossibilities, and whereby he gave glory to God (Rom. iv. 18-21). When, then, as walking in the steps of the faith of Abraham, we can look up believingly to the God and Father of the Lord Jesus Christ, as we behold sovereign grace in his heart, and infinite wisdom in his mind, so we see almighty strength in his arm,

and thus become sweetly persuaded that all which his loving heart feels, his infinite wisdom directs, and his omnipotent power can execute.

Elder J. C. Philpot

“The king’s daughter is all glorious within; her clothing is of wrought gold. She shall be brought unto the king in raiment of needlework.” - Psalm xlv. 13, 14.

THIS is a beautiful description of the bridal garments of the Church as the queen. The gold was to be wrought into her clothing, the raiment to be of needlework, intimating that her robe of justifying righteousness was wrought, as it were, as in needlework, stitch by stitch; yet that every thread was embroidered with gold. Here we have the thread of the humanity in union with the gold of Deity, and yet each in such close union that the thread is but one. In gold thread the beauty, the value is in the gold; yet how close the union. Gold by itself could not be made into embroidery, So Deity cannot suffer, bleed, or die; but humanity can in union with it. Thus, as our blessed Lord went through the whole work which the Father gave him to do, his Deity, being in union with his obeying, suffering humanity, stamped each successive movement, as he went through it, with all the value and va-

lidity of Godhead. It is this union of Deity with humanity which made the work of redeeming love so unspeakably glorious, and so meritoriously efficacious, As Hart says:

“ Almighty God sighed human breath.”

It is indeed a mystery; but *“great is the mystery of godliness, God manifest in the flesh.”* O glorious mystery !

“ The highest heavens are short of this;

’Tis deeper than the vast abyss;

’Tis more than thought can e’er conceive,

Or hope expect, or faith believe,”

Elder J. C. Philpot

EPHESIANS 1: 2-4.

Grace be to you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ., who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ:

According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love.

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1 CORINTHIANS 12:7-9.

But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal.

For to one is give 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.

Signs of the Times

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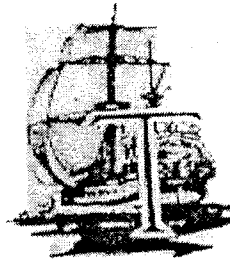
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EN
VOYAGE

*There's a ship sailing on to a harbor,
To a haven of comfort and rest;
It's a ship of God's fashion and making,
And its voyage by Him will be blest.
It departed with silence and beauty,
With the Master, Himself, in Command;
As with dignity truly majestic
It sailed out of sight of all land.*

*There will always be clear skies above it;
There will always be calmness below;
There will never be storms to harass it,
For the Master is on it, you know.
And His wisdom will carry it safely
To the port of His infinite peace.
Where the light of His love will protect it
With a blessing that never will cease.*

*You have watched it sail onward
and outward,
With a tear of regret in your eye. For
a loved one was sailing upon it.
And there's grief when you're say-
ing goodbye.
But your tears would be tears of
rejoicing.
And your heart would be happy and
free,
If you could look for only a moment
On that ship that is sailing to sea.*

*For the one you have loved is at
leisure,
With no worry or trouble or care;
There's contentment beyond under-
standing,
In the way God's passengers fare.
And you'd know from your own
observation
That the sailing was joyful-not grim,
For it means a new life and new
living,
And a sweet, closer contact with
Him.*

*Oh, the solace there is in the knowl-
edge.
Life is life and it always will be,
And it's simply a change of direc-
tion
When we sail on His ship out to sea.*

*And the tears that we shed for our
loved ones
Are in truth shed for us left behind.
For it hurts to give up to the Master.
Tho we know He is gentle and kind.*

*So believe in His great and good
wisdom,
Trust in Him, as you patiently wait;
On His ship God is ever the pilot,
And the one you have loved is the
mate.*

*Unknown Author
Sent in by Phil Pittman*

CONTENTS

EDITORIAL	50
Elder Jerry B. Farmer	
VOICES OF THE PAST	30
Elder Gilbert Beebe	
Elder J.C. Philpot	
Elder Richard H. Campbell	
John Warburton	
CONTRIBUTIONS	71
OBITUARIES	72
Sister Agnes Anders	
Brother Russell Rudowski	

EDITORIAL

*"Study to shew thy self ap-
proved unto God, a workman
who needeth not to be ashamed,
rightly dividing the word of
truth." 2 Timothy 2:15.*



Elder J.B. Farmer

Here is the com-
mandment of
God given to the in-
spired apostle and
then to the true min-
ister of the gospel,
Timothy. It Elder J. B.
Farmer was also left
on record for His people from that
day even down to this day. It is a
great mystery how the God of
heaven and earth revealed His truth

to the apostle and caused it to be received, believed and obeyed by himself and by Timothy and, we hope, ourselves. It is also a great mystery how any of us know anything of the kingdom of God. *"The things of God knoweth no man but the Spirit of God."* *"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."* Therefore, if anyone knows anything of this mystery, it must be revealed to him by the Spirit.

Now, the Spirit says, *"study"*, meaning not to be lax or presumptuous in nature, but to be diligent by the grace of God, *"to shew thyself approved unto God"*, not to show yourself approved unto men, but to show yourself, by His mercy, approved unto God, *"a workman who needeth not to be ashamed"*, not as one who works shamefully as a hireling for a wage, but one who labors honorably in the truth, by grace, desiring all to be to the glory of God and to the comfort of His people, *"rightly dividing"*, not twisting for some kind of cover for wickedness or advantage, but rather by revelation, giving the correct spiritual sense of, *"the word of truth"*, the holy inspired scriptures of truth given by God to His little ones for their instruction and comfort.

How can we know if, when preaching, we are rightly dividing

the word of truth? Or, how can anyone, when reading the scriptures with a desire for understanding be sure he is rightly dividing them? Or how can one, when hearing or reading the word being divided by another, be sure that it is being rightly divided? This is another great mystery and only God is able to make it plain. He has hidden these things from the wise and prudent and has revealed them unto babes. He has given us assurance that He has a people in this world who have been given life in Him by the Spirit and who have had His spiritual law written in their hearts and have had it put in their minds. His Spirit and His holy law is in them. They have been given the mind of Christ by which they judge all things. It is no wonder He said, *"examine yourselves whether you be in the faith"*, and *"try the spirits whether they be of God."* The children of God are made to examine everything they think, say, hear, read, and do. They are constantly standing before the judgment seat of Christ, receiving the things done in the body, whether they be good or evil.

So, in a sense, the little ones are constantly looking to God as little children, asking Him to render judgment about every matter which comes before or in them. They seek not the praise of this world but rather the approval of almighty God. They desire to know the truth even if it is against them. Job said, *"though He slay me, yet will I*

trust Him.” *“They hear the words, “lean not to thine own understanding, but in all thy ways acknowledge Him and He will direct thy paths”.* When they come to a fork in the road of life and know not which way to take, they stop and ask for guidance of the One who knows all and cannot make a mistake. Then, at His direction, they step out in faith with the assurance that God has spoken and that He will go with them and keep them in the way, even when it is contrary to nature. So is it true when the children of God divide the word of truth or hear or read it as it is being divided.

When the true ministers of God are called to rightly divide the word of truth, they are not left to the strength of the flesh to perform this. The holy apostle said, *“how to perform that which is good, I find not,”* and also, *“He that has begun a good work in you shall perform it unto the day of Jesus Christ.”* So then, the ministers of God and all the children of God find themselves to be inadequate for the task. They know not how to give the correct sense of it. But God is merciful and gives them to hear a small voice saying, *“if any man lack wisdom, let him ask God who giveth all men liberally and upbraideth not.”* In the very hour or moment of need, the God of all power and of compassion appears and supplies all our needs. Therefore, the rightly dividing of the word of truth is the work of God, not the

work of men. If we were left to ourselves, we would immediately err and follow nature. And we do err from time to time as our God teaches us what we are by nature. But if we be the people of God, we are not allowed to altogether follow nature but rather, we are corrected and kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. When the word of truth is rightly divided, it perfectly fits the spiritual mind and heart and renders all praise, honor and glory unto Him unto whom it is due. When it is this way, we have no doubt that it is the true doctrine of God and the true gospel of the grace of God which is given in power of the Holy Spirit.

This is written in love and in hope of eternal life.

Elder J.B. Farmer
12-4-2000

PSALMS 65: 10-12.

Thou waterest the ridges thereof abundantly: thou settlest the furrows thereof: thou makest it soft with showers: thou blessest the springing thereof.

Thou crownest the year with thy goodness; and thy paths drop fatness.

They drop upon the pastures of the wilderness: and the little hills rejoice on every side.

VOICES OF THE PAST

2 TIMOTHY 1: 9, 10.

“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; but is now made manifest by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.”

No subject has ever so much engrossed the attention of men as that of salvation; and if we had not some acquaintance with the blindness and ignorance of the carnal mind, we could not but wonder at the variety of, and conflicting sentiments of men in relation to it. But it must be admitted that God is of one mind, and none can turn him, and that his laws are immutably the same, and that the transgression of it in all ages is sin, and it condemns every transgressor of it, consequently there can be but one way of salvation from it. It is admitted, we believe, by all who admit the truth of revelation, that the way of life and salvation is taught in the Bible. But different men construe the same Scriptures in different ways. But the portion before us is so plain and

intelligible, and so perfectly free from all ambiguity, that we cannot conceive how common candor can give it but one and the same construction. In this epistle Paul desires Timothy to stir up the gift of God which was in him, and which was communicated to him for the purpose of comforting and instructing the saints in this only way of life and salvation. Paul said to him, *“God hath not given us the spirit of fear, but of power, and of love, and a sound mind. Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of the Lord, nor of me his prisoner; but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel, according to the power of God; who hath saved us and called us with an holy calling.”* If we attempt to contemplate salvation in its true character, we must go back in our contemplations to the revelation which the eternal Jehovah has made of himself. And as nothing can have an existence without an origin, so must salvation have an origin, and that origin is God himself. And as we know nothing of him, only as he is pleased to reveal himself to us, may it be his pleasure to communicate that knowledge and wisdom unto us, that we may speak as becometh sound doctrine which cannot be gainsayed. If God is infinite in wisdom, and if salvation be his work, he must have known from eternity the whole arrangement, for it was his work, and so is the consummation of all the plan. We are

told that all the works of God were known unto him from the foundation of the world. And in relation to salvation, we are informed that the whole arrangement was made before any human being who would need salvation was formed. Jesus Christ was set up as the Savior before the dust of the earth, from which man was formed, was spoken into existence. Said Christ, in speaking under one of his titles, (viz, wisdom,) *"I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was."* *"Rejoicing in the habitable parts of his earth; and my delights were with the sons of men."* This language carries our minds back to the utmost stretch of human comprehension. It throws our contemplations into the boundless ocean of eternity, and that ocean we can neither fathom nor explore. But as far back as our comprehensions can go, so far back we can trace the salvation of God; and we must content ourselves to roam within that scope which God has been pleased to allot to us. If we inquire for what purpose Christ was set up, we are met with the answer, the Head, Mediator and Savior of the church. God gave him for a covenant of the people, a light to the Gentiles, and his salvation to the ends of the earth. Hence we read of the church being chosen in him before the foundation of the world. The elect of God, or those who were chosen in Christ, are those of whom Jesus said, *"And my delights were with the sons*

of men." This truth is presented also by David, in that passage in which it was said by the Savior, *"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 were none of them."*- Psalm cxxxix. 15,16. Whenever we approach the subject of salvation we enter upon a theme as high as heaven, and as boundless as Deity itself. And the ever astonishing and wondrous plan of salvation which was established in eternity, and is fully developed and consummated in time, is what Paul in this epistle to Timothy is discoursing upon. But salvation cannot benefit any but the lost. None can be condemned by the law but those who have transgressed it, and none can be delivered from its curse but those who are under it. Hence Jesus came not to save the righteous in their righteousness, but he came to save his people from their sins. In the fullness of time, and after the creation of the world, God made man, and by transgression he fell, and in him all his posterity fell also, and they are all born into the world, yea, they are conceived in that depravity which Adam possessed after the fall. And let us here understand what it is that brings us into a state of condemnation. Some people

tell us that sinners are damned because they do not close in with overtures of mercy; because they do not believe the gospel, and improve the means of grace which God has spread before them. But there is not one word in all the Bible which will countenance this sentiment, but all the testimony of the sacred volume is in contradiction to it. Let us begin with the beginning of this subject, and endeavor to take our start in the channel of truth. What was it which caused the fall of Adam? Was it in consequence of his doing something which God had not commanded him to do? Certainly not, but it was his doing what God had forbidden him to do. It was what he had done which brought the curse. And so it is with all condemned sinners. They are not condemned for what they have not done, but it is for what they have done. They are condemned for sin, and sin is a transgression of the law. And this is the case also in law among men. No man was justly condemned by the law of his country because he had done nothing, but because he had committed some act which was a violation of the law of the land. And the sentiment called gospel condemnation, is entirely without foundation in truth, and in the Bible. But as all admit, Adam transgressed; he did that which God forbade his doing. And as his posterity were then all in him, and he had fallen under the curse, as he was, so are they all by nature, and are brought into their

natural existence the degenerate plants of a strange vine. *“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.”* Sin is the natural element of all the posterity of Adam, for they have descended from him since his fall, and they have his fallen nature, and like him are sinful. They inherit his carnal mind, and his carnal mind is enmity against God. Hence the fallen state of man is a lost state, for by the offense of one, judgment came upon all men to condemnation, consequently all the elect of God are by nature under the curse and condemnation of the law, and are without hope in the world. *“Without holiness and perfect righteousness, none can stand before God.”* All mankind are condemned, and the wrath of God abideth on them. Alas, how deplorable the condition of man. The earth is shrouded in the sable mantle of gloom, and man is cast out of Eden’s bliss, and is groaning under God’s awful curse. Was God taken by surprise through the development of this sad state of things? Is he discomfited and disappointed in his purpose in consequence of something having occurred which was unknown to him before the creation? By no means. It is true that sin entered into the world; misery and death are here, but let all heaven rejoice, and earth be glad; let the mountains leap for joy, and the inhabitants of the rock

sing, a ransom is found. Before man was formed, or sin had entered the world, the God of wisdom and salvation had given his elect, grace in Christ, that where sin abounded, grace should much more abound. Jesus was set up before man was formed, to save him under the awful state of sin into which God was pleased to suffer him to fall, and from that dreadful death consequent upon it. Christ the Savior is declared, and of him it was said, He shall bruise the serpent's head. The serpent could only bruise the heel of the church, but Jesus shall bruise his head. The covenant engagements of Father and Son in the salvation of the family of God now begin to be developed. The great and eternal plan of salvation begins to be opened, and by manifestations, types and shadows, Jesus Christ is presented to the people.

The offering of the lamb by Abel, pointed to that salvation and Savior which were provided before the birth of time. Salvation was ratified in the eternal counsel, and now God begins to make that salvation known to the heirs of it. God saved his people with an everlasting salvation; but it requires the entrance of sin into the world, and the fall of God's children in it, with rolling time, and transpiring events, to reveal that God, to man, who hath saved us and called us with an holy calling, and to fully manifest and apply this salvation unto them. The types and shadows all pointed to this, and

prophets and righteous men desired to see the Savior. In the fullness of time, a multitude of the heavenly host was heard to announce his advent into the world. And as without perfect righteousness none can have peace with God, Christ himself is the peace of all the church. God has made him to be unto them wisdom and righteousness and sanctification and redemption. This is the salvation which is presented in the text. *"Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling."* We have touched upon salvation as an act of God before man was formed, and now pass to take some notice of it, in the personal manifestation of it to, and the volition of it in, the heirs of glory. And the first thing in this branch of salvation is the calling already described in the text. But as there are various opinions upon the subject, it may be well for us to examine the Scriptures of truth, and hear what they say about it. Many suppose that the preaching of the gospel constitutes this call. That sinners, who are dead in trespasses and sins, and who sit under a preached gospel, receive this call, and that the volition of their will turns the scale whether they are benefited by it or not, or decides the event whether the call will be effectual or not. Now this position is not true, and finds no support in the Bible, for no man but he who has been regenerated or quickened by the Spirit of God, can hear the gospel. The sinner who is dead in tres-

passes and sins, possesses (spiritually) no living or spiritual capabilities. *"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 preaching of the cross is, to them that perish, foolishness. Why is it foolishness to them? Because they possess no spiritual life which enables them to discover the Spirit and glory of it. The wisdom of this world can never attain to it, for God has hidden these things from the wise and prudent. The apostle, in his epistle to the Corinthians, has put this subject in a clear and decisive light, *"But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumbling-block, and unto the Greeks foolishness; but unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and wisdom of God."* Here the most sluggish mind must discover that the same preaching had a different effect upon different characters. To one it is a stumbling-block, to another folly, and to the third it is Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God. What makes the difference, for certainly the message is delivered irrespectively to them all, so far as the act of preaching is concerned? The different effects are caused by that grace and Spirit which has made the hearers to differ. The seed sown on the rock, where there is no earth, will remain inactive, while that which is

sown in good ground will germinate and bring forth fruit. Those to whom the gospel was Christ the power of God, and wisdom of God, had already been called with an holy calling, while those to whom the same sermon was a stumbling-block, and folly, had not been called. If this be not true, then the language of Paul to the Corinthians is contradictory in itself, and has no meaning in it at all, and is altogether abortive. Who will dare charge the Spirit of inspiration with this? This holy calling is a work beyond the power and control of man, and is one which God has never committed to the hands of man. Christ said, *"He came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."* Yet he preached to those self-righteous pharisees, whom he came not to call, and on one occasion at least, those of them who heard him preach a sermon on sovereign grace, were all filled with wrath. If the preaching of any being could constitute this an holy calling, we should certainly suppose that the preaching of the Lord of glory would effect it, but this holy calling is the work of almighty power. *"It is the Spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing."* Said Jesus, *"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."* The elect of God by nature are dead in trespasses and sins, and must be quickened; but preaching cannot quicken them. How then are they to be quick-

ened? We will turn to Jesus Christ, for an answer: *"For as the Father raiseth up the dead and quickeneth them, even so [by the same almighty power, and in the twinkling of an eye] the Son quickeneth whom he will."* This is what we understand by an holy calling, a heavenly calling, or as men sometimes denominate it, an effectual calling. It is an holy calling because it calls them to holiness; they are called to the Holy God through Christ, and the life communicated in it is a holy life. It is the life of Christ communicated to them. The reason why they are called is, they are the saved of the Lord, and they are now called into the enjoyment of that salvation. *"Who hath saved us and called us with an holy calling."* Salvation precedes the calling, and the calling brings the heirs of salvation to Christ, and they are put into the enjoyed possession of an existing, finished and eternal salvation. *"The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints."* This calling is not to make them the heirs of salvation, but it calls those who are already heirs, into a knowledge of their heirship, and the enjoyment of their inheritance.

Many contend that something must be done by the sinner; some preparatory steps are to be taken by him; some righteous acts are to be

performed by him, or the Lord will never save him. If he be an heir of glory, he is already saved, and in his unregenerate state, he possesses neither the power nor the will to perform any righteous act, for his mind is a carnal mind, and is enmity against God. But let us hear what the text says: *"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: [when we began to be religiously inclined, and to seek the Lord, and to get religion? Nay, Verily, No such language ever stained the pages of holy writ, or divided the crown of Jesus]. But, according to his own purpose and grace which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began."*

This purpose is an eternal one, and this grace was given to all the heirs of glory in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world, when they were chosen in him, and blessed in him with all spiritual blessings, and which were to flow to them in time; and this holy calling is one of these blessings, and it reaches them in consequence thereof. These things are embraced in the expressions, purpose and grace. If we ever had grace given to us at all it was before the world began for there is no succession of grants from God. What christians receive from day to day, is the manifestation of the blessings of an original grant, or covenant. It was not in consequence of any

goodness which the Lord foresaw in any of the children of men, that he established the economy of salvation, but it was according to his purpose and grace from eternity. His own sovereign will decreed it, and death and hell cannot disturb it. There is a fullness in it, and a certainty of its being all accomplished. That God, who has numbered the very hairs of our heads, has not forgotten one blessing which will be for our good, and he who suffers not a sparrow to fall to the ground without his notice or permission, has not failed so to secure these blessings, that the devil shall never be able to rob us of one of them. What can be more comforting to the tempest-tossed pilgrims than a knowledge of this heavenly truth? What submission and patience it produces in us while being rolled and tossed hither and thither, to know that the Lord rules and reigns, and guides and governs all our affairs, and that all things work together for our good, and that they flow unto us under the controlling hand of God. This is grace, not to be thought of but with tears of joy, not to be mentioned but with shouts of praise.

In inseparable connection with the foregoing, is the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ. What is this appearing for? Is it to effect some new arrangement, or to establish some new purpose, to render man savable, and leave the event at the volition of the will of man? Now this question is answered by inspiration,

and the answer will outride and shine amidst all the opposition and rage of men and devils in earth or hell. Jesus came to make manifest that salvation, purpose and grace, which were given the heirs of glory in himself before the world began. He came to make manifest and apply the salvation of God to his children, *"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. But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Savior Jesus Christ."* The appearance of Jesus Christ was in accordance with this salvation, purpose and grace, and it presents a theme of the most devout contemplation. In this appearing it is made known to the church of the manifold wisdom of God, according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord. What is his appearing? If we visit the manger, we will find a babe wrapped in swaddling bands, and there, in the appearance of a helpless babe, we see the Conqueror of death and hell. We see him in whom dwells all the fullness of the Godhead. But we here behold him, who in his mediatorial character is meek and lowly in heart, just entering into his humiliation. He takes not on him the nature of angels, but the seed of Abraham, and unto us is born this day a Savior, which is Christ the Lord, and his name shall

be called Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins. Here is fulfilled that prophetic strain of Isaiah: *"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."* Jesus is made under the law to redeem them that were under the law. He delivered them from the curse of the law, being made a curse for them, as it is written, *"Cursed is everyone that hangeth on a tree."* His people being entirely destitute of righteousness which would be acceptable to God, they being ignorant, unholy, and condemned, Christ was of God made unto them wisdom and righteousness, sanctification and redemption. Daniel had foretold that the Redeemer should make an end of sin, bring in everlasting righteousness, and seal up the vision and prophecy. Some people talk about Christ's working out the righteousness of the saints. The Spirit of inspiration has said, *"This is the name whereby he shall be called, THE LORD OUR RIGHTEOUSNESS."* Our righteousness is Christ's righteousness, for he is our righteousness, and so far from his coming into the world to work it out, he came to bring it in. And as Daniel has said, he shall make an end of sin; prophetic annunciation! He has put away sin (from the church) by the sacrifice of himself. His people

were under the law and he must go where they are, and as they are under the condemnation of it, and under the sentence of death, he must die to redeem them therefrom. *"In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace."* If we follow him to Calvary we will there hear him cry, *"It is finished!"* It is done! He bowed his head and died, and through his death the law is forever silenced, and powerless over the church, and through his resurrection from the dead the church is everlastingly justified. *"For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life."* He was the plagues of death, and the destruction of the grave. This is the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, who hath swallowed up death. This is the testimony which Isaiah bore of him, *"And he shall swallow up death in victory."* He did not swallow it up in merely falling, but in victory; in his glorious and triumphant resurrection from the dead. He has abolished death in bowing to its requirements, or in laying down his life, and then taking it again. He triumphed over it. In that he died, he died unto sin once, but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God; death has no more dominion over him. But why has death no more dominion over him? He has abolished it, triumphed over it, taken

away its sting, and disarmed it of its power. At his command the massive bars retreat, and the grave gives way before him. Where was the life of the church when Jesus laid down his life? Is the life of the church in Christ? The apostle has told us that Christ is the life of every believer in him. In this light, we can easily comprehend him when he speaks of Christ's dying unto sin once, but now living unto God, and then turns his discourse to the saints, saying, "*Also likewise reckon ye yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ.*" And again, "*If we be dead with him, we shall also live with him.*" The bodies of the saints must die, but in Christ they triumph over death, and are enabled to sing, "*Death is swallowed up in victory. O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?*" Jesus had offered himself without spot to God, and by that one offering hath perfected forever them that are sanctified. He was delivered for our offenses, and was raised again for our justification. He laid down his life a voluntary sacrifice, and took it again, and through his resurrection from the dead, life and immortality are brought to light through the gospel. The church lives in Christ's life, and her immortality is in his immortality, and because he lives she lives also, and because he reigns she reigns with him. Her all and in all, is in him, and where he is there she is also. She is the heir of God, and

joint-heir with Jesus Christ in all things, and if she suffers with him, she will be glorified with him, for all things are hers, and she is Christ's, and Christ is God's. And if we seek the living among the dead we cannot find him, for there is no life in the law, nor in a dead savior, but the life is in him who was dead, but is alive for evermore; lives at the right hand of God, where he maketh intercession for the saints, according to the will of God, and heaven and earth are appealed to in vain, to lay a single charge to God's elect, for God has justified them, and who then can condemn them? Christ has died, yea, rather, is risen from the dead, and he was delivered up for their offenses, and raised again for their justification.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
 Middletown, N. Y.,
 Sept. 1, 1854.

"Which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil."- HEBREWS vi. 19.

ANCHORS, you know, are made of different sizes. You may walk in the Queen's Dockyard, and there you may see anchors for a boat, and anchors for a three-decker. Yet all anchors are made in the same way, and are designed for the same purpose; and the little an-

chor that holds the boat is as useful and as much an anchor as that which holds the three-decker. So spiritually. There is hope in the heart of the babe. But the hope in the heart of a babe is but as the anchor of a boat ; yet it holds that babe as firmly as the anchor holds the boat to which it is moored. But as the Lord increases hope, he increases the size of the anchor; and as the vessel and its anchor always bear a proportion to each other, so when he enlarges the size of the anchor he increases the size of the ship. Nay more, as he increases the size of the ship, he increases its burden, for these two are proportionate. Thus hope takes a more vigorous hold within the veil; it enters more deeply into the presence of God; it takes a firmer grasp of covenant engagements, electing love, the immutability of God's purposes, and the unchangeable nature of the great eternal I AM. Have you not felt at times your hope sweetly enlarged, so that it almost attained to the "*full assurance of hope?*" Scarcely a cloud remained between you and God ; and you believed you should ride triumphantly into the haven of bliss and peace; and having these blessed sensations in your heart, you could part with life itself at that moment to fall into the embrace of your God.

Elder J. C. Philpot

"Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the Scriptures."- LUKE xxiv. 45.

BLESSED opening, when He that hath the key of David puts in his hand by the hole of the door, and opens our heart to receive his own word. Then when we go to the Word of Truth, after it has come to us, our fingers drop with sweet-smelling myrrh upon the handles of the lock. It is said that "*the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God, and they that hear shall live.*" O, to hear the voice of the Son of God in our hearts. Surely it shall make our dead hearts, cold frames, withering hopes, drooping love, dying faith, languishing prayers, and fainting minds live; yea, revive as the corn and grow as the vine. What is all religion without a divine beginning, middle, and end, commencing, carried on, and accomplished with a heavenly power, supernatural life, and spiritual unction? Well may we be ashamed and sick of, and sorry for all our thoughts, words, and works, all our knowledge and profession that have not stood, or do not stand, in the power, teaching, and wisdom of God. All our talk has been but vain babbling, our prayers lip-service, our preaching wind and vanity, our profession hypocrisy, our knowledge the worst kind of ignorance, and all our religion carnal-

ity or delusion, if they have not been divinely communicated. Sir Isaac Newton, the wisest philosopher, is said to have remarked to one who congratulated him on his knowledge, *"I have been like a little child on the sea-shore taking up a little water in a shell when the vast ocean of truth lay undiscovered before me."* Much more may a spiritual man feel how little, how nothing he knows of the unsearchable riches of Christ, and the boundless stores of wisdom hid in them.

Elder J.C. Philpot

Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.



Elder R. H. Campbell

I have read the above scripture many times, and each time I have wondered just what it meant. I know what it says, but what is the real every day meaning of it. I read it the other day, as I had many times in the past and was thinking about what it could actually mean, and as I did this thought came to mind; faith is the manifestation of the Spirit of God in the lives of his children. The Spirit is manifested in their lives as they are led

and directed to fulfill the purposes that he has for them here in this time world, and they are unaware of its presence because it comes sovereignly and takes up its abode within them and they walk in a different path. The spirit is what produces the faith that his children have and faith is what motivates them to believe, enables them to understand the things of the Spirit and to do all of the other things that they do in the name of Christ and for his sake, whether under the law dispensation, or in the gospel day.

The Spirit was manifested in the lives of the Israelites, under the law, and directed them all the days of their life, but not in the same manner that it does the saints, in the gospel day. Under the law they were given priests to be a go between, God and the people; now Christ is the high priest and just before his death he told the disciples that he would send the Spirit which indwells man and leads him in ways that are pleasing unto God, but, it is by faith in either case. Under the law God gave them the gift of faith which caused them to follow those whom he had sent to lead them, but their faith was in God, not in the law, because they feared God. As when he spoke to them from the mount and they saw the fire and smoke and exceedingly feared the fire and smoke and the loud sounds and asked God to speak to Moses and let Moses speak to them as regarding the oracles of the law. They per-

formed the miracles and manifested their faith even as the apostles did before the day of Pentecost; by God giving them a special dispensation of power as he did when he sent them out to preach, but the Spirit did not indwell them until the day of Pentecost when they responded and fulfilled the prophecy of Joel as he spoke concerning this day.

Faith is what leads the saints in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake, it is that which enables them to persevere in the times of adversity, that which strengthens them in times of weakness and causes them to stand against the distressing wiles of the devil: whether it be lions, fiery furnaces, pharaohs or any of the other natural fears and weaknesses of the flesh when it is faced with the temptations that confront them in this world of sin. This world is Satan's domain, in which he wields havoc with the saints, in his war against God and all that is holy and good, but he does not destroy one of these little ones, with all of his fury. Faith is the armour which God provides for the chosen generation in their war against principalities and powers of this earth, and against the spiritual wickedness in high places. This armour can withstand the strongest onslaught of Satan because even he is under the dominion of God, and in all of his raging is but fulfilling the will of God, as are all of the other forces in existence.

Since faith is the manifestation

of the Spirit in the saints, and they are the chosen generation, Satan is powerless to do anything but disturb, harass and afflict them. He can never destroy a single one of the saints because greater is the Spirit that is within them, than the spirit that is within Satan and all of his unholy angels; and this is because God, in mercy, has determined that it should be that way, to cause them to turn to him in faith.

Faith is bestowed upon the saints of God to make manifest that they are his very special beloved, the ones he had chosen before the foundation of the world as his own; he formed them for himself, named them, and promised that he would never leave nor forsake them. He has loved them with an everlasting love, and faith is the indestructible bond that assures them that they shall never fail nor finally fall away, regardless of the weakness and frailty of the natural man. By faith, David slew Goliath, when but a lad, by faith Abraham believed God and left his former life and country and went to seek the country that God had promised that he would possess; by faith Moses forsook Egypt not fearing the wrath of the king, looking to him that is invisible: kept the Passover and by faith led the children out of Egypt and to the borders of the land of Canaan. All of these examples of faith are demonstrated in the children of God, and are but the substance of the things hoped for, the great cloud of wit-

nesses that encompasses them, comforts and encourages them in their journey here in time, all are evidences of the working of the invisible spirit that was directing their way. They do not understand, nor can they explain this faith to anyone, other than to say that it is not of an earthly origin because the things that it causes them to believe defies all natural laws and reasoning and yet they cannot deny the existence of them.

Faith caused David to reply to his brother, when he reprimanded him for coming to the battlefield by saying, what I have now done, is there not a cause. I don't believe that even David understood the reason of this reply; even as the prophets who prophesied of the grace that was to come to us; they were searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify. God is the author of all scriptural truth, and is the instigator or motivator of all events, which come to pass, even though the prophets, or David, uttered the words or performed the deeds.

Israel had been given evidence of the Messiah that was to come for many generations, prophecies concerning the things that he would do in behalf of the chosen nation, and yet when all of the things that were foretold were fulfilled in their presence, they did not recognize him. This too, was in the plan of God from the beginning, even as sin and all of the other pitfalls that were placed in

their path, they were ultimately for their good and were to teach them and cause them to turn to him in times of trouble, for he is the only source of help in their time of need, and this all because of this faith that Gods gives to the saints.

Through faith they understand the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear. Now this precept is foolishness to the natural mind, as are all of the other miracles described in the scriptures; as Elder Ramar L. Biggs, a former pastor of the Bordeaux Church used to say, the truth is not reasonable, it defies all of the logic of man, yet, by faith, the saints of God believe that the miracles were actual events which occurred as described. After all, the greatest event that shall ever occur is the greatest of all miracles and all of the saints depend on the authenticity of that miracle for their hope of eternal life. Some people will say that they don't believe in predestination, and my reply has always been, *"Well you had better believe in it, because only by absolute predestination of all things do you have any assurance whatsoever that there will be a heaven and immortal glory to hope for, in the end of the ages."* The scriptures declare that there shall be, and the very foundation of the plan of salvation depends on the author of the scriptures being able to perform that which he has promised and to do all

that he has promised that he would do, and faith in the individual, is what enables him to believe that God is able, and shall do everything that he has promised to do, without the omission of a single event. If one event is omitted, it might be, "*that heaven*" that is prepared for them that worship God, and if that be the case, what is the point of it all? It must all be there for it to be the work of a sovereign, all powerful God who created the heavens and the earth and who said, my counsel shall stand and I will do all of my pleasure.

Paul said by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God, and this is from the beginning to the end, and it never fails; as is recorded in (Isa. Chap 46, vs. 11) "*yea, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass: I have purposed it, I will also do it.*" It is not of the creature, but is the work of God in bringing every heir of promise into the fold, and it is in a way and manner that causes them all to acknowledge their unworthiness of this gift and to declare, with Paul, that though they feel to be the chiefest of sinners, the longsuffering of God was extended to them in their lost and sinful condition, raised them up and blesses them to sit together, with their brethren, in these heavenly places, where they can worship him in spirit and in truth, from a pure heart.

Able offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain be-

cause it was offered in faith; he was but returning unto God a small portion of that which God had given him, as an expression of his love, to show his appreciation for his many blessings, and to praise and honor his most holy name. God had respect unto Abel and his offering because it came forth from the heart that had been touched, and blessed to see the glory of the kingdom of heaven. By this faith he was impressed to shew forth his love in this manner. It was not of duty, but from an humble and contrite heart, as he was made to realize what he was in nature, as compared to what he should be before a Holy and Just creator. This knowledge comes by the revelation that is given with the faith when received; it is not engraved on tables of stone but on the fleshly tables of the heart, and cannot be erased.

By faith, the elders obtained a good report, and this is referring to all of the holy men of old who spake and responded as they were moved by the Holy Ghost to perform great deeds of valour as God worked in them both to will and to do of his good pleasure. They were, but men, as are all of the saints of God, but faith makes the difference in what man can do in nature and what he can do by grace; as Paul said, (Phil Chap 4, vs. 13) "*I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.*" and faith is this strengthening power of Christ being made manifest in the lives of his

children. Faith enabled David to face Goliath, Daniel to face the lions den, the three Hebrew children the fiery furnace, Moses to face Pharaoh, and untold millions to suffer persecution at the hands of the world's, so called, religious leaders and the rulers of the nations but they have never been overcome yet. They may die, but, just as Christ who triumphed in his death, so do they, there is no recorded incident in the scriptures where the powers of Satan overcame the power of God in the salvation of one of the saints, and he never shall. In the world they shall suffer tribulations, but, even as Christ overcame the world, so shall they. They shall triumph and reign with him in glory in that place that he has gone to prepare for them, and as he told them to be of good cheer because he had overcome the world; well, he overcame it for them and their faith gave them the knowledge of that fact.

(Eph. Chap 2, vs. 8) *"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast."* How then is this grace given, and how is it received by man, we have stated that it is by the grace of God, so the creature is not involved in the process, except as the receiver of a gracious gift, which is bestowed upon him by the sovereign and irresistible grace of God. The man is completely unaware of the circumstances surrounding the gift, and can only won-

der in amazement that it has been bestowed upon him, after he has been made to realize what he actually is in nature. In the flesh he would have said, I am entitled to it as much as anyone else, I am as good as the next person, but by the grace that accompanies the gift he cries, Oh woe is me, I am undone, I am not worthy of this gift that has been given me, and his heart overflows with gratitude and thanksgiving unto the giver of the gracious and precious favor that has been shown him.

(Job Chap 33, vs. 14-17) *"For God speaketh once, yea twice, yet man perceiveth it not. In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men, in slumberings upon the bed; then he openeth the ears of men, and sealeth their instruction, that he may withdraw man from his purpose, and hide pride from man."* This scripture indicates that God alone is the author and the finisher of faith in man, he speaks to them and seals their instructions and they respond without even realizing when and where the faith which was imparted to them came from, until it is revealed unto them. They go to bed without it and wake up with it. This is, of course, over simplifying it but nevertheless all of the imparting of faith unto man is the work of God, they didn't have, now they do.

The apostle Paul started from Jerusalem professing the Jewish

faith and arrived in Damascus a believer in Christ and all that Paul did was to be at the place of the appointment, of God, which was made before time began, and of which he was completely ignorant. Paul did not see it coming, and did nothing to assist or deter the giving or the receiving of this faith, and so it is with all men. As Job said above, he does it this way, to withdraw man from his purpose and so that man has nothing to boast of in the work. Isn't this the same as the apostle Paul stated in Ephesians, by grace are ye saved through faith, not of works lest any should boast.

Yes, faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of future things not seen, as yet. It is the most precious of the gifts of God to his children because, it in fact, encompasses all of their dreams and desires and causes them to ever be found pressing on to the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus, even though they cannot see nor prove it to someone else, that is unfamiliar with the process. It is however stamped indelibly in their minds and will influence them as long as they live in this world. It is a special gift of love to them from their heavenly Father, even as the coat of many colors which Jacob gave unto Joseph, and in like manner is a mark that they are of the most beloved of the Father.

By faith, they live, move and have their being in this world, and

by faith they shall overcome and have their being in that world which is to come; that high abode of the angels where all mystery will be ended, they shall see God, face to face, know as they are known, and rejoice in a way and manner that they have never done before. Here they have the shadow, there they will have the actual substance. Faith will be but a memory of their earthly existence, for they will have the fulness of the things hoped for here in time, but til then, they will cling to this faith because it is the only real treasure that they have in these earthen vessels, which is where they must dwell, until the time appointed of the Father. Then will be the time when He comes to take his jewels home, to adorn that holy city the new Jerusalem, to the eternal honor and glory of his holy name. Faith, is the eye by which the saints of God see and understand the certainty and sure reality of these things that are to be theirs in that day, while they are still here in this time world.

Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the spiritual knowledge that is given to every heir of grace, to see the things that are unseen by the natural eye, but which are more real and present in their spiritual eye and mind than the things that are visible to them here in nature. The things that they view here with the natural eye are temporal, but these things are eternal, and the possession of this knowledge is worth more, to them, than all of the wealth

of the world combined. Faith is their key to that city; that new Jerusalem, which shall come down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband, the most precious of all the blessings of time and eternity, unto the children of the heavenly king. All of these things were prepared for them before time began, were preserved in Christ Jesus until the time of the end, at which time all mysteries shall be revealed and the fullness of the glory of God shall be known unto all of the saints. The grandeur and glory of these things cannot even be imagined with the natural mind, but they are the inheritance of the saints that is laid up for them when time shall be no more, and heaven shall ring with the songs of praise from the hearts of the saints who were redeemed by the precious blood of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, their elder brother.

In bonds of love;
Elder Richard H. Campbell

ROMANS 7: 24-25.

*O wretched man that I am!
who shall deliver me from the
body of this death?*

*I thank God through Jesus
Christ our Lord. So then with the
mind I myself serve the law of
God; but with the flesh the law
of sin.*

“THE LORD WILL PROVIDE”

We are reminded of the sore poverty that some of the saints of God had to endure in a former generation.

Work was now very bad, and provisions immensely dear. We had three small children, and had lost one about six months before.

One circumstance that occurred about this time I think I shall never forget. One week we had a very scanty allowance of food, not sufficient to last us through. In the hope of getting my piece out [of cloth; he was a handloom weaver], if it were possible, by Saturday, I worked very hard; but this hard work and the want of nourishment, our food being principally barley, so exhausted me that I was obliged through weakness to leave off on Friday at the very time when we had not one morsel of food remaining.

Here was a gloomy scene, not a morsel of food for husband, wife or child; the wife, too, with an infant at her breast. If ever I prayed in my life, I did that night, that the Lord would take away our appetite and send us to bed satisfied. And I believe the Lord heard my cry, for the poor children wanted to go to bed, and said not one word about anything to eat, for which I felt thankful.

But my trouble was about the morning, for I could not leave the

morrow to take thought for the things of itself.

I rose very early the following morning, and worked till I was obliged to leave the loom, and could scarcely walk or stand, I was so faint and weak. My poor wife, who was as weak and sickly as I, burst into tears, and cried, "*O what shall we do? I cannot live. I am sure we shall die of want!*" and I was sunk so low, both in body and mind, that I verily believed it would be the case.

But what was the finishing stroke to my feelings was that my eldest child, who was about five years of age, looked up to me with tears running down its little cheeks, and cried, "*Father, give me some bread; O my father, do give me some bread.*"

I thought my soul would have burst of grief. "*O,*" cried I, "*are my children to die of want before my face, and I cannot help them?*"

I ran into a little place under the cellar stairs, fell on my knees before God, and entreated the Lord with all my soul to take away my life. "*O Lord, do take away my life; let me die; how can I behold the death of wife and children?*"

Whilst I was upon my knees entreating God to take away my life, these words came with great power and force into my mind: "*And they did all eat and were filled; and they took up the fragments that remained twelve baskets full.*" And it was repeated again: "*And*

they took up of the fragments that remained twelve baskets full."

I did all I could to put it away. "*What,*" said I, "*can it have to do with me in our situation? It has nothing to do with me.*"

I kept crying for some time, but the whole connection came so powerfully to my mind how the Lord had fed five thousand in the wilderness with five loaves and two fishes, and they were all filled. "*Well,*" thought I, "*He is as able to feed us now with fish and bread as He was then.*" That precious text flowed into my soul with such light, life, liberty, power and glory: "*Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and today, and for ever,*" and my soul was so refreshed, and my faith so strengthened by it that I was as sure that we should have a supply as that there was a God.

I arose off my knees as strong as a giant in mind and body, and told my wife that the Lord would most certainly send us something to eat, and very soon. She wanted to know how and when. "*It does not matter,*" said I, "*about the how nor the when. I know it will be the case, and my soul can bless God for it before it comes.*"

Just upon the back of this, a man knocked at the door, and I went and opened it to him. It was a gentleman's servant. "*John,*" said he, "*my master has bought some herrings to give to his factory*

people. I had no orders to leave you any, but I thought as I came along that I would leave you twelve, if you like to accept them."

I was so overpowered that I could scarcely speak to the man. The goodness, mercy and kindness of my dear Lord shone so brightly that I was quite lost in wonder. Whilst I was still wondering and admiring the goodness of God to a worthless worm, a neighbour sent two cakes of bread. I thought my very soul would have burst through my poor body, and taken its flight into glory unto my dear Jesus.

I withdrew into the little palace under the cellar steps, the very place in which, a few hours before, I had begged God to take away my life.

And O what a heavenly palace it was!

After returning, my God thanks, some of the fish were soon ready, and we sat down to the table all crying, together. *"Come, my dears," said I, "we are now dining on the same food as Jesus and the five thousand dined on in the wilderness"*; and I do believe in my very soul that Jesus sat with us at the table.

O the sweetness of that fish and bread!

And how wonderful the goodness and mercy of the Lord appeared to me in sending, fish and bread as the food of the soul in

promise, and then the first morsel of food to the body must be fish and bread also. The fish were so sweet and good that we soon made a breach into the twelve.

O how my poor soul was overcome with the lovingkindness of my dear Lord!

The remainder of the day was taken up with nothing but praises, thanksgivings, adorations and honours to my God for His wonderful deliverance.

From Mercies of a Covenant God by John Warburton (1776-1857).

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR DECEMBER 2010

Tommy Wall, VA.....	5.00
Elder Woodrow Hudson, LA	5.00
Hattie Spencer, VA	5.00
Sallie Hodges, VA	5.00
Faye Brown, NC.....	15.00
Louie Clare, GA	5.00
James Carr, VA.....	25.00
George Hyslip, TN	15.00
Vance Duncan, VA	5.00
Jerald Hatchett, OK	50.00
<i>In memory of Linda Joyce Hatchett</i>	
Jerry Mourer, AR	25.00
Eva Wyatt, NC	5.00
Charles Alders, TX	25.00
Helen Bailey, ME	10.00

CONTRIBUTIONS

SISTER AGNES ANDERS

Pleasant Ridge Primitive Baptist Church is saddened at the loss of our dear Sister Agnes Anders.

Sister Agnes passed away on December 25, 2010, being 86 years old. She and her late husband Brother Dan Anders were members of Pleasant Ridge Church. She along with Bro. Dan were supporters of all the churches of the Buttahatchie-Hopewell Association.

Sister Agnes not only supported the churches with her presence but also with good food and hospitality for all members and visitors.

Survivors include her sons Dan (Connie) and Joe (Donna) and four grandchildren and five great-grandchildren.

Graveside services were at the Mt. Hebron Church Cemetery conducted by Elder James Pugh. She was laid to rest beside her husband to await the glorious resurrection.

Our hearts are saddened at our loss but this, our earthly loss, is her heavenly gain. May God reconcile us to his will.

Elder James Pugh, Moderator
Sister Agnes Sullivan, Clerk

BROTHER RUSSELL RUDOWSKI

It is with sadness of heart that I write this in memory of Brother Russell 'Rudy' Rudowski. Although Brother Rudy was not a member of any of our churches, he was a supporter and lover of the truth. He professed a Hope that was none other than Jesus Christ and his finished work.

Brother Rudy passed away on December 4, 2010, at home.

He is survived by his wife of 62 years, Merrill Rudowski; daughter Martha Willingham (Elden); sons Frank Rudowski and John Rudowski (Sharron), two grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

He was born June 21, 1924, and served in the army during World War II.

Graveside services were held at Mt. Hebron Cemetery by Elder James Pugh.

We will miss him greatly for he was faithful to attend as long as he was able. We believe that our

earthly loss is his heavenly gain. May God reconcile us to his will.

Elder James Pugh

ROMANS 8:28.

And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

1429 Howlett Street
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*By the poor widow's oil and meal
Elijah was sustained;
Though small the stock, it lasted
well,
For God the store maintained.*

*It seemed as if from day to day,
They were to eat and die;
But still, though in a secret way,
He sent a fresh supply.*

*Thus to his poor he still will give
Just for the present hour:
But for to-morrow they must live
Upon his word and power.*

*No barn or store-house they possess,
On which they can depend;
Yet have no cause to fear distress,
For Jesus is their Friend.*

Then let no doubt your mind assail;

*Remember God has said,
"The cruise and barrel shall not
fail;
My people shall be fed.*

*And thus, though faint, it often
seems,*

*He keeps their grace alive;
Supplied by his refreshing
streams,
Their dying hopes revive*

Newton.

CONTENTS

EDITORIAL	74
Elder Wayman Chapell	
CORRESPONDENCE	77
ARTICLES	78
Burnell Williams	
VOICES OF THE PAST	79
Wm. Quint <i>sent by Jim Cote</i>	
Elder Gilbert Beebe	
J. W. McClanahan	
Mrs. W. I. Wade	
Elder H. H. Lefferts	
C. V. Hill	
CONTRIBUTIONS	96
OBITUARIES	96
Agnes Pauline Tony	

EDITORIAL

"...For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us." I Cor. 5:7.

In the exhortation of the apostle Paul to the church at Corinth, he makes the comparison to what Christ has already completed for his bride with that historic event, recorded in Exodus chapter 12 where the children of Israel were delivered out of Egyptian bondage. *"...it is the Lord's passover." Ex. 12:11.* It is a pattern to be closely noticed.

Consider also, *Rom. 15:4.* *"For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope."* This testifies strongly to the present comforts and benefits of the old writings where they are seen to point to the finished work of the Lord, as recorded in the New Testament and they were written for our learning. The apostle also points to the fact that all scripture is given by the inspiration of God (only the old testament existed then) and is profitable to the man of God. *II Tim. 3:16-17.*

With the above scriptures in mind what might be learned, or better yet what lessons are given; what doctrine, what reproof, what correction, or what instruction in righteousness does the Spirit bring forth in relaying the details of the passover in the night before the exodus from Egypt? Much of course, but for a few that seem clearest consider this: God told Moses that after the last plague was brought upon Egypt Pharaoh would not only let them go *"...he shall surely thrust you out hence altogether."* *Ex. 11: 1.* Does this sound familiar today? The world of religion would like to have everyone's service, as depicted by Pharaoh. But this is the nature of the carnal mind, and as expressed in *Romans. 8:7,* *"...the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the laws of God, neither indeed can*

be.” So, for the most part, a free grace doctrine will soon be pushed aside or endorsed with conditions.

Israel must leave Egypt. But before they go the last plague upon Egypt must be carried out. *“And Moses said, Thus saith the Lord, About midnight will I go out in the midst of Egypt: And all the firstborn in the land of Egypt shall die...” Ex. 1 1:4-5.* No exceptions or conditions are given—all of the firstborn.

It is hard to imagine the great cry that went through all the land from all the mourning of such a plague of death. But in contrast how great was the promise of God to the children of Israel. *“But against any of the children of Israel shall not a dog move his tongue, against man or beast: that ye may know that the Lord doth put a difference between the Egyptians and Israel.” Ex. 11:7.* However, lest the children of God boast of their standing the apostle Paul asks the question in *1 Cor. 4:7.* *“For who maketh the to differ from another? And what hast thou that thou didst not receive? now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory, as if thou hadst not received it?”* No, this difference, this electing grace is not earned, nor are any of the graces. If they were earned it would not be grace, but due compensation for work performed—physical or mental.

Before the departure from Egypt the activities, for which the night

takes its name, *“passover”*, must be carried out. The activities, as instructed by the Lord, center around the sacrifice of a lamb of the first year, a male without blemish, all depicting perfections of the Lord and Savior. There was to be a lamb according to the size of the house—a lamb for a house. If the family was too small for the lamb to be eaten that night then a man and his close neighbor would take and divide the lamb according to the number of persons and what was sufficient for them to eat. The lamb, properly roasted with fire, was to be totally eaten by those in the house with none of the edible parts remaining until morning—none left over. The parts that were left (the inedible parts) were to be burned with fire so that nothing was left.

The blood of the sacrificed lamb was to be put on the two side posts and the upper door post of the house. After the blood was applied no one was to leave the house until the morning. The blood on the house was a token. When the Lord went through to smite the firstborn in the land of Egypt, as he had said, he would see the blood on the houses of Israel and passover and not suffer the destroyer to smite the house. (See the full text of Ex. Chs. 11 and 12).

Several things can be derived from the actions and God’s instructions concerning the passover or the parts of it outlined above. First, it would seem most evident that the

sacrificed lamb was a figure of Jesus Christ, the son of God, and that the protection provided by the applied blood was only applicable for those in the house. There seems to be no real evidence that the Egyptians knew anything of the coming danger nor of the remedy provided to Israel.

The provision of the sacrificial lamb was sufficient for the eating of those in the house. But, the instructions were also just as clear that there was to be nothing left over. The atoning blood was for those only in the house where the blood was applied and they were to stay in the house until morning. Therefore there was no passover lamb for the Egyptians.

The instructions for the eating of the passover were very restricted as to who could take part, for which a present day notice should be taken, for it relates to the Lords supper. The Lord ate the passover with his disciples and brought to light it's fuller meaning, in Him, (typical of his flesh and his blood) on the night he was betrayed. See 1 Cor. 11:20-29 and also Mat. chapter 26.

The Lord instructed Moses that in the ordinance of the passover, *"There shall no stranger eat thereof."* See Ex. 12:43-49 A foreigner and a hired servant shall not eat thereof but a bought servant, when he is circumcised, shall eat the passover. And when a stranger shall sojourn with you and desires to keep the passover all his males are to be

circumcised. Then he shall come and keep the passover as one that is born in the land. The custom for Israel was for all males to be circumcised. Under the new covenant however, it is the circumcision of the heart that is the fulfillment of the fleshly token given under law. See Rom. 2:25-29. Therefore let us keep the feast, not with the old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth." 1 Cor. 5:8. Here it should be pointed out the Feast of Passover was also known as the Feast of Unleavened Bread.

The point to be made here is to the care that is to be taken with the Lord's Supper, as instructed in the New Testament, since it is related directly to the passover of the Old Testament. *"...For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us."* And the apostle Paul, in his first letter to the church at Corinth admonishes them, *"...flee from idolatry I speak as to wise men; judge ye what I say. The cup of blessing which ye bless, is it not the communion of the body of Christ? The bread which ye break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?"* 1 Cor. 10:14-16. And vs. 21, *"Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils: ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table and the table of devils."* Therefore is it any wonder that devout church men before us held to the practice of closed commun-

and care would seem slack, and practices would be subject to changing as circumstances change. But in words that extend beyond the Lord's Supper Paul the apostle exhorts the church at Corinth thusly: *"Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness?"* 2 Cor. 6:14

Elder Chapell served as assistant pastor and is now chosen to follow Elder Campbell as pastor of Memphis Primitive Baptist Church.

Editors

CORRESPONDENCE

2-17-2011

Dear Brother Horton,

Enclosed you will find enough for another years renewal - use the rest as you need.

Thank the Lord for all of you. You do a great job.

Thank you,
In love and hope,
Carol L. Lawson

2-14-11

Dear Brother Horton,

The Signs expires very soon and I would thank you to renew my subscription another year. I enjoy reading the Signs very much. I hope the dear Lord will bless you and others to get the paper out and bless all writers to write or speak of the God of heaven and earth.

Many good wishes to you and your family.

With love I hope,
Reidy Pickral

Feb. 8, 2011

Dear Brother Horton,

Enclosed please find my check for \$50.00, which I would like to be used to renew my subscription to "Signs of the Times" for one year and the other as you see fit. I really enjoy the paper.

I was saddened to read of Elder Campbell's death. I enjoyed hearing him at our meetings. We will miss him, but will enjoy reading his articles in your paper.

Sincerely,
Billie (Dunn) Speir

ARTICLES

February 1, 2011

Dear Brethren,

Each time I write for publication I feel it is my last. Who am I to relate experiences to you? I feel each of the Chosen of God have had beautiful times of rejoicing that the household of faith would enjoy reading. I hope you realize that I am not worthy of writing to you but my mind will not rest until I attempt to tell of some of my visions.

I hope they are of the true actions of the Holy Spirit upon this worm of the dust.

Recently, I was in my dreams when two of my nephews, Elder T. A. Stanfield's grandchildren, were discussing their grandfather's belief. It seemed that neither were convinced that he believed in salvation by Grace. I was, as I dreamed, listening, and I could not be quiet. I said, *"I know what Elder Stanfield believed. He did believe in salvation by Grace as the only means of salvation."* Then I compared Grace as a vessel of pure bleach. If it was any part of another substance, it would not be pure but contaminated and not fit for use. Then I said that the Grace of God is a pure river of water proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb (Rev 1:22). Our God will not share

his Glory with another. If there is any conditions to being saved by Grace it is a polluted idea and would not be allowed by the God that causes and controls the natural rivers to flow. The nephews did not answer me at all but they did listen.

If any of God's creatures are blessed to relate the absolute perfection and purity of any of God's blessings, they are shown that no natural creature unless he is given revelations from above can see the glorious perfection of our blessings. They cannot be learned by all of the world's education. These, I believe, are the hidden things of God and these blessings are from a divinity that is not of this world that is so full of all kinds of pollution. Why would any natural mind be so blind as to believe a holy act of God can be duplicated by a weak sinful race? It is because it is hidden from all except to whom it is revealed. Who is to be compared to Him? Are you not thankful that his divinity is sealed from the world and will never be diluted by any act of the creatures he controls? And he does control all things both seen and unseen.

My precious companion and I have been so blessed to worship and to be members among you for 56 years and 54 years, respectively. What a glorious journey it has been! To be so loved and shown fellowship throughout our traveled times among them is indescribable. If these statements be true, can you even imagine what eternity will be?

We have only caught glimpses of what it shall be and if I am in that chosen race, then this world and all of its riches are of no value. Only to be carried to that eternity of endless bliss can the complete fulfillment of our hope be realized.

Have you dwelt on what is to come? It is not the natural mind but a spiritual one that can see any of the glories that await His people. My greatest evidence is that surely I do love my brethren. May His unpoluted pure Grace be with us all throughout the journey that is left for us. We sometimes wonder if we will be given to realize that He has promised to be with his people until the end and that will be our joy instead of dreading what the future holds. I have no doubt that a pure river of water that will flow to us from His throne will be sufficient to carry us to the glory land.

I love you saints in the pure name of our savior Christ Jesus.

Burnell Williams

Note: Elder Stanfield was my wife's father. He died in 1942. I remember him in my young days but I never heard him preach after I received a hope. He was a much-loved minister in the Upper Country Line Association of North Carolina. The strange part about all of these remarks about what Elder Stanfield believed is that I never heard him express these beliefs to me in real

life. But I know what the called ministers have expressed in their remarks to be very sure it goes back through the ages of time and includes the Bible writings.

VOICES OF THE PAST

The Maine Old School Baptist Conference, convened with the church at North Berwick, Maine, September 2d, 3d and 4th, 1887, to the churches, and associations with whom she corresponds, sends christian salutation.

DEAR BRETHREN IN CHRIST: — By the mercy of our all wise and all powerful God we have the high privilege once more to meet with our messages of love, relying upon him who has all power on earth and in heaven, and whose love never fails; and by the exercise of that faith which works by love, and purified the heart, and overcomes the world, we are made confident that all things work together for good to them that love God, and who are the called according to his purpose.

In sending this our annual epistle we have chosen for our subject the eternal, electing and unchangeable love of God to his people. Jeremiah says, "*I have loved them with an everlasting love; therefore with loving-kind-*

ness have I drawn thee." Dear brethren, before the sun mounted his dazzling throne, or the foundation of the mighty deep was laid, or dust was fashioned into man, this wondrous love existed. Paul says, "*According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love.*"

Time and space cannot come between the infinite Jehovah and his people, for his love is everlasting, and with loving kindness does he draw them; and being King of Kings and Lord of Lords, the beginning and the end, the first and the last, his power is above all powers. His omniscient eye saw the end, and Christ glorified, before time had its beginning, or his chosen bride had a natural existence; for he was as a lamb slain from the foundation of the world. Hence the redemption of his people was secure before the breath of life animated Adam's dust. All alike, from Abel to the end of time, are saved by (and in no other way) the blood of Christ, which cleanseth from all sin. It was said to Jacob, "*I have redeemed thee; thou art mine.*" The waters cannot overflow thee, the fire cannot burn thee; for the everlasting arms of the Redeemer are underneath thee. The panoply of his love is above thee, and no weapon formed against thee shall prosper. Christ says, "*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 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." Blessed words, "*Greater than all!*" No jewel from the royal diadem can ever be lost; for if God, who is "*greater than all,*" be for us, who can be against us? "*Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?*" Our Father, who is "*greater than all,*" has made us more than conquerors over all these things through him who has loved us. "*For I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*"- *Romans viii.*

"Hail, sacred union, firm and strong!

How great the grace! how sweet the song!

That worms of earth should ever be

One with incarnate Deity!

"One in the tomb, one when he rose,

One when he triumphed o'er his foes,

One when in heaven he took his seat,

And seraphs sung all hell's defeat."

"Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." And not only called the sons of God, but *"the Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ,"* their elder Brother. How sweet the thought that a bond of sovereign grace exists between Christ and his chosen people which can never be broken. He their Head and they his body; and where he is, ere they are; and as sure as he lives, they shall live also. The kingdom of God is theirs; and what he has declared is as firm as his throne. Then shout, saints of God, for on Christ the solid Rock you stand, and he has bid you cast aside your fears, and rely upon him for wisdom, power and safety until the warfare shall end; and then around the throne shall your ransomed souls have everlasting rest.

Our meeting has been well attended, and the weather was as pleasant as we could wish for. Elders Purington, Chick and Campbell were with us through the meeting; but it was evident that there was but one preacher among us, and that he did speak through them all to the comfort and edification of all that

had an ear to hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches. It was evident that their conversation was in the gospel heavens, so that we were made to sit together in a heavenly place in Christ Jesus our Lord. On Sunday, the last day of the meeting, it was thought that seven hundred people were there. We still wish to continue correspondence with you.

WM. QUINT, Moderator.
LEWIS BUTLER, Clerk.

Sent in by Jim Cote

MATTHEW XVII. 5.

"WHILE he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him."

Various indeed, grand and sublime beyond description, have been the manifestations of Jesus to his disciples; and perhaps none of them have been more glorious than the one now under consideration. In the preceding chapter the Redeemer had been warning his disciples of the doctrine of the Pharisees and Sadducees, and had therein revealed to Peter something of the nature of his kingdom here upon the earth. He then gave them some instructions relative to his death, and resurrection from the

dead. And it is quite evident from the answer of Peter to him, that he was as yet in great ignorance of the true nature of the mission of Jesus into the world. The Lord was not pleased to let in the full blaze of the light of the knowledge of his glory upon the minds of his disciples at once, for they were not yet able to bear it. But he manifested the light in proportion as he strengthened and prepared their minds to receive it, and thus step by step he led them on from glory to glory, in the knowledge of himself as the Son of God, and Redeemer of the church. And when he had told them that he must be killed and raised again from the dead, Peter began to rebuke him; for which rebuke the Savior reproved him sharply. Shortly after this Jesus took Peter, James and John up into a high mountain apart, when this most grand and enrapturing scene described in the text occurred. We read that Jesus was transfigured before them, and his face did shine as the sun, and his raiment was white as the light. And behold, there appeared unto them Moses and Elias talking with him. It was at this juncture that Peter proposed building three tabernacles, one for Jesus, one for Moses, and one for Elias. *"While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them."* Whatever this cloud was in itself, we believe we are correct in saying it was the symbol of the presence of the glory of the eternal Jehovah. The Redeemer had on differ-

ent occasions manifested himself in the cloud, and in a way that those to whom the manifestation was made, were made to know that God was with them. When God blessed Noah, and established his covenant with him, that he would no more cut off all flesh with the waters of a flood, the cloud was his chosen emblem, in which he set his bow, the token of that covenant. The declaration was, and *"I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of the covenant between me and the earth."* And I will look upon it, and remember my covenant for perpetual generations. The covenant was made with all the earth, and the token is that which all the earth can see. And all the ages which have passed and gone, the rising and falling of Empires, with all the various and changing seasons and scenes, which have existed from that time until the present, have not removed the token, nor annulled the decree, and by it we are still assured that all flesh shall not any more be cut off with the waters of a flood, and to this day the token is seen, and through its soft and beautiful hues it is yet proclaiming to men the immutability, mercy and faithfulness, of the covenant and unchanging God. If we pursue this cloud a little farther, we will find it the emblem of another bright, merciful and luminous manifestation from the God of grace and glory.— We refer in this instance, to the cloud that attended the Israelites in their

journeyings from Egypt to Canaan. And by it God led Joseph like a flock, and Israel by the right way, that he might go to a city of habitation. But the question naturally arises, How did he lead them? Is God a man, that he should take Israel by the hand literally, and lead them forth? What shall be their unerring guide, and their unfailing protection through the wilderness, and over that trackless path with which they are altogether unacquainted, and which alone leads to their land of promise? Will God do anything more than to command them to the land of promise? Will he not leave them to guess at the way, and search it out for themselves, and leave them subject to the misfortune of missing the right way, dependent upon circumstances, and the direction of mortals? By no means; God led them. But how did he lead them? The language of the inspired writer is more full and clear upon this point, than any other can be. *“And they took their journey from Succoth, and encamped in Etham, in the edge of the wilderness. And the Lord went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light; to go by day and night: he took not away the pillar of cloud by day, nor the pillar of fire by night, from before the people.”* From the foregoing Scripture, we cannot fail to discover that Israel were led by the Lord their God. They were not only

led by the cloud (the emblem of God's presence, power and glory, but it was also a protection to them from their enemies. When they were pursued by their enemies, this cloud stood between the two companies, and the Egyptians could not have reached the Israelites until they passed through the pillar of cloud, and thus we see them completely protected from the wrath of Egypt's king. This cloud, called the angel of God, which went before the camp of Israel, removed and went behind them, and came between the camp of the Egyptians, and the camp of Israel, and while it was a cloud and darkness to them, it gave light to Israel. None, methinks, can fail to discover the fullness of the blessing of this cloud, for it was the leader and protector of Israel; the presence of their God with them, manifesting these mercies which could come from no other source. When God commanded Moses to make a tabernacle, he commanded him to make all things according to the pattern presented to him on the mount. The tabernacle was to accompany the Israelites in their journeyings through the wilderness, and on the day it was reared up, the cloud covered it, namely, the tent of the testimony; and at even there was upon the tabernacle, as it were, the appearance of fire, until morning. So it was always, the cloud covered it by day, and the appearance of fire by night. And when the cloud was taken up from the tabernacle, then

the children of Israel journeyed onward, and in the place where the cloud abode, there the children of Israel pitched their tents. From the foregoing we cannot fail to see the wisdom and sovereignty of God, in leading his chosen people into the promised land of their inheritance, and they could not lose their way, for God was with them in the cloud as their leader; neither could the enemy destroy them, for the Lord was their protection, and very present help in every time of need. The cloud bade them to march onward, and it commanded them to rest, and whither it moved they went; when it rested, they rested, and it then passed around and stood between the two camps. But these manifestations to national Israel, were but feeble glimmerings of the revelation of the glory of God in his church in the gospel. They were but the shadow of things to come; the body or substance of which is Christ. Our Lord said to his disciples, *"Blessed are your eyes, for they see; and your ears, for they hear. For verily I say unto you, that many prophets and righteous men have desired to see those things which ye see, and have not seen them; and to hear those things which ye hear, and have not heard them."* The legal ministration of the law was but a shadow, and all its glory was borrowed, as the light and glory of the moon are borrowed from the sun. And we are informed that the law

made nothing perfect, but the bringing in of a better hope did, (which hope is Christ.) There was never a law given which could give life; the vail was over the law, and there was no looking upon it with open face. But in the gospel the apostle says, *"We all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord."* Here then, the superlative glory, the substance, that better thing, which God hath provided for us in the gospel, is revealed, and was declared out of that bright cloud which overshadowed the disciples at the transfiguration. But why did the cloud appear at this time, and at the ascension of our Lord to glory, and appear no more? To this, it may be answered, that Jesus was a minister of the circumcision, to confirm the promise made unto the fathers, and the types and shadows must remain until Jesus is glorified, and the substance comes in all its perfection, and swallows up all these things in its transcendent glory. When the cloud covered the tent of the congregation of Israel, the glory of the Lord filled the tabernacle, and Moses could not enter into the tent of the congregation. And there is certainly no room for the law of Moses, or a conditional covenant, in the gospel of Christ. There can be no room for the ministration of condemnation and death, in the ministration of life; for it is covered and filled with Christ, its liv-

ing glory, its life, its all and in all. But it is said that this cloud is taken up, and has not been seen in that peculiar form and manner, in which it appeared to Israel, since the ascension of our Lord. And what is now to be the guide and protection of the church, and how are we to know what has the seal and authority of heaven, and what has not? How are we to know who the people of God are, that are walking in gospel truth and order, and what is the infallible rule by which we may distinguish them from those who are walking after the traditions and commandments of men? All claim to be right, but opposite directions and jargons assure us that some are wrong. And it is truly an important inquiry, how shall we distinguish between him that serveth God, and him that serveth him not? The text affords us the infallible rule. That cloud prefigured Christ as its substance, and the last words heard out of it were uttered by the eternal God, and were, "*This is my beloved Son; hear ye him.*" The cloud will no more guide the wandering Israelites, for the gospel kingdom is now to be set up, and Christ is King and Lawgiver therein; and he shall tell his subjects, not through the movable emblem of the vapping cloud, but with his own words, what the commands of the gospel are, and wherein they shall walk. Moses and Elias talked together with Christ at the transfiguration, but Moses and Elias are now lost sight of, and swal-

lowed up in Christ.

The Patriarchal and Jewish dispensations bore testimony to Christ, but now he has come, the testimony is swallowed up in Christ, the substance. The prophets foretold his coming in the flesh, and now he has come and fulfilled all that was written of him, and here all types, shadows and prophecies, have come to an end. The law and the prophets were until John, but now the kingdom of heaven is preached, and Jesus himself declared, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the law of Moses, and in the prophets, and in the psalms, concerning him. Hence we are not to take the law of Moses for our guide. The law of Moses has no power over a gospel subject, for Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every believer. Yet we are not without law to Christ; and in relation to this, the apostle said, "For the law of the spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death." But to return to the language, "*This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.*" We cannot receive the idea, that God has any sons with whom he is not well pleased, or that there is any sonship out of Christ. But here, Christ the Mediator, (and the children of God were never without an elder brother and mediator,) is spoken of particularly. The prophet Isaiah spake of Christ, in his mediatorial character, as the cloud by day, the shining of a flaming fire

by night, and the defense upon all the glory of Zion. He also spake of him as the Son and Lawgiver, and the one upon whose shoulder the government should rest. God also declared that he gave him, a commander and leader to Israel. Now, if the government is upon his shoulder, and he is the commander and leader, it certainly can be nothing short of idolatry to follow in any other way, or establish anything as religious institutions which he has not commanded. The eternal God declared himself well pleased in Christ as Mediator, Savior and Redeemer of the church, and he is well pleased also with his children in him, for they are all accepted together in the beloved, and it is Jesus whom they acknowledge as their only Lawgiver, Lord and Christ. Agreeable with this is the commission itself. In this the disciples are to teach all nations (or the saints among all nations,) to observe all things which Christ has commanded them, and they have nothing to do with Moses, for he is dead. The Lord buried him, and even his sepulchre is nowhere to be found in the gospel. When we listen to the command, "*Hear ye him,*" (my Son) we are as gospel subjects to listen to, and obey God rather than men, and look to Christ, and turn away from Moses. And where can we find where Christ ever commanded a subject in the gospel to keep the law of Moses, and obey the conditions of the old covenant, as a means of salvation, or

as having anything to do with the children of grace, under the gospel dispensation? Did he ever tell anyone that he had fulfilled a part of the law, and that the balance was to be complied with by man? Never. But he did declare that heaven and earth should pass away, but not one jot or tittle of the law should pass until all was fulfilled. He came to fulfill the law and the prophets; to pay all the requirements of the law; to die under its curse, and to redeem therefrom the bone of his bone, and the flesh of his flesh, and he was straitened until he had accomplished it. He bore the curse of the law for his brethren, and delivered them from that curse; he having been made a curse for them. Many people suppose that they have much to do to help Christ along in the great business of salvation. But all such have yet to learn the beauty and force of that saying, "*The Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.*" In the glorious plan of salvation, Christ does everything, and the church receives all things, and this excludes boasting, exhibits grace, exalts the Redeemer, and glorifies God. And all the commands of Christ are to the children of his kingdom. And these commands are simply to follow him. And how unlike they are to the commands of men. The subject is most beautifully illustrated in Acts XV. There were certain men which came down from Judea, which believed,

and taught the brethren, saying, Except ye be circumcised, and keep the law of Moses, ye cannot be saved. And when the apostles had assembled, there rose up certain of the pharisees which believed, saying that it was necessary to circumcise them, and to command them to keep the law of Moses. And these pharisees were believers. In what did they believe? Just what Arminians believe in now, and what they preach and contend for: that it is necessary for man to do something; which something will amount to an obedience which God will accept as conditions of his salvation. But what said that judge in Israel, even the one to whom Jesus gave the keys of the kingdom of heaven? Peter said unto them, Why tempt ye God, to put a yoke upon their necks which neither we, nor our fathers, were able to bear? Peter had received no authority from Christ to command the disciples among the Gentiles to observe these things. But what commandment had he received? We must now most certainly look for him to act in strict accordance with the authority and command given him by his Master. The apostles considered the matter, and sent a message to those brethren, whose hearts had been made sad by these false teachers. And it is still the duty of all the servants of Christ to lift their voice against every species of error, and present to their brethren the glorious consolations of the gospel. This consolation is found in the

message already referred to, and which we will here transcribe, and will remark that the effect produced was the same that all gospel messages will invariably produce upon the entire household of faith. After the apostles had prefaced their message with a solemn declaration that they had given those judaizing teachers no commandment to lay this conditional system upon the disciples, they say, *“For it seemed good to the Holy Ghost, and to us, to lay upon you no greater burden than these necessary things: that ye abstain from meats offered to idols, and from blood, and from things strangled, and from fornication; from which if ye keep yourselves, ye shall do well.”* And when the epistle had been read, they rejoiced for the consolation. The gospel of Christ is a message of consolation to the brethren at all times, and under all circumstances. It proclaims to them the fullness of their redemption, and the glory of that liberty wherewith Christ hath made them free. And all the commands of the gospel require nothing more nor less, than for its subjects to follow Christ, in the ordinances of it, through evil, as well as good report. They call upon none in heaven, or earth, to devise ways, make laws, or institute means for the salvation of men, or the furtherance of the glory of God. The eternal Father hath given Christ, a commander and leader to the people, and it is his to

command, and theirs to obey. And in this obedience they are not to lead, but are to follow Christ. And he has said, *“If ye love me keep my commandments.”* They have nothing to do with Moses. They left him on the Pisgah of the law, and were led by Jesus into the Canaan of the gospel, and to him they are to look, and from him they receive all the commands which they are to obey; and in all this obedience they show forth his praise, and acknowledge him as their Redeemer and Commander, and the Captain of their salvation. They know no other commander, they have no other leader; they acknowledge him alone as King in Zion, and it is he that they obey as the only Lawgiver in Israel. Let us then run with patience the race set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith.

Elder Gilbert Beebe
 Middletown, N. Y., Sept. 15, 1854.

PSALM 78: 13-15.

He divided the sea, and caused them to pass through; and he made the waters to stand as an heap.

In the daytime also he led them with a cloud, and all the night with a light of fire.

He clave the rocks in the wilderness, and gave them drink as out of the great depths.

INFANT SALVATION.

We have been accused by the enemies of truth of preaching infant damnation, or of preaching infants in hell not a span long. We people, known as the Old School or Primitive Baptists, do believe and preach that both infant and adult are saved by grace, and both infant and adult are sinners. This was the mission of Jesus into this world, to save sinners. His name shall be called Jesus, for he shall save his people from their sins. Our enemies say that infants are not sinners until they pass a certain age. If they are not sinners they have no Savior until they reach a certain age and cross the line of accountability, as is claimed by them, then what about the thousands of infants that die before reaching the age for crossing the line of accountability? Is it not a fact that they would be without a Savior if such a theory be true as is advocated by the Arminian World? If the infants were not sinners they would never die. It is sin that kills. There is but one way from earth to heaven, and Jesus says, I am the way, the truth and the life. The infant and adult alike will praise Jesus for their redemption alone through. His atoning blood that he shed for them on Calvary's rugged cross. The enemies of truth claim that children from their natural birth to a certain age are fit subjects for heaven, as they are innocent and harmless. Now I fully believe after

one is born again, has passed from law to gospel, he is accountable to God for his waywardness after the promptings of the flesh. God never fails to correct his children. The rod of chastisement is applied and the child is corrected, and with Paul he can say, No chastisement seemeth good for the present, but afterwards it yields the peaceable fruit of righteousness to them that are exercised thereby. By experience I have some knowledge of his chastisement. Often I have bowed my head with shame for some vain or idle word spoken in haste.

“And they brought unto him also infants, that he would touch them: but when his disciples saw it, they rebuked them. But Jesus called them unto him, and said, Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God.” Let us take notice of what he says next: *“Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, shall in no wise enter therein.”* The total depravity of all creatures, both infants and adults, is taught in this lesson to his disciples. The adult is as helpless as the new-born babe, so there is a special interest by father and mother in caring for and looking after the little ones. John says, Ye are of God little children. It is not always infants that are termed as little children, but adult as well, because of their helplessness, being totally depraved.

“That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.” The carnal mind cannot comprehend the mystery of the new birth. *“The wind bloweth where it listeth [where it pleaseth], and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is I everyone that is born of the Spirit.”* These words were spoken by our Savior to Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews.

We hear David saying, *“Behold, was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me.”* Again, ye hear him saying, *“The wicked are estranged “from the womb; they go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies,”* So it is evidently clear that all of Adam’s posterity are born into this world sinners, and both infants and adults are saved by grace.

J. W. MCCLANAHAN.

PSALM 89: 24-26.

But my faithfulness and my mercy shall be with him: and in my name shall his horn be exalted.

I will set his hand also in the sea, and his right hand in the rivers.

He shall cry unto me, Thou art my father, my God, and the rock of my salvation.

Yawkey, West Virginia.

Elder A. J. Mullens: - I have thought for some time that I would write you my experience.

Like many others, I was raised by parents who did not believe Baptist doctrine. They were Methodists, or were in my childhood days, but I will say that now in their last days their belief is far from that. I was sprinkled in infancy and was sent to Sunday School I never heard an Old School Baptist preach until I was sixteen years of age. I heard of them and heard people make fun of them. At the age of eighteen years I was married into an Old Baptist family. I never in my life heard a gospel sermon preached until the day my husband was baptized. He was baptized by Elder J. H. Terry in July, 1898. Elder Terry's text was, "*O generation of vipers, who has warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance.*" That sermon seemed to give me some light on the Scriptures, but before that I had been blind to their meaning. I had set times; to do better, and thought that if I, was taken sick I would start right in and get religion. I truly thought I could get religion any time I wanted to. My people would say to me, Do not let your husband make a "*Hardshell*" of you. I would answer, You need not worry, he will never do that. I truly thought I never would be one, but

God moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform. I had several dreams that made me worry. I dreamed of seeing the devil come with his chains to bind me. Before that time I was afraid of the devil, but I never was afraid of him after that. I became greatly troubled about my sins. I had a great desire to read the Bible. My desire to read was so great that I would stop work and read it. I would try to pray, but the thought would come that I was acting the hypocrite. I went on in this way for some time, trying to keep my trouble to myself. I did not want even my husband to know I was *in* trouble. My desire was to be away off in some lonely spot where I could not see anyone, or even hear the birds sing or the insects cry. My trouble was so great I wanted to be alone. One night I had a dream, or a vision rather, I thought I was in torment, where they were doing all kinds of meanness. I wanted to get away from there, and looked for a door, or a way to get out, but could find no way of escape. I thought I was doomed to stay there. I cannot describe my feelings, and when my hope was just about gone I heard a voice say, Come, follow me. I looked and saw Jesus and followed him. He lead me up the most beautiful staircase I ever saw. When I got to the top I beheld the prettiest place my eyes had ever seen. I saw two women sitting at a table. He asked me if I knew who they were. I said,

No. He said one was Christ's mother, but did not say who the other one was. I thought it was the most beautiful place I had ever seen, and I was very happy. I would have liked to stay that way, but he disappeared from me. I was very happy for a time, but my trouble came back and I thought, That is only a dream, and I know there is nothing in dreams. About that time my husband began preaching, was licensed and there was talk of ordaining him. He said he did not want to be ordained. I told him that if he did not want to preach to just stop preaching. I did not want him to be a preacher and be gone from home so much. It gave me much trouble, and one night I had a dream that stopped my worrying about his ordination. I thought I went to the church-house door, but did not go in, for at that time I had not joined the church, and when I looked in the house and saw the church members all sitting there and my husband was not among them I asked where he was, and a voice answered me, and said, He is numbered with the preachers. I looked in and saw him in the upper end of the building with eleven other preachers, all dressed in white robes. I knew the faces of some and some I did not know, but believe I have seen them since that time. That was in the year 1911. About eight or nine years after that I went to an association held at the Liberty Church. After we

got off the street car we had to walk some distance, and we overtook a man none of us knew. I told my husband that he was an Old Baptist preacher, and when he asked me how I knew I said, Because I have seen him before. You, brother Mullens, are that man. You are one of the eleven I saw with my husband in my dream, eight years before that time, and I knew you was one of those preachers I saw at that time. I was so overjoyed during that meeting that I could not talk with anyone. I heard you preach three sermons there that I have never forgotten. I have also met some others that I knew were preachers because I knew their faces from my dream.

Brother Mullens, I started this letter seventeen years ago. I found it today and thought I would copy it and send it to you, as I have thought much of writing you about my dream. I believe God showed me in that dream that his servants are chosen by him and not by mortal man. I have had many ups and downs since that time, and have heard you preach some sweet sermons and if I could have the confidence in myself that I have in you being a chosen servant of God I would not go groping in the dark begging the Lord to have mercy upon me a poor sinner, saved by grace if saved at all. Pray for me when at the throne of grace.

(MRS.) W. I. WADE.

“THUS SAITH THE LORD.”

THE expressions, “*Thus saith the Lord*,” “*Saith the Lord*,” “*Saith God*,” and including the sayings of Jesus, occur at least one thousand times throughout the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments. Yet, despite this fact, there are to be found those who say the Bible is not the word of God. Indeed, beyond all successful controversy, it is verily the word of God. Jesus Christ himself is the living Word, the Scriptures of inspiration are the written Word. These two, the living and the written Words, do never contradict each other. They are in perfect harmony, the literal meaning of the Scriptures and the spiritual significance thereof, do never conflict. If at any time, any man thinks he sees contradictions and lack of harmony in the Word of God, the opposition is in the man himself. Everyone of us by nature are in opposition to God’s word. The carnal mind is enmity against God and the natural man knows not the things of God. No wonder, then, that carnal minds and natural men charge the Scriptures with being contradictory. Every man’s opinion, every man’s views, all preaching, all philosophy, all meditation and all sentiment should be brought to the test of the written Word of God. If not in accord with the Scriptures, they must be cast aside and rejected, howsoever fair and plausible they may seem. Frequently we hear it said that one man

says the Scriptures mean thus and so, another man says they mean quite something else: therefore, it is said the Scriptures can mean anything. This is absolutely false. When the Scriptures are taken and handled honestly with no attempt to deceive and with no personal bias which twists them to suit our personal notions, they can mean but one thing, and that one thing is the truth of God as revealed in and through Jesus Christ. God’s people should not follow preachers only in so “far as the preacher follows the Scriptures. The Scriptures should be the man of our counsel. The brethren at Berea were more noble than the other christians because they searched the Scriptures daily to know whether the things said by Paul were so. (Acts x:vii. 11.) The brethren at Thessalonica were said not to have done as the Berean brethren did. We fear that in this present day there is entirely too little searching of the Scriptures by the brethren themselves and too much reliance placed in what the preacher says. If any man lacks wisdom, we are not told to go to our pastor about it, or to inquire of the preacher, but we are commanded to ask of the Lord and that thus inquiring sincerely of him, we shall receive. To go directly to the fountainhead of all Wisdom is vastly better than to inquire of one of the streams. No Scripture should ever be interpreted at variance with the context in which it occurs. If we pick out a verse here, another verse there, a word here

and a word there, the most fantastic and absurd conclusions may be arrived at; but this is not right and certainly is not honest. We fail to see how a man truly called of God to preach can conscientiously thus handle his Master's goods. What kind of an account will such a man give of his stewardship? We are commanded to study to show ourselves approved unto God, workmen rightly dividing the word of truth and so needing not to be ashamed.

The word of truth needs no addition or subtraction, but is to be properly divided. This the servant of God does by that same Spirit which has called and qualified him as a servant of God. If the calling of God be absent, no amount of study will do any good. It is not necessary to study books about the Bible, but it is necessary to study the Scriptures themselves, compare Scripture with Scripture, spiritual things with spiritual. No amount of Bible reading will ever make a man preach the gospel, but one who is truly called to the work of the ministry will feel to make the Scriptures the man of his counsel and will desire to read and search them, asking the Spirit to direct him in his perusal of them. In any walk or profession of life, it is needful to have the tools to work with. Are not the inspired Scriptures the tool of the man of God? Are they not for his furnishing to all good works and for his instruction in doctrine? If we cannot give a "thus saith

the Lord" for what we believe and preach, we had better quit. Nothing is worth anything unless founded on divine authority. Divine authority for doctrine is to be found in the inspired Scriptures of truth. True Baptists all down the ages have always required scriptural proof for their doctrine and practice. Anything not sanctioned by "thus saith the Lord," they let alone. It is interesting to know that the word "bigot" arose centuries ago in France. "Bigot" comes from "by God." Today this word means narrow-minded person and one who is very decided and uncompromising in his views, particularly on the subject of religion. In olden times, the Huguenots in France were called "by God" people, because they demanded the word of God as their authority. Whenever approached by their enemies and examined by them to know why they believed as they did, they would refer their enemies to the Bible and declare that their faith was "by God," their doctrine and teaching was "by God," their practice was "by God," etc. Thus, it came to be that a "by God" person was one who demanded the Bible and the "thus saith the Lord" as his guide. This phrase "by God" has been by much use contracted into the word "bigot." Most people to-day hate to be called "bigots," but we who love the Scriptures should rejoice to have ourselves thus denominated, because when we know the origin of the word, it is complimentary

rather than defamatory, since it stamps one as being an upholder of the Word of God. When we come, in our reaching, to passages of Scripture which we cannot understand, let us await the Spirit's pleasure to unfold them to us: and as we thus wait, let us not deny them and let us not permit our imaginations to range wildly over them unduly spiritualizing them. Imagination, some one says, is the biggest "nation" in the "world. Surely it is, and further the Word says the imaginations of our hearts are nothing but evil continually.

H.H. Lefferts

CLIFTON SPRINGS, N. Y.,
Aug. 16, 1931.

DEAR BROTHER LEFFERTS: - You will note I am here in the Clifton Springs Sanitarium. I came here last Thursday. I have not been well for a long time; almost a year continually going back. However, these people think they can do me some good. I hope they can. They are making a very rigid examination.

I have thought many times about your letter. You said the Lord must have put it in my mind to write you, as my letter came just when you needed it. It has always been hard for me to understand how a good preacher like you, with such a wonderful understanding of the Scriptures, could get so low down

that a word from me could help you in any way. I have often felt that if I had the understanding you and others have I would not be down in the valley so much of the time but would be able to see things in the Scriptures that would lift me up, revive my hope, causing me to walk on a higher plane, and yet I know all the distinguished writers of the Bible had their lean times and felt their need of help. They were not always on the mountain praising the Lord, but were often found down in the valley, like Habakkuk when he said, O Lord, revive thy work in the midst of the years. He had a desire to see again the manifestation of God's power, his love and mercy, and that is the way with you and me, when we are down we want to see again some of the wonderful things we once saw. We want the manifestation of that mighty power that lifts a poor sinner up out of the slums of darkness, causing him to see and understand some of the wonderful works of God. God's people are like a calf in the stall, they must wait for their food. I often think how well the words of Malachi describe the travels of a poor sinner, one who is always destitute of the Spirit except when the Lord feeds him. It drops down as the rain and distils as the dew. No one can hasten it or stop it. It comes at the appointed time, just when it is most needed, and is always a surprise to the one receiving it. This food never comes to one when he is expecting it because of

any goodness in himself, for when there is any goodness left in a person he is not entirely destitute. Manna comes to the meek and lowly in heart, to the poor and needy, those who are down and cannot lift themselves up. The whole need not a physician, but they who are sick. Yes, sick of sin, feeling and realizing they are sinners, condemned before a just and holy God. One who has seen the light remembers the wormwood and the gall, therefore he has hope. His travels through the wilderness and desert, the byways and hedges, even in the prison-house down in the dungeon, and then for the Sun of righteousness to arise with healing in his wings, *is* as an anchor to the soul, both sure and steadfast. This anchor holds you fast; it will not let you go. At times *it* seems very weak, only a thread to hold on, but at the most discouraging moment, when all *is* dark, the light of divine grace shines through the clouds and fresh food right from the throne of glory *is* given to the poor sinner in the stall. How glorious and refreshing! It builds him up in his most holy faith and he again basks in the sunshine of God's love and mercy, and, like David, is made to exclaim, The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want. As he travels on the great highway of life he finds many low places; only now and then he gets on a hill or high elevation. I always seem to be down in the valley. I have great fellowship for those traveling the same road. They speak

the same language. It comes home with power, for therein is the righteousness of God revealed "*from faith to faith.*" Salvation by grace, and grace alone, is the only theme, the only kind that reaches a poor sinner in the dungeon of hell and leads him out into the light and liberty where the Sun of righteousness shines forth in all his glory. The Son of God has power to make the wilderness a pool of water and the dry land springs of water. His words they are spirit and they are life. He speaks to the dead and they hear his voice. I love to think of that mighty power that said, Let there be light. I love to think of that God who leads the blind by a way they knew not and into paths they have not known.

Your brother in hope,
C.V. HILL.

ST. LUKE 10: 21-22.

In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight.

All things are delivered to me of my Father: and no man knoweth who the Son is, but the Father; and who the Father is, but the Son, and he to whom the Son will reveal him.

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR FEBRUARY 2011

Bille Speir, LA	35.00
Tim Barron, TX.....	10.00
Phyllis Stroud, VA	5.00
Reidy Pickral, VA.....	25.00
Jane Mabe, NC	15.00
Carol Lansaw, VA	20.00
Alfred Ratliff, VA.....	5.00

OBITUARIES

AGNES PAULINE TONY

At the request of the family this short sketch of the life and death of Sister Pauline Tony is recorded for those who knew her and loved her. Although this obituary is only a short biography of her life it is hoped that it will serve as a reminder of what she meant to those who knew her and loved her in her family, social, and spiritual life.

Her adventurous life spanned a little more than 82 years; from June 21, 1928 to July 12, 2010. She was the daughter of Elder George W. and sister Angie Jones of Delhi, Louisi-

ana. Much of her life was spent in various places as she followed her husband, who was a career naval officer, and was later known to the church as Elder Harold Tony.

Following her husband's naval career they made their home in northwest Mississippi and began a regular attendance to the Primitive Baptist Church in Memphis. She was received into membership of the Memphis church, along with her husband, on April 10, 1960. Her travels became extensive again as she accompanied her husband, having later been ordained elder, as he visited and served churches throughout much of the south, southeast and southwest. He preceeded her in death.

Funeral services were conducted by her brother, Elder Theron Jones in Magee Mississippi, near her present home. The funeral service bulletin contained the words of Amazing Grace as well as the poem "The Weaver", by Grant C, Tullar.

She is survived by three brothers and a sister, Elders Theron and Preston Jones, Windall Jones and Carolyn Spence; By four children, Junior Tony, Carolyn Morriston, Gloria Lucas and Adrian Tony, as well as eight grandchildren.

Written and distributed by request.

Wayman Chapell

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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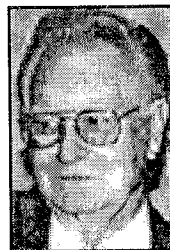
All letters for this paper containing subscriptions and remittances, should be mailed to Tony R. Horton, 1429 Howlett Street, Hillsville, Va. 24343. All articles and letters for publication, all notices of meetings and all obituaries should be mailed to Elder Cleo Robertson, 111 Livingstone Drive Cary, NC 27513.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.
1429 Howlett Street
Hillsville, Va. 24343

We, the staff of the "Signs," are very saddened at the loss of our good friend and Editor, Elder Kenneth R. Key. Here is the notice of his passing from the Forbis & Dick Funeral Home in Greensboro, N.C.

KENNETH RAY KEY, SR.

GREENSBORO--
Kenneth Ray Key, Sr., 88, passed away April 3, 2011 at Moses Cone Memorial Hospital. A 2 p.m. funeral service will be held Wednesday, April 6 at Forbis and Dick North Elm Street Chapel. Interment will follow immediately at Lakeview Memorial Park.



Mr. Key was born in Surry County on January 22, 1923 to the late Ransome Key and Ida Lowe Key. Upon honorable discharge from the US Naval Air Corps, he worked in the kitchen remodeling business for 30 years as owner and operator of K and W Custom Kitchens. His passion and real calling in life was spreading the gospel as an

Elder with the Primitive Baptist Church, a ministry he held for 60 years. During this time he served four churches. He was also editor of the "Signs of the Times" magazine which shares the message of the Primitive Baptist Faith.

Elder Key was preceded in death by his wife, Nellie Jobe Key. In addition, he was preceded in death by four brothers and sisters.

Survivors include two sons, Kenny R. Key, Jr. (Sharon) and Gary Van Key (Amber). In addition, he is survived by brothers Rueben and John Key and sister Minnie Jackson. Also left to cherish his memory are five grandchildren and numerous great-grandchildren.

The family will receive friends Tuesday, April 5 from 6 until 8 p.m. at Forbis and Dick North Elm Street Chapel.

PSALM 8 1-3.

O Lord our Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the earth! who has set thy glory above the heavens.

Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings has thou ordained strength because of thine enemies, that thou mightest still the enemy and the avenger.

When I consider thy heavens, the work of thy fingers, the moon and the stars, which thou hast ordained.

CONTENTS

EDITORIAL 98
 Elder Kenneth R. Key

CORRESPONDENCE 101

VOICES OF THE PAST 101
 Elder John Leland
 Elder Richard H. Campbell
 Elder Gilbert Beebe
 Elder J.C. Philpot

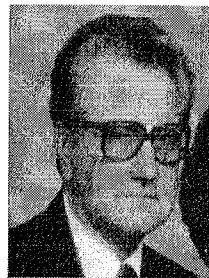
MEETINGS 118

CONTRIBUTIONS 119

OBITUARIES 119
 Sister Ruby Parsons Atkins
 Sister Phyllis Dalton Goad

EDITORIAL

"But now, O Lord, thou art our father; we are the clay, and thou our potter; and we all are the work of thy hand. (Isaiah 64-8).



Elder Kenneth R. Key

Isaiah is speaking of those who through the new birth come to know their heavenly father. Jesus told Nicodemus "except a man be born again, he can not see the kingdom of God."

That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the spirit is spirit." The two scriptures above are to be considered as we think of the work of the Lord with his people.

Let us consider the potter. A potter takes a lump of clay and places it on the potter's wheel. As the wheel turns, his hand is always upon the clay and he has complete control of it. He molds the clay as he wishes it to be. The Lord being our potter is molding his people as he would have them to be and they would not ask why hast thou made me thus. It is God who is at the helm and reigning over his people. *"O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself: it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps."* Jer. 10:23. *"For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure."* Phil. 2:13. Then Paul could say, it is by the grace of God that I am what I am. He was suffered of the Lord to go his own way. He went to a school and was highly educated and preached for some 14 years the works of man and verily thought he was doing the work of God. Then one day it pleased the Lord to show him a more excellent way. Paul fell immediately to the ground and looked up and said. Lord what will you have me to do. From that time forward and for the rest of his life he preached, we are saved by grace and not by works, lest any man should boast. Before thou people he confessed I

come not with excellency of speech of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the power of God. The Lord is ever with his people even before the new birth. He has loved them even before the foundation of the world. When yet dead in trespasses and sin he loved them.

It is manifest to his people through the new birth that God is their father and they are his children. This is the work of the Father and if then his children, heirs of God and joint heirs with Jesus Christ. Nothing can destroy them or separate them from his love. What they do or what they do not do has no effect on their eternal salvation. The greatest desire of God's children is that they can follow in the footsteps of their Lord. The apostle Paul who was a chosen vessel confessed that what he would not do, those things he did, those things he would do, those things he did not. When he explains that if I do those things I would not, then it is not I that does it, but sin that dwelleth in me. We can all relate to the thorn in the flesh, the messenger of satan that buffets us. I am glad satan's bounds are set, he can go so far and no further. Christ said that, that is within you, is greater than that that is in the world.

We find comfort that our heavenly father is the potter and our way is not our own because the carnal mind is not subject to the laws of God, neither indeed can be, one being enmity against the other. We can be confident of this very thing

that he who has begun a work in our heart will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. As the potter, he has hold of us and will not let us go. As long as we live the wheel will continue to turn until he has made us a fit subject of his grace and will one day carry us to a better world.

This will not be attained by any works that we have done but solely and completely by the work of our savior. Christ came to this world not to do his own will but the will of the father who sent him. That was to save his children from their sins. He came not to save the whole world, the whole adamic race, but to save those the father had given him in a covenant of grace before the world was. When he had finished his work, we hear him praying to the Father, saying, I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do. I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world. I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou has given me; for they are thine. Those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition; that the scripture might be fulfilled. I have given them thy word; and the world hath hated them, because they are not of the world. I pray that thou shouldest not take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil.

I believe this prayer is for all those who shall believe on the Lord. All whose names were recorded in

the Lamb's book of life. When the Lord shall open this book and the roll is called, there will be no absentee's all will be there to hear him say, come you blessed of my father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world.

I hope I have set forth above some of the things that are most surely believed among God's people.

May we never forget it is in the Lord that we live, move and have our being. We are helpless and have no power except it be given from above. Not even a sparrow can fall without HIM. The scripture doesn't say as we often hear it quoted, without his notice, but without Him. He is our all in all, our Prophet, Priest and King and only hope of eternal life.

Humbly submitted,
Elder Kenneth R. Key

ST. MATTHEW 18: 1-3.

At the same time came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?

And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them,

And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.

CORRESPONDENCE

February 26, 2011

Dear Brother Horton,

Please renew my subscription to the Signs for another year. Enclosed is a check for \$15.00.

I enjoy reading the Signs every month regardless the articles that are printed. It's wonderful to find comfort and experience reading what God does for his people. We always seem to receive it when we most need it. God is my only hope of eternal life.

Thank you for sending my magazine if I am behind.

A Sister in Hope,
Gloria B. Reese

March 3, 2011

Bro. Tony,

Enclosed is a check for two more years for the "Signs.

God bless you all and for holding to what I believe to be the truth.

Pauline and Phil Jones
12555 F.M. Route 79
Sumner, TX 75486

VOICES OF THE PAST

PRIDE IS HUMBLED
 Republished from
 Spiritual Law Counsel

The following incident is told as part of the unwritten traditional history of Elder John Leland:

During the latter part of his life Elder Leland traveled much over the country on preaching tours, on foot. On one occasion he had been warmly solicited in writing, by a widow lady, to visit the part of old Virginia in which she lived and preach, telling him to set his time and her house was at his service, both as a place of abode and also a place to hold his meeting. Mr. Leland replied to her by setting a day that he would preach at her residence at ten o'clock a.m. The lady was a wealthy planter, in Appomattox valley. She regarded herself as *one* of the most pious and exemplary persons to be found anywhere. She had been raised in the high circles of life and knew nothing about poverty, nor had ever associated with laboring classes. She was about thirty-five years of age and had been a widow two years, but knew nothing of the privations commonly attending the life of the widowed mother. She took much pains to appear pious, and her chief object in inviting Mr. Leland to preach at her house was, that she

might make a display of wealth, and thus have the applause of her associates; not only to show her wealth, but her piety as well; so she went to great trouble and expense in preparing for the meeting. The appointment had been spread far and near, pressing solicitations had been sent to numerous friends, to attend the meeting, no expense or pain had been spared, not only to have the best and finest of everything, but to the evening preceeding the meeting several carriages had already arrived to be in good time and enjoy the hospitality of the hostess. About sunset Mr. Leland came up to the mansion on foot. The day was quite warm and dusty when he made his appearance. The walk had caused a free perspiration, which ran down his cheeks making roads in dust which had settled on his face during his day's work. He walked up to the door of the large stone mansion, and his rap was answered by a black servant, of whom he inquired for the landlady, the servant ran down the broad carpeted hall to a door, which proceeded the sound of talking and laughing. In a very short time a lady, richly attired, made her appearance, walking briskly and lightly toward the door where Mr. Leland was standing. He had a fair view of her person, and at once read in her physiognomy and deportment something of her leading traits for character.

His intention had been to introduce himself, but before he had time

to speak, or before she was near enough for him to address her, she spoke in rather a harsh tone: "Old man, what do you want here? I have nothing for beggars."

Mr. Leland, in a very soft and unassuming tone, said, "Please excuse me madam; I do not wish to beg for money, I am very tired from a long walk, and called to know if you would do me the kindness to allow me to stay under your roof during the night."

Viewing him hastily from head to foot, She very postively answered "No: I have company now, and tomorrow the Rev. Mr. Leland is to preach at my house; so I cannot take in poor stragglers."

Well, said Mr. Leland, I am too much fatigued to travel further tonight, will you allow me to stay in one of those cabins? Pointing to a row of negro houses, just outside of the mansion yard.

After a moment or two of reflection she said, "Yes you may stay there with the negroes if you want to."

He bowed a very polite thank you, and turned toward the row of huts. He proceeded to the furthest one from the mansion before he found anyone to whom he could speak, to ask permission to stay, but came at last to the smallest, but neatest of all the huts, where he found seated at the door an old negress, who was fanning herself with the wing of a fowl. He spoke to her very gently. "Good evening aunty."

His greeting was answered with, "Good evening mosta." "Well aunty, said he, I have come to ask a very uncommon favor of you,"

"Bless de Lord, mosta, what can dat be, fo' please God, l'se got nuffin to give anyone?" "I am very tired from walking all day, I called at the house of your mistress. But she says she has no room for me in this great house. I am too fatigued to go further, and so I have come to see if you can allow me a shelter in your house."

"Bless de Lord, mosta I got no commodation for anyone; but fore a fellow mortal shall stay out doo's I lets 'em stay in my cabin so, ef da can put up wid my plain hut, Uncle Ben be in drectly den he keep ye company while I fixes you sumpen to eat, for you looks as do you had not eat a morsel for a long time," at the same time pointing to a three-legged stool by the side of the door saying, "set down dar and rest yourself, for you looks so wore out."

Mr. Leland took the seat as directed, saying at the same time, "I am sorry that I am compelled to put you to so much trouble as I have no money to pay you."

"Please God, mosta, Aunt Dilsey never charges anyone yit for sich 'commodations as I could give 'em; for God knows its poor enuff at best."

You say, mosta, you call on missus at de house dar, and she can't take you in? Well you must cuse her, for she's looking for a

mighty heap O' company tomorrow; dar's a great man to be dar tomorrow, what's gwin preach in her house, an a good many folks done come a'ready an' heap mo' comin' tomorrow; so missus is mighty busy fixin' for 'em. But here's Uncle Ben she continued, as an old gray headed negro came around the corner of the cabin, muttering to himself about the carelessness of some other negroes.

This old couple, Uncle Ben and Aunt Dilsey, as they were familiarly called by all who knew them, both black and white, were an old couple who, from age, had for a long time lived in a small but snug cabin at the far end of the row of huts occupied by the younger and more active slaves.

Although Uncle Ben was not required to do any labor, yet he voluntarily took a kind of supervision over the farm, stock, etc. When he saw Mr. Leland he stopped short and gave him a scrutinizing look, when Aunt Dilsey spoke, saying:

Uncle Ben, don't stare your eyes out at a stranger; dis ole gentleman was out traveling', and come to stay in our cabin, kase missus she can't let him stay dar, as she's got a heap O' company now."

"Well, said Uncle Ben, we's commanded dat if a stranger comes along we's got to take him in an give him sich as we got to set before him."

While Aunt Dilsey was preparing supper Mr. Leland learned much about the lady of the mansion from

Uncle Ben; he learned, among other things, that they were a very religious family, but the hostess had been raised in the city of Richmond, and had imbibed all the fashionable ideas of religion, with but little of its true principles, and none of its humility. Soon after Mr. Leland had finished a very good, coarse supper, he told his host that he was very much fatigued from a very long day's walk, and would like to retire for the night and that he felt like he wished to return thanks to his Creator for the blessings of the day, and invoke his protection through the night; that if he would annoy them he would retire to some place out of doors,

"Bless God, said the old folks at the same time, we allers like prayin in our house, and neber goes to bed 'thout one of us tries to pray."

Mr. Leland then took an old, wellworn Bible out of his little bundle, and read in a very solemn tone the one hundred and second Psalm. During the reading two blacks often said in a low voice, "Amen, bress de Lord." When the Psalm was ended Mr. Leland fell upon his knees, and poured out his feelings in such an outburst of reverential eloquence as was ever equaled, and never surpassed by mortal lips. His host and hostess were so affected by his reading and prayer that they could do no more or say no more than to fix their eyes on their guest, as though they felt that he was something more than a mortal man. He retired to a clean little

pallet in one corner of the cabin, where he soon fell asleep. When morning came he was up early. Aunt Dilsey soon had him a good repast, after which he seated himself to read telling hostess that he felt too much fatigued to travel, and if she was willing he would rest there until afternoon anyway, and then if he felt better he would go on his way.

Aunt Dilsey said. "Yes, mosta., stay jist as long as you want to; we be glade to have you be with us a fort-night, if you can put up with our fare."

Mr. Leland seated himself under a shady tree in the cabin yard, and with his Bible, waiting to see what the finality would be.

About nine o'clock everything was in hustle at the stone mansion; the servants were called in to dress in their very best. Carriages began to arrive by the dozens until the hall and every part of the large and elegant building was crowded to overflowing, but to their dismay no preacher had made his appearance, for the last carriage that came in sight had been scanned to get a glimpse of the minister. No one in the large congregation had ever seen him, but all had heard of him. So everyone was full of anxious expectation, supposing that when he came he would be drawn by two or four fine horses, driven by a servant in livery.

Ten o'clock passed, half past ten, eleven o'clock was announced by the clock on the wall, and no min-

ister. The company had by this time become restless, and were about to disperse, when Aunt Dilsey went to her mistress and said.

"Bress de Lord, missus, why don't you git dat ole man who stayed in our cabin last night to come to de door and pray 'fore de folks all go home; he prayed in our cabin las' night and dis mornin', 'fore God, in all my born days I nebber heard sich prayin' afore. He's sit tin' right dar now, under de tall pine tree; and as de preacher's not cum, if you'll let him pray, I'll go right now and fetch him down."

The lady consulted with some of the company, the matter was talked of among the congregation when it was agreed to have the old straggler as they called him, come and pray before the congregation broke up.

So Aunt Dilsey went to where Mr. Leland was sitting, and said, 'Mosta, de folks all dispinted 'bout de preacher comin'; he am not cum, and da wants you to go down an' pray for 'em fore da all brakes up. Mosta I wants you to pray jis' like you did las' night.'

Mr. Leland walked down to the front door and standing on the steps, repeated a short hymn by memory, sang and then engaged in prayer: by the time his prayer was ended all eyes were fixed upon him with amazement.

He then remarked that as there

seemed to be a disappointment, that if it would not be assuming too much, he would talk to them a few minutes, and as a foundation or starting-point, he would read a short passage from the word of truth, which they would find by reference to the thirteenth chapter and second verse of Hebrews: "*Be not forgetful to entertain strangers: for there by some have entertained angels unawares.*" When he had spoke for twenty or thirty minutes the hostess, who had refused him the hospitality of her house the evening before, became so deeply affected that she ran and fell prostrate at the feet of Mr. Leland, and would, if he allowed her to do so, have washed his feet with her tears and wiped them with the hair of her head. It was said that she was so overcome and affected that from that time forward she was a changed and different woman so much so that she threw off all her finery and ornamental dressing, and became an humble and plain Christian. Though she was a professor before, her whole deportment underwent a complete change. Her house became a place of divine worship where she delighted in making all, no matter how plain or how poor, as happy as kind attention could make them; in fact, it was said that if preference had to be given to any, it was always in favor of the poor and needy.

Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

I have read the above scripture many times, and each time I have wondered just what it meant. I know what it says, but what is the real every day meaning of it. I read it the other day, as I had many times in the past and was thinking about what it could actually mean, and as I did this thought came to mind; faith is the manifestation of the Spirit of God in the lives of his children. The Spirit is manifested in their lives as they are led and directed to fulfill the purposes that he has for them here in this time world, and they are unaware of its presence because it comes sovereignly and takes up its abode within them and they walk in a different path. The spirit is what produces the faith that his children have and faith is what motivates them to believe, enables them to understand the things of the Spirit and to do all of the other things that they do in the name of Christ and for his sake, whether under the law dispensation, or in the gospel day.

The Spirit was manifested in the lives of the Israelites, under the law, and directed them all the days of their life, but not in the same manner that it does the saints, in the gospel day. Under the law they were given priests to be a go between, God and the people; now Christ is the high priest and just before his death he told the disciples that he

would send the Spirit which indwells man and leads him in ways that are pleasing unto God, but, it is by faith in either case. Under the law God gave them the gift of faith which caused them to follow those whom he had sent to lead them, but their faith was in God, not in the law, because they feared God. As when he spoke to them from the mount and they saw the fire and smoke and exceedingly feared the fire and smoke and the loud sounds and asked God to speak to Moses and let Moses speak to them as regarding the oracles of the law. They performed the miracles and manifested their faith even as the apostles did before the day of Pentecost; by God giving them a special dispensation of power as he did when he sent them out to preach, but the Spirit did not indwell them until the day of Pentecost when they responded and fulfilled the prophecy of Joel as he spoke concerning this day.

Faith is what leads the saints in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake, it is that which enables them to persevere in the times of adversity, that which strengthens them in times of weakness and causes them to stand against the distressing wiles of the devil: whether it be lions, fiery furnaces, pharaohs or any of the other natural fears and weaknesses of the flesh when it is faced with the temptations that confront them in this world of sin. This world is Satan's domain, in which he wields havoc with the

saints, in his war against God and all that is holy and good, but he does not destroy one of these little ones, with all of his fury. Faith is the armour which God provides for the chosen generation in their war against principalities and powers of this earth, and against the spiritual wickedness in high places. This armour can withstand the strongest onslaught of Satan because even he is under the dominion of God, and in all of his raging is but fulfilling the will of God, as are all of the other forces in existence.

Since faith is the manifestation of the Spirit in the saints, and they are the chosen generation, Satan is powerless to do anything but disturb, harass and afflict them. He can never destroy a single one of the saints because greater is the Spirit that is within them, than the spirit that is within Satan and all of his unholy angels; and this is because God, in mercy, has determined that it should be that way, to cause them to turn to him in faith.

Faith is bestowed upon the saints of God to make manifest that they are his very special beloved, the ones he had chosen before the foundation of the world as his own; he formed them for himself, named them, and promised that he would never leave nor forsake them. He has loved them with an everlasting love, and faith is the indestructible bond that assures them that they shall never fail nor finally fall away, regardless of the weakness and

frailty of the natural man. By faith, David slew Goliath, when but a lad, by faith Abraham believed God and left his former life and country and went to seek the country that God had promised that he would possess; by faith Moses forsook Egypt not fearing the wrath of the king, looking to him that is invisible: kept the Passover and by faith led the children out of Egypt and to the borders of the land of Canaan. All of these examples of faith are demonstrated in the children of God, and are but the substance of the things hoped for, the great cloud of witnesses that encompasses them, comforts and encourages them in their journey here in time, all are evidences of the working of the invisible spirit that was directing their way. They do not understand, nor can they explain this faith to anyone, other than to say that it is not of an earthly origin because the things that it causes them to believe defies all natural laws and reasoning and yet they cannot deny the existence of them.

Faith caused David to reply to his brother, when he reprimanded him for coming to the battlefield by saying, what I have now done, is there not a cause. I don't believe that even David understood the reason of this reply; even as the prophets who prophesied of the grace that was to come to us; they were searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify. God is the author of all

scriptural truth, and is the instigator or motivator of all events, which come to pass, even though the prophets, or David, uttered the words or performed the deeds.

Israel had been given evidence of the Messiah that was to come for many generations, prophecies concerning the things that he would do in behalf of the chosen nation, and yet when all of the things that were foretold were fulfilled in their presence, they did not recognize him. This too, was in the plan of God from the beginning, even as sin and all of the other pitfalls that were placed in their path, they were ultimately for their good and were to teach them and cause them to turn to him in times of trouble, for he is the only source of help in their time of need, and this all because of this faith that God gives to the saints.

Through faith they understand the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear. Now this precept is foolishness to the natural mind, as are all of the other miracles described in the scriptures; as Elder Ramar L. Biggs, a former pastor of the Bordeaux Church used to say, the truth is not reasonable, it defies all of the logic of man, yet, by faith, the saints of God believe that the miracles were actual events which occurred as described. After all, the greatest event that shall ever occur is the greatest of all miracles and all of the saints depend on the authenticity of

that miracle for their hope of eternal life. Some people will say that they don't believe in predestination, and my reply has always been, *"Well you had better believe in it, because only by absolute predestination of all things do you have any assurance whatsoever that there will be a heaven and immortal glory to hope for, in the end of the ages."* The scriptures declare that there shall be, and the very foundation of the plan of salvation depends on the author of the scriptures being able to perform that which he has promised and to do all that he has promised that he would do, and faith in the individual, is what enables him to believe that God is able, and shall do everything that he has promised to do, without the omission of a single event. If one event is omitted, it might be, "that heaven" that is prepared for them that worship God, and if that be the case, what is the point of it all? It must all be there for it to be the work of a sovereign, all powerful God who created the heavens and the earth and who said, my counsel shall stand and I will do all of my pleasure.

Paul said by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God, and this is from the beginning to the end, and it never fails; as is recorded in *(Isa. Chap 46, vs. 11)* *"yea, I have spoken it, I will also bring it to pass: I have purposed it, I will also do it."* It is not of the creature, but is the work of God in bringing

every heir of promise into the fold, and it is in a way and manner that causes them all to acknowledge their unworthiness of this gift and to declare, with Paul, that though they feel to be the chiefest of sinners, the long-suffering of God was extended to them in their lost and sinful condition, raised them up and blesses them to sit together, with their brethren, in these heavenly places, where they can worship him in spirit and in truth, from a pure heart.

Able offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain because it was offered in faith; he was but returning unto God a small portion of that which God had given him, as an expression of his love, to show his appreciation for his many blessings, and to praise and honor his most holy name. God had respect unto Abel and his offering because it came forth from the heart that had been touched, and blessed to see the glory of the kingdom of heaven. By this faith he was impressed to shew forth his love in this manner. It was not of duty, but from an humble and contrite heart, as he was made to realize what he was in nature, as compared to what he should be before a Holy and Just creator. This knowledge comes by the revelation that is given with the faith when received; it is not engraved on tables of stone but on the fleshly tables of the heart, and cannot be erased.

By faith, the elders obtained a good report, and this is referring to all of the holy men of old who spake

and responded as they were moved by the Holy Ghost to perform great deeds of valour as God worked in them both to will and to do of his good pleasure. They were, but men, as are all of the saints of God, but faith makes the difference in what man can do in nature and what he can do by grace; as Paul said, (*Phil Chap 4, vs. 13*) "*I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.*" and faith is this strengthening power of Christ being made manifest in the lives of his children. Faith enabled David to face Goliath, Daniel to face the lions den, the three Hebrew children the fiery furnace, Moses to face Pharaoh, and untold millions to suffer persecution at the hands of the world's, so called, religious leaders and the rulers of the nations but they have never been overcome yet. They may die, but, just as Christ who triumphed in his death, so do they, there is no recorded incident in the scriptures where the powers of Satan overcame the power of God in the salvation of one of the saints, and he never shall. In the world they shall suffer tribulations, but, even as Christ overcame the world, so shall they. They shall triumph and reign with him in glory in that place that he has gone to prepare for them, and as he told them to be of good cheer because he had overcome the world; well, he overcame it for them and their faith gave them the knowledge of that fact. (*Eph. Chap 2, vs. 8*) "*For by grace are ye saved*

through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast." How then is this grace given, and how is it received by man, we have stated that it is by the grace of God, so the creature is not involved in the process, except as the receiver of a gracious gift, which is bestowed upon him by the sovereign and irresistible grace of God. The man is completely unaware of the circumstances surrounding the gift, and can only wonder in amazement that it has been bestowed upon him, after he has been made to realize what he actually is in nature. In the flesh he would have said, I am entitled to it as much as anyone else, I am as good as the next person, but by the grace that accompanies the gift he cries, *"Oh woe is me, I am undone, I am not worthy of this gift that has been given me, and his heart overflows with gratitude and thanksgiving unto the giver of the gracious and precious favor that has been shown him."*

(Job Chap 33, vs. 14-17) "For God speaketh once, yea twice, yet man perceiveth it not. In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men, in slumberings upon the bed; then he openeth the ears of men, and sealeth their instruction, that he may withdraw man from his purpose, and hide pride from man." This scripture indicates that God alone is the author and the

finisher of faith in man, he speaks to them and seals their instructions and they respond without even realizing when and where the faith which was imparted to them came from, until it is revealed unto them. They go to bed without it and wake up with it. This is, of course, over simplifying it but nevertheless all of the imparting of faith unto man is the work of God, they didn't have, now they do.

The apostle Paul started from Jerusalem professing the Jewish faith and arrived in Damascus a believer in Christ and all that Paul did was to be at the place of the appointment, of God, which was made before time began, and of which he was completely ignorant. Paul did not see it coming, and did nothing to assist or deter the giving or the receiving of this faith, and so it is with all men. As Job said above, he does it this way, to withdraw man from his purpose and so that man has nothing to boast of in the work. Isn't this the same as the apostle Paul stated in Ephesians, by grace are ye saved through faith, not or works lest any should boast.

Yes, faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of future things not seen, as yet. It is the most precious of the gifts of God to his children because it, in fact, encompasses all of their dreams and desires and causes them to ever be found pressing on to the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus, even though they

cannot see nor prove it to someone else, that is unfamiliar with the process. It is however stamped indelibly in their minds and will influence them as long as they live in this world. It is a special gift of love to them from their heavenly Father, even as the coat of many colors which Jacob gave unto Joseph, and in like manner is a mark that they are of the most beloved of the Father.

By faith, they live, move and have their being in this world, and by faith they shall overcome and have their being in that world which is to come; that high abode of the angels where all mystery will be ended, they shall see God, face to face, know as they are known, and rejoice in a way and manner that they have never done before. Here they have the shadow, there they will have the actual substance. Faith will be but a memory of their earthly existence, for they will have the fulness of the things hoped for here in time, but til then, they will cling to this faith because it is the only real treasure that they have in these earthen vessels, which is where they must dwell, until the time appointed of the Father. Then will be the time when He comes to take his jewels home, to adorn that holy city the new Jerusalem, to the eternal honor and glory of his holy name. Faith, is the eye by which the saints of God see and understand the certainty and sure reality of these things that are to be theirs in that day, while they are still here in this time world.

Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the spiritual knowledge that is given to every heir of grace, to see the things that are unseen by the natural eye, but which are more real and present in their spiritual eye and mind than the things that are visible to them here in nature. The things that they view here with the natural eye are temporal, but these things are eternal, and the possession of this knowledge is worth more, to them, than all of the wealth of the world combined. Faith is their key to that city; that new Jerusalem, which shall come down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband, the most precious of all the blessings of time and eternity, unto the children of the heavenly king. All of these things were prepared for them before time began, were preserved in Christ Jesus until the time of the end, at which time all mysteries shall be revealed and the fullness of the glory of God shall be known unto all of the saints. The grandeur and glory of these things cannot even be imagined with the natural mind, but they are the inheritance of the saints that is laid up for them when time shall be no more, and heaven shall ring with the songs of praise from the hearts of the saints who were redeemed by the precious blood of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, their elder brother.

In bonds of love;
Elder Richard H. Campbell

ZECHARIAH 3:9.

Brother Beebe: -- As you are in the habit of expounding portions of the scriptures for the brethren, I would be glad if you will expound for me the text, Zech. iii.9. Please be particular on the *graving thereof*, and oblige yours.

Jacob Winchel, Jr.

“For behold the stone that I have laid before Joshua, upon one stone shall be seven eyes; behold I will engrave the graving thereof, saith the Lord of hosts, and I will remove the iniquity of that land in one day.”

In attempting a reply to Elder Winchel, we feel deeply sensible of our insufficiency to do justice on the subject. We profess to have no special light on the text proposed, more than what the words thereof will readily suggest to the mind of all who are taught of God. To us it is highly probable that brother Winchel's mind, having been particularly directed to the subject, a commentary from him might be more satisfactory than any thing we can write. Such views, however, as we have on the scriptures of truth, however weak and feeble, we have not felt at liberty to withhold from our readers when called on to give them.

The book of Zechariah the prophet abounds with sublime, and striking figures, many of which, to

an ordinary mind, appear exceedingly abstruse, and like some of the writings of our beloved brother Paul, hard to be understood. The primary allusions of the figures used by Zechariah seem to have been directed to illustrate the astonishing display of the mighty hand of the God of Israel in restoring his people from their captivity in Babylon, the repairing of the city of Jerusalem, and the rebuilding of the temple of the Lord. But as all these things were typical of the redemption of the church of the living God, from bondage and captivity, and the upbuilding of the spiritual temple in the Lord Jesus Christ, they are serviceable to the saints of the present age in their spiritual and prophetic application to our Lord Jesus Christ, under the gospel dispensation.

Joshua was the high priest at the time of the restoration, and as such, he was, of course, a type of the great and glorious High Priest of our profession, the Lord Jesus Christ, whose priesthood is not after the law of a carnal commandment, but after the power of an endless life. By the stone which God had laid before Joshua we understand Christ the anti-type of Joshua to be intended. Not in the order of the time of manifestation in his flesh, but he was before Joshua in the same sense that he was before Abraham, David, and John the Baptist. He said to the Jews, *“Before Abraham was, I am.”* David said he foresaw the Lord always before his face, etc. And

John the Baptist says, "*He that cometh after me is preferred before me, for he was before me.*" His goings are of old, even from everlasting, and in his Mediatorial relationship to his people, He is before all things and by him all things consist. This is the Stone which God has laid in Zion for a foundation; and in laying this Stone for a foundation in Zion, it was laid before Joshua the high priest. And in this preeminence, in regard to his person and priesthood, God laid the stone before Joshua, showing that the priesthood after the order of Melchizedek should far surpass that of the order of Aaron. The epistle to the Hebrews very clearly sets forth wherein the High Priest of our profession excels the priesthood of Aaron or Joshua; and Zechariah the prophet had a very clear prophetic view of the superior excellency of the royal priesthood of Christ over the typical priesthood, and speaking by the Spirit, he said, "*Thus speaketh the Lord of hosts, saying, 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; and he 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. vi. 12, 13. In contemplating the superior priesthood of our great Redeemer,

who is holy, harmless, and higher than the heavens, being assured that he knoweth how to succour them that are tempted, having in the days of his flesh been tempted himself in all points, as we are, and yet without sin, truly we may say, such a High Priest becomes us. For he is able to save unto the uttermost all who come upon God by him, seeing that he ever liveth to make intercession for them. The offerings made by Aaron and his sons could not purge the conscience from dead works to serve the Living God, nor remove the perpetual obligation of those for whom the offerings were made, to do the whole law or the dreadful penalty resting on them for failing to do all that the law required; but Christ has by one offering perfected forever them that are sanctified. He has redeemed them from the dominion as well as from the curse of the law, having himself born their sins in his own body on the tree. He has redeemed them unto God with his blood and made them kings and priests unto God, and they shall reign with him forever. They are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood and a peculiar people; and they delight in shewing forth his praise.

This Stone laid before Joshua, unto all them that believe, is precious; but unto them that be disobedient, this Stone, which the builders refused, is the head of the corner, and a Stone of stumbling and a Rock of offense to them that stumble at the

word, being disobedient, whereunto also they were appointed.

Upon one stone shall be seven eyes. This one stone on which should be seven eyes we understand to be the same stone which God had laid before Joshua; and although the eyes upon the stone, in the type, were engraven eyes, yet we find the signification of the engraving was to set forth the seven spirits of the Lord, which go to and fro in the earth. It is far beyond our ability to comprehend, or to define the seven spirits of the God of Israel; but whatever they signify must certainly be found in the person and priesthood of our Lord Jesus Christ. If by seven eyes we understand the peculiar attributes of his eternal deity, they are displayed to men only in and through the priesthood of Immanuel. He is the brightness of his Father's glory and the express image of his person. And it pleased the Father that in him all fulness should dwell. The fulness of eternal Godhead, and the fulness of the church dwell in him bodily. The seven eyes described in the type by the engraving on the stone are directly applied, Rev. v. 6, to Christ in his Mediatorial character, as being in the midst of the throne; and he is in that connection expressly called "*The Lamb,*" which title invariably refers to him in his Mediatorial character, as the Lamb that was slain, and hath redeemed us unto God with his blood. He was thus identified by John the Baptist, "*Behold the Lamb of God,*

which taketh away the sins of the world." This Lamb which had been slain from the foundation of the world, but which is now made known to them who by him do believe in God who raised him up from the dead, as seen by John in the midst of the throne, and of the elders, and of the four beasts, as a Lamb that had been slain, having seven eyes, and seven horns, which he informs us are the seven spirits of God sent forth into all the earth. Compare this, Rev. v. 6, with Zech. iv. 10. With those seven they are the eyes of the Lord, which run to and fro through the whole earth, and no doubt can remain that Christ is the anti-typical Stone on whom the seven eyes, or spirits of the Lord, should be, and accordingly were displayed. The eyes, by Zechariah are simply called seven eyes, and we are told that they are the eyes of the Lord, etc., but in Revelation, John saw them in connection with the emblems of regal power and dominion after the exaltation of the slain Lamb to the midst of the throne. "*Having seven horns and seven eyes.*" The number seven agrees with the number of the golden candlesticks and of the stars which were in his right hand, the seven churches, the seven seals, seven trumpets, seven vials, etc. It is regarded as a number signifying perfection; precisely enough, and nothing to spare. These eyes being represented as going to and fro, and as being sent in connection with the seven horns, forth into all the earth,

may be designed to signify Christ on the throne of his Mediatorial glory, going forth in the gospel to every kindred, tongue, and people under the heavens. His eyes denoting that in him is light, and that he is the fountain of all spiritual light reflected upon his people; for this light is identified with the life of this mystical body. In him was life and the life was the light of men. With his seven eyes he was able to look upon the sealed book, and by the power signified by his horns, he was able to take the book out of the angel's hand, and open the seals thereof. Habakkuk says, "*His brightness was as the light, he had horns coming out of his hand, and there was the hiding of his power.*" The union of the eyes and of the horns set forth also the peculiar character of that priesthood which is after the order of Melchizedek, in distinction from that of Aaron; as a royal or regal priesthood. He sits as a Priest as well as a Ruler upon his throne; King of Salem and Priest of the Most High God, and the counsel of peace is embraced between them; (King and Priest) or between the eyes and the horns. As in him personally and relatively as Head of his body the church, he has all wisdom and all power to direct and accomplish the complete and eternal salvation of all his members; so also is he presented in the Gospel, sent forth into all the world, as Christ the wisdom of God, and the power of God. The church as his body can never be left

in darkness, in her union to him as her Head, for all the light of the knowledge of the glory of God shines in his face; nor can she ever be destroyed while the horns of his power embrace all the power of heaven and earth.

Behold I will engrave the graving thereof, saith the Lord of hosts. In preparing the stones for the temple made with hands, mechanics and artists were employed to engrave such devices as were required to signify those things which they were intended to prefigure in the temple of the Lord's mystical body, which is made without hands. Although men were employed in the typical building, none but God himself is able to fashion and engrave the graving of the spiritual Temple of the Living God. The engraving of the seven eyes upon the Stone which God had laid before Joshua the High Priest, as we have understood the stone to represent Christ in his Mediatorial relation to, and connection with his church, and the eyes to denote the seven spirits, or the eternal perfections of the supreme Godhead, especially, the display of his wisdom and power, appears to us to express the idea that God would stamp the impress of his own perfections on the man Christ Jesus; by being himself manifested in the body of his flesh. That in the revelation of the Stone, laid in Zion for a foundation he would give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. And that Christ,

in his incarnation, and his priesthood should shine upon Israel as the brightness of his Father's glory and the express image of his person. Hence Christ in his revelation is God, manifest in the flesh, seen of angels, preached to the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory. He is recognized by inspired witnesses as the image of the invisible God. By the term *image* in this place, we understand a visible, or tangible manifestation of the supreme God. Aside from this engraving, or manifestation, God is called the invisible God; but in Christ the Mediator, he is revealed, so that, if we have seen the Son, then have we seen the Father also, for the Father is in him, and he is in the Father. While independently of this revelation, no man hath seen the Father at any time, neither can any man come unto the Father but by him. That Christ is essentially God as well as man and Mediator, we fully believe, have never for a moment doubted; but that he is man and Mediator as well as essentially God is equally clear to our understanding; and it is in Christ as Mediator that the eternal Godhead is revealed, admits of no disputation. Hence the revelation of the Messiah, as the Redeemer of Israel is the manifestation of the Stone which Daniel saw taken without hands from the mountain, which should grow and fill the earth, and break in pieces all other kingdoms, and continue forever.

And I will remove the iniquity

of that land in one day. The land spoken of is that mentioned in Chapter ii, and verse 12, "*And the Lord shall inherit Judah his portion, in the holy land; and shall choose Jerusalem again.*" In the connection we are informed that the consecrated land of Judah had been defiled for which cause they had been delivered into the hand of the enemy, where they had been held in captivity three-score and ten years. But this seventy years of captivity being now accomplished, the Lord was about to restore them, repair the walls of Jerusalem, and rebuild the temple, etc., and remove the iniquity of the holy land. The ceremonial purification of the land of Judah prefigured the redemption of the chosen people of God from their iniquities by the blood of the everlasting covenant, and the return of the ransomed of the Lord with singing to Zion. None but the Lord could remove their iniquities; and he gave the assuring promise that he would do it in one day. The *one day* may be understood in a two-fold sense. First, in relation to the day of the atonement by our Lord Jesus Christ. When Jesus was delivered up for the offenses of his people and arose from the dead for their justification; having put away their sins by the sacrifice of himself; when he made an end of sin, finished the transgressions, and brought in everlasting righteousness.

Secondly, the one day may also apply to the whole gospel dispensa-

tion, during which all the people of God should be gathered in from the four winds, and receive experimentally the application of the Savior's blood and righteousness, for the remission of sin, and for their perfect justification before God. All this is the work of God, and in either application, the iniquity of that land is removed in one day.

If what we have written should be of any service to brother Winchel or others, we will rejoice. Let all who read examine the subject for themselves in the light of divine revelation, and if they find that what we have written is not sustained by the word and spirit of our God, reject it, and attribute the failure not to design, but to weakness and infirmity on our part. *"Prove all things, and hold fast that which is good."*

Middletown, N.Y., March 15, 1854

"That he would grant unto us, that we being delivered out of the hand of our enemies might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him, all the days of our life. — Luke i. 74,75.

Holiness consists mainly of two points: 1. being made a partaker of the spirit of holiness whereby, as born of God, we are made meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light; set our affections on things above,

where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God; have our conversation in heaven; put on the new man which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him which created him; live a life of faith in the Son of God, and beholding, as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord. To be thus spiritually-minded, to be thus brought near unto God through his dear Son, to walk before him in the light of his countenance, and to know something of spiritual communion with the Lord of life and glory as sitting on his mercy-seat in the fulness of his risen power, and in the heights, depths, lengths, and breadths of his dying love — this to taste, to handle, to experience, and to enjoy is to be made a partaker of true holiness, and to be sanctified by the Spirit of God as an indwelling Teacher, Guide, Advocate, and Comforter. And if we know nothing of these things, at least in some small measure, or are not looking after and longing for them to be brought into our heart by a divine power, we give but little evidence that the grace of God has reached our heart and renewed us in the spirit of our mind.

2. The second branch of holiness is a life, conduct, and conversation agreeable to the precepts of the gospel; and the one springs out of the other. *"Make the tree good,"* said our blessed Lord, *"and his fruit good, for the tree is known by his fruit."* Gospel fruit must

grow upon a gospel tree, and thus the fruits of a holy and godly life must spring out of those divine operations of the Holy Ghost upon the heart of which we have just spoken. Thus to speak, live, and act is to be "*holy in all manner of conversation,*" that is in our daily walk; and is a fulfilling of the precept which God gave of old to his typical people Israel, and quoted in the New Testament to shew that it is spiritually fulfilled in that peculiar people whom he calls by his distinguishing grace under the gospel.

Elder J.C. Philpot

ROMANS 8:1-4.

There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, 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.

For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh:

That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

MEETINGS

STAUNTON RIVER UNION

The Lord willing the Staunton River Union will be held at Canaan Primitive Baptist Church, located in Pittsylvania County, Va Mount Cross Road, the fifth Saturday in May.

The song service will begin at 10:00 a.m.

Mark Terry, Moderator
Fred Murphy, Clerk

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION

The West Country Line Union will meet, the Lord willing, on the fifth Sunday in May. This meeting will be held at Moons Creek Church. The church is located 1 mile east of Hwy 86, between Danville and Yanceyville, on Park Springs Road.

Elder Kenneth R. Key
Moderator

ROMANS 8:11.

But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you.

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR MARCH 2011

Bernard Cox, VA	5.00
Anonymous, VA	100.00
Kendrick Jones, AL	5.00
Jerry Morgan, LA	10.00
Peggy Phillips, VA	5.00
Pauline Jones, TX.....	10.00
J.D. Neely, AR.....	5.00
Edward Ambrose, VA	5.00
Greg Webb, IL	25.00
Livie Thompson, VA	5.00
First Primitive Baptist Church of Memphis - <i>In Memory of</i> Elder R. H. Campbell	1000.00

OBITUARIES

SISTER RUBY PARSONS ATKINS

Our Lord called home Sister Ruby Parsons Atkins January 6, 2011. Sister Ruby was born June 25, 1921, A daughter of Brother David and Sister Many Hamblett Parsons. She was married to the late Roger Carter Atkins.

Sister Ruby was a member of Springfield Primitive Baptist Church. She was received by experience and Baptism September 9, 1951. Sister Ruby loved the doctrine salvation by Grace. She attended and enjoyed services as long as her health permitted.

Those left to mourn Sister Ruby are sons Roger J. Atkins, Sr. and Donald J. Atkins, Sr and his wife Lynn; granddaughter Lisa Zimmerman husband Bill, Beth Atkins, Kimberly McComb and husband John, grandson Donald J. Adkins, Jr., Roger Atkins, Jr. and wife Tammy and ten great-grandchildren. A Sister Grace Mohr, Brother Fred Parsons, Courtney M. Parsons and wife Lena.

The family wishes to thank Diane Harris for her love and care for the past ten years.

Sister Atkins obtained a Masters Degree in Education from Longwood University. She committed her entire career to public education in Appomattox and Charlotte County. She retired as Principal at Charlotte Elementary in Charlotte Court House. She lived in Midlothian, VA near her family for the past sixteen years.

The family received friends at 1:30 January 10, 2011 at Oak view Presbyterian Church near Cullen, VA.

Her funeral was held by her Pastor, Elder Marvin Brumfield, January 10, 2011 at 2:30 at Oak View Presbyterian Church. Her body was laid to rest in the church cemetery.

May all be reconciled to God's Will.

Written by:
 Carol R. Lansaw
 Elder Marvin Brimfield.
 Moderator
 Oscar Pickral, Clerk

SISTER PHYLLIS DALTON GOAD

With much sadness and grief in my heart, I will endeavor to write a few words in memory of my dear Mother and your sister and friend. I pray we will be comforted with trust in the all-powerful God who holds all things in His mighty hand.

Mama was born in Pittsylvania County on December 16, 1935, a daughter of the late Brother Hubert Russell and Sister Gladys Hines Dalton. She was married to Elder Raymond Lewis Goad on March 26, 1954, and to this union two daughters were born Pamela Betterton and Stephanie Dawson, who survive her. She also leaves two sisters, Patsy Barker and Gail Crouse and two grandchildren, Lauren Dawson and Brent Dawson.

She was a strong believer in salvation by grace, faithful to attend her meetings and loved the Songs of Zion. Mama always was concerned for the welfare of Weatherford Church. She prepared meals to serve the visitors and kept them in her home as long as she was able. She also enjoyed visiting sister churches near and far. She and her companion asked for a home with Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church on July 25, 1965 and was received into the sweet fellowship

and was baptized on August 8, 1965 by their pastor, Elder O. K. Tench.

I believe Mama was made reconciled to her condition. She never complained, she fought a good fight and has finished her course and has kept the faith and henceforth there is laid up for her a crown of righteousness which the Lord, their righteous judge shall give her at that day; not to her only, but unto all them also that love his appearing. She was taken from this world of sin and sorrow on October 23, 2010.

Her funeral was held on October 25, 2010 at 2:00 p.m. at Weatherford Primitive Baptist Church by Elder Marvin Brumfield, Elder Jimmy Gray and Elder Joe Sawyer and her body was laid to rest beneath an array of beautiful flowers in the Church Cemetery to await the second coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Mama's trials and tribulations are over and we have sweet memories of the many years we were blessed to share with her. Her journey is over, but we have a while left on ours. God has promised never to leave nor forsake not even one of His little children. He never makes a mistake.

Written by her daughter who misses her.

Pamela G. Betterton

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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All letters for this paper containing subscriptions and remittances, should be mailed to Tony R. Horton, 1429 Howlett Street, Hillsville, Va. 24343. All articles and letters for publication, all notices of meetings and all obituaries should be mailed to Elder Cleo Robertson, 111 Livingstone Drive Cary, NC 27513.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

1429 Howlett Street

Hillsville, Va. 24343

As you probably know by now, our editor Elder Kenneth Key, passed away April 3 of this year. He served as editor for 28 years and we shall surely miss him. His obituary appeared in the May issue and I am sure there will be other obituaries from the churches he served.

As I have accepted the responsibility of editor, fearfully and feeling so inadequate, I ask for your prayers and support. This is your paper as it relies upon your articles and communications. The Lord has blessed this publication since 1832 as an advocate for sound doctrine to the comfort and edification of it's readers. We look to the Lord for His divine guidance and instruction. We pray that the Lord will continue to bless us to labor in the word and doctrine to His honor and praise.

In addition to articles expounding the scriptures, we would welcome your experiences relating the wonderful things the Lord has done for you. Any comments or suggestions will also be appreciated.

Humbly yours,
Cleo Robertson

CONTENTS

EDITORIAL	122
Elder Cleo Robertson	
CORRESPONDENCE	126
ARTICLES	127
VOICES OF THE PAST	131
Elder E. J. Lambert	
Wilson Thompson	
Elder Gilbert Beebe	
Elder J.C. Philpot	
MEETINGS	142
CONTRIBUTIONS	144
OBITUARIES	144
Elder Kenneth R. Key	

EDITORIAL



Elder Cleo D. Robertson

Many believe that the scriptures are literal and not spiritual. Those of us who believe that the scriptures also have a spiritual meaning are accused of being "spiritualists". When the carnal mind reads the scriptures, it can only see and understand that which is literal. Romans 8:6-8, **For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace: Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the**

flesh cannot please God. When Christ came to the Samaritan woman at the well, He said unto her, **God is a Spirit: and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth.** Contrary to the opinion of the world, no one in the flesh can worship God who is a Spirit. Therefore, the Spirit must be in us for us to worship Him and to have any understanding of Him. The Apostle also wrote that **"the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."**

The scriptures are more than a history of the nation of Israel and the Jewish people. From the very first verse of Genesis to the last verse of Revelation, Christ is set forth. In the Old Testament, there are many types and shadows of heavenly things. As the Apostle Paul wrote in Hebrews 8:4-6, **For if he were on earth, he should not be a priest, seeing that there are priests that offer gifts according to the law: Who serve unto the example and shadow of heavenly things, as Moses was admonished of God when he was about to make the tabernacle: for, See, saith He, that thou make all things according to the pattern shewed to thee in the mount. 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.** It has been said that the Old Testament is the New concealed and the New Testament is the Old revealed.

Christ spoke in parables and His

disciples asked "why". Christ answered **"Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given."** Mark writes that He taught His disciples many things by parables. All scripture is a parable that the world cannot understand. Neither can we understand it of ourselves. This understanding must come by revelation from God. As Christ told Peter, **"Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee; but my Father which is in heaven."**

Christ is set forth in the scriptures from the beginning of Genesis to the end of the book of Revelation. If we are not given of God to see Christ throughout the scriptures, we have missed the very essence or substance of them. I believe that His people have the same desire as certain Greeks who came to worship at the Passover in Jerusalem and said unto Phillip, **Sir, we would see Jesus.** The very first verse of Genesis reads **In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.** The first verse of St. John reads, **In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.** Also, verse 3 of St. John says, **All things were made by Him; and without Him was not any thing made that was made.** The Word is Christ and He was in the beginning with God because He is God. The Apostle Paul writes in Colossians 1:16-17 concerning Christ, **For by Him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or**

principalities, or powers: all things were created by Him, and for Him: And He is before all things, and by Him all things consist.

Genesis 1:4 **And God said, Let there be light: and there was light.** This was not the light from the sun, for the sun, moon, and stars were not created until the fourth day. This was not a created light as God said **"Let there be light."** This light was already there as it had no beginning and no end. It was manifested as it shined in darkness. When this light is manifested, it always separates. **"And God saw the light, that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness."** When this light shined in the darkness of your soul, there was a separation between the spiritual man and the carnal man. It separated you from the world. **"Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord."** This light showed you that you were a sinner and lost. It showed you the very blackness of your soul. There was now a division between the darkness of the carnal man and the light of the spiritual man. John writes that **"In Him was life; and the life was the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; and the darkness comprehended it not."** John says Christ was that light.

When the serpent (Satan) deceived Eve and she took of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil and Adam followed her in the transgression, God said to the serpent **"I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head, and thou**

shall bruise his heel.” The seed of the woman was Christ who was born of a virgin. For He came **“in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh; That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.”** The tree of the knowledge of good and evil sets forth the law for by the law is the knowledge of sin. The tree of life is a type of Christ who is eternal life. The tree of life was in the midst of the garden from the beginning and there was no commandment or law against eating of it. But, they had no desire nor felt a need of it as they must first eat of the tree of knowledge of good and evil and their eyes were opened to see their nakedness. When the law is applied to our hearts, we see ourselves as sinners and lost. We cannot cover our sins by works of the flesh and we cannot hide from God. They heard the voice of the Lord walking in the cool of the day. This was Christ, the Word, who came to them in the day of grace. This was a cool, refreshing time and the Lord clothed them with coats of skin. This required a death and a shedding of blood and sets forth that Christ clothed them with His righteousness. We see Jesus as He suffered, died, shed His blood and rose again to save His people from their sins.

Christ is seen in the scripture concerning Cain and Abel. Abel was a keeper of sheep showing that there were no works of the flesh. He did not make them sheep, but was only a “keeper”. He brought of the firstlings of his flock and the Lord had respect to his offering be-

cause the lamb offered set forth Christ as the Lamb of God. Christ stood a lamb slain from the foundation of the world. John the Baptist saw Him and proclaimed **“The Lamb of God”**. Abraham saw Him as the Lamb of God when taking his son Isaac to be offered on Mount Mariah. On the third day he saw the place afar off. Abraham was given faith to see Jesus as He would hang on the cross on that very mountain some two thousand years in the future. The third day sets forth the gospel day or the day of grace. Christ rose from the dead on the third day having finished the work the Father gave Him to do. That’s why Abraham could tell Isaac, when he asked where was the lamb for a burnt offering, that **“God will provide Himself a lamb for a burnt offering.”** Abraham saw Christ as the Lamb of God. Cain was a tiller of the ground which implies action meaning that his offering was works of the flesh. He brought of the fruit of the ground which was of the earth earthy. God had not respect to Cain’s offering. **“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.”**

Not only are there types or figures of Christ through all the scriptures, but He also appeared in other forms at times. When Abraham’s nephew, Lot, was captured by the four kings, Abraham and his trained servants pursued and destroyed them. He rescued Lot and was returning home when someone met him. Melchisedec, king of Salem and priest of the most high God

brought bread and wine and blessed Abraham. Melchisedec communed with Abraham there. This man was Christ because His name means King of righteousness. He was also King of Salem, which is King of peace. These names, titles and description fit no one but Christ. This priest of the most high God had no beginning nor end and therefore Christ was a priest forever after the order of Melchisedec. Christ came as Melchisedec to set forth that His priesthood was before the Levitical priesthood was ever established. The priesthood of Christ could not be after the order of any carnal man who is a sinner with a beginning and an end. How great this man was is evidenced by Abraham worshipping Him in giving a tenth of the spoils and by Melchisedec blessing Abraham. As the Apostle says, the less is blessed of the greater. Christ is the high priest of His people who are a royal priesthood because they are one in Him and therefore, clothed with His robe of righteousness.

On another occasion the Lord appeared unto Abraham as he sat in the door of his tent in the heat of the day. There appeared unto Abraham three men that stood by him. The Lord told Abraham that Sarah would have a son at the time appointed. He then told Abraham that He was going to destroy Sodom and Gomorrah. The one who talked with Abraham was indeed Christ, the Word, and the other two were angels sent to deliver Lot and his family and to destroy the cities.

In the New Testament, Christ came into this world born of a virgin and had a

body of flesh as any other man except without sin. As Isaiah was blessed to describe Him so wonderfully, He had no form nor beauty that anyone should desire Him. He was despised and rejected of men. He was a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. But He carried our sorrows and bore our grief. He was wounded for our transgressions and bruised for our iniquities. The chastisement of our peace was upon Him and with His stripes we are healed. What suffering He endured and opened not His mouth! What manner of love is this! The fulness of the Godhead dwelled in Him bodily as He had all power. Men saw Him but could not know who He was because His body was a veil. Only those who were the elect were blessed to truly know Him. He was God in a body of flesh who had the power to lay down His life and the power to take it up again. No man took it from Him. He knew the thoughts as well as the intent of the hearts of all people. He knew the extent of all the suffering He would endure. He knew the very moment of His death and resurrection. It pleased the Father that in Him should all fulness dwell. Not only the fulness of the Godhead, but also the fulness of the church and all blessings were in Him.

Don't you have a longing, a sincere desire of the heart, to see Jesus? The Apostle Paul said, **"For now we see through a glass darkly; but then face to face: now I know in part; but then shall I know even as also I am known."** As the Apostle wrote to the Philippian Church, **"For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also**

we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ; who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto His glorious body, according to the working whereby He is able even to subdue all things unto Himself." The Apostle writes to the Corinthians that while we are at home in this body we are absent from the Lord for we walk by faith and not by sight. But he says we are willing to be absent from this body, and be present with the Lord.

It is my desire as long as we are in this body that the Lord continue to bless us in love and sweet fellowship.

Your fellow traveler,
Cleo Robertson

CORRESPONDENCE

April 11, 2011

Dear Mr. Horton,

This is to let you know that my husband and I moved from our old address at:

2140 Cinook Ct.
Seven Bays, Wa. 99122

into Spokane, Wash. on April 1st of this month, please send my copy of The Signs of the Times to my new address:

Caroline Martin
1317 E. Everett Ave.
Spokane, Wash. 99207

Arlene Hole let me know of Elder Key's sudden passing. What a blessing

for him, but a great loss to the ones left behind to mourn his loss - I was blessed to hear him preach back in Oct. of 2009 and have several tapes of The Staunton River Association meetings. I feel they are a blessing to me!

Yours in hope,
Caroline Martin

Dear Brother Horton,

Enclosed you will find enough for two more years.

Thank the Lord for all of you. You do a great job.

With Love,
Randolph Plybon
140 Lynch Dr., Apt. 103
Rocky Mount, Va 24151

April 7, 2011

Mr. Tony Horton,

It is time to renew my subscription to the Signs of the Times - I would never want to miss a copy. And look forward very much for it each month - use enclosed check for one year and the rest as needed.

I pray the Lord's richest blessing on the Times, all the Editors and Writers.

Thank you very much - a sinner saved by Grace, if at all.

Roland G. Allen
Son of the late - Elder M.J. Allen

ARTICLES

1st Corinthians Chapter 1:1-3,

Paul, called *to be* an apostle of Jesus Christ through the will of God, and Sosthenes *our* brother, Unto the church of God which is at Corinth, to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called *to be* saints, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours: Grace *be* unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.

The Apostle Paul identifies himself as the author of this letter and includes Sosthenes as the writer, both because he was well known to the Corinthians and because the letter itself was probably written by his hand as dictated by Paul. Paul further identifies his office as an apostle thereby giving the authority by which he writes. He makes it clear that his qualification as an apostle is without question. He was not an apostle because he desired or sought after the office, but rather he was called to be an apostle through the will of God. His calling was made known to him while traveling to Damascus with no thought of anything other than the persecution and destruction of the very people he is now writing to with such tenderness and affection. Nor is he an apostle by reason of his education, his knowledge of, or zeal for the law, or any other thing that might qualify him according to the flesh. Consider his testimony

to the church at Philippi:

Philippians Chapter 3:4-8,

Though I might also have confidence in the flesh. If any other man thinketh that he hath whereof he might trust in the flesh, I more: Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee; Concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless. But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea doubtless, and I count all things *but* loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them *but* dung, that I may win Christ,

According to the wisdom of men, his qualifications would be found in the very things he counts as dung. He gives no qualifications for his apostleship other than that of his calling and that it was according to the will of God. Without doubt, this calling of the Apostle Paul, though received on the road to Damascus, was in the mind and purpose of God from eternity. As God is an eternal being, all of his purposes are eternal. Paul writes to the Galatians that he was separated from his mother's womb for this express purpose. So then, there was nothing conditional about his calling. Neither was it subject to his willingness to submit. When God calls his servants they are called with an irresistible power that makes them willing. They are made willing in the day of that power by

a God that works in them both to will and to do of His good pleasure.

Next, the apostle identifies who he is writing to. This would seem foolish, if he were writing to the world and everyone in it. On the contrary, by identifying who he is writing to, he excludes everyone else. This letter is to "the Church of God at Corinth" but not to those who may be nominal professors simply having their names on the church ledger, but exclusively to those meeting the following qualifications.

First they are "sanctified in Christ Jesus." The word sanctified means to be separated or set apart. Clearly, if language has any meaning, the construction of this sentence leaves no doubt but what this is an act done to, and not by, the ones sanctified. One might ask, by whom and how is this separation made.

The apostle says it this way in his letter to the Church at Ephesus; "according as He (God the Father) has chosen us in Him (Jesus Christ) before the foundation of the world." It is therefore none other than God himself who has sanctified his saints. He did so when He chose them in Jesus Christ before the foundation of the world. It is this separation that distinguished Cain from Abel, Isaac from Ishmael, Jacob from Esau, and separates the saints of God even to this day from the children of disobedience. This is a separation from among the sons of Adam that is solely an act of unconditional and sovereign grace.

Romans Chapter 9:15-16,

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.*

This separation is made by an omnipotent and immutable God and "there is none that can stay His hand or say What doest thou?" What He has done is done forever and no powers exist that can disannul it. For "the foundation of God standeth sure having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are His." He knows them in time experimentally and has always known them in eternity. He chose them freely of His own will and has eternally purposed them to be heirs to His Kingdom.

The next qualification is that they are "called to be saints." In his second letter to Timothy, Paul identifies the calling of God's saints as "an holy calling." That is to say, as we understand it, there is nothing natural about it, neither the source nor the delivery of it. It is a calling that emanates from an all wise and all powerful God, and is sourced in that eternal covenant made before the foundation of the world between God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost. It is administered to each of God's individual saints by God himself in the person of the Holy Spirit. There is no calling to God's saints or manifestation of Jesus Christ, other than by revelation of the Holy Spirit. Flesh and blood does not reveal it to them, but their Father which is in heaven. The scriptures leave no doubt as to the way and manner in which God calls his children. This is not a general calling to the world inviting as many as may have a desire, to come. If such

was the case, there would be none to answer the call. "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God." Not only can he not receive them "neither can he know them." "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." How can any man have a desire for something that he does not know about? Had Saul of Tarsus received any other calling than one manifesting the power of the Holy Spirit and the revelation of Jesus Christ, he would have continued on his way, arriving in Damascus with the same intentions he had when he left Jerusalem. The calling of God's children comes with a spiritual power and they are just as helpless to resist it as the world is to receive it.

John Chapter 10:24-27,

Then came the Jews round about him, and said unto him, How long dost thou make us to doubt? If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly. Jesus answered them, I told you, and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me. But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me:

This calling of all God's saints is the same calling, of the same divine nature, coming from the same source as the apostle Paul's calling. The apostle says in 2nd Timothy, not that we are called with holy callings, plural, but rather "an holy calling" singular. God calls each of his children with the same "holy calling."

It is imbued with the same power, having the same effect, but administered in the way and manner that is uniquely suited to each individual child of grace. Adam was called in the garden, Jacob in a dream, Moses in a burning bush, Matthew sitting at the receipt of custom, Saul on the road to Damascus. The circumstances were different, but the calling and the effectiveness of it was the same. When God's children receive their calling and Jesus Christ is made manifest as their Lord and Savior, they are given an eye of faith to see that which the natural eye cannot see, an ear of faith to hear what the natural ear cannot hear. "He that hath an ear to hear, let him hear." To one called to the glorious light of the Gospel of Jesus Christ, the things of this world no longer hold the promise they once held and his heart is now set on the heavenly things that belong to his Master. Like the Apostle Paul, he sees things in a new light. Not that natural light that comes from the sun, but a light that shines down from heaven "above the brightness of the sun." His perspective is changed. All things are become new. Indeed, he is a new creature. In this new light he is given an unexplainable love for his brethren in Christ that cannot be understood any more than it can be denied. It was said of David and Jonathan that "the soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul." This represents the love that binds God's children together, for they are knit together by the Spirit of Christ that dwells within them.

The apostle continues identifying

who he is writing to by including all who in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ, and that not everyone who might call upon Him in a nominal way but only those to whom He is Lord, "Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours." By inference, those who are also sanctified in Him and called to be saints. To these he says, "Grace be unto you." First and foremost, above and beyond all else, God's children are made to know they stand in need of grace. They know they are not worthy of even the temporal blessings of this life, much less the Spiritual blessings that flow from their Lord Jesus Christ. "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast..." Our works of righteousness are as filthy rags and it is by grace and grace alone that we have hope in eternal life.

Then, "peace from God our father and from the Lord Jesus Christ." This is not the peace that the world seeks. The natural man seeks an end to warfare between tribes, nations, and peoples. This is the only warfare he knows about. The child of God is engaged in a warfare that the children of this world have no knowledge of. It is a warfare that rages within them by reason of their dual nature. This is a continual warfare between the old, outer man of the flesh and the new, inner, spiritual man. "For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other: so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." The apostle describes this warfare in his letter to the Church at Rome; "For that

which I do, I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I. If then I do that which I would not, I consent unto the law that it is good. Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not. For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do. Now if I do that I would not, it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me. I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me. For I delight in the law of God after the inward man: But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin." In this continual warfare in the lives of God's children, they are from time to time blessed to experience the words spoken by their Lord Jesus Christ "Peace, be still." Only God the Father and His beloved Son Jesus Christ, by whom this peace was wrought, can speak peace to the soul tormented by sin. This is "peace that passeth understanding." and is that spoken of by the prophet Isaiah: "Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned..."

We know we have but hinted at the beauties of the unchangeable truth of the

doctrine of God our Saviour, as set forth here and declared by the Apostle Paul. We are made to witness with the words of this same Apostle, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!"

In hope of eternal life,
Elder Kenneth R. Adams

VOICES OF THE PAST

SPIRITUAL SONGS ACCORD WITH GOD'S STRINGED INSTRUMENTS

My late visit with the editors and many readers of the Signs in Virginia, Delaware, New Jersey, Maryland, Pennsylvania and other places has stimulated me with a greater desire to write to the Household of Faith through this medium. The visit with the Welch Tract, Hopewell, and other historical meeting places of God's children through the centuries past has peculiarly affected me. It is inspirational to learn that the same principles of Truth has been loved, cherished and contended for by His people these hundreds of years in the same meeting place.

While attending Salisbury Association held at Delmar, Delaware, the text of this article began to arrest my attention. God willing, I shall use Isaiah 38:20, as basis for my remarks: "**The Lord was ready to save me; therefore we will sing my songs to the stringed instruments all the days of our life in**

the house of the Lord." We shall attempt to prove that the songs of God's people are their spiritual experiences and the stringed instruments are the harp of God, the hearts of His people, the Bible, etc. We want to show that a psalm or an hymn is not necessarily a spiritual song to one of God's people at all times. We expect to show that the stringed instruments under consideration are not pianos, organs, or any like instrument made and tuned by man - which will get out of tune but, that which God has tuned, strung, and prepared - which never gets out of tune.

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

The expression found in 20th verse was made by Hezekiah, King of Judah, after undergoing critical experiences brought about by the Lord dealing with him. Even though he be king he was brought low by the Lord. He was sick unto death, and word came to him from the Lord, "**Set thine house in order; for thou shalt die and not live.**" (Is. 38:1) We read a similar command in Amos 4:12 to Israel: "**Prepare to meet thy God, O Israel.**" I am persuaded a similar command comes to every spiritual Israelite in the beginning of an experience of grace. When we try to cope with the situation in trying to set our house in order in preparation to meet God, we find ourselves as miserable failures in the attempt. This forces us to pray to God for mercy. Surely Hezekiah's attempts were in vain to set his

house in order and he was made to depend upon God for this. We would all sink into death were it not for what the Lord adds unto our life. Our life is sinful, He adds holiness; our life is unstable; He adds stability; our life is earthly, He adds heaven; our life is ungodly, He adds godliness. We come to the end of our path, He leads us into a new path. We die, He adds life. Dear trembling child, has the Lord added unto your life? Our life is unstrung and untuned. He tunes and strings our hearts to sing His praise! This must have been Hezekiah's experience as he said, "**The Lord was ready to save me.**"

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

Because the Lord was ready to save me - "**we will sing my songs to the stringed instruments.**" We read in Ephesians 5:19, of "**Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord.**" What were the songs Hezekiah had under consideration? Psalms and Hymns would include all compositions written with natural verse to be used in religious worship. When any hymn or psalm is in perfect harmony with our experience and feelings, it becomes our

spiritual song. Paul says in **1st Cor. 14:15**, "**I will sing with the spirit, and I will sing with the understanding also.**" There is a natural song and there is a spiritual song. There are experiences that are natural and there are experiences that are spiritual. The song that is natural is the old song and the song that is spiritual is that the Lord adds by putting into your mouth the new song. We would like to contrast the old song and the new.

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

You will note that Hezekiah says, "my songs". This means his own personal spiritual experiences. Unless the Lord has added to your individual life you cannot sing these songs. There are more spiritual experiences than one; therefore more songs than one. Sometimes you sing, "**All things work together for good.**" Sometimes you feel, "**All things are against me.**" Sometimes you are asking, "**Is God gone forever?**" Sometimes you say, "**I know**

that my redeemer liveth." Sometimes you sing, "Jesus, Lover of my soul:" and at other times, "I am a stranger here below." Sometimes you ask, "My God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Sometimes you sing, "The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want."

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

Pianos and organs are made, strung, and tuned by man. These may be damaged, get out of tune, and the strings broken. Natural musical instruments only give forth natural mechanical tones. The instruments under consideration give forth spiritual Godly melody. The command to the Church is to "**speak to yourselves, singing,**" - not, to play a mechanical instrument. The question should be, "Is our singing to

accord with the mechanical instruments or spiritual instruments? Is our singing to be in accord with the piano, organ, or heart? I am persuaded the singing should be in harmony with our hearts that God has prepared, tuned and strung; thus, "**making melody in the HEART.**" When brethren are blessed to come together and sing with the Spirit and understanding in sweet fellowship and harmony it is much greater and sweeter melody than the best of singing without the Spirit accompanied by the best mechanical musical instruments. The accompaniment of mechanical musical instruments is pleasing to the natural ear. The accompaniment of the Spirit and understanding is pleasing to the spiritual ear.

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

THERE IS A FOUNTAIN:

Lord, I believe thou hast prepared
(Unworthy though I be)

For me a blood-bought free reward-

A golden harp for me.

'Tis strung and tuned for endless years

And formed by power divine,

To sound in God the father's ears

No other name but thine.

Hezekiah stated in the same chapter from which the text of this article was taken - **"He hath BOTH SPOKEN unto me and HIMSELF hath DONE it."** (Is. 38:15) Here is a double. He commanded **"Set thine house in order ,"** and He performed the command Himself by setting it in order. He works both the will and the do. Children of God receive **"of the Lord's hand DOUBLE"** (Isaiah 40:2) Scores of doubles come to our mind that neither time nor space will permit us to mention. Suffice it to suggest that the harp of God consists of a number of double strings. If the harps used back at that time under the ceremonial worship had ten strings, the spiritual harp must have five doubles which results in ten. Let us turn to the 8th chapter of Romans to find these five principles of the doctrine briefly stated. As we read them let us keep in mind that He has both spoken and Himself hath done it. Now, **"For whom He did (1) FOREKNOW, He also did (2) PRE-DESTINATE to be conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom He did predestinate, them He also (3) CALLED and whom He called, them He also (4) JUSTIFIED: and whom He justified, them He also (5) GLORIFIED. What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?"** (Rom.8:29-31)

This foreknowledge is an intimate relationship with His people even before the manifestation of His decrees in time. He chose them in His Son. **"Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being**

unperfect and in Thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned when as yet there was none of them." (Psalms 139:16). He knew them in eternity; they shall know Him in time. He predestinated them to be conformed to the image of His Son. He has ordered, arranged, and fixed all things to fallout at appointed times and seasons so that all things work together for the fulfillment of this grand purpose. See Romans 8:28. He calls and they shall answer. He performs the double as the word that goes forth out of His mouth returns not to Him void, but accomplishes that which He pleases and prospers in the thing whereto He sends it. He decreed the justification of His people and He justifieth them by sending His Son into the world to pay the penalty for their sins, thus satisfying justice. The just bore the sins of the unjust that justice divine might be perfectly satisfied. He not only justified them but also glorified them through the divine righteousness of His own Son. **"For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled (*justified*) to God by the death of His Son, much more being reconciled, we shall be saved (*glorified*) by His life."** (Rom. 5:10) We are glorified by the imputed righteousness of His Son. These five wonderful things are both spoken and performed by God the Father, Son, and Spirit. These ten strings ring clear the melodious song of praise to Him. This ten stringed harp becomes ours when it pleases God to give it to us that we receive it with praise and thanksgiving. Then we are HARPERS HARPING

WITH THEIR HARPS. See Revelation 14:2. We have the harps of God. Rev. 15:2). We sing to the accompaniment of these harps in the "house of the Lord," Zion, the new Jerusalem, the Church, or with the children of God. We sing "all the DAYS of OUR life." Sometimes the day is gloomy because of the clouds of trouble and despondency which hides the view of the brightness of the Son of Glory. Sometimes the day is cold because of the felt sense of our unworthiness. We experience cloudy and bright days; cold and hot days; jovial and sorrowful days; but, they are all days because it takes the light to manifest the darkness that is in our heart and the coldness in our thoughts. Nevertheless the expression of days in the plural shows that there are night times in our experience.

We hang our harps upon the willows by the river, Babylon, during the nights of our experience. (Psalms 137) We have no use or regard for the Lord, nor Zion nor His people during the night. We are then resting in our own carnality and we are at ease. We do not think upon Zion nor his people. We forget Zion as is intimated in the expression, "We wept when we remembered Zion." (Ps. 137:1) When the dwellers in Babylon require of us in mirth to sing one of the songs of Zion, we are made to realize we cannot sing the Lord's song in a strange land. We must be brought again out of Babylon into Zion before we have any more use for the harp. It is not in the night that we feel unworthy, unfit, and so wretched but on dark and cloudy days. In the night we have no feeling, no sense

of guilt, no deep concern over our spiritual welfare, neither any regard for His house. It is when we are awakened in the morning that we are made to weep because of our forgetfulness and unconsciousness of His providential care over us. It is when we are awakened by His Spirit before the rising of the Son of Glory. Thanks be to God, when the Son rises and we see the brightness of His face whose rays warms and calms our troubled breasts, fear is driven from our souls and love springs forth. Songs of praise again are sung to His matchless and glorious Name for His amazing Grace toward us.

You notice that Hezekiah says "OUR LIFE" in the text. It seems to the natural mind that he should have said, "my life" or "our lives" to have been consistent with the proper usage of language. Let us see. The Lord added unto his life. My life had its end as my life when the Lord added His life to my life. My natural life ended as only a natural life when the Lord added that that is spiritual to my life. The life of a child of God prior to regeneration (or the addition of the graces of His Holy Spirit) is only a lustful fleshly life. After God adds that that is spiritual it becomes our life. When the Lord adds his Spirit there is set up a dual character in one. This results in a warfare. The flesh lusts against the Spirit and the Spirit against the flesh so that you cannot do the things that you would, these being contrary one to the other. See Gal. 5:17. What the Lord adds is contrary to that naturally possessed.

One more thought and I shall close. The last night will be when death shall

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

Elder E. J. Lambert

BAPTIST

Brother Beebe:

This is a world of change, and its inhabitants are changeable. I sent you a notice lately, that my address was changed, by a change of my residence. I must now notify you of another change. I have sold my farm in Rush County, and located in Connersville, Fayette County, IN. Yourself and other correspondents, therefore, will address me at the latter place.

Now, having given notice of my address, I believe I will blot over my sheet with something for your disposal, as you may think proper. Almost every subject of revealed truth has been touched on, more or less, by some of your able and numerous correspondents; but I do not recollect of having seen anyone especially designed to set forth the claims of our denomination, above any other, to a

divine origin. I will therefore, devote this little space to that point.

The name Baptist. The name John was given by an angel of the Lord to Zacharias, some nine months before he was born, and his mission fully described, as the fulfiller of Malachi's prophecy of the coming of Elias. See Luke ii, and Mal. iv. Hence, when the child was born and some dispute arose about his name, it was referred to his father, who wrote, "His name is John," for the angel had so named him. This John was to be, "The voice of one crying in the wilderness; prepare ye the way of the Lord." And he was to make ready a people prepared for the Lord. Make them ready for what? Why, for the visible kingdom or church of the Lord. They were first prepared for the Lord, by the regeneration of the spirit, and then made ready for the visible church by John, whom God had sent to baptize them with water. Christ, as king and founder of the church, was made visible to Israel by water, in his baptism, for he who had sent, said unto him, On whomsoever you shall see the Holy Ghost descend and abide, the same is he. When John baptized Jesus, the visible token was given, accompanied by the opening of the heavens, the visible form of a Dove, and the voice of God, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased. John saw this demonstration and publicly testified that, "This is the Lamb of God," &c. John's baptism was from heaven, and not of men. God had sent him to baptize with water, and this being his divine mission, he faithfully prosecuted it, and so received officially,

the name of **The Baptist**. This name and title, also bears a divine sanction. Christ, and the divinely inspired evangelists and apostles, so called him. The public ministry of the Gospel, commenced with the Baptism which John preached. "The law and the prophets were until John; since that time the kingdom of God is preached, and every man presseth into it," or men of all the nations. The mission of John differed from that of any of the preceding prophets. They could speak of a king which was to come, but John could say that he now standeth among you, he has come, this is he. Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world. John was, also to prepare the way of the king, and make ready a people, by the visible ordinance of water baptism, as the materials of his visible kingdom; so that they were ready for a visible constitution or organization on the day of pentecost. This mission of John, gave him such a preference over the former prophets, and yet he only made ready the materials for the visible kingdom, but died before its visible organization, so it is said. Of all that were born of women, there was not a greater prophet than John the Baptist; nevertheless, the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he. I suppose that John was the Elias that appeared with Moses, and talked with Christ, in the transfiguration on the mount. This John was a Baptist, and authorized from heaven to baptize with water, and was visibly patronized by Christ, who was himself baptized by him, also by the Holy Ghost, descending like a dove, by the opening heavens, and by the audible voice of the

Father, saying, This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased. If this is not enough to establish the name Baptist, what would be sufficient? John was a Baptist, and as such, he baptized Christ, the king. Then Jesus was also a Baptist; and the materials for his visible church were baptized by John, and thereby were made ready to be constituted a Baptist church, for the Baptists will admit of no other; even to this day. Hence we see that the Baptists have the divinely sanctioned name. We also see that God sent John, the first Baptist, with divine authority to baptize with water. And still further, we see that the Son of God, being baptized by a Baptist, became visibly a Baptist; and still further, we see by the opening heavens, the descent of the Holy Ghost like a Dove, and abiding on him, and the approving voice of the Father; a three-fold sanction from heaven was given. And the baptized King of Zion, having all power - namely, all legal power - all authority in heaven and in earth, extended the commission to baptize, to his disciples, and finally connected it with, and embraced it in the great commission which he gave to his apostles which was to be perpetuated, even to the end of the world, and carried out in all nations.

Now, in the name, in the practice of water baptism, in the order and place assigned for this ordinance, in making the materials ready for the visible church by water baptism, after the Lord, by his spirit had prepared them for himself, etc., in all these things the Baptists are identical with John the Baptist and with the primitive church. All these items give

to the Baptists a claim above all other denominations.

The Presbyterians have their John (Calvin); The Methodists, also, have their John (Wesley). We all have our Johns, but, in all candor, let me ask, where or when did all of their Johns or any other man, or set of men, except the Baptists, receive authority from heaven to administer water baptism in any way, at any time, to any person or persons, old or young, believer or infidel? If no such authority has been given to any of their Johns, or any other person or people but the Baptists (and if there has, let it be proved by Scriptural testimony), then it follows of course, that, let the administrator be a good man or a bad man, and let him perform the action of baptism as he may, and as conscientiously as he may, he acts without divine authority, it therefore is based only on assumption, and cannot, therefore, be valid baptism.

Of all the sects which are called Baptists at this day, which, may it be asked, have the right to claim this preference? I answer, Only those who, in other respects, believe and practice according to the order and rules established by the King, for the faith and practice of his visible kingdom or church. The visible church is one body, have one spirit, and are all called in one hope of their calling, one Lord and law-giver, one faith and one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and in them all. They all, wherever they may be, or whatever may be the diversity of their gifts, are but different members of the same body, for there is one body and one spirit. This unit is the church, and

the same spirit bestows all the diversity of gifts to qualify every member of the body for its respective office, so that no one member can say to another, I have no need of thee. Each is a member in particular or a particular member. Of course, then, they all believe and preach the doctrine of union. The union of Head and body, the unity of the spirit, with all its divine gifts fitly set in the church for the edification of itself in love. The church continues steadfastly in the apostles doctrine, and, of course, in the apostles fellowship, and in the fellowship of each other, in breaking of bread and in prayer. And the Lord adds to her visible members, such as shall be saved. Her banner is, Christ and him crucified, and that to the exclusion of all means, instrumentalities, conditions, terms, works, or anything else of our will or power. The true church and her ministers, are determined to know nothing, save Christ and him crucified. Her proclamation is, Salvation by grace. She acknowledges Christ as her king and only law-giver, by her habitual observance of the order and discipline of his house, whose house are ye. These are the Old Primitive Regular Baptists. We often hear it said, One has as good a right to his opinion as another. This may be true in matters of mere opinion, where evidence is equal, or absent; but where evidence the most weighty and unequivocal is presented, no man has the right to believe the reverse of it.

In this very imperfect sketch, I believe the evidence is abundant to sustain the claim of the old order of Baptists, that they are the visible church of

Christ, of the primitive faith and order.

Yours in Christ Jesus,
Wilson Thompson

(The above was written by Elder Thompson in 1857, and was re-published by request in 1957. Elder Thompson died May 1, 1866.)

WASHING OF REGENERATION

“Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy, he saved US, by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost.” -Titus iii. 5.

NEW VERNON, N.Y., August 2, 1841.

The salvation of Paul and Titus is the same salvation that embraces the whole election of grace; for there is but one method of salvation brought to light in the gospel. **“Neither is there salvation in any other; for there is no other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved.” Acts iv. 12.** We therefore understand the salvation spoken of in this text in its application to all the redeemed of the Lord. The declarations of this scripture are as follows: first, God hath saved us- his people; second, that salvation is not according to or in consequence of any works of righteousness by us performed; but thirdly, by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost, and all in accordance with the sovereign mercy of God. Could we, with old Jonah, take a voyage to the se-

cret channels of the mighty deep, and like him feel ourselves pursued by the sovereign hand of the omniscient God, on account of our rebellion against him, and, with that disobedient, peevish prophet be locked up in the *belly of hell* for three days and three nights, until we were perfectly convinced, as he was, of our helplessness, our total inability to deliver ourselves from our deplorable condition, we incline to the opinion that we would say, as he said, **“Salvation is of the Lord;”** and with Peter, as above cited, **“Neither is there salvation in any other.”** By this sweeping declaration, however, the fallacy of all the popular institutions of the day, and of all other days, as having in view the salvation of the world, is laid bare. All such pretensions are therefore deceptive, hypocritical and vain; as

“None but Jesus, none but Jesus, Can do helpless sinners good.”

“He saved us.” In the past tense. The work is done; the salvation of God’s people is complete. **“He 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. i. 9.** Many there are in these days of delusion and anti-christian rant, who say, “Truly the Lord saves us; there is salvation nowhere else; but”- but what? “God works by the use of means. We are not machines; we must use the means of grace; we must give up our hearts to God; we must sit on an anxious bench; or we must do something else, and then

we must say that God has done it." That must be, at best, but a lying system which requires that we should tell lies even in what is called *getting religion*, and it must certainly be a lie, if we have done anything in the work of salvation, to say that God has done it all.

But while we are upon this point, let us inquire a moment into New School consistency. They tell us there is something for the sinner to do; if we wait for God to work we shall die in our sins; they ridicule the doctrine of man's entire impotency and helpless condition, and command him to be up and doing; they tell him that the provisions of the gospel are such that if any sinner chooses he can secure an interest in the salvation of the Lord. With this theory for their platform, they hold protracted meetings, erect anxious benches, and perform many wonderful feats, and declare to the unregenerate that God is now offering them salvation, is knocking at the door of their hearts, wooing and beseeching them to comply with the terms of the gospel. They tell sinners, in so many words, if they will do these things they shall be saved; but if they refuse, they shall be damned. Suppose the sinner should be kind enough to consent to be saved, and to perform the prerequisites as instructed by these teachers, if by these means they obtain salvation, they are saved according to their works. These works are either works of righteousness or works of unrighteousness; if of righteousness, they cannot contribute towards the salvation of those by whom they are performed; and if of unrighteousness, they are sinful, and can

only expose their performers to the curses of the law. Not by works of righteousness which we have done; and as in the parallel, "**Not according to our works,**" and again, "**Not of works, lest any man should boast; not of yourselves, it is the gift of God.**"- Eph. ii. 8, 9. If by grace, it is no more of works, otherwise grace is no more grace. The man who, in opposition to this array of scriptural testimony, would dare proclaim salvation as depending in part or entirely on works, whether good or bad, is an enemy to God and a base deceiver. Of all such men it is written, "**Their judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not.**"

Having shown, negatively; that; salvation is not according to our works, and consequently that the doctrine of all Arminian work-mongers is false, we pause to notice how this salvation is brought home experimentally to the heirs of promise. "**By the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost; and according to his mercy.**" By the *washing of regeneration* we understand the cleansing operation of the Holy Spirit in the work of regeneration. We have attempted to show, when dwelling on the subject of regeneration, that as the effect of being quickened into life we are brought to realize ourselves vile and polluted, and as no unclean thing can enter the kingdom of God, we require to be washed; and as no blood of goats, or other Jewish sacrifices, can cleanse from sin, we require a washing of far superior efficacy. Connected with regeneration there is a foun-

tain opened for the house of David and for the inhabitants of Jerusalem, for sin and uncleanness; and when the sinner is brought, by the Spirit, to the fountain of that blood, that speaketh better things than the blood of Abel, he finds that the blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin; his heart is sprinkled from an evil conscience, and his body is prepared to be washed in pure water. The *renewing of the Holy Ghost* is that work by which a new principle is implanted, an incorruptible seed by which old things are passed away, and all things become new. And this work of the Spirit is wrought in the saints in accordance with a fixed and immutable standard. **“According to his mercy, not according to our works:”** But brother Fox may inquire concerning the character of this standard. His mercy it is sovereign. **“For he will have mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth.”** Such is the mercy of God, sovereign, discriminating, immutable, and his own. It is according to his own purpose and grace which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.

Elder Gilbert Beebe

PSALM 62: 1-2.

**Truly my soul waiteth upon God:
from him cometh my salvation.**

**He only is my rock and my salvation;
he is my defence; I shall not be
greatly moved.**

**“Thou wilt cast all their sins Into
the depths of the sea.”- MICAH vii. 19.**

When God takes all our iniquities with his own hand, and casts them with his own arm into the depths of the sea, they will never come out of those depths to witness against the family of God in the great and terrible day. Your sins now may seem to be all alive in your breast, and everyone of them to bring accusation upon accusation against you. This sin is crying out for vengeance, and that for punishment. This slip, this fall, this backsliding, this foolish word, this wrong action, are all testifying against you in the court of conscience. Do what you may, be where you may, live how you may, watch and pray how you may, keep silent and separate from the world or even from your own family how you may, sin still moves, lives, acts, works, and often brings you into guilt and bondage, not if God has had mercy upon us he has cast all our sins with his own hands into the depths of the sea, and those sins have no more eyes to look at us with angry indignation, have no more tongues to speak against us in voices of accusation, have no more life in them to rise up and testify that they have been committed by us, that God's law has been broken by them, and that therefore we are under its condemnation and curse. And there is no truth in God's word more certain than the complete forgiveness of sins, and the presentation of the Church of Christ at the great day faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy.

Elder J. C. Philpot

“O satisfy us early with thy mercy; that we may rejoice and be glad all our days.” - PSALM XC. 14.

Many of the dear children of God are tossed up and down on a sea of great uncertainty, doubt and fear, because they have not had sensible manifestations of Christ to their soul. He has not come into them in the power of his love; still they often say, **“When wilt thou come unto me? O visit me, with thy salvation; speak a word to my soul; it is thyself, and thyself alone, I want to hear, to see, and to know!”** Now these are drawings of the gracious Lord, the secret beginnings of his coming, the heralds of his approach, the dawning of the day before the morning star arises and the sun follows upon his track. But when the Lord does come in any sweet manifestation of his presence or of his power, then he will abide where he has come, for he never leaves or forsakes, a soul which he has once visited. He may seem to do so; he may withdraw himself; and then who can behold him? But he never really leaves the temple which he has once adorned and sanctified with his presence. Christ is formed in the hearts of his people the hope of glory; their body is the temple of the Holy Ghost, and Christ dwells in them by faith. Though we often mourn over his absence and do not feel his gracious presence as we would, still he is there, if he has once come.

Elder J. C. Philpot

MEETINGS

FOURTH OF JULY MEETING

The annual fourth of July meeting will be held, the Lord willing at New Bell Spur Church in Carroll County, Va. the church is located on Terry's Mill Road (610).

From the Blue Ridge Parkway take the Exit at milepost 184.

From route 58 take Terry's Mill Road about 3.3 miles.

The meeting time is 10:30 Monday July 4, 2011.

We invite all lovers of the truth to be with us.

Tony Horton

STAUNTON RIVER ASSOCIATION

We invite our correspondents and friends to our one hundred seventieth session of the Staunton River Primitive Baptist Association. The 2011 session will convene, the Lord willing, at Weatherford Church which is our usual location. Springfield Church will be the host church this year. Singing will start at 9:00 AM and preaching at 9:30 AM. This will be on Saturday, July 9th and Sunday July 10th. We hope the Lord will bless our meeting with good attendance and praises to His holy name.

Burnell Williams
Clerk of the association

**Lower Country Line
Association 1947
School at Roxboro, NC**

Front Row left to right

Elder E. L. Cobb, Black Creek Assoc.,
Pastor at Durham

Elder J. V. Roberts, Contentnea Assoc.,
Farmville, NC

Elder S. Gray, Kinston, NC

Deacon F. D. Long, Roxboro, NC

Elder George Hill, Salem Assoc.,

Elder D. W. Topping, Balltimore, MD

Elder S. W. Walker, Mebane Church

Elder John P. Helms, Smith River Assoc.

Elder J. H. Herndon, Durham, NC (Blind)

2nd Row left to right

Elder Emmett Stone

Elder John W. Gilliam, Upper Country
Line Assoc.

Elder H. D. Nash, Atlanta, GA

Elder W. J. Berry, Upper Country Line
Assoc.

Elder Z. L. Rhue, Winston-Salem, NC

Elder D. V. Spangler, Upper Country
Line Assoc.

3rd Row left to right

Elder O.J. Croker, Harmony Church,
Hiram, GA

Elder B. L. Godwin, Seven Mile Assoc.

Elder D. A. O'Bryant, Hillsdale Church

Elder A. B. Barham, Burlington, NC

Elder J.A. Chandler, Mt. Airy, NC

Elder L. L. Yapp, White Oak Assoc.

Elder J. T. Jones, Bear Creek Assoc.,
Marshville, NC

Elder Raymond Payne, Staunton River
Assoc.



**Lower Country Line Association 1947
School at Roxboro, NC**

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR APRIL 2011

Ronald T. Jacks, AL	15.00
Randolph Plybon, VA	5.00
Carlton Brown, NC	5.00
Marilyn Shaw, VA	5.00
Judy Raven, VA	5.00
Mary Poff, VA	5.00
Merrill E. Mabe, NC	5.00
Roland Allen, GA	5.00

OBITUARIES

Elder Kenneth Ray Key, Sr.

Elder Kenneth Key, 88, a prominent Primitive Baptist preacher and editor of "Signs of the Times," departed from this life on April 3, 2011 at the Moses Cone Hospital in Greensboro, N.C.

A native of Surry County, N.C., Kenneth was born January 22, 1923. The son of Ransome and Ida Elizabeth Lowe Key he grew up in a large family of five boys and three girls. Kenneth's parents were of the Primitive Baptist faith and his fondest childhood memories were of attending the various Primitive Baptist

churches in Surry County with his parents. During Kenneth's early childhood the Key family was engaged in farming.

When Kenneth was in his early teens his family moved to Guilford County which they made their lifetime residence. As a young adult Kenneth married Nellie Mae Jobe and they made their home in Greensboro. Kenneth and Nellie joined the church at Greensboro and during his 60 years as a Primitive Baptist minister he ably served as Pastor of Greensboro, Dan River, Big Meadows and Moon's Creek churches. He also conducted numerous funerals and preached at many corresponding churches and associations. He was well-known among Primitive Baptists for his knowledge, insight, and wisdom and he will be missed as a preacher, a beloved pastor and a friend.

A widower since July 17, 2006, Elder Key is survived by two sons, Kenneth R. Key, Jr. (wife Sharon), Gary Van Key (wife Amber), five grandchildren and several great grandchildren. He is also survived by two brothers, John and Rueben Key and a sister Minnie Jackson.

A funeral service was held Wednesday April 6 at Forbis and Dick North Elm Street Chapel. The service was conducted by fellow ministers: Cleo Robertson, James Gray, Thomas Solomon and J.B. Farmer. In recognition of Elder Key's service in the US Navy a brief military ceremony was held at the grave site at Lakeview Memorial Park.

By Herbert Edwards

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

“The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon”

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

1429 Howlett Street

Hillsville, Va. 24343

*Hungry, and faint and poor,
Behold us, Lord again
Assembled at thy mercy's door,
Thy bounty to obtain.*

*Thy word commands up nigh,
Or we must starve indeed;
For we no money have to buy,
No righteousness to plead.*

*The food our spirits want
Thy hand alone can give;
Oh! hear the prayer of faith, and
grant
That we may eat and live.*

Newton.

JOHN 6:35.

And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that come to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst.

CONTENTS

EDITORIAL	146
Elder Jerry Farmer	
CORRESPONDENCE	150
VOICES OF THE PAST	150
Wm. Quint	
Elder Gilbert Beebe	
Elder E. J. Lambert	
Elder David Spangler	
Elder H. L. Rogers	
W. L. Edwards	
Elder J.C. Philpot	
MEETINGS	166
CONTRIBUTIONS	167
OBITUARIES	167
Sister Novaline Stewart	

EDITORIAL

Let all things be done decently and in order. 1 Corinthians 14:40.



Elder J.B. Farmer

This scripture is often quoted to express our understanding of the manner in which true believers, by grace, are to conduct themselves in Church matters, and in their daily lives. The devil is very deceptive, and has proven to be a liar from the beginning. If he could, he would deceive us and pull us to one side or the other

out of the way of decency and order in which we have been placed. If the Lord were not our keeper, we would surely be deceived by the devil along with the rest of the world, and be led into everlasting destruction. A man stands or falls according to his master. If God is our Master, we shall surely stand. May we be blessed to understand and embrace true decency and order to the praise, honor and glory of the God our Father.

To one side of the narrow way of doing things decently and in order we see restraining legalism, which says, "**Touch not, taste not, handle not.**" This manifests itself in proud self-righteousness, and the stirring up of the desire for that which is forbidden. And on the other side of the narrow way we see permissiveness, which says, "**Take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry.**" This manifests itself in an undisciplined, fleshly life. Satan presents both counterfeit views as ways of truth. But both of those views lie alongside, outside, and contrary to the path of the just. I am persuaded that God is merciful to deliver His people from Satan's devices and keep them in the way of righteousness.

The scribes and Pharisees, in the days of Jesus and the apostles, were typical of all those who have ever practiced a legalistic religion. They knew the scriptures, but understood the letter only and not the Spirit of them. They kept the commandments outwardly, in that they did not commit overt sins such as robbery or murder, or other things forbidden by the law. They also did their religious duties very painstakingly. They read the scriptures, attended the syna-

gogues, paid tithes, and made prayers – all to be seen by men. In their view, they walked decently and in order. They thought they were right, and despised others (like the poor publican) that were not as religious and righteous as they supposed themselves to be. Jesus brought their pride and hypocrisy to light, and they hated Him for it. There are many religious people today that walk by the same rule as the scribes and Pharisees. May God deliver us from that same deceptive, self-righteous pride that also lurks in our own flesh.

Many other religious people think they are under no law, and that nothing is to be withheld from them. They do not manifest the same grace of God that tempers the behavior of the saints. They think they are superior to others because they see themselves as being liberated and not shackled by old-fashioned ideas and customs. Their guide is their carnal mind. They allow most anything, and do not admonish others for unacceptable behavior because of their respect of men's persons. There is no suffering for them as they seek to escape the reproach of the cross. Those doing such things are just as full of error as the legalistic scribes and Pharisees, but are on the opposite side of the way of truth in their permissiveness.

The inspired apostle indicated the keeping grace of God for His children saying, **"All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient."** The children of God are not under the law, but under grace. But that does not give them license to sin. The saints are exhorted to abstain from even the appear-

ance of evil. In declaring that all things are not expedient, the apostle was blessed to teach that those things that are not profitable are, by grace, to be rejected and avoided. The saints are exhorted to redeem the time, for the days are evil. May God deliver us from evil thoughts, self-will, and the fleshly respect of persons with which the devil ever tempts us. **"Happy [Blessed] is he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth."**

The way of truth is so hidden that it has never been detected by anyone in a carnal mind. Job said, **"There is a path which no fowl knoweth, and which the vulture's eye hath not seen."** Your life in the path of righteousness is hidden to the world. **"For ye are dead and your life is hid with Christ in God."** You have been placed in the way of true decency and order that has been shared by all saints in every age. We are taught that the just shall live by faith, and that faith works by love. The little band of true believers, unrecognized by the world, are kept walking in truth by this love. They are not ruled by self-righteousness, neither are they ruled by the pleasures of the flesh. Their chief desire is to please the true and living God, although they feel unworthy to speak His name. We are assured that **"without faith it is impossible to please Him"**, and that **"all men have not faith."** But thanks be unto God, each child of God is given faith according to the measure of grace. **"By grace are you saved through faith."**

The world does not know who the saints are. Ungodly people, judging by

carnal reasoning, conclude that those who live in true decency and order are pretending, self-righteous, hypocrites. To them, there is no God, no true religion, and no true goodness. Therefore, the saints are under constant suspicion, and are hated by them. Also, since God's children are not outwardly religious, those practicing duty-religion condemn them. They judge them to be lacking in their idea of good works (which are actually fleshly works), which they falsely believe justify one before God. And the other religious professors, who are careless in their walk, judge the children of God to be too strict in their ways, since they will not walk with them or agree with them in their wickedness. There is no resting place in this world for the children of God among ungodly people, or among those that are legally religious, or among those that are loosely religious. The only rest for the household of faith is in the Lord, His finished work, and His righteousness. May He bless us to enter into that rest from time to time.

Misunderstood as they are in the world, the saints press on, not looking for the approval of men but seeking the approval of God. They must suffer many things for their God given faith, which faith causes them to walk decently and in order. We know that none are perfect in these things, but the desire of God's people is to do right. We always fail in our own strength, but God gives strength to those who love Him and wait upon Him. Knowing not how to perform that which is good, we are made to look unto God for wisdom, and to trust Him to

keep us in the way. Jesus has gone before us in all things. He has suffered for truth's sake, and we must suffer with Him. It is our joy to believe we have been blessed to suffer some things for His name's sake. If we suffer with Him we shall reign with Him. This is the promise of God to His people, even eternal life with Him in Glory.

To my poor mind, the word "**Let**" in the scripture listed at the head of this article does not indicate an optional request from a man, but is a powerful command from God to His people. When God said, "**Let**," that meant, "It must be". "**Where the word of the king is, there is power: and who may say unto him, What doest thou?**" And with His command, He gives grace to obey, that His name should be glorified. It is as when God commanded the light to shine out of darkness. "**For he spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast.**" He said, "**Let there be light: and there was light.**" And when the apostle said by the Holy Spirit, "**Let all things be done decently and in order,**" he spoke as the oracles of God, or as the very utterance of God. The rightly dividing of this passage, I believe, is this: By grace and faith, all things must be done by the saints in decency and in order. The blessed ones are not left, as the rest of the world, to walk in darkness and disobedience in the strength of the flesh, but are given grace to walk in the light, and in the obedience of faith by the Spirit.

To do anything "decently", literally, in the apostle's language, is to do it in a well-schemed way. It means to do it hon-

orably, being well thought out. I believe that the Lord's people are blessed to consider well the ways of their goings. This means that when a Church matter or something of a personal nature requires their attention, they, by grace, are blessed to reflect upon the scriptures, and upon the example of the apostles, and upon the practice of faithful brethren that have gone before them. It means that they consider the consequences of any action they must take. And it means they must beg God for wisdom and understanding in order to please Him, lest reproach be brought upon His name. And by grace they hearken to that small, still voice that they might show forth His praise.

The opposite of doing a thing decently is doing it indecently. And to do a thing indecently is to do it in a way not honorable and not well thought out. That is the way of wickedness and confusion, not the way of righteousness and peace. The apostle said to the Church, "**But, beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak.**"

To some, the word "order" means a set of evil, restricting, manmade rules devised to separate brethren. That sort of thing is not order but rather disorder. True order is given by the Holy Spirit to maintain unity and peace among true brethren. The word "order" actually means "regular arrangement". For things to be done in true order, they must be done in the proper sequence. This calls for patience and long-suffering, which are the fruit of the Spirit. Often, the saints

are required to wait upon the Lord and to see His salvation. And we are told that, "**He that hasteth with his feet sinneth.**" Consider Saul, of the Old Testament, when he grew impatient at the delay of the coming of the prophet Samuel, and presumptuously offered the sacrifice himself. His disobedience caused him to be rejected as king of Israel. Saul is typical of all those who have not grace to wait upon the Lord. Many, through the ages, to their own shame, have tried to take things into their own hands, not waiting for things to be brought forth in proper order. When things are done that way, they are done in disorder. In every situation, the saints are commanded, by grace, to look unto the Lord, and to wait upon Him for direction and keeping.

We are also commanded by the Holy Spirit through the apostle, "**Let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath**". And we are instructed to wait upon the Lord. I am persuaded that this is the way the orderly brethren in the true Churches have been blessed to conduct themselves through the ages, by the grace of God. They have been given the desire for all things to be done in the light, in kindness, in the proper sequence, not respecting any man's person. They desire all things to be done honorably to the glory of God. The Holy Spirit said through the apostle Paul unto the faithful, "**And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not.**" The apostle Peter was also blessed to comfort us with these words. "**But the God of all grace, who hath called us**

unto his eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle *you*. To him *be* glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen.”

Written in love and in hope of eternal life, I trust.

J.B. Farmer
1-11-09

CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Brother Tony,

I see it is time to renew my subscription to the “Signs of the Times”. I do not want to miss a copy for I do enjoy reading it. So will you use the money for the renewal. I look forward to receiving it each month.

Best regards to all,
In love,
Edrie Clifton

5-9-11

Dear Brother Horton,

Enclosed is my check for \$15.00 renewal for the “Signs.”

It is with much sadness that I hear of the death of Elders Campbell and Key, but realize they are in a better place. I love getting the Signs each month. God bless all of you.

A sister in Hope,
Frances Brinkley

Dear Brother Tony,

I am sending a check for \$30.00, renew the “Signs” for 2 years, use the other as needed.

You all do such a good job on the “Signs. I enjoy reading the editorials and experiences of our faith. A few sweet crumbs from the “Masters” table is comforting!

In Love and hope,
Mary Janney

VOICES OF THE PAST

The Maine Old School Baptist Conference, in session with the North Berwick Old School Baptist Church, in North Berwick, York Co., Maine, Sept. 4th, 5th, and 6th, 1891, sends christian greeting to the associations and churches with whom we correspond.

Dear Brethren: - Another year with all its vicissitudes has passed away, and we again have the high privilege of sending you this our annual epistle of love and fellowship; and in addressing you at this time we have chosen for our subject Christ comforting the weary: **“Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest.”**

These words were spoken by the gracious Savior, on which the soul may confidently repose and be at peace forever. How good to have the shadow of this great Rock in a present weary land.

Before the throne there is not one rippling wave; but Jesus assures his weary ones that even on earth there is a haven for the tempest-tossed, saying, **“Come unto me, and I will give you rest.”** All other peace is shadowy, unreal. The eagle spurns the gilded cage as a poor equivalent for its free-born soarings; so the soul’s immortal aspirations can be satisfied with nothing short of the possession of God’s favor and love in Jesus. How unqualified, tender and loving is the command. If there had been one condition on entering this covenant, purchased with the dear Redeemer’s blood, we must have been through eternity at the mercy of the storm, but all his dear people are alike warranted and welcome, and none more warranted than welcome, For the weak, the weary, the sin-burdened and sorrowing there is an open door of grace. Return then unto thy rest, O my soul. May the sweet cadence of these words steal on us amid the disquietudes of earth. Sheltered in him we are safe for time and safe for eternity. There may be and will be, temporary tossings, fears and misgivings, manifestations of inward corruption; but these will only be like the surface heavings of the ocean, while underneath there is a deep-settled calm. **“Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee.”** In the world it is care on care, trouble on trouble, sin on sin; but every wave that breaks on the believer’s soul is calmed when the loving Jesus whispers, “I’ll give you rest.” All that befalls us, to the very numbering of our hairs, is known unto God. Nothing can happen by accident or chance.

Nothing can elude his inspection. The fluttering of the insect, the waving of the angel’s wing, the annihilation of a world, are all equally noted by him. Man speaks of great things and small things. God knows no distinction. How especially comforting to think of this tender solicitude with reference to his own covenant people, that he metes out their joys and their sorrows. Every sweet and every bitter is ordained by him. Even wearisome nights are appointed. Not a pain we feel nor a tear we shed but is known to him. What are called dark dealings are the ordinations of undeviating faithfulness. Man may err, his ways are often crooked; but as for God, his way is perfect. He puts our tears into his bottle. Every moment the everlasting arms are underneath and around us. He keeps us as the apple of his eye. He bears us as a man bears his own son. Do we look to the future? Is there much of uncertainty and mystery hanging over it? Trust him. All is marked out for us. Dangers will be averted, and bewildering mazes will show themselves to be interlaced and interwoven with mercy. He keepeth the feet of his saints; or, in other words, he equaleth them for every precipice, every ascent, every step, and every tangled thicket. He leads sometimes sorrowfully, and most frequently by cross and circuitous ways which we ourselves would not have chosen, but always wisely, always tenderly. With all its mazy windings and turnings, its roughness and ruggedness, the believer’s is not only a right way, but the right way, the best which covenant love and wisdom could select. Although our great Counselor puts clouds and

sunshine round about him, he also promises an eternal and uninterrupted sunshine on the other side. Well may we commit the keeping of our souls unto him in well-doing, as unto a faithful Creator. He gave himself for us. This transcendent pledge of love is the guarantee for the bestowment of every other needed blessing. O blessed thought! Our sorrows are numbered by the man of sorrows; our tears are counted by him who shed first his tears and then his blood for us. He will impose no needless burden, nor exact an unnecessary sacrifice. There was no redundant drop in the cup of his sufferings, neither will there be in the cup of his people. **“These things have I spoken unto you, that ye might have peace.”**

Dear brethren, if the foretaste of this rest and peace be so precious, what must be the glorious consummation! Awaking in the morning of immortality, with the unquiet dream of earth over, faith lost in sight, and hope in glad fruition, no more any bias to sin, no more latent principles of evil, nothing to disturb the spirit's deep, everlasting tranquility, the trembling magnet of the heart reposing where alone it can confidently rest in the enjoyment of the infinite God.

“All hail the power of Jesus' name,
Let angels prostrate fall;
Bring forth the royal diadem,
And crown him Lord of all.”

In conclusion we would say that our meeting has been very pleasant and interesting. Salvation by grace has been clearly set forth. The obligations of believers to walk as becometh saints have also been presented, and we believe

that we have been mutually profited. We have gladly received your correspondence, and desire to continue the same.

We have appointed our next meeting to begin on Friday before the first Sunday in September, 1892.

Wm. Quint, Moderator
Ivory Libbey, Clerk

THE CHURCH OF GOD.

New Vernon, N.Y., Nov. 23, 1832.

About eighteen hundred years ago, a Baptist Church was constituted at Jerusalem, under the immediate superintendence of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to an ancient prediction was born of a virgin, and came into the world to preside as Head over all things to the church, which is his body and the fullness of him who filleth all in all. Having manifested himself as the Only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth, and the only foundation upon which his church could rest securely, he claimed the exclusive privilege of building and of governing his church in his own way; his language is, **“Upon this Rock will I build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.”**

After the similitude “of a stone cut out of the mountain without hands,” the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed, nor left to other people; but bearing down all opposition, it shall stand forever. The eternal Father set his King upon his holy hill of Zion,

and to his Son he said, **"Thy throne, O God, is forever; a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom:"** and in an audible voice from the third heaven made proclamation, **"This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him."**

At an early period in the reign of the glorious Messiah, his authority was questioned by the high priests, scribes and pharisees: **"Tell us said they, by what authority doest thou these things, and who gave this authority?"**

The subjects of King Jesus were chosen in a furnace of affliction, and advised that in the world they should have tribulation, but in Christ they should have peace.

Tracing the history of the church from the morning of her visible existence, we find her constantly beset with enemies; presenting to our view the anti-type of the burning bush which Moses saw in the wilderness. She has been constantly enveloped with the flames of persecution; yet, to the astonishment of all her cruel foes, she is not consumed. We behold her King taken, and led like a lamb to the slaughter, after bearing the reproaches of ungodly men for about thirty years, during which time he was a man of sorrow and acquainted with grief. He was scourged and crowned with thorns, and to finish the horrid picture, was nailed to the fatal cross, and between two thieves, on Calvary, crucified and slain, — not by the open and avowed enemies of God and man, but by the most learned and popular denomination of professors of religion on the earth, —

not by an "inert or anti-effort class," but by those who had a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge; by men whose religion was a science, whose ministry was learned, and whose titles were honorary.

We cannot do justice to our subject and stop here. No, the cry of slaughtered thousands who were put to death for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held, ring in our ears, — who from under the altar cry with a loud voice, **"How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth."** These things have been done in the green tree, and they will be repeated in the dry. They have called the Master of the house Beelzebub, and they will much more call them so, who are of his household.

We know there are many in our day crying Peace! peace! and so there were in those times of bitter persecution above mentioned. The present is a time when men will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts they are heaping to themselves teachers having itching ears. Popular creeds are substituted in the place of the faith once delivered to the saints — the commandments of men instead of the gospel of Jesus Christ — human inventions take the place of divine ordinances — the work of the Holy Ghost, in gathering in and quickening the elect of God, is superseded by human contrivances. The holy scriptures are made an article of religious speculation; repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, are dispensed with, for a mere excite-

ment of the natural passions, and the peculiar virtues of an anxious seat. Four days, or protracted meetings, got up by men, are received as seasons of Pentecost, while the amount of money given in aid of the inventions of men, is made the standard of orthodoxy and the stepping stone to power. Instead of a strict adherence to the command of Zion's King, "**Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and unto God the things that are God's,**" a profession of religion is urged as an indispensable qualification for civil magistracy. In short, by a general amalgamation of the world and the church, by the onward march of priestcraft, the cloud of persecution is gathering fast, and the impending storm is almost ready to burst with dreadful fury upon this unhappy land, and to stain the American soil with the blood of all such as will not worship the beast or receive his mark. Candid reader, we appeal to you, are things so, or are we deluded? Would to God we were; but alas! awful realities stare us in the face. Ye can discern the face of the sky, and can ye not discern the signs of the times?

We do not flatter ourself that this little sheet will be able to shut the flood-gates of delusion; for the man of sin must and shall be revealed, whom the Lord will consume by the spirit of his mouth, and by the brightness of his coming. But we feel it to be our duty to "blow the trumpet in Zion," and to sound an alarm on God's holy mountain, and exhort our brethren, and so much the more as we see the day approaching.

In conducting this paper we expect

to call down upon ourselves the indignation and wrath of those whom we oppose. We shall be greatly disappointed if they do not load us with reproaches and hard names; but it will be to us a privilege rather than a trial to follow our beloved Lord through evil as well as through good report. Our prayer to God is, that we may be governed by the same spirit which beautified and adorned the life and conversation of our Lord Jesus Christ in the days of his flesh, that when we shall be reviled we may not revile again.

Elder Gilbert Beebe

(The above article is just as true and applicable today as it was when written in 1832.)

WHY DO CHILDREN OF GOD SUFFER? January, 1947

If we suffer, we shall also reign with him. — 2 Tim. 2:12

It is evident in all the experiences of the children of God as recorded in the Bible, that they all suffered in many ways. It is also evident in the experiences related by God's children in this age that suffering is yet common. They are all experimentally acquainted with grief, temptations, persecutions, tribulations and all manner of suffering. Job was afflicted in body and had all earthly possessions taken from him. All the Israelites suffered under Egyptian bondage. David was sorely oppressed and conscious of his great sins. Paul was beaten with many stripes and was made

to exclaim, **“O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?”** Yes, this suffering is necessary, but why?

We do not suffer in order to merit a home in heaven, because Jesus fulfilled the law to a jot and tittle for us. Therefore, it is solely upon His merits that we shall inhabit that place prepared for His saints in after life. He has merited our salvation in heaven by His obedience.

We do not suffer in order to merit blessings in time for these were included in the “all things that pertain unto life and godliness” that was given to us by the Father through the merits of Jesus. These blessings that we enjoy in time are not merited by us as Paul says, **“By grace are ye saved through faith; and [faith] not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works lest any man should boast.”**

We do not suffer to satisfy justice; nor to merit any blessing in time; nor to gain a home in heaven. We suffer because it was appointed unto us to suffer; God appointed to us this suffering just as He appointed Paul to suffer as an apostle, a preacher and teacher of the Gentiles (1 Tim. 1:11, 12). In 1st Thessalonians 3:3 we read, **That no man should be moved by these afflictions: for yourselves know that we are appointed thereunto.** So then, this suffering comes by the appointment of God. It was also appointed unto Jesus to suffer and as it was necessary for Him to have suffered so it is necessary that we suffer. Paul reasoned with them out of the Scriptures, opening and alleging that Christ must needs have suffered

(Acts 17:3). It was not only necessary that Jesus suffer because of our sins, but it was also necessary in order to learn obedience. Paul wrote to the Hebrews concerning Jesus, **Though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered.** (Heb. 5:8). So Jesus was taught obedience through suffering. We learn obedience by the things we suffer.

Paul told the Philippian brethren, **For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake** (Phil. 1:29). Even the suffering of God’s children is a gift. It is a valuable gift for it teaches obedience. We are made obedient through suffering. Paul did not preach the gospel for filthy lucre’s sake nor for any glory for He said, **For though I preach the gospel, I have nothing to glory of: for necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel!** (1 Cor. 9:16.) The sufferings that Paul experienced drove him to obedience. God is a perfect Teacher and will make His children obedient as it is said in Psalms 110:3, **“Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power.”**

How could we have believed that Jesus was the Christ had we never suffered? It took the suffering of trials, heartaches, disappointments, vexation of our natural spirits, and failures in all our undertakings to teach us that we were not capable of saving ourselves and to make us to cry to some power other than ourselves to save us. How could we believe in an all-wise sovereign God had we not suffered so many disappoint-

ments to teach us that we are at best but vanity and foolish, and to teach us that **“It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps?”** By these experiences God teaches us that there is a power that is sovereign and worketh all things after the counsel of His own will and no power is able to withstand Him.

It takes the sufferings that we experience to teach us daily that we are nothing — yea, less than nothing and vanity. This suffering is necessary to keep us humble and dependent upon the grace of God. This suffering makes us to be constant in prayer to the God of Israel for His mercies. We cry unto Him daily for His continued mercies, realizing that we do not merit anything but His hot wrath. If justice were meted out to us according to that we deserve, hell would be our doom.

Now we are comforted with this thought, **“If we suffer, we shall also reign with him.”** Oh, blessed thought! Paul reckoned in his letter to the Roman brethren, **For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us** (Rom. 8:18). Now we experience sufferings; then, we shall experience glory. Now we experience death; then, we shall experience life. Now we experience sin; then, we shall experience holiness. Now we experience foolishness; then, we shall experience wisdom. Now we experience hope; then, we shall experience reality.

No other people suffer as the children of God suffer. No other people has experienced that pure heart that

teaches that the best of man's righteousness is but filthy rags in God's sight. No other people are convinced that without Him we can do nothing. Other people conclude that they have some power vested in them upon the volition of their own will. They think that they can, at least, accept or reject. We would be of the same opinion were it not for the sufferings that we experience that teaches us otherwise. This lesson is learned through suffering. May God be praised for blessing us with suffering to keep us humble and submissive to His will and at each other's feet.

Elder E. J. Lambert

Zion shall be redeemed with Judgment, and her Converts with Righteousness Isaiah 1:27

Sometime ago, after using this scripture for a text, I was asked to write an article on it.

The Zion under consideration, must undoubtedly be the church of God, often referred to in the Word of God as such. **“Out of Zion the perfection of beauty, God has shined”.** **“The Lord loveth the gates of Zion.”**

“Look upon Zion, the city of our solemnities; thine eyes shall see Jerusalem a quiet habitation, a tabernacle that shall not be taken down; not one of the stakes thereof shall ever be removed, neither shall any of the cords thereof be broken.”

These and many other passages show that the church is often referred to as Zion. Though there is a hill near

Jerusalem named Mt. Zion, it is a type of the spiritual family of God.

It will be noticed that the promise of God, by the mouth of the prophet is very definite. **“Zion shall be redeemed with judgment.”** We are noted as a people as mentioning often the shalls of God, and such reminders is often a comfort to the ones who can rest in nothing less than the promises of an immutable God. One who is able, and will bring to pass every promise He has ever made. His word that has gone forth will not return to him void but will accomplish the things whereunto he has promised.

There can be no true comfort in the knowledge of this redemption until one has some understanding of what they are redeemed from, the kind of redemption they receive, and the one who perfects this redemption.

There can be no question as to who the redeemer is. He is spoken of as, **“The man Christ Jesus.”** He was the offering that God prepared to forever put away sin. The only one that could perfect forever them that are sanctified; the body spoken of in Hebrew where it is said, **“A body hast thou prepared me”**. The offering that only God himself could make.

Job saw him even before he was born of the Virgin Mary, and could say, **“For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth.**

And though after my skin worms destroy this body, Yet in my flesh shall I see God:

Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not an-

other;

Though my reins be consumed within me.”

There is a sense in which one might be redeemed from something, and be brought into bondage again and the debt have to be paid the second time; the price of their deliverance might only serve for a limited time, and they would find themselves again needing redemption. The first redemption would not secure the payment of all future debts.

Not so with the kind of redemption we here refer to. **But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building;**

Neither by the blood of goats and calves, BUT BY HIS OWN BLOOD HE ENTERED IN ONCE INTO THE HOLY PLACE, HAVING OBTAINED ETERNAL REDEMPTION FOR US, Heb. 9:11-12. **“In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sin.” “So Christ was once offered to bear the sins of many.” “For by one offering he hath perfected forever them that are sanctified.”** Hence we see that the kind of redemption perfected by our Lord Jesus Christ was eternal, and we can sing,

“Dear, dying lamb, thy precious blood

Shall never lose its power,

**Till all the ransomed church of God
Be saved, to sin no more.”**

The next question is, what are the people of God, the chosen in Christ

Jesus, redeemed from. According to the word of inspiration they are redeemed from everything that would ever condemn them. **“Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is everyone that hangeth on a tree.”** Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works; Titus, 2-14.- Peter describes this redemption from our vain conversation, hence the people of God are redeemed out of every nation, from the curse of the law, from sin, from iniquity and from their vain conversation.

“Zion shall be redeemed with judgment.” The prophet describes how this redemption shall be obtained. Christ was made sin for us, who knew no sin, that we may be made the righteousness of God in him. He died the just for the unjust that he might bring us to God. The righteous execution of God’s wrath because of sin fell on him as the sin bearer. God’s holy law must be honored, and the demands of justice satisfied. He looked and there was none to help, therefore his own arm brought salvation. Help was laid upon one that was able to save.

Pardon alone for a sinner would not do; reconciliation must be made, and the handwriting of ordinances that were against us must be blotted out. The sins of all the chosen of God were imputed (charged) to Jesus Christ, and as their sin-bearer, the judgment of God must fall on him. He is made a curse, that he might redeem from the curse. As the Ark rose above the waters when God’s

wrath was poured out upon the world because of sin, as we see him, who knew no sin, made sin for us, hanging upon a tree, and hear him cry **“My God, My God why hast thou forsaken me.”** The sun refuses to shine on this scene the earth quakes, and the Vail of the temple is rent. Here is the judgment of God that redeems Zion. One important question is in the minds of his dear people, Was I represented there? Was this great love for me? If one sin is left unatoned for, the one will forever banish us from him. Christ, Our blessed Saviour, suffered all the agonies of hell as he hung, as a curse. He trod the winepress alone. O, my soul, how great was his love, how tender was his pity, how enduring are his mercies.

The righteous indignation of God, and the execution of his wrath in his judgment was his way of salvation. It is called in his Word, The way of holiness. The Lion’s whelp, (king of beasts) the vultures eye has not seen it, but the redeemed of the Lord shall walk there. This execution of his righteous wrath on one who has a perfect offering, one who could die under the stroke, and rise again from the dead, was the justifying of all his people, and being justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.

This judgment has ransomed them from the power of the grave, and they wait for the adoption, to-wit the redemption of their bodies, which is just as sure as their redemption from sin.

The judgment of all the family of God is already past according to the Word, **Some men’s sins are open before-**

hand, going before to Judgment; and some men they follow after. 1 Tim. 5-24.

*"On him almighty vengeance fell,
That must have sunk a world to
hell:*

*He bore it for his chosen race,
And thus became their hiding
place."*

*A few more rolling suns at most,
Will land me on that heavenly
coast*

*Where I shall sing the song of
Grace, And see my glorious hiding-
place."*

"And her converts with righteousness." Through his perfect work of atoning for sin, putting it away, Jesus became The Lord our righteousness. And the power of this righteousness is what brings all of Zions converts into the heavenly way, for **"The ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads: they shall obtain joy and gladness and sorrow and sighing shall flee away."**

Elder David Spangler

ISAIAH 53:4-5.

**Surely he hath borne our griefs,
and carried our sorrows: yet we did
esteem him stricken, smitten of God,
and afflicted.**

**But he was wounded for our
transgressions, he was bruised for
our iniquities: the chastisement of
our peace was upon him; and with
his stripes we were healed.**

**"BUT HE THAT ENTERETH IN
BY THE DOOR IS THE SHEPHERD
OF THE SHEEP"**

**Verily, verily, I say unto you, He
that entereth not by the door into the
sheepfold, but climbeth up some
other way, the same is a thief and a
robber. - John 10:1.**

It is probable that ninety per cent of the population of the people of the world is trying to enter into the sheepfold or into Heaven some other way instead of by the door, which is Christ. I suppose the reason is that the door is closed to them, so they are trying to climb in some other way. The door was closed against the goats or reprobates when God made the choice in Christ before the world was. It has been closed ever since and will be forevermore to come, so in trying to climb in some other way other than the choice and grace of God, they are seeking to steal and rob God of the honor of saving His people according to His own will and pleasure.

Christ did not come to earth to turn goats into sheep, for there never has been a goat turned into a sheep and never will be; neither has there ever been a sheep turned into a goat. Goats were made goats in the creation, and sheep were made sheep also in the creation, as was everything else, for God decreed when He made the earth and all its inhabitants that everything shall bring forth seed after his own kind. He created His people or children in Christ as the seed of Christ. The children of the devil or Satan were created Satan's

seed, and cannot be turned into children of God, being regenerated and born again is not the thing which makes them the children of God, but they are regenerated and born again because they are the children of God. They were the children of God in the creation, and by transgression fell under condemnation to the law of sin and became alienated to God temporarily, so He, God, sent His only begotten Son into the world to redeem them and reconcile them to Himself. Redeem means to ransom from bondage, rescue, makes atonement for, perform, recover that which is rightfully yours but has been temporarily lost from you by some illegal act or some other procedure. Christ continues in this 10th chapter, **"But He that entereth in by the door is the Shepherd of the sheep, to Him the porter openeth; and the sheep hear His voice and He calleth His own by name and leadeth them out. And when He putteth forth His own sheep, He goeth before them and the sheep follow Him, for they know His voice."** When the Lord calls His people, they know His voice though they never heard it before.

Paul knew the voice of the Lord when He called to him, though he never knew the Lord before, but when the voice spoke to him, he said, **"Who art Thou Lord!"** So when the Lord calls to *His* sheep, they always hear, answer, and obey. Paul took all his orders from the Czar up until this time; he had never prayed to the Lord before. **"Then said Jesus unto them again, Verily, verily I say unto you, I am the door of the sheep. All that ever came before Me**

are thieves and robbers, but the sheep did not hear them. I am the door, by Me if any man enter in, he shall be saved, and shall go in and out and find pasture." Christ, our blessed Lord, is the only door whereby anyone can enter into the heavenly kingdom; none can enter in through this door except those whom He calls in and not one of them called by Him ever refuses to enter, for He never calls any except those who were chosen and created in Him before the world was.

I am the good Shepherd, the good Shepherd giveth His life for the sheep, 11th verse. **I am the good Shepherd and know My sheep and am known of mine. As the Father knoweth me, even so know I the Father; and I lay down My life for the sheep. And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold; them also I must bring,** (Notice how impressive He makes it. I must bring them) **and they shall hear My voice, and there shall be one fold, and one Shepherd.** 14-16 verses. He here was talking to the Jewish fold and the other sheep, as I think were the Gentile people. Notice He says them also I must bring and they shall hear My voice. The bringing comes first; one must be regenerated and born again before he can hear His voice. Life must precede action or knowledge or feeling.

There seemed to be a division of opinion among the Jews as to whom this man was. Many of them, those unbelieving Jews said, He hath a devil, others said these are not the words of him that hath a devil. Can a devil open the eyes

of the blind? "Then came the Jews round about Him, and said unto Him, How long dost Thou make us to doubt? If Thou be the Christ, tell us plainly. Jesus answered them, I told you and ye believed not: the works that I do in My Father's name, they bear witness of Me. But ye believe not, because ye are not of My sheep, as I said unto you. My sheep hear My voice, and I know them and they follow me: And I give unto them eternal life; and they 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." So when He had thus said that I and My Father are one, then the Jews took up stones again to stone Him. "Jesus answered them, Many good works have I shewed you from My Father, for which of those works do ye stone Me? The Jews answered Him saying, For a good work we stone thee not; but for blasphemy; and because that Thou, being a man, makest Thyself God." As Christ said, they had seen the many good works and miracles which He had done, such as raising the dead, giving sight to the blind, cleansing the leprosy and walking on the water and many other wonderful works, but all of this did not convince the carnal minds of man that He was the Christ, nor did it produce in them any spiritual effect. How could material evidence be any stronger to the carnal minds of men that He was the Christ? Does not this all prove what the apostle

said, "The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned?" Christ on another occasion said to the unbelieving Jews, "Why do ye not understand My speech? Even because ye cannot hear My word." This is the reason the ungodly world has never and will never believe the truth; they can not hear the words of truth, ears they have and hear not, eyes they have and see not, hearts told understood not, and so they can not receive the love of the truth because they can not understand it and do not want to understand, for they hate it. The apostle says, **And then shall that Wicked be revealed, whom the Lord shall consume with the Spirit of His mouth and shall destroy with the brightness of His coming: Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie; that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness, 2 Thess. 2:8-12.** We find again that Christ in speaking to these same people says, **If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed. I know that ye are Abraham's seed; but ye seek to kill Me, because My word hath no place in you. I speak that which I have seen with My**

Father: and ye do that which ye have seen with your father. They answered and said unto Him, Abraham is our father. Jesus saith unto them, If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham. But know ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth, which I have heard of God: this did not Abraham. Ye do the deeds of your father. Then said they to Him, We be not born of fornication, We have one Father *even* God. Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love Me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of Myself, but He sent Me. Why do ye not understand My speech? Even because ye cannot hear My word. Ye are of your father, the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there was no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it. And because I tell you the truth, ye believe Me not. Which of you convinceth Me of sin? And if I say the truth, why do ye not believe me? He that is of God heareth God's words; ye therefore hear *them* not, because ye are not of God. John 8:36-47. Who would have the courage to say that Christ came to earth to suffer and die the cruel death of the cross for these children of the devil, and if He did not, why say that He died for every man or to give every man a chance to be saved? The world tells us that the Old Baptists believe that some

are born for heaven and some born for hell, and if that be true, God would be an unjust God, but I go back further than that even to the creation. God made the devil and made him a seed to serve him and to be cast into the lake of fire with him. Nothing ever changes into something different from what it first was. The seed of the serpent has never changed into the seed of Christ and vice versa. God made the two seeds in the beginning, the seed of the serpent and the seed of the woman; the woman representing the Church, the seed of Christ; and decreed that the seed of the serpent shall bruise the heel of the seed of the woman and the seed of the woman shall bruise the head of the serpent and his seed; for He says, I will put enmity between the two seeds. Do we not see that enmity strongly manifested in our days?

We never knew a goat to turn into a sheep, neither a sheep turn into a goat, for God decreed that everything shall bring seed after its own kind, whose seed is itself, and it was so. It seems that the seed of the serpent is much greater in number than the seed of the woman, for the bond woman hath many more children than she that hath an husband.

Elder H. L. ROGERS

PSALM 18:30.

"As for God, his way is perfect: the word of the Lord is tried: he is a buckler to all those that trust him."

CASTLEWOOD, Virginia.

DEAR BRETHREN:-In a 1931 article of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES is an article from the pen of brother J. I. Foster, of Texas, at the close of which he says, "I hope some one with more extended views on the subject may write, if the Lord so directs." This is a kind and reasonable request and should have a brotherly reply. Not that I claim for myself a better gift than brother Foster, but I feel to be quite subordinate to him, and fear anything I may write upon the subject might cause it to be asked, Who is this that darkeneth counsel by words without knowledge? or whether the impression I have to write upon this subject is duly of the Lord. The brother has given us many good, sound and consoling things in his article, however I failed to fully catch the thought the writer of this article meant to convey in regard to the sycamore tree Zaccheus climbed. It could be my weakness might have prevented me from so doing. I will say here, without keeping the reader in suspense as to what I see in this matter. This tree doubtless represents the law. I hope anything I am blessed to say may be in line with the thought the brother had in mind to convey. Zaccheus was not only chief among the publicans, but he was rich. A publican is an inn-keeper and a collector of tolls, yet he was a son of Abraham. Zaccheus has the experience of all God's children, they all climb Zaccheus' tree (the law). The very first thought and first step Zaccheus made to climb the tree to see the Savior manifested the work of salvation by grace in

the heart of Zaccheus, because the Lord saw him before he saw the Lord, and by this awakening the sinner flies to the law of works for justification, but it thunders its sentence, the soul that sinneth, it shall die. No reprieve or mercy there. Paul said, "**Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believeth.**" "**Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.**" How is that? Only by the purpose and predestination of God in the salvation of his people by grace, to the end that the sinner should scale the law to his very utmost for justification, and thereby wean himself and see he was a poor, condemned sinner and his only hope for salvation was at the feet of Jesus, and seek his all in him. Then Paul again said, "**But after that faith is come we are no longer under a schoolmaster,**" My experience and the Scriptures do not teach me that we ever saw Jesus by our own efforts, or deeds of the law, neither does Zaccheus tell us that he ever saw Jesus in a manifested sense before he made haste and came down, then he saw Jesus, because he had the witness in his soul that Jesus was richly abiding at his house and received him, joyfully. Therefore, Jesus says, I in you and you in me. Paul once climbed Zaccheus' tree. He said he was taught according to the perfect manner of the law of the fathers, but when from heaven a great light shown round about him and he fell unto the ground, as did Zaccheus, then Paul laid down his Pharisee religion and never took it up again, but confessed, and said, It is not of him

that willeth, nor of him that runneth, but of God that sheweth mercy. Paul says, But even unto this day when Moses (by whom the law came) is read the veil is upon their hearts, nevertheless when it shall turn to the Lord the veil shall be taken away. When Rebekah lifted up her eyes, and when she saw Isaac she lighted off the camel (the law). Here was the figure of Jesus, the dear immaculate Lamb of God, and his bride. As Rebekah lighted off the camel or law, even So did Zaccheus, and Paul, and all the children of this eternal Bridegroom and bride. Paul said, Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin. Here the sinner is slain by the law. He had worked himself out of timber and material, all his unrighteousness by the deeds of the law had failed him, his stronghold, as he thought, now gave way and he saw himself a poor, vile, wretched sinner in the sight of the just and holy Jesus. He is as the old poet: said, "When to the law I trembling fled, it poured its curses on my head." Here the sinner finds the doors of justice by the law bolted against him, no way to escape divine justice. He sees nothing but mercy can reach his doleful case, and cries, Lord, have mercy on me, a poor sinner condemned to die. Here the Lord reveals himself, and says, **"Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest."** Then he makes haste and comes down, **"for today I must abide at thy house."** The poet says, "On the wings of his love I was carried above." To a feast of fat things well refined, where all

is love. It is a memorable day of lifting up and refreshing with those who are blessed of the Lord to fully realize these things. The dear child of God thus led is no more a conditionalist, he no more cries do, but it is already done and completed in Jesus, and all his works shall praise him, and he has no confidence in the flesh. The prophet says, We are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousness is as filthy rags. I often think of what I heard of a poor Indian who wanted to tell his experience to the church but could not speak English very plainly, and to make the church know his feelings the Indian used a metaphor. He got a worm and made a ring of fire all around it. The worm crawled to all parts of the ring for a way of escape, but there was none, so it crawled to the middle of the ring and curled up to die, when the Indian reached over, picked up the worm and set it free. Here was a bright figure of the law and salvation by grace plainly manifested in that poor Indian. The law is holy and the commandment holy but cannot give eternal life or show mercy to its violators, only metes out the just sentence of death upon its violators. No one is able to keep the whole law. It is much like the slick sycamore tree. If he offend in one point he is guilty of all. This tree represents the law, and is a holy tree, and no one has been able, as I have said, to keep the law but Jesus. He kept it in all things and fulfilled it perfectly in the redemption and salvation of his people. **"Out of Zion shall go forth the law, and the word of the Lord from Jerusalem."** **"By him, all that believe are justified from all things,**

from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses." Paul said, Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ. The matter of Zaccheus makes a bright, picture in the experience of all God's people who have thus been brought up in grace's school, as was Zaccheus. They all flee to Zaccheus' tree, to get up where they can see Jesus. As I see it, this running to the law, or Zaccheus' tree, is as much a link in God's purpose and predestination in the salvation of his people as the Lord had in Jonah's going to Ninevah, and trying to go to Tarshish. When Jonah went down to the bottom of the sea he could cry, Salvation is of the Lord. Even so with the children of God, if they had not tried to climb Zaccheus' tree and had not done their very utmost to be justified by the deeds of the law they might have boasted, and said their own arm had brought salvation down to them. Paul said, What then, shall we sin because we are not under the law, but under grace? God forbid. It is not while on elevation by deeds of the law that Christ manifests his love in the pardon of the sinner, but it is down, down all the time in the valley of humility, where the Lord found Jacob in a desert land, and in a waste howling wilderness; he led him about and instructed him; he kept him as the apple of his eye. Mary, the mother of the Savior, said, "**He hath put down the mighty from their seats and exalted them of low degree.**" All know these things when they have experienced them, and to experience them is to love and embrace them, and we

should give all praise to God in time and eternity for his great unspeakable love and mercy to poor worms of the dust.

Your little brother, if one at all, in gospel bonds,

W. L. EDWARDS

That I may see the good of thy chosen. — Psalm cvi. 5.

Did you ever see any good in God's chosen? Oh! "**how goodly are thy tents, O Jacob, and thy tabernacles, O Israel!**" Did you ever see what good God has blessed his people with, and how good it is to be one of them? All God's people see that there is a "good" in God's chosen family, peculiar to them, and that they sigh and long for. But some will say, Had David never seen it when he penned this psalm? Aye, surely; he had seen it. But did he not want to see it again? Yes; he had lost the sight of it, the sweet vision of it had retired, the old veil had come back, his eyes were dim, he wanted fresh "eye-salve." So with us; we have seen, we trust at times "the good of God's chosen," have felt our affections drawn towards them, and drawn up towards God, and have said, "**Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside thee.**" That was to enjoy the sweet foretastes of heaven. But all these sweet foretastes became clouded; fogs and mists rested upon them, and hid them from our eye. Fresh sin brought fresh guilt, and darkness and

deadness and doubts and temptations and fears and besetments came on of various kinds; and all these beclouded our sight. But we cannot forget the past; we cannot forget the solemn moments when we walked with God and talked with God, nor the sweet feelings that his presence enkindled. However dark, however dead, however disconsolate, however tried, harassed, and tempted, we cannot forget that. And having "seen the good of God's chosen," we want to see again the good sight, to taste again that heavenly banquet. "That I may see the good of thy chosen."

Elder J.C. Philpot

PSALM 128.

Blessed is every one that feareth the Lord; that walketh in his ways.

For thou shalt eat the labour of thine hands: happy shalt thou be, and it shall be well with thee.

They wife shall be as a fruitful vine of the sides of thine house: thy children like olive plants round about thy table.

Behold, that thus shall the man be blessed that feareth the Lord.

The Lord shall bless thee out of Zion: and thou shalt see the good of Jerusalem all the days thy life.

Yea, thou shalt see thy children's children, and peace upon Israel.

MEETINGS

Annual Meeting First Primitive Baptist Church Memphis

Plans are to hold the annual meeting of the Memphis Church, as usual, on the 2nd Sunday in August and the Saturday before — August 13th and 14th. The meeting house is at 7247 Andrews Rd. in Bartlett 38134, just off Hwy. 70. (In greater north east Memphis). Come and worship with us. Please call a few days ahead so we can arrange your accomodations — (901) 398-0741.

Wayman Chapell, Moderator
Elaine Jones, Clerk

2011 One Hundred Eighty-Six Annual Session of the Pigg River Association to be held on Chestnut Church Ground.

Commencing on Friday before the first Sunday in August, 2011. Starting time on Friday 10:30 Singing and 11:00 Preaching Starting time on Saturday 9:30 Singing and 10:00 Preaching.

Starting time on Sunday 9:30 Singing and 10:00 Preaching.

We invite all Elders & Brethren of our faith and order, and all Churches that we are associated with, to come and be with us.

Direction:

Going North on Route 220, about 13 miles past Bassett, Va. turn right on to Route 724. (Goose Dam Road) about 2 1/2 miles to church.

Going South on Route 220, past Rocky Mount, Va. turn left at first stop light on Route 619, go 3.7 miles, turn right on 724 (Goose Dam Road) 1 mile to church.

**Skewarkey Union
(Eastern Kehukee Association)**

Skewarkey Primitive Baptist Church will host the next Skewarkey Union, the fifth Sunday in July 31, 2011. The church is located just off of Exit 514 from US 64 East. Preaching services begin at 10:30 am.

We extend a welcome to all lovers of the truth and especially all ministers of our faith and order.

Naomi Coker, Clerk
252-823-0786

ST. JOHN 1:4.

In him was life; and the life was the light of men.

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR MAY 2011

Edna Graves, AL	5.00
Ada Beeghly, VA	5.00
Pam Screen, TN.....	5.00
Elder W. L. Gardner, GA	25.00
Mary Janney, VA.....	5.00
Ted McDaniel, VA	100.00
Dan Delp, VA	5.00

OBITUARIES

SISTER NOVALINE STEWART

Durham Primitive Baptist Church has asked me to write the obituary for Sister Novaline Sanderson Stewart. Unworthy though I be, I will do my best to follow the church's wishes.

Novaline died July 18, 2010 at the Britthaven Nursing Center in Nags Head, North Carolina. Novaline was born in Durham, North Carolina to the late Cassie (Wilson) and Clarence Sanderson on March 28, 1922.

She is survived by her daughter, Joann Stewart Rhew of Bahama, North Carolina; son, Charles Ronnie Stewart, Jr., wife Alice of Manteo, North Carolina. There were 8 grandchildren, 21 great-

grandchildren and 9 great-great grandchildren. She is predeceased by her husband, Charles Franklin Stewart, Sr.

Novaline was a devoted member of Durham Primitive Baptist Church. As long as her health permitted, she did all that she could to take care of the church's needs. She generously gave to provide for the sanctuary. One could say that she often did more than would have been her share for the church's upkeep. I am reminded of one scripture: II Corinthians, 9:7 — **"Every man according as he purposeth in his heart, so let him give; not grudgingly, or of necessity: for God loved a cheerful giver."**

Other scriptures come to mind in thinking about Novaline. I read in Proverbs, chapter 31:30. **Favour is deceitful, and beauty is vain; but a woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised.**

II Timothy, 2:19 reads: **Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his.....**

The first epistle of Peter, 1:3 reads: **Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to His abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.**

My thoughts about Novaline are that she was strong in the faith and enjoyed her time at church to the fullest. Endless scriptures would be examples of Novaline's hope in Christ. Her belief was strong and this was seen in her countenance.

My personal account of Novaline was her being Durham's song leader. I had the privilege of sitting behind Novaline. Her strong voice carried well. She was sorely missed when she was not able to attend.

Sometimes after services, I would hear her relate to our pastor regarding the sermon. She was blest to understand. She loved the church.

As I think about her, I recall the bounty of food that she brought to church for our lunches. She enjoyed providing for our church family.

Both Novaline and Charles were members of Durham Primitive Baptist Church. Novaline joined on June 20, 1976 and Charles on November 17, 1985. The absence of this precious couple has left a void.

It is a comfort to know that Novaline's faith carried her to the end. In Paul's writing in II Timothy, 4:7, **"I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith."**

Farewell, dear one.
Written by Betty McPherson

PSALM 134

Behold, bless ye the Lord, all ye servants of the Lord, which by night stand in the house of the Lord.

Lift up your hands in the sanctuary, and bless the Lord.

The Lord that made heaven and earth bless thee out of Zion.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

“The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon”

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

1429 Howlett Street

Hillsville, Va. 24343

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.

Twas grace that taught my heart to fear,
And grace my fears relieved:
How precious did that grace appear,
The hour I first believed.

Through many dangers, toils, and snares,
I have already come;
Tis grace has brought me safe thus far,
And grace will lead me home.

The Lord has promised good to me,
His word my hope secures;
He will my shield and portion be
As long as life endures.

Yes, when this flesh and heart shall fail,
And mortal life shall cease,
I shall possess, within the vale,
A life of joy and peace.

The earth shall soon dissolve like snow,
The sun forebear to shine;
But God, who called me here below,
Will be forever mine.

Newton

CONTENTS

EDITORIAL 170
 Elder Cleo D. Robertson

CORRESPONDENCE 173

ARTICLES 174
 Elder Wayman Chapell
 Elder Haywood Wray
 Ila Leary

CHURCH OF OUR FAITH 185

VOICES OF THE PAST 187
 Elder J. C. Philpot

MEETINGS 188

OBITUARIES 189
 Herman Shelton Guthrie
 Arthur Lenwood Gearheart
 Elder Kenneth R. Key
 Rebecca Jean Blackwell Moran
 Julian Hall Rutrough

EDITORIAL

Lucifer



Elder Cleo D. Robertson

Isaiah 14:12-15,
 “How art thou
 fallen from heaven,
 O Lucifer, son of the
 morning! *How* art
 thou cut down to the
 ground, which didst
 weaken the nations!

For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the

clouds; I will be like the most high. Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit.”

The most common use of the name, Lucifer, is in reference to Satan. The most prevalent belief is that this is an angel who turned evil and fell from the eternal heaven and became the devil. O dear people, if this were true, what hope would we have that the Lord could keep us! But, bless your heart, I want to emphatically say that God has never nor will He ever lose one of His chosen, man nor angel. **St. John 6:37-39, “All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father’s will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day.”** I believe that God created Satan as He did everything else. He created him as an adversary and tempter of His people. **1 Peter 5:8, “Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour.”** **Matthew 4: 1-3. “Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward an hungered. And when the tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread. But He answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by**

every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.” Hebrews 2: 18, “For in that he himself hath suffered being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted.” Hebrews 4:15, “For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as *we are, yet without sin.*” In John 8:44, Jesus said that the devil was a murderer and a liar from the beginning. There is no truth in him and there never was.

I do not believe Isaiah used the name, Lucifer, to refer to Satan. I believe Isaiah is referring to the king of Babylon as evidenced by **Isaiah 14:4**, “**That thou shalt take up this proverb against the king of Babylon, and say, How hath the oppressor ceased! The golden city ceased!**” Though he does not mention the king by name, I believe he is referring to Nebuchadnezzar. In the fourth chapter of Daniel, Nebuchadnezzar relates his experience. He dreamed of seeing a tree in the midst of the earth and its height was great. The tree grew and was strong and the height of it reached unto heaven and the sight of it to the end of all the earth. The leaves were fair (beautiful) and there was much fruit. There was meat in it for all. The beasts of the field had shadow under it and the fowls of the heaven dwelt in the boughs, and all flesh was fed of it. In his dream, Nebuchadnezzar saw a holy one come down from heaven and command to “**hew down the tree, cut off his branches, shake off his leaves, and scatter his fruit. Let the beasts get away from under**

it, and the fowls from his branches. **But, leave the stump of his roots in the earth.**” Daniel interpreted the dream for the king and told him things he would have to experience to be taught that the most High rules in the kingdom of men and gives it to whomsoever He will.

Nebuchadnezzar conquered many nations including Judah when he invaded Jerusalem. He destroyed the temple taking items in it back to Babylon. He also took many of the inhabitants to Babylon as slaves. Daniel was one. Other nations and people were subject to his rule and were dependent upon him for their protection and livelihood. Thus, fulfilling his dream that “**the beasts of the field had shadow under it (tree) and the fowls of the heaven dwelt in the boughs, and all flesh was fed of it.**” During his reign, Babylon was considered to be one of the most magnificent cities of the world and his palace one of the most beautiful. This fulfilled the description of him as the great tree in his dream. He was puffed up with vanity, pride, self-importance, and filled with the belief that he had all power, majesty and honor. He exalted himself like unto God as Isaiah prophesied, “**For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north: I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High.**”

The Apostle Paul, before he was converted, also persecuted the saints of

God. He, too, was puffed up with vanity, pride, self-importance and thought he was doing God's service. Lucifer means "brightness" or "light." Nebuchadnezzar thought of himself as the brightness equal with God. He saw himself as the light of the world. Isaiah refers to him as Lucifer, not in a favorable way, but because Nebuchadnezzar thought of himself that way.

Now after twelve months (twelve sets forth completeness), the king walked in his palace in Babylon saying that by his mighty power and for his own honor, he had built such a great kingdom. In that moment, a voice spoke and declared, "**the kingdom is departed from thee.**" The king was taken out of his palace and into the field to dwell with the beasts. Daniel 4:33, "**The same hour was the thing fulfilled upon Nebuchadnezzar: and he was driven from men, and did eat grass as oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven, till his hairs were grown like eagles' feathers, and his nails like birds' claws.**" The tree was cut down, but the stump of his roots was left. He was not destroyed, but he was stripped of all self-works and self-righteousness and shown that he had no power of himself. He could witness with Isaiah 64:6, "**But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags,**" and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away." As Isaiah had prophesied, the King of Babylon was brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit. Surely, Isaiah 14:16-17 describes the condition of Nebuchad-

nezzar, "**They that see thee shall narrowly look upon thee, and consider thee, saying, Is this the man that made the earth to tremble, that did shake kingdoms; that made the world as a wilderness, and destroyed the cities thereof; that opened not the house of his prisoners?**" He could cry with the Apostle Paul, "**O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death!**"

Nebuchadnezzar was in that condition until the fulfillment of God's appointed time ("*till seven times passed over him*") and then, he was given to look up. My dear people, have you not experienced being brought so low and in such a horrible state that it was hell to you. There, you had your self-works and self-righteousness stripped from you and you were completely helpless and lost and felt surely hell was your home and justly so. Who drove Nebuchadnezzar from men where he could not look to the arm of flesh for support? This is the place where each of you is taken. A place in your experience where no fleshly man could reach your case. The scripture says, "**They shall drive thee from men.**" It was not the army of Babylon nor of any other nation, but I believe the "*They*" was God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. God worked in Nebuchadnezzar the "to do" of His good pleasure. God brought Nebuchadnezzar down from his heaven to the depth of hell in his experience, a place of great tribulation, a place where no flesh could help him. Nebuchadnezzar was taught that "**tribulation worketh patience; and**

patience, experience; and experience, hope; and hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.”

You, too, were given to look up and cry for mercy. You had been given to see yourself as a sinner in all its blackness. What a horrible sight. But, then Christ appears in love and mercy and gives unto you hope and peace that surpasses all understanding. The gift of faith is given so that you believe in one that you can't see nor touch.

Nebuchadnezzar says his understanding was returned unto him and he praised and honored Him that liveth forever. He came forth confessing that God's dominion is an everlasting dominion, and His kingdom is from generation to generation; that all the inhabitants of the earth are reputed as nothing; that God doeth according to His will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; and that none can stay His hand, or say unto Him, what doest thou.

Daniel 4:37 reads: “Now I Nebuchadnezzar praise and extol and honour the King of heaven, all whose works are truth, and His ways judgment; and those that walk in pride He is able to abase.”

I believe that each child of grace can in some measure witness with the experience of this king of Babylon.

In hope,
Cleo D. Robertson

CORRESPONDENCE

June 19, 2011

Dear Brother Horton:

Please find enclosed a check for two years subscription for the “Signs of the Times”, plus extra to help pay for the time my subscription has lapsed. When I received the June issue I realized I was behind on my payment. Thank you for continuing to send it to me. I enjoy reading each issue as it arrives.

I also am going to endeavor to write a little of my experience to be printed in the “Signs of the Times” as Elder Joe Sawyer has requested in the past, if you think it worthy.

Sincerely,
Ila Leary

1 JOHN 4: 13-16.

Hereby know we that we dwell in him, and he in us, because he hath given us of his Spirit.

And we have seen and do testify that the Father sent the Son to be the Saviour of the world.

Whosoever shall confess that Jesus is the Son of God, God dwelleth in him, and he in God.

And we have known and believed the love that God hath to us. God is love; and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God, and God in him.

ARTICLES

Better is the end of a thing than the beginning thereof: and the patient in spirit is better than the proud in spirit. Ecclesiastes 7:8.

Such promises in the scriptures are a great comfort and encouragement when a child of God finds himself swamped in trials and tribulations; A comfort because of the greatness of the source of the promise, and an encouragement to forbear and press on because of the new brightness which lies ahead, though the road may be rough and poorly marked. And the strength is in the source. The strength of the promise is not in the words of the scripture themselves, but in the light and hope brought forth from them by the Spirit, which is the true source.

There are other scriptures in Ecclesiastes which frame a little wider picture and with just as great promises. Consider chapter three and verse one. **“To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven.”** Not only a Godly purpose in every thing, (If not God’s purpose then whose?) but a time for everything that is so perfect and timely that it is called “a season” (an appointed time). This scripture is followed shortly in verse 11, by a scripture that would seem to encompass the whole doctrine of salvation by grace, if seen in it’s fullness. **“He hath made everything beautiful in his time:”**

But alas, such scriptural words and

phrases appear to be as idle tales when the soul is left in darkness. Even feeble attempts at prayer seem to fade away like the mist. When the natural mind can see no just reason for the troubles that flood in, then the question becomes, “why?.”

And, like with Jobs’ miserable comforters, there is no apparent answer at hand, and the question remains. Yet there is hope and a desire for meaning. **“For there is hope of a tree, if it be cut down, that it will sprout again, and that the tender branch thereof will not cease. Though the root thereof wax old in the earth, and the stock thereof die in the ground; Yet through the scent of water it will bud, and bring forth boughs like a plant.” Job 14:7-9.** In the 42nd chapter, verse 12, it is recorded that the Lord blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning. Though Job apparently did not see “the beginning” as a blessing, yet it is evident that **“Blessed is the man whom thou chastenest, O Lord, and teachest him out of thy law;” Psalms 94:12.**

When troubles abound, a particular sought after answer may not be forthcoming; but a much better one may be provided, even in the midst of trouble. But even so, God is not required to answer. By the mouth of Elihu, God corrected Job: **“Why dost thou strive against him? for he giveth not account of any of his matters.” Job. 33:13.** Yet help is given. A still small voice within, a scripture understood anew, or the consoling words of a brother, can be the work of the Spirit to

enlighten and instruct the inward man. And the soul will confess that it is all of him when he gives a glimpse of his beauty and majesty. When granted such grace then the specific reason "why" of the troubles that persist, can be set aside with the understanding that the end of a thing is better than the beginning. **"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.

"Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord come, who both will bring to light the hidden things of darkness, and will make manifest the counsels of the hearts: and then shall every man have praise of God." 1 Cor.4:5.

Many other examples are found in the scriptures, both temporal and spiritual, that express to the child of God the trials and tribulations that precede the victorious end of a matter. Consider the severe trials of Joseph that were to be endured in delivering his father's house from famine. Or, the troubled path of Moses in leading the children of Israel through the wilderness to the promised land, and the stoning of Steven before he saw the heavens open and the Son of man standing on the right hand of God. The Apostle Paul expresses it thus, in Acts 14:22,... **"that we must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God."** And again in Romans 8:18, **"For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us."** The

climax of the matter would seem to be expressed in the book of Habakkuk when his questions were answered in prayer, as recorded in chapter three. After beholding the mighty works of God, both in the lives of men and upon the physical world, he indicates that the power of God was not slack in bringing forth the victory. In the terms of a mighty warrior in the thick of battle he states, **"Thy bow was made quite naked, according to the oaths of the tribes, even thy word. Selah."** Then the purpose, expressed in verse 13, and an answer to "why?" is this, **"Thou wentest forth for the salvation of thy people, even for salvation with thine anointed;..."**

After receiving this answer Habakkuk was greatly astonished. **"...rotteness entered into my bones, and I trembled in myself, that I might rest in the day of trouble:..."** Yes! Rest in the day of trouble and rejoice in Him, and understand how the writer could express the following:

"Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls: Yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation. The Lord God is my strength, and he will make my feet like hinds' feet, and he will make me to walk upon mine high places," Habakkuk 3:17-19.

Thus with the second part of the above heading in mind, "the patient in

spirit” and the better promises for the end, the words in Hebrews 12:1-2 ring out clearly. **“...let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us, Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith;...”**

Elder Wayman Chapell

**9/2/2007 Sermon by
Elder Haywood Wray**

“And he shall judge among the nations, and shall rebuke many people: and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, and their spears into pruninghooks: nation shall not lift up sword against nation, neither shall they learn war any more.” (Isaiah 2:4)

Those words came to me a few nights ago as we sat there in our room. I don't know when I had ever thought of these words, but it seems like they came and they left something in my heart. If we should take these words literally, we would come to the conclusion that the Bible is all wrong because it says that they should not learn war anymore and they shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruninghooks. In our carnality, it really doesn't make much sense, but our carnality doesn't have anything to do with understanding what the word says. Because the Bible tells us that the Scriptures are not given for any carnal

interpretation....meaning that in our carnality, naturally speaking, we cannot enter into the understanding of the word of God.

To me, these words express our experience in the Lord and the ways of the Lord's people. Let me read it. **“And He shall judge among the nations and shall rebuke many people.”** Now, those people, that He rebukes, are His people, because you'll never read in this Bible where God ever chastises or rebukes any other people except His own people. When you read what God does to the rest of the people in the world, you'll read of His wrath that He pours out among them, but God rebukes His people. You'll read in the New Testament that those that He loves, He chastises, that they may bring forth more fruit, and that's the difference, my friend. God rebukes His people, and He has from the beginning of time. Like He did Peter, **“Peter, Satan desires thee to sift you as wheat.”**

All through our life, chaff somehow builds up in our carnality trying to have some part in this realm of salvation that we're talking about, but, it can't do it. That's the way it is with us. We often get rebuke and chastisement from the Lord, and the Bible tells us that those, that He chastises not, are bastards and not sons. That's the Word. That's why I bring out the fact that those people that He is talking about, many people are going to be rebuked. They are His people because He cares about them. We correct and chastise our children not because we hate them, but because we love them and find that our love teaches them

something. The chastisement of the Lord is a wonderful blessing to God's people, because it keeps them in the way. That's why He uses the word rebuke. He didn't use the word wrath...that I will pour out my wrath upon many people. He didn't say that, because they are His people. **"And I will rebuke many people and they shall beat their swords into plowshares."**

When we think about plowing, we think about how on the farm we used to take the plow and turn the land bottom upwards so we could plant something on it. **"And they shall beat their swords into plowshares."** What is the sword? It is the nature of the realms in human beings. Think about it, it's like a sword they have. It is against God. We're talking about something that is plotting against Him and they're continually warring with their swords. I'm telling you about my own experience also in this. When the Lord began dealing with me, there was nothing I wanted any less to do with than the place I'm in now. And I would come up with all kinds of weapons and excuses, and I would put them before Him and He would rebuke me. He labored and He labored and He labored with me. And I used my sword, my way. Our way is a sword against our Lord and Saviour...in the Bible one fights against the other. And we use that sword like Jonah. When the Lord told Jonah to go down into Ninevah and to preach to that city..... **"I am going to overthrow it"**, Jonah was detennined that he wasn't going to have any part in that ministry. He was going to find a place where God didn't dwell. When he started on his jour-

ney, he was on his way down there all the time, and he didn't know it. That's the way God works. And Jonah used his sword, and when he comes to the end, he fulfills the scripture, **"They shall beat their swords into plowshares."** What does "the plowshares" mean? To me, it means God gives His people a spirit to dig and to search into the depths of the riches of God's grace and His words that He's left on record. He gives us a spirit, the Bible tells us in the New Testament, to search out the depths of the scriptures..... the deep things, and He brings them out.

Also, you'll read in the Bible in the New Testament, where Paul speaks of the three heavens, and he says the first heaven is passed away. What is the first heaven? The first heaven is when that life, naturally, is turned bottom upwards, when He has brought you to the end of your strength and made you to understand that you cannot trust your carnality in things pertaining to the salvation of God and the great wonders of God. Then the first heaven is gone. Here in this life, my friends, the life, that we live until the Lord quickens us and makes us alive in Him, is a heaven to us....to the carnality....to the human nature. It's a heaven to us. When He comes along and the warfare begins, that plowshare will just turn anything bottom upwards and that heaven is gone and behold the second is established. And what is that? It's the kingdom Jesus made when He came down. Behold the kingdom of God is within you. Oh, my friends, that's where you cannot take your sword with you in nature and hold to that which also

holds to the Word of God. You cannot hold to the worldly things and hold to Him too. It's impossible to do this. Oh, my friends, and they shall beat their swords into plowshares, meaning that after the Lord has destroyed their first heaven, He brings them into a banqueting house where His banner over them is love. Then there is love and mercy and grace, and for the first time in our lives we can sing.

I remember when the Lord convicted me, I went out and He made me to know what a great sinner I was by nature. Oh, I can tell you all the things I didn't do when I was growing up. That doesn't matter. When the Lord convicts one, they know they're a sinner in nature, my friend, just a sinner! I went out into a little garage, that I had built and where I would sit, and with tears rolling down, I knelt down and I began to pray to God to forgive me for all of my sins. I was made to know that he'd forgiven me though I didn't see how He could....a just God had forgiven me for all my sins and trespasses even as I had used the sword to have my own way against Him. and yet still be a just God. When I got through, I stood up. My friend, something happened, something had taken place that showed me the first heaven had been taken away. And, behold I saw something that I had never seen before. The first thing I saw was my Lord hanging on the cross and I felt like all my sins were on there. crucified. I've felt that way all my life and I felt so at peace. I slept so calmly. There was just something that came over me. My friends, I believe the Lord hears His people. Beat my shaft

and my spirit and my sword into plowshares. Then He put something in my heart, and I wanted to understand more and more of the goodness and the mercies of God. Oh my friends, this is where we always have this feeling. If the Lord has begun a good work in you, He will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. That, my friend, is a wonderful thing to think about.

Then he goes on down and says, **“And they shall beat their spears into pruninghooks.”** What does that mean? To you? I'm not only trying to explain what these words mean to me, but I hope they mean something to you, too, in your own experience in life. “And they shall beat their spears into pruninghooks....that spirit that God puts in His people. The Bible tells us that His Word is sharper than any two-edged sword. The Bible is filled with so many ways to teach His people to know Him. That's for sure. The spears shall be turned into pruninghooks. The spirit of God, my friends, will guide you and these are the pruning hooks that He gives you by His grace. You cannot do it by yourself. There's no way under the sun that we can prune ourselves from anything that we know in nature. It takes the spirit and the power of God to do this work. That's why He says, “those, I love, I chasten, that they may bring forth more fruit-He prunes them. He prunes His people the same as if you have an apple tree or a fruit tree or whatever, if you don't prune it, it'll go wild and grow nothing. If you prune it and care for it, it will continue to bring forth fruit and more fruit. That's the way it is with God's people - He knows how

to prune and He knows how to keep them in the ways of righteousness. By the grace and mercy of God, He will continue to prune them from time to time. That's what it means when Jesus told Peter, "**Satan desires you to sift you as wheat.**" He has to prune him a little bit. The Lord used the devil to do it. Think about it. ..had to prune him. Oh my friends, I've thought so many times in my life if I had just enough understanding to know what was best, I could have avoided a lot of these prunings. But the Lord was giving me over to these. It was that way with Peter too. But, my friends, those He loves, He chastises, that they may be brought into more beauty and to more of this knowledge of the goodness and mercies of God.

I remember years ago when the Lord began to deal with me concerning the ministry, I continuously told Him that I could not do this thing. I had never even thought of it. I couldn't even speak a sentence and make sense out of it. I was so stammering in my thoughts and my tongue. Then He brought me to the point that I had nothing else that I could use against Him, and I had no strength to fight against Him. Then I learned that preaching the gospel was the easiest thing that a man had ever done, but "trying" (as I told a minister a long time ago) —"trying to preach" will kill you! That's how it is my friend. "I will give you a mouth," He says. Oh my friends, if He doesn't give His people a mouth and a tongue to speak of His greatness and His mercy that He has bestowed upon us all the days of our life, we will never sound one note of the gospel or one note

of joy that the Lord has provided for us here in this world. But, let me tell you, those that He has rebuked for their sins and has forgiven them, my friend, they have a door opened before them and that door is Christ Jesus, our Lord. "**I have set an open door before you to understand and to see. I have opened your eyes to see and understand.**"

We were just as blind to these things as these two men were when they heard that Jesus was passing by. They began to cry, "Thou Son of David have mercy on us." And the people said, "be quiet, Jesus is coming this way," and they cried the louder. They couldn't hold their peace. That's the way it is sometimes with us when we cry and our soul is in need of something. We cry unto Him louder and louder like the woman, that followed him, and cried "Thou Son of David, have mercy on me..... my daughter is grievously sick and nigh unto death..... just speak the word." But, Jesus went on His way like He never heard her. My friend, many times in my life I have begged for His mercy and grace, and it seemed like His ear was deaf to me, but yet I couldn't stop.

There was something within me that couldn't stop. It had to continue to cry unto Him; because there was something that made me to know that He was the only source that could reach my case. I believe that's the case with you. I believe that's the same thing that this writer, Isaiah, was speaking of here. "**They shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning-hooks: Nation shall not lift up sword**

against nation, neither shall they learn war anymore.” Literally, we would say well that’s wrong. Look at the wars all over the world. Let me tell you, we read in the Bible, **“my people shall be a willing people in the day of my power.”** There’s no more war, no more spears that we’re going to take, no more swords that we’re going to take, the Spirit of God will guide them. And, when we make a wrong step, the Lord will be there with His Spirit to do some pruning and He’ll bring us back into the fold. Oh my friend, how great is His compassion and His love towards us. How can we measure the sufferings that He has shown us and how He has labored so with us all through our life? I feel like this is my experience. That He labored with me in such compassion and love that a normal person, he would have cast me overboard a long time ago. That’s the difference, my friend. They shall bring forth fruit. **“My people shall be a willing people in the day of my power.”** The Lord reconciles His people to the fact that His word is true, that His word is going to come to pass, whatever He has promised, it shall be done, whatever He says is going to be, it is going to be, my friend, and there are not powers enough in the world to keep it from coming to pass. This is what He has done inside His people to see and to understand that the road that they have to go through...the Lord has purposed every step!

In the New Testament, you find Paul saying, “The law is the school master bringing us unto Him.” This is what this sets forth. There is a school master, the

law, the school master that brings His people unto Him. Let me tell you something. None of us will ever graduate from this school. We’ll always be in that school of grace, learning. Years ago when the Lord began to deal with me, and He had reconciled me to walk humbly before Him, I didn’t have any more strength. I was just a little fellow in my feelings. One night, One appeared unto me and said “Do you want more knowledge and understanding?” I said, “Yes!” He said, “You know, it means more sufferings.” I said, “yes, that’s all right.” And the next morning, I woke up and thought why did I say that. I can hardly make it now, because I had physical problems and had to make a way to support my family. I continued in that state for a while desiring to understand more and more of His goodness and mercy. I wanted to see more of the great wonders that He had performed from the beginning of time until to the end of time. I wanted to understand and believe His blessed Word and His mercy and forgiveness. He made me to know that too. So, I tell you, trouble after trouble after trouble, but all of them opened my understanding and it does yours. Your tribulations and your trials will open your understanding into the deeper things of the greatness of God’s mercy and grace. **“I will not leave you. I will not forsake you. I’ll go with you all the way even unto the end.”** Oh my.

David was going to build a house unto the Lord, but God wouldn’t allow it, because he was a bloody man, a man of war. He helped to prepare the timbers, but Solomon was the one who built

it. Any time that the enemy of the Israelites would show evil towards the children of Israel, David would realize that it seemed like war was ahead of him. There is a lot of difference between how it was then and how it is now. David would go to the Lord and say, "Lord, shall I go up against this nation?" and the Lord would answer him every time. When circumstances and problems arise in our church today, we seek the same God with the same spirit to guide us in the right way (His way). Think about it, my friend. He quietly and peaceably counseled David. He's the One that never makes a mistake and never will. That's why He leads you, and I hope me, here in this life. Oh, my friend, let me tell you, in these things we can see the greatness of the wonders of God, and how He leads us on and rebukes His people, many people He shall judge. The time comes with us, when speaking of this, the enemy of the Israelites looked for a war to destroy them, but you know what? Let me give you a little bit of information. In the New Testament you will find where Jesus said, when you sow wheat the good man sows the seed and the wicked one sowed the tares, and they came back and said. the disciples said to Jesus, "the tares. somebody came along and sowed tares in the wheat. They said to the Good Master, do you want us to get the tares out of the wheat?" "No, He said, leave them alone let them grow together." That's the way it is in this world today. God's people are mingled with the tares of the world. They're like the Pharisees and the Sadducees (all unbelievers). He's talk-

ing about the ones that are not His people and never will be. And He said, let them grow together until the harvest and then when the harvest comes, there will be a separation. When the end of time comes, my friend, there will be a separation between the wheat and all the tares. He'll do the separation not man. Let them grow together. My friend, He knows what's best. He knows how to work all things for the good of His people. There is a warfare that will last us a lifetime. We read in the Bible, where the writer said, the weapons of our warfare are not carnal but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds. And yet, what are these weapons that God has given you to use in your daily life, grace and mercy and love and compassion from Him, who has watched over us all the days of our life. These are the weapons that God has provided for His people. That warfare is peace in our heart believing that in all of our sufferings in this world, He will bring us through more than conquerors through Him that loved us and laid His life down for us. The love of God is precious. Oh, my friend, every time I think of that lovely old hymn, "Amazing Grace how sweet the sound that saved a wretch like me I once was lost but now I'm found Was blind but now I see" No one will ever be able to measure the grace of God, because the more you meditate upon it, the greater it gets. Then we can sing the verse that we all can sing, "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". There is no end. God's people

are going to a place that is an eternal place, no end to it, no sorrow, no sighing. All the chaff, that represents all the people that will be cast down and there is no end to that place either, because it will be forever and forever. My dear hearers, if God did not chastise us from time to time, we would wonder if we are His or not. That's how it goes with all the elect of God. He saw the whole thing and nothing can go contrary to the will and purpose of God. nothing. He has a purpose for everything, everything. are we going to experience any of that? When He speaks the word, everything is "right and good" whether we understand the whole thing or not. That's why by the grace of God and by the mercy of God, you and I are blessed to see this day, that the world knows nothing of, for His people to congregate together and worship Him in spirit and in truth because of His goodness and His mercy and His grace that He has bestowed upon us all the days of our life. This takes me back again to the words my wife spoke, some-time ago, as I told you, and I never heard that expression before, "I am thankful to be thankful." Oh, my friends, much of the time she couldn't remember who I was, but she loved to talk about the Lord and I'd read some of the Bible to her and we would talk about the goodness and mercy of the Lord and it's the same way with us today. Someday, my friend, the time will come, at the appointed time of God, He will come again and gather all of His precious ones together to be carried home to Heaven. Oh, my friend, may God, in His mercy, be with you all, and I am confident that all of God's

people have been blessed to beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruninghooks. These things will lead us and guide us. So many times in life we say things and do things that are not becoming and must beg "oh, Lord, please forgive us." May God's grace and mercy be with us all and keep us humble in the Way that leads unto life eternal. We find that we need Him to be with us in all our sorrows and our tribulations in this life. May God's mercy keep us, and again "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."

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ROMANS 8:27-28.

And he that searcheth the hearts knoweth what *is* the mind of the Spirit, because he maketh intercession for the saints according to *the will of God.*

And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to *his purpose.*

For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate *to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.*

Many times I have felt an impression to tell, or write of my experience of the Lord's goodness and mercy to me. As a child, I grew up around many people of the Primitive Baptist faith. My maternal grandfather was Elder James G. Gaskill and my mother and daddy, along with several other relatives attended services (sometimes traveling great distances).

My parents never forced my brother, sisters, or me to go with them to church, and as a young child I attended the local Methodist church with my childhood friends. I remember once as a young child of about 12 years old, feeling a sense of doom and my sinful ways. I felt Hell was my due and fell on my knees begging that the Lord would take away my sinful acts and help me walk a better way. I got up from that prayer feeling no better than before. I knew my prayer had gone no further than my mouth. As the years went by, I would listen to all my relatives and preachers who visited our family. My dear mother cooked many meals for the visiting preachers. After the meals, they would speak about the scriptures and what they meant to them. Of course, as a child it all went over my head, but I still felt that they were wise in the interpretation of the scriptures.

Even as a teenager, I couldn't accept the notion that one must accept Christ and join some church or else all was lost. I always felt strongly that unless the Lord dealt with me in a personal and touching way, I couldn't do it of myself; and thus, while others of my girlhood friends joined the local churches I did not.

In 1965, I was married and we were blessed with two children, a son and then a daughter. I often took my two children to the local Sunday School in our community; but always felt out of place there. Later, I began going with my mother to the Goose Creek Island Primitive Baptist Church in Lowland, NC, and felt more comfortable with the preaching I heard there.

After his high school graduation, our son left home and went into the Air Force. This would have been around June of 1985. On August 31, 1985, if not deceived, I had a dream like no other I had ever experienced.

I dreamed I was in the Goose Creek Island Primitive Baptist Church waiting for the preaching to start. Though I was supposed to be at work, I desired to be there more than anywhere else. In the beginning, I saw my cousin who was sitting a distance away from me and who was in deep distress, I went to him and offered to get him a tissue from the front of the church. As I went to get the tissues for him, the front of the church turned into the front of the local Methodist Church I had frequented many times through the years. I went up to the front altar to get the tissues but when I took them to him they turned into a box of trash bags instead. Thinking about it afterwards, I believe this was showing me that the doctrine preached there was not the true doctrine. Then in the dream, my cousin disappeared and I remember sitting in the pew waiting for the preaching to start. I was in great distress and unable to be consoled by those around me. Seeing my distress, a man (who was a

stranger to me) tried to help me. He took me from my seat in the church and took me to a room much like the Sunday School classrooms of my youth. He spoke to me but nothing he said helped my distraught feelings. The next thing I knew I was back in my seat in the church listening to the preacher. I couldn't see the preacher in the pulpit but his words were filling up my thirsty soul to the point that I couldn't hold back the tears. I looked around me on the seat and my tears were running down my body onto the seat and onto the floor. My tears reminded me of a thick grease-like substance. The tears were flowing out of my eyes like a waterfall and I couldn't stop them. Suddenly a voice spoke to me. The voice said, "Those are not your tears, that's Christ blood he shed for you." That's when I awoke, but how I felt when I awoke is hard to say. I was crying when I woke up, just as I was in the dream and couldn't stop crying. My husband lay sleeping along side me with no idea what was happening to me. I got up and walked into the next room - still crying. He joined me then and was alarmed, thinking that I had heard bad news from our son in the service. After a while I was able to tell him what had happened.

Needless to say, I felt a great change in my feelings and felt my total unworthiness. I felt that I, of all people, didn't deserve such a blessing as I felt I had received. It was a Sunday morning, and I looked out our window and saw my mother leaving to attend services somewhere; and oh, how I wanted to tell her what had happened. Later that day, af-

ter she returned I did tell her and she said, "You'll have to join the church." But, though I went with her to the church, I still couldn't bring myself to join until much later.

In April, 1988 I finally asked for a home at the Goose Creek Island Primitive Baptist Church and was received and baptized.

I will never forget that days, weeks, and months later after this experience I felt such bliss and an inner peace within in my everyday existence. My thoughts would wander back to it and I would re-live it over and over again. These thoughts also brought with them my thoughts of such utter unworthiness as I could see what, and who I was and felt to be such a sinner and so undeserving.

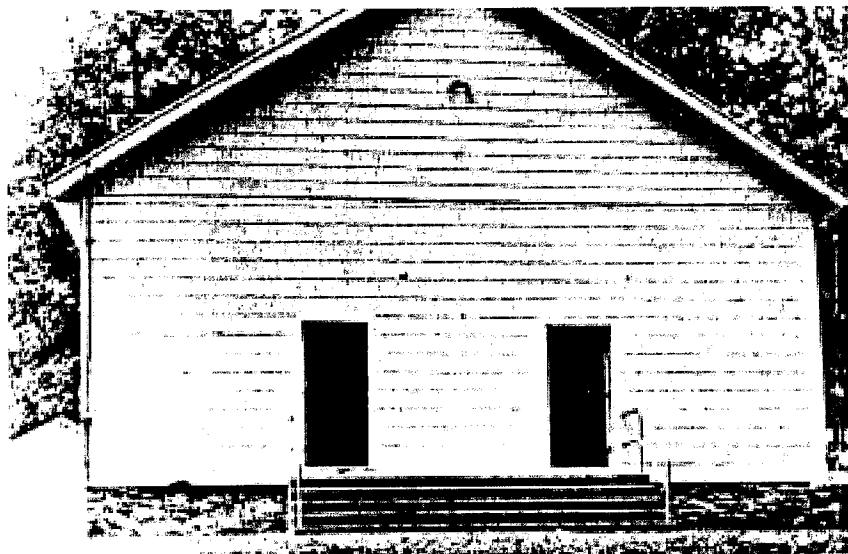
More often than not I can relate closely with the sweet hymn, "Sweet was the time when first I felt the Savior's pardoning love". Soon after this dream, "His praises tuned my tongue", and "His love was all my song". But to me now, these many years later I feel that I'm more often in darkness than light. I continually beg for mercy, for I believe I know above all others what my fate would be if I receive justice and feel to be in the valley more often than not.

I now attend the Eastern Kehukee churches in the area. I appreciate being able to attend these churches and these dear people allowing me to be among them.

Respectfully submitted,

Ila Leary

CHURCH OF OUR FAITH



Salem Church

From The Floyd Press
August 16, 1979

According to Elder Roy Agee, pastor of the Salem Church, also called the "Head of the River Church," former president Abraham Lincoln visited the county church once every year.

"I heard that he tried to come the second Sunday in August. Following the Blue Ridge, he rode on his horse from Gettysburg and stopped at the church. His ancestors were Old Baptists, and he was very much a defender of salvation by grace—but as far as I know, he never united with the church," pastor Agee explained. Established in 1784, the Salem Church, a Primitive Baptist church, has also become known as the "Head of the River Church," its location being near the heading of the Little River around the Copper Hill area.

Pastor Agee said some of the early history of the church was unknown since the old records to the church had been destroyed by fire. He does know that the old building, a log construction, stood back of the present building and housed a balcony where Negro members of the church sat. The white frame building which stands now was constructed in 1900.

An unusual tradition of the church, that was passed on to Pastor Agee and that can be traced back seventy-five to a hundred years, involves dual pastors.

Pastor Agee reported that John C. Hall and Elder Roberson served as pastors at the same time until Roberson passed away. Then Elder Cole and Hall served together. After Hall's death, Cole and Elder S. L. Moran served, followed, after Cole's death, by Moran and Elder

B. O. Thompson.

After Moran died, Pastor Agee and Elder Thompson served together until Thompson's death in 1975, the year Agee began serving as the church's sole pastor.

The history of the Primitive Baptist denomination, Pastor Agee said, goes back to 1832.

"At that time, we were called Baptists. Then there was a division in 1928 until 1932. This is where missionaries got their start and called themselves the New School. We (Primitive Baptists) were called the Old School, "Hardshells," predestinarian — a name we liked. Now we're called the Old School Primitive Baptists," Agee commented.

He added, "The New School wanted to send their men to seminaries and to have a Sunday School. Our forefathers didn't want that. We believe if the Lord has called one, He is able to qualify him to preach."

The Salem Church, which meets the second weekend in each month, observes their communion outside the church building (when it is not raining) in a formation of a round ring. Preaching services are also held outside in good weather.

Pastor Agee cited the church's beliefs taken from the Articles of Faith:

1--We believe there is but one, true and living God and that in the Godhead there are three persons, the Father, the Word, or Son. and Holy Ghost, and these are One in essence, power and glory.

2--That the Scripture of the Old and

New Testament are the written word of God, and the only complete and unerring rule of faith and practice.

3-- That God has always pursued His infinitely wise plans in all His works and ways, and that He will continue to do so; hence all things brought to pass by Him are but the result of His holy, wise and determinate counsel from eternity.

4--That Adam. was created upright, but he transgressed and became a fallen and totally depraved creature and all mankind with him,

5--The regeneration, sanctification, justification and salvation are by virtue of the birth, life, death, resurrection and mediation of Jesus Christ, and in no other way; and that all these graces of the Spirit are referrable to the Church of God. which He purchased with His own blood.

6--That all the saints were predestinated unto the adoption of children: elected to eternal salvation according to the foreknowledge of God, and they will be called with an holy calling and the righteousness of Christ imputed to them by the effectual working of the Holy Spirit, and that none of the heirs of promise will be finally lost.

7-- That all of the elect of God were chosen in Jesus Christ before the foundation of the world, and that they should be holy and without blame before Him in love.

8--That baptism by immersion upon profession of faith in the name of the Sacred Trinity, and that by one duly authorized by the Church to administer ordinances. is gospel baptism, and that only; and all persons who shall continue

to walk circumspectly have a right to the Lord's Supper.

9--That the Church of Christ is a body corporate, possessed of full power to govern herself, her only rule. being the written word of God, She is. therefore, independent.

10--That it is the office of the Holy Spirit to apply Christ's righteousness to the souls of the children of men, and that the Scriptures alone are not sufficient to accomplish this.

11-- That there will be a resurrection. both of the just and the unjust. and that the happiness of the righteous and the punishment of the wicked will both be eternal.

12--That it is the duty of each member of the church to be jointly and severally engaged in every good work for the glory of God and the honor of the Christian Religion.

(A new building was built in 1984 and the first service was the funeral of the pastor, Elder Roy Agee. The current pastor is Elder Carl Terry.)

1 John 5:1-3.

Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him.

By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments.

For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous.

VOICES OF THE PAST

“That as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord.” - Romans 5:21.

This is the mercy for mourning saints who are sighing and groaning under a body of sin and death, that God has decreed that grace not only may reign, but that it must reign. Were it left to us, we could not more rescue ourselves from the dominion of sin than the children of Israel could deliver themselves from the house of Egyptian bondage. But they sighed and groaned by reason of the bondage, and their cry came up unto God. He had respect unto his covenant, and looked upon them and delivered them (Exodus ii. 23-25). So God has determined on behalf of his people that sin shall not be their eternal ruin; that it shall not plunge them into crime after crime, until it casts them at last into the gulf of endless woe, but that grace “shall reign through righteousness unto eternal life.” But it must reign here as well as hereafter, for by its reign here its eternal triumph is secured. It must then subdue our proud hearts, and never cease to sway its peaceful sceptre over them until it has secured in them absolute and unconditional victory. Now this is what every sincere child of God most earnestly longs to feel and realise. He

longs to embrace Jesus and be embraced by him in the arms of love and affection. As the hymn says,

“But now subdued by sovereign grace,

My spirit longs for thy embrace.”

He hates sin, though it daily, hourly, momentarily works in him, and in him, and is ever seeking to regain its former mastery; he abhors that cruel tyrant who set him to do his vilest drudgery, deceived and deluded him by a thousand lying promises, dragged him again and again into captivity, and but for sovereign grace would have sealed his eternal destruction. Subdued by the sceptre of mercy, he longs for the dominion of grace over every faculty of his soul and every member of his body. “O,” he says, “let grace reign and rule in my breast; let it not suffer any sin to have dominion over me; let it tame every unruly desire, and bring into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ!” Thus, he who truly fears God looks to grace, and to grace only, not merely to save, but to sanctify; not only to pardon sin, but to subdue it; not only to secure him an inheritance among the saints in light, but to make him meet for it.

Elder J.C. Philpot

PSALM 23:1.

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.

MEETINGS

LITTLE VINE OLDE ASSOCIATION

The Lord willing, the thirty-fourth session of Little Vine Olde Predestinarian Primitive Baptist Association will be held at the Newfound Primitive Baptist Church meeting house located on Brier Creek Road in Wyoming county about 12 miles southwest of Pineville, West Virginia on the fourth Sunday in August and the Saturday before. The dates are August 27 and 28, 2011. Singing is scheduled to begin at 10:30 am and preaching at 11:00 am each day. It is our hope and trust that the Lord will gather together faithful ministers, brethren and friends to worship Him in Spirit and truth, and to show forth His praise. If anyone needs more particular directions or information about lodging, please call me at 606-474-4327.

J.B. Farmer

SMITH RIVER ASSOCIATION

The one hundred fifty-fifth annual session of the Smith River Association will convene, the Lord willing, with Union Church located in Patrick County, Va. on September 2, 3, 4 2011.

The church is located on Route 623. Traveling Rt. 57 in Patrick County, turn on Rt. 346 (Entrance to Fairy Stone Park). Go about a half mile and take a

left on Rt. 623 (Union Bridge Road). Go about 3.5 miles and the church is on the right at the intersection with Rt. 624 (Union Church Road).

We invite the ministers of our faith and order, our brethren and friends to be with us.

Tony R. Horton
Association Clerk

GALATIANS 3:18-24.

For if the inheritance *be* of the law, *it is* no more of promise: but God gave *it* to Abraham by promise.

Wherefore then *serveth* the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; and *it was* ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator.

Now a mediator is not *a mediator* of one, but God is one.

***Is* the law then against the promises of God? God forbid; for if there had been a law given which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law.**

But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe.

But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed.

Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster *to bring us* unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.

OBITUARIES

HERMAN SHELTON GUTHRIE

Salem Primitive Baptist Church is saddened again at the loss of another dear brother, Herman Shelton Guthrie, who passed away on Wednesday, May 25, 2011. He is survived by his cherished wife of 65 years, Ora Agee Guthrie; son, Herman Shelton Guthrie, Jr.; daughter, Judy Perdue; grandson, Doug Perdue; and a granddaughter, Anne McCroskey and husband, Eric.

Brother Herman was born September 7, 1915 in Floyd County, Virginia.

He loved to grow vegetables and fruits and gave his loved ones and friends the best of his crops.

Brother Guthrie's funeral was held at John M. Okey & Son Chapel of Salem, Virginia with interment at Sherwood Memorial Park in Salem. Mr. Don Edwards officiated. We believe that our loss is his eternal gain. May God reconcile us to his will.

Written in memory of Brother Herman.

Mary Poff, Clerk
Elder Carl Terry, Moderator

ARTHUR LENWOOD GEARHEART

It is with much sadness that I attempt to write an obituary for our friend and dear brother in Christ of the Salem Primitive Baptist Church. Brother Lenwood was called from this earthly home on March 18, 2011 He was born

July 16, 1921 and was preceded in death by his parents, Curt and Pearl Gearheart; sister, Ethelene Vest; and brother, Floyd Lewis Gearheart. Brother Lenwood was a lifelong resident of Floyd County, Virginia, a veteran of World War II and a member of the Salem Primitive Baptist Church.

Brother Lenwood is survived by his loving wife of 65 years, Grace D Gearheart; two daughters, Judy Britt and Kathy Boyd Blackwell, all of Floyd, Virginia; Three grandsons, Darin Britt, Tracy Britt and Logan Boyd; one granddaughter, Lori Schantz; two step-grandsons, six great-grandchildren and five step-great-grandchildren; one brother, Willie Wayne Gearheart of Pilot; one sister, Oweeda Conner of Pulaski; one brother-in-law, James Sweeney and several nieces and nephews.

Brother Lenwood always had a smile for you and a sense of humor always followed. The arrangements were handled by Gardner Funeral Home. Elder Larry Hollandsworth and Elder Allen Terry officiated with the funeral held at Gardner Funeral Home and interment in the Jacksonville Cemetery. Graveside rites by Floyd VFW Post #7854 and American Legion # 127.

Brother Lenwood is and will be greatly missed by all who knew him. May God reconcile us to His will in that our loss is Brother Lenwood's gain.

Written for Salem Church
Mary Poff, Clerk
Elder Carl Terry, Moderator

A TRIBUTE TO ELDER KENNETH R. KEY

Since 1985, until his death, April 3, 2011, Elder Kenneth R. Key was our pastor at Dan River Primitive Baptist Church, Highway 700, Ruffin, NC. During this same period, he also served Moon's Creek Church, Big Meadows Church, and Greensboro Church.

Through the years we at Dan River Church felt really blessed to have Elder Kenneth and Sister Nellie in the Church. Both were very personable and had very firm and strong convictions regarding salvation by grace. Their faith and trust in our Lord and savior was unmistakable.

Elder Key was a kind person and a real gentleman. He is greatly missed and his influence will be felt for years. I am just pleased I had the opportunity to know and worship with him through the years. What a wonderful experience!

Even though there is a big void without him at Dan River Church at the present time, I'm confident we will move on in the future the Lord willing.

We will always cherish the memories we have of Elder and Sister Key. They were faithful and trustworthy in their endeavors. This humble man will always be remembered for what he really was: God Fearing; honest; a loving and caring person.

God saw fit to use him as an instrument to further His Kingdom. Thanks be unto God he touched our lives in so many ways.

John Collie, Deacon
Dan River Church

**REBECCA JEAN
BLACKWELL MORAN**

On April 13, 2010 our precious Sister Jean was called from our midst. She was preceded in death by her parents, Brother John Raymond Blackwell, Sr. and Sister Lelia Dix Blackwell. She is survived by her husband, Garnett "Morris" Moran; her brother, John Raymond Blackwell, Jr., who has since also been called home; her sisters, Dorothy Blackwell Callahan, and Barbara Blackwell Schaeffer. Her funeral was conducted by Elder Kenneth Key, Elder Haywood Wray, and Elder Thomas Solomon at Dan River Primitive Baptist Church on April 15, 2010 after which, her body was laid to rest in the Church cemetery to await the second coming of her Lord.

Sister Jean was born April 25, 1937 and was such a good child that her parents feared she would be taken from them at a young age. On November 27, 1969 she asked for a home at Dan River Primitive Baptist Church and was baptized by her former pastor, Elder David Spangler. Having put her hand to the plough, she was so wonderfully blessed to never look back. As was stated at her funeral, when one looks at the life the Lord blessed her to lead, what can be said other than Amen. For many years she suffered from Parkinson's disease, but the Lord blessed her to overcome great obstacles and to lovingly and earnestly fill her seat at church. As was also stated at her funeral, the power of the love of God strengthened her and en-

abled her to face each day with a smile and an humble thankfulness for the grace and mercy of her Lord. When asked do you ever say "Why me?", she replied, "I'm not worthy to ask that." The below verses of one of her favorite hymns sums up her God given faith in the finished work of her Saviour:

"If to Jesus for relief, My soul has fled by prayer,

Why should I give way to grief, Or heart consuming care?

Are not all things in his hands? Has he not his promise passed?

Will he then regardless stand, And let me sink at last?

While I know his providence Disposes each event,

Shall I judge by feeble sense And yield to discontent ?

If he worms and sparrows feed, Clothes the grass in rich array,

Can he see a child in need, And turn his eye away?

The Church at Dan River is especially grateful to the Lord for blessing Sister Dot to bring Sister Jean to church. Many are the times that we've seen the tears flow down her cheeks as she rejoiced at the sound of the gospel. One of the last times was at Pleasantville Church when Brother Wray preached on the Good Shepherd. As we broke up that day, the tears were streaming down her face, and I said to her, "We're looking for a better place" and she nodded yes as she embraced me. For thirty eight

years, I've been blessed with the love and fellowship of this beloved Sister and have witnessed the love of God and the fruit of the Spirit shining from within her. Unworthy though I am, I am so very grateful to my God for the wonderful blessing she was in my life.

May the Lord bless and comfort Morris, Dot, Barbara, all of her family with the precious memories of her life and the comfort that only He can give. For those of us in her church family, may He bless us to realize that our loss is her eternal gain, and may He bless us all to "lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us. ..and run with patience the race that is set before us, Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith. .." as our beloved Sister Jean was so wonderfully blessed to do in her sojourn on this earth. In all things may the Lord be praised.

Submitted by one who loved her deeply,

Mary Hawkins

REVELATION 21:3-4.

And I heard a great voice out of heaven saying, Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and he will dwell with them, and they shall be his people, and God himself shall be with them and be their God.

And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.

JULIAN HALL RUTROUGH

May we at Salem Primitive Baptist Church bow in humble submission to our lord in the passing of our dear brother in Christ, Julian Rutrough.

Brother Julian passed from this life March 19, 2011, at the age of 90 years. He is survived by his wife of 63 years, Eveleen Rutrough. His son, Eddie Rutrough, and two grandchildren Brian Cox and Kaitlyn Rutrough and many friends. His funeral was held on March 21, 2011 at Salem (Head of the River) Church, by his Pastor Elder Carl Terry and Elder Larry Hollandsworth. He was laid to rest in Restvale Cemetary, Copper Hill, VA.

Brother Julian asked for a home with the church in August 1991, was received and baptized September 8, 1991. He was ordained as a deacon June 12, 1993. Brother Julian stood firmly for what he believed, Salvation by Grace. He was faithful to attend his church and others of like faith as long as he lived. His absence will be felt by all who knew and loved him.

May the lord comfort his family and all of us at Salem Church. We will miss him as a brother in Christ, deacon and friend.

By: Mary Janney, Assistant Clerk
Moderator: Elder Carl Terry

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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I searched my soul and found me clothed
with ten thousand filthy rags
And all my shame and bitterness rolled
With tares that made the snags.

I searched the pot away down deep
It was hard for me to believe.
How all the dirt I'd done had heaped
I've never known a wretch like me.

Twas then I cried out for my Lord
Twas all that I could do
For fear and terror took my heart
And cold and hunger too.

But God came down to visit me
He lifted away my heavy load
He picked me up from the mercy seat
And beautiful things he told.

Affliction is so hard to bear
But, we'll be glad in time
When love has covered up the scars
And bitterness left behind.

Katherine Mathews

CONTENTS

EDITORIAL	194
Elder Jerry B. Farmer	
CORRESPONDENCE	198
VOICES OF THE PAST	199
Elder H. M. Curry	
Elder Gilbert Beebe	
Elder Frederick W. Keene	
Elder E. J. Lambert	
J. C. Philpot	
MEETINGS	214
CONTRIBUTIONS	215
OBITUARIES	216
Sister Lessie Louise Lancaster	

EDITORIAL

“And when the servant of the man of God was risen early, and gone forth, behold, an host compassed the city both with horses and chariots. And his servants said unto him, Alas, my master! How shall we do? And he answered, Fear not: for they that *be* with us *are* more than they that *be* with them. And Elisha prayed, and said, Lord, I pray thee, open his eyes, that he may see. And the Lord opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw: and, behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha.” II Kings 6:15-17.



Elder J. B. Farmer

Did you ever wonder about the angels of God, especially those angels who protect and preserve the elect children of God? We see pictures of what some think angels must look like. And we read of and hear of angels described as some kind of human-like beings with large white wings. Many times they are depicted in the female form. But do those images really describe the angels of God, or are those kinds of thoughts purely fanciful? We desire that God should be merciful and show us the truth of the matter, that we should not be led about with every wind of doctrine and that we should be kept from error. May the Lord help us to see and to understand the truth to the praise of God’s mercy and grace, and for our comfort and strength.

Elisha and his servant dwelt in a city, which was compassed about by the Syrian army -- a host of seemingly invincible military men with horses and chariots. They had come to conquer and to destroy that city. The servant of Elisha, upon seeing the host, greatly feared for his life and looked to Elisha for comfort and instruction about what they should do. When we are overwhelmed, our nature tells us to do something, and do it quick. We are told by the carnal mind either to stand and fight, or to flee for our lives. But the Spirit, in that small, still voice tells us, **“Fear ye not, stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord.”** The Spirit calms us down and gives us a vision that we could not see on our

own. He comforts us by again and again teaching us that our God rules and reigns in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. He shows us by God given faith, which is the substance of things hoped for and the evidence of things not seen, that our God is greater than all. He made the world and all that is in it, and He controls it and will surely bring glory and honor to Himself by keeping His children. When the servant's eyes were opened, he was blessed to see the mountain full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha. There were more with them than there were with the enemy. He was in a safe place, because God had not forgotten him, and had made provision to keep him and to deliver him, even before the servant had any knowledge of God's powerful purpose to save. **"Greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world."** **"The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them."**

Jacob, when fleeing from his angry brother Esau at the command of his mother and father, lighted on a certain place and tarried there all night, because the sun was set. Here is another child of God, afraid for his life, but still desiring to please his mother and father. He was out in the wilderness, seemingly alone, with darkness coming on and not knowing how things would come forth. It seems that he had nothing of this world to comfort him, because we are told that he took of the stones of that place, and put them for his pillows, and lay down in that place to sleep. But Jacob was not

alone. He was like David who said, **"Whither shall I go from thy spirit? Or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there, If I make my bed in hell, behold thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; Even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me."** God was with Jacob. Jacob dreamed, and behold, a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it. Here is manifested the provision for one of God's little ones, even one in trouble. The angels, or messengers (for that is what the word angels means), were shown to Jacob in a dream ascending and descending on that ladder between earth and heaven. The messengers of God are continually coming down in that small, still voice bringing the good news, teaching, and encouragement from a far country. And the desires and prayers, sometimes in songs of praise and thanksgiving, and sometimes in groans, go up from God's children by way of those messengers to God. The apostle instructed the children of God to pray without ceasing. This they do as freely as they breathe — as freely as those angels ascend and descend that ladder. And the Lord appeared to Jacob in that dream and said, among other things, **"Behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again to this land; for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of."**

God brought the sure word of comfort and strength to Jacob in time of need. And He made Jacob aware that His angels are continually ascending and descending for the benefit of God's little ones.

On the way to Rome in a ship, the apostle Paul was comforted by the presence of the angel of God when all hope of being saved was about gone. They had been exceedingly tossed upon the stormy sea by a tempest for many days. The storm bore heavily upon them, and neither sun nor the stars appeared for many days. It must have been something like a hurricane, in which they were caught. Paul and the shipmen had fasted long, for they perceived that unless God intervened for them all was lost. They were in such distress that they cast overboard the tackling of the ship and finally even the cargo in the vain attempt to save themselves. **"After long abstinence Paul stood forth in the midst of them and said, Sirs, ye should have hearkened unto me, and not have loosed from Crete, and to have gained this harm and loss. And now I exhort you to be of good cheer: for there shall be no loss of *any man's* life among you, but of the ship. For there stood by me this night the angel of God, whose I am, and whom I serve, Saying Fear not, Paul; thou must be brought before Caesar: and, lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee. Wherefore, sirs, be of good cheer: for I believe God, that it shall be even as it was told me. Howbeit we must be cast upon a certain island."**

I cannot help believing that these things were written and preserved for the comfort and teaching of God's little children. These are not just historical facts or exciting stories to entertain us, but these historical details, given by the Holy Spirit, also speak of our experience. Can you think back on times in your life when all about you seemed to be in chaos and confusion? Can you remember when you were in such great fear and doubting about the outcome of the trial you were in that you thought you must perish in it? Can you identify with the apostle and the men of old when they were brought to their wits end and said, **"Lord save us: we perish."**? It seems that this has been my lot time and again since being set in this way. Yes, there have been many long and peaceful seasons, but from time to time, if not deceived, I have been brought to the end of my strength and made to look unto God, who only can deliver. There have been many sleepless nights and days of groaning and begging for mercy and wisdom. There have been times when I thought I would surely perish in the affliction. But God has been merciful through all. And many times, I believe He has sent His holy angel in that small, still voice speaking peace to my soul. In the midst of the trial, that voice speaks saying, all is well, God is in control, even this shall pass, **"and we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to *his* purpose."**

God has promised never to leave us or to forsake us, and that He will be with us even unto the end of the world.

God cannot lie or fail in a promise. None who are given to believe His promises shall ever be disappointed. And all who are blessed to hear His word and to believe in Him whom God hath sent have everlasting life, and they have passed from death unto life. He has gone before us in all things, even in our afflictions. The way of salvation has been made. Christ suffered and died for our sins, and was raised up again the third day for our justification. God's children are now in a safe place — they are in His hand and no one is able to pluck them out of the Father's hand for He is greater than all. The Holy Spirit said through the prophet Isaiah, **"In all their affliction he was afflicted, and the angel of his presence saved them: in his love and pity he redeemed them; and he bare them, and carried them all the days of old."** God is with us, and the angel of His presence is delivering us from moment to moment, and shall bring us to the end of our journey in peace. We are not alone. This is our hope and our confidence. We cling to it with all the faith and strength we are given.

Jesus said concerning the ones beloved of Him, **"Take heed that ye despise not one of these little ones; for I say unto you, That in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven."** This is the extent of the care of God the Father for His children. He has appointed their angels in heaven to continually behold His face on their behalf. These messengers of God carry from you every burden, grief, sorrow, trouble, and joy

directly into His presence always. And these same messengers return to you with assurances of His love and mercy for you. He pities you, and loves you, and cares for you. And He will deliver you out of your troubles and will bring you safe to heaven's shore without fail. Jesus said, **"Fear not little flock, for it is your Father's good pleasure to give to you the kingdom."** God has loved His people with an everlasting love, and has determined to keep them while they are in the world. He has given them of His Spirit, which I believe is the messenger that continually communicates between them, while earth-bound, and the throne of God. There is never a moment when they are out of His sight and care, though sometimes we doubt it. Now, we have need of the angels of God to protect and to preserve us. But soon, His people will all behold the Lord God of heaven face to face. They shall see Him with their own eyes. As Job said, **"Oh that my words were now written! Oh that they were printed in a book! That they were graven with an iron pen and lead in the rock forever! For I know that my redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God: Whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me."**

This was written in love, and in hope of eternal life.

J.B. Farmer
12-9-2007

Monday, 6-6-11

CORRESPONDENCE

Dear Editors of the Signs,

I am about 92 years of age but in the years passed, I believe it was about 1967 or 1968, I had a most beautiful experience that I sent to you. It had happened before but it kept bothering me to send it to you so I did, then I worried about it because I didn't want any one to feel that I thought I was out of my mind. But this thing has kept on with me and now I wonder if this was so right to tell what the Lord had done for me and still doing the same wonderful things for me. I've had many troubles and heart-aches, but never a day passed that I haven't thanked my Savior for His wonderful care for me. So I wrote through the years many poems that entered my mind as I went along the way. Now if you like, use them. If not then just throw them away.

I do not have a computer now but I can hardly see to write.

Katherine Mathews
Danbury, Ct.

Dear Brother Horton,

Please renew our subscription for two more years and use the remainder as you see fit. My wife and I enjoy receiving it and hope that God will continue to preserve it in the future.

Neal and Sue Reed

Dear Tony & Family,

My sincere appreciation to you and all who help with getting the Signs out. I feel sure it is not a small undertaking. May all those, Editors and each one who helps, be blessed to continue. We so much need these Truths in these trying times.

Sincerely,
Arlene M. Hole

Use the extra for any needs.

Dear Mr. Horton,

Enclosed is my check for another year to the "Signs", and please use the rest where ever you need.

I enjoy reading the "Signs" every month, very much.

I thank you all so much and Bless you for the "Signs."

Thank you,
In Love and Hope,
Gladys Shelton

My mother, Jane Carroll would like to renew her subscription for one year. She enjoys your publication. Says a lot of the Elders she knew are gone.

She is in a nursing home but able to get around with the help of a wheelchair or walker. Her mind is good. She will be 103 years in Nov.

VOICES OF THE PAST

(The following article was sent to us by Hoyt Sparks)

THE CITY WITHOUT A TEMPLE

“And I saw no temple therein.”
Rev. 21:22.

We have read this morning from the inspired record a striking description of the city of God; the city of which we have heard, and read, and sung from our earliest childhood; but we have heard that it was far away above the skies; we have sung that it is among the stars; we have read in popular religious fiction that it is the place where good people go when they die. All these notions are no better than the various fabrications of heaven, and are foreign to the true location and nature of the city as the sensual paradise of Mahomet, or the happy hunting grounds of the American Indian. Our eyes have been so long blinded by tradition that we scarcely see the plainest facts of Bible truth; our ears have been so completely stuffed with fables from our early youth that we are deaf to the plain declarations of the inspired record; and our understanding is so darkened by material affections that it is indeed difficult for us to conceive the most prominent principles of the doctrine of Christ. May the God of all grace enlighten our eyes, unstop our ears and open our understanding this morning, that we may hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

First, let us have a proper understanding of the location of this city. It is not in heaven, for John saw it coming down from God out of heaven. It is declared to be the tabernacle of God with men; God dwelling with men, and not men gone above the sky to dwell with God. This city then is in the world, though not of the world; it is the present abode and inheritance of the saints, and not something they come in possession of at the close of their mortal pilgrimage. It is the new Jerusalem, arrayed in the splendor of the covenant of grace, revealed in living contrast with the old Jerusalem, clothed in the blackness of legal servitude. It is the gospel church revealed in the perfection of her living worship, contrasted with all humanly devised and conditional systems of religion.

The jeweled walls, sparkling, gleaming and glittering with all manner of precious stones; the new earth upon which it stands stretching away in all the beauty of its virgin landscape; the new heaven spread above like a tent of righteousness; the pure, peaceful, gladdening river; the tree of life in the midst of its street of gold, each furnishes a theme for a thousand volumes; but more significant to me than all these this morning, is the absence of the temple: **“I saw no temple there.”**

What a novel sight to a Jew was a city without a temple! And what would a modern Arminian think of a city without a church? The religious prosperity, the state of morals, the degree of intelligence, and even the social and business advantages of a village, town, or city, are

all estimated by the number and height of its steeples; and if a community could be found without a church, the unfortunate inhabitants would be stigmatized as heathens, notwithstanding they may have attained to a high standard of morals, intelligence, piety and virtue. But the gospel church, walking in the Spirit, is the perfection of society; and the perfect society is revealed from heaven under the similitude of a city without a temple, or, in modern parlance, a city without a church.

The absence of the temple suggests, first the complete removal of the law of Moses. The temple was a symbol of the law, and an almost necessary attendant of all law worship. Jerusalem was the pride of the Jews; and the glory of Jerusalem was the temple. The carnal Jews were less boastful of their temple privileges as a mark of special distinction, than of their fleshly relation to Abraham. They saw nothing in the goodly stones of the temple but the gratification of their own pride; they saw nothing in the streaming blood and quivering of the evening sacrifice, but the things which Moses commanded; they beheld nothing more in the gorgeous trappings and imposing ceremonies of the high priest, than the pomp and splendor of an earthly priesthood. But to the remnant according to the election of grace **“who were born, not of blood, nor the will of the flesh, nor the will of man, but of God,”** the temple with all its service spoke a different language. They looked beyond the matchless pile of stones, to that temple that was to be thrown down and in three days raised

up again; they saw beyond the blood that daily drenched the Jewish alters, the blood of the everlasting covenant that was to be shed for the remission of the sins of the many; they recognized in their high priest the type of him who should **“offer himself without spot to God, and by that one offering perfect them forever;”** they heard in the tinkling of the golden bells upon the high priest's garment the joyful sound of the gospel of their salvation.

They groaned under the bondage of temple service, and waited and longed for **“the consolation of Israel.”** There was no hope for the flesh in the deeds of the law, and no rest for the spirit in the earthly Jerusalem. But God had provided some better things for them, and in the fullness of time the new Jerusalem was revealed from heaven, arrayed in bridal splendor, enshrouded in gospel glory, clothed in vestments of peace, with gates wide open to receive all those predestinated to enter its walls of salvation, its towers of refuge and palaces of peace.

Through the death and resurrection of Jesus, spiritual Israel was redeemed from the law of Moses, having become dead to it by the body of Christ, and by him were led out of bondage, and brought with singing unto Zion, which is the new Jerusalem. They saw from afar the heavenly city. Joyous welcome greeted them, written above the gates in letters of gold, **“Come, ye blessed of my Father.”** **“Come unto me, all ye that labor and are heavy laden.”** They gladly entered, and, to their increased delight, they find no temple therein. No

more sacrifices, no more burnt offerings, no more Sabbath keeping, no more observance of new moons, feasts and holy days. Even the sun and moon which mark times and seasons, days and months, are obliterated from the sky. No Easter celebration, no Christmas frolics. Every vestige of the law removed, and no temple to bring these buried things to remembrance. The justified inhabitants find themselves possessing what angels have desired to look into, and what the prophets of their fathers had searched diligently concerning.

The absence of the temple signifies the perfect deliverance of the elect Gentiles from every species of vain philosophy and esteemed and cherished idolatry. The Gentile Christians were under equally a galling bondage as were the Jews, although they owed no allegiance to the law of Moses. They were under the law of sin and death, and were by nature alienated from the life of God through their ignorance, and were brought into bondage by the lusts of the flesh and the wiles of their priestcraft. The temple is not only a symbol of the law of Moses, but is a universal attendant of every form of Gentile idolatry. Stupendous temples adorned the cities of Egypt five thousand years ago. These temples were the homes of Egypt's gods; sources of revenue to Egyptian priests, and the oppressors, enslavers and robbers of Egypt's people. Marble shrines of exquisite beauty brightened the cities of ancient Greece; massive temples of costliest design contributed to the imposing grandeur of the once mighty Rome; and gorgeous temples of

gold, of fabulous wealth, dazzled the eyes of Spanish robbers in the far away mountain recesses of Mexico and Peru. The gigantic remains found in every quarter of the earth proclaim in tongues of crumbling stone, the universal reign of temple service over the benighted sons of men. The reign of grace has broken the reign of sin, and the Gentiles have seen the salvation of God. Grace searched the dark places of heathen idolatry, and brought forth to the light of the glorious gospel of the hidden objects of electing love.

Many of the saints at Ephesus had served in the bondage, in the temple of Diana; many of the "**washed, justified and sanctified**" ones of the Corinthian church had been gathered from the temples of Olympian Zeus, which adorned and burdened that opulent city; and many of the called saints of Rome had been led out of the temples of Jupiter. When Paul declared to the Athenians of Mars Hill that God dwelleth not in temples made with hands, some who worshiped at the altar of the unknown god clave unto him and believed. All the inhabitants of this city, whether Jew or Greek, bond or free, have learned that God dwelleth not in temples made with hands, but that he is a Spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit. They have found to the joy of their hearts, that where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty. The truly spiritually minded seek no temple, but God himself. In him they live and move and have their being, and in this gracious environment they enjoy all the fullness of the blessing of Christ.

The absence of the temple signifies the breaking down of the **“middle wall of partition between the Jews and the Gentiles.”** The Jewish temple was the great objective distinction between the Jews and all other nations, and stood as an outward evidence of God’s favor to the Jews and rejection of the Gentiles. But, as an outward evidence that God is not a respecter of persons, and that the Gentiles are “brought nigh by the blood of Christ” and reconciled in the same body with the Jews, the temple of Jerusalem was utterly destroyed, completely thrown down, so that **“not even one stone remained”** upon another, as Christ had said before it was done. In addition to this outward evidence, the new Jerusalem was revealed to the eye of faith with no temple in it, so that the believing Jew can no more be offended by bringing Gentiles into the temple. The grounds of dispute concerning Jewish prerogatives have been completely removed from the church under the gospel dispensation, and now representatives of every nation dwell together in unity in this spiritual commonwealth, each esteeming others better than himself, all hearts having been purified by faith which works by love. All have God for their Father, having been born again; all washed in the same blood, and all possessing one life, living together in the unity of the Spirit and in the bond of peace.

The absence of the temple signifies the absence of priestcraft. There is but one city in which priestcraft is not to be found, and that is the city of God. Priests have sought to rule the world; and are

still seeking. A priesthood is a necessary element of all formulated religions, whether Jewish, Mohammedan, Catholic or Protestant. The priesthood of all will-worshipping idolaters has always pretended to stand between the people and their gods, and that in some way or another they are instrumental in bringing about reconciliation between offending men and offended gods. This important element is common to all carnal religious systems; it is found alike in heathen, Catholic and Protestant, and is plain evidence of the common origin and common interest of all religious enterprises. The Catholic priest assumes to forgive sins for a stipulated sum, and pray souls out purgatory for wages. The different Protestant hirelings will not exactly promise to do this, but they are equally cunning, and as little to be trusted. They hold out that men cannot be saved unless they hear them preach, and believe them; and some even go so far in their blasphemous presumption as to say that the heathen cannot be saved, neither can God justly damn them, until they preach to them. They array themselves in hypocritical robes of false christs, and profess to be commissioned to evangelize the world and bring it to Christ. They even ascribe the salvation of their children to their incantations, to penny tracts and religious fiction. They have invented hundreds of schemes and tricks to delude the people, and meeting in conventions from year to year to devise new fables, to send out their agents with new demands for money.

The absence of the temple implies

the absence of all these workers of darkness and propagators of iniquity. The inhabitants of this city have been delivered from the base deception of both Catholic and Protestant priesthoods. They have learned that there is but one mediator between God and man, the Man Christ Jesus. They are themselves a royal priesthood in Christ, prepared by grace to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. In this new creation they worship God in the spirit, and have no confidence in the flesh. They have no need of a candle, or the light of the sun or moon, all of which are emblems of worldly wisdom, as claimed by the carnal priesthoods; but the Lord God giveth them light, and the Lamb is the light thereof. Carnal worshippers seek a temple, but the spiritually minded seek no temple but God himself; the carnal worshipper delights in rites and ceremonies, but the spiritual seeks the secrecy of his closet; the carnal worshipper seeks the intercession of priests, but the spiritual is satisfied with no intercession outside of the unutterable groanings of the Spirit himself.

The absence of the temple signifies the absence of all fraud, deceit and violence. All the great temples of the world, from Thebes to Athens, from Athens to heathen Rome, from heathen Rome to Catholic Rome, from Catholic Rome to Protestant London, have been intimately connected with the blackest crimes of history; they have been the cradles of superstition, folly and vice, the nurseries of the antichrist in every phase and form, the despots of hypocrisy, the resorts of religious deceivers and oppres-

sors; the sepulchers of liberty, prison house of saints, and the high seats of spiritual wickedness. The absence of the temple from the city of God is evidence that all the works of the flesh are unknown either to Jew or Greek in pure spiritual worship. This city is redeemed from all iniquity, and in this spiritual city, the true gospel church, no guile is found. The deeds of the body are mortified, and the fruit of the Spirit abounds. The inhabitants are blessed with good and upright hearts and are in possession of charity which thinketh no ill of his neighbor.

The contrast was no greater between this city and old Jerusalem, than between this city and the communities of carnal religionists now. This is an age of extravagant temple worship. The chief ambition of the different sects is to surpass each other in temple building. Religious societies in every place from the country cross-roads to the metropolis of the nation, render themselves a pest to their neighborhood and a disgrace to the name of Christianity, in going beyond their means to gratify the foolish, wicked, antichristian pride in erecting fine places of worship. The huge piles of stone and stained glass, thrown together in all the fantastic forms of heathen architecture that adorn our towns and cities, are regarded with quite as much reverence and admiration by their benighted votaries, as the temples of any of the ancient heathen nations.

This city is the whole election of grace, as they in one body worship the Father in spirit, as they stand holy and without blame before him in love. God himself dwells in them and with them,

and he is their temple, and they are his.

The glory of the city is seen only by faith; the carnal senses of the saints themselves have never seen it. But the time shall come when still more grace shall be brought to them. The city shall be unveiled until all shall see it plainly and all earthly cities with all their temples and idolatry shall be finally and forever overthrown, and the city of God shall stand a living, enduring, eternal monument to the love, mercy and power of God, and the victory of Christ over all enemies.

Elder H. M. Curry.
May 14, 1893

EPHESIANS 1: 1-5.

Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, to the saints which are at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus:

Grace *be* to you, and peace, from God our Father, and *from* the Lord Jesus Christ.

Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly *places* in Christ:

According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love:

Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will.

(The following article is the first editorial written by Elder Beebe for the "Signs" and is just as true and applicable today as when it was written in 1832.)

THE CHURCH OF GOD.

NEW VERNON, N.Y. Nov. 23, 1832.

About eighteen hundred years ago, a Baptist Church was constituted at Jerusalem, under the immediate superintendence of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to an ancient prediction was born of a virgin, and came into the world to preside as Head over all things to the church, which is his body and the fullness of him who filleth all in all. Having manifested himself as the Only-begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth, and the only foundation upon which his church could rest securely, he claimed the exclusive privilege of building and of governing his Church in his own way; his language is, "**Upon this Rock will I build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.**"

After the similitude of "**a stone cut out of the mountain without hands,**" the God of heaven set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed, nor left to other people; but bearing down all opposition, it shall stand forever. The eternal Father set his King upon his holy hill of Zion, and to his Son he said, "**Thy throne, O God, is forever; a sceptre of righteousness is the sceptre of thy kingdom:**" and in an audible voice from the third heaven made proclamation, "**This is my beloved Son in whom I am**

well pleased; hear ye him." At an early period in the reign of the glorious Messiah, his authority was questioned by the high priests, scribes and pharisees: **"Tell us (said they,) by what authority doest thou these things, and who gave this authority?"**

The subjects of King Jesus were chosen in a furnace of affliction, and advised that in the world they should have tribulation, but in Christ they should have peace.

Tracing the history of the church from the morning of her visible existence, we find her constantly beset with enemies; presenting to our view the anti-type of the burning bush which Moses saw in the wilderness. She has been constantly enveloped with the flames of persecution; yet, to the astonishment of all her cruel foes, she is not consumed. We behold her king taken, and led like a lamb to the slaughter, after bearing the reproaches of ungodly men for about thirty years, during which time he was a man of sorrow and acquainted with grief. — He was scourged and crowned with thorns, and to finish the horrid picture, was nailed to the fatal cross, and between two thieves, on Calvary, crucified and slain, — not by the open and avowed enemies of God and man, but by the most learned and popular denomination of professors of religion on the earth, — not by an "inert or anti-effort class," but by those who had a zeal for God, but not according to knowledge; by men whose religion was a science, whose ministry was learned, and whose titles were honorary. We cannot do justice to our subject and stop here. No, the cry of slaugh-

tered thousands who were put to death for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held, ring in our ears, — who from under the altar cry with a loud voice, **"How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth."** These things have been done in the green tree, and they will be repeated in the dry. They have called the Master of the house Beelzebub, and they will much more call them so, who are of his household.

We know there are many in our day crying Peace! peace! and so there were in those times of bitter persecution above mentioned. The present is a time when men will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts they are heaping to themselves teachers having itching ears. Popular creeds are substituted in the place of the faith once delivered to the saints — the commandments of men instead of the gospel of Jesus Christ — human inventions take the place of divine ordinances — the work of the Holy Ghost, in gathering in and quickening the elect of God, is superseded by human contrivances. The holy scriptures are made an article of religious speculation; repentance towards God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, are dispensed with, for a mere excitement of the natural passions, and the peculiar virtues of an anxious seat. Four days, or protracted meetings, got up by men, are received as seasons of Pentecost, while the amount of money given in aid of the inventions of men, is made the standard of orthodoxy and the stepping stone to power. Instead of a strict

adherence to the command of Zion's King, "**Render unto Caesar the things that are Caesar's, and unto God the things that are God's,**" a profession of religion is urged as an indispensable qualification for civil magistracy. In short by a general amalgamation of the world and the church, by the onward march of priestcraft, the cloud of persecution is gathering fast, and the impending storm is almost ready to burst with dreadful fury upon this unhappy land, and to stain the American soil with the blood of all such as will not worship the beast or receive his mark. Candid reader, we appeal to you, are things so, or are we deluded? Would to God we were; but alas! awful realities stare us in the face. "**Ye can discern the face of the sky, but can ye not discern the signs of the times?**"

We do not flatter ourself that this little sheet will be able to shut the flood-gates of delusion; for the man of sin must and shall be revealed, whom the Lord will consume by the spirit of his mouth, and by the brightness of his coming. But we feel it to be our duty to "**blow the trumpet in Zion,**" and to sound an alarm on God's holy mountain, and exhort our brethren, and so much the more as we see the day approaching.

In conducting this paper we expect to call down upon ourselves the indignation and wrath of those whom we oppose. We shall be greatly disappointed if they do not load us with reproaches and hard names; but it will be to us a privilege rather than a trial to follow our beloved Lord through evil as well as through good report. Our prayer to God

is, that we may be governed by the same spirit which beautified and adorned the life and conversation of our Lord Jesus Christ in the days of his flesh, that when we shall be reviled we may not revile again.

Elder Gilbert Beebe

(The following article was sent to us by Jim Cote, Westbrook, Maine)

January 26, 1916

Dear Brethren:- How unknown to those who know not God are those moments, given to the called of God, of nearness of access unto God. Here the soul pours forth its moans and longings, and adoration, and we are bowed in sacred worship at the throne of His grace. A few hours ago I sat reading the Scriptures, and found the word sweet, and my heart was stirred. Then certain persons came into my mind, my reading was suspended, and my heart went out in prayer to God for them. I mentally viewed their circumstances, burdens, temptations, and trials they were then enduring, and this was the burden of my prayer: Be merciful and gracious unto them, and let all these things work together for their good. As I sat thus in prayer to God my thoughts were turned to myself, and I felt in my heart, O that all things might work together for my good, and in an instant I felt, How can the great and holy God be good to me? How can He who worketh all things after the counsel of His own

will ordain that all things shall work together for my good? How can He have a thought toward me? How can He delight in me? In the twinkling of an eye I looked over my whole life, what I have been, all unrighteousness; what I am even now in my Adamic nature. I saw myself utterly unworthy. I saw myself as a very abject, unholy, unclean, vile transgressor, ungodly. O the immeasurable gulf I saw between the Holy One of Israel and me, a sinner! I saw myself base, to be despised, a fit object for the just condemnation of God, meet to be under the curse of the law. I found my heart much moved, so humbled under the sight, the tears came into my eyes, and under the dreadful consciousness of what I am in my vile nature I moaned and cried unto God, Do not abhor me, cast me not away. Then came with all graciousness the words to my heart, To them who love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose. What! Can a vile, sinful being love the just and holy God? O, I feel I love God, and I love Him as revealed in the face of our Lord Jesus Christ.

*"Love I much? I've much forgiven;
I'm a miracle of grace."*

Once I was altogether enmity against God, alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in me, because of the blindness of my heart, but the Lord has, I hope, called me by His grace; He drew me, a wretched, guilty sinner, unto Himself, brought me with a broken and contrite heart at His feet, crying for mercy, yearning for reconciliation and salvation. Surely He gave me a heart to know Him. (Jer. 24:7) As

it is written, **"They shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more."** (Jer. 31:34) And unto me Jesus became precious, and to this day He is most precious to my soul, and I, a poor sinner, love Him, yes, I love the dear incarnate Son of God; the Lamb of God, our Savior. **"To them who are the called according to his purpose."** Called by God's grace, called unto the fellowship of the incarnate Son of God, called to the inheritance of all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ, called unto His eternal glory by Christ Jesus. I was comforted as the blessedness of the gospel of God's grace was unfolded to my tried soul, and I saw in that moment my acceptance in the beloved Savior, the Head of the church, all according to the eternal purpose, everlasting love, and mercy and grace in Christ Jesus.

"O! wondrous grace, and mystery profound;

*In God's eternal purpose I found;
His sovereign love, His grace, His deep decree,*

In some mysterious way included me."

O these precious, sacred verities came to my heart with comforting power, and I was nourished by the consolations of our Beloved; and was ruled with joy and peace in believing,

"Whate'er thou deniest, O give me thy grace;

The Spirit's sure witness and smiles of thy face;

Indulge me with patience to wait at

*thy throne,
And find even now some sweet
foretastes of home."*

Thus once more I feel I can say, I have known in my soul the gospel of Christ in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance. And as the tribes of Israel of old worshiped God by the shedding of the blood of a lamb in the morning and evening sacrifice, so the spiritual Israel, the true worshipers of God, unto this day draw nigh unto God continually by the one offering of Christ, the Lamb of God. O children of God, the throne at which we worship is the throne of God and the Lamb. The Lamb in the midst of the throne. (Rev.5:6-14; 22:3) He once was slain, He gave Himself an offering and a sacrifice unto God for a sweet smelling savor, to wash away our sins in His precious blood; to obtain eternal redemption for us. But Christ Jesus the Lamb liveth again, He arose from the tomb, and ascended to heaven, and was received up unto glory, and He is set down on the right hand of the Majesty in the heavens. He is enthroned, He reigns, the Lamb in the midst of the throne, loved, believed in and worshiped by all the blood-washed church of God, the redeemed of the Lord, saying with a loud voice, **"Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing, and every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, Blessing and honor, and glory, and**

power, be unto Him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever. And the four beasts said, Amen. And the four and twenty elders fell down and worshiped him that liveth for ever and ever." (Rev. 5:12-14) My heart is saying, "Amen," too. O the contrast between this scene and that portrayed in the next chapter! **"And the heaven departed as a scroll when it is rolled together; and every mountain and island were moved out of their places. And the kings of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman, and every free man, hid themselves in the dens and in the rocks of the mountains; and said to the mountains and rocks, Fall on us, and hide us from the face of him that sitteth on the throne, and from the wrath of the Lamb: for the great day of his wrath is come, and who shall be able to stand?"** (Rev.6:14-17) O the comfort and delight of my yearning heart is to behold the Lamb in the midst of the throne, by faith to see the Lamb that was slain, and who liveth again, even Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, crowned with glory and honor. For all my expectations of forgiveness, cleansing, righteousness, justification, salvation and of being brought unto glory, is by Him; From the throne of God and the Lamb even now, by faith, I blessedly realize there flows unto me the pure river of water of life, clear as crystal. (Rev. 22:1) Here I drink the river of His pleasures. (Psalms 36:8)

*"I taste, delight succeeds to woe;
I bathe, no waters cleanse me so;*

*Such joy and purity to share,
I could remain enraptured there."*

(Elder) Frederick W. Keene

Frederick W. Keene served as pastor of Oakwoods Baptist Church, North Berwick, Maine 1893-1919.

WHAT SHALL I CRY?

Please get your Bible and open to the 40th. chapter of of Isaiah and read the entire chapter. May the Lord now enable us to meditate together upon this scripture using the first part of the 6th verse as basis for our meditations: "The voice said, 'Cry', and he said, 'What shall I cry?'"

Cry means to utter, proclaim, groan, shriek or speak. When you cry it is involuntary brought about by a stimulus that causes you to speak, proclaim, and say things that, were it not for this stimulating influence, you would not utter. We believe that the "Spirit of the Lord" is the stimulating influence that prompts God's people to cry. When the "**Spirit of the Lord bloweth upon**" us it prompts the opposite cry from that of the spirit of man. (See 7th verse) There is such a drastic change brought about by the direct operation of the Spirit that there always is a question. A question intimates that you do not know.

When the Spirit fell upon them on the day of Pentecost they asked, "**What shall we do?**" (Acts 2:37) When it arrested Paul on the way to Damascus he asked, "**Who are thou, Lord?**" and,

"What wilt thou have me to do?" (Acts 9:5-6) Those who were pricked at heart by the Spirit on the day of Pentecost did not ask what May we do? But "**what shall we do?**" Paul did not ask, what do you WANT me to do? But, "**What wilt thou have me to do?**" The one in the text did not ask, what MAY I cry?, but, "**What SHALL I cry?**" All upon whom the Spirit of the Lord has blown are made to realize that God has ALL power and that they have NO power. They are made to realize that "**He speaks and it is done; He commands and it stands fast.**" When I was identified with another order of religion I outlined my sermons before-hand and delivered them according to outline. I knew what to cry because the Spirit had not withered my flesh and caused my goodliness to fade. I was certain, sure and proud of myself. Since my flesh withered until I have no power and the goodliness thereof faded until I have no self righteousness, I have been entirely dependent upon God to give me at the self-same hour light of thought and liberty of speech. I go groaning, wondering, "**What shall I cry?**" (I trust this has been brought about by the Spirit of the Lord blowing upon me.)

It has already been intimated that those who cry the Truth do so because of the stimulating influence of the Holy Spirit. They wonder what to cry because they have nothing of themselves to cry. When the voice says, "Cry", they know they MUST cry. I am persuaded that every time the Voice commands to cry the child of God does cry that which God puts in his mouth. Now, "**What shall I cry?**"

“All flesh is grass, and all the goodliness thereof is as the flower of the field: the grass withereth, the flower fadeth: because the Spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it: surely the people is grass.” (Isaiah 40:6-7) How is all flesh as grass? The grass withers. Therefore, all flesh withers. How is all the goodliness of the flesh as the flower? The flower fadeth. Therefore, all the righteousness of the flesh fadeth. What causes the flesh to wither and the righteousness thereof to fade? The Spirit of the Lord bloweth upon it. Has the Spirit of the Lord ever blown upon you? If your natural power has so withered that you realize you cannot lift yourself up to the extent to be approved of God I am persuaded that the Spirit of the Lord has blown upon you. If all your righteousness has faded in beauty that it appears as filthy rags, I am convinced that the Spirit has blown upon you. **“But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousness are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away.” (Isaiah 64:6).**

What shall I cry concerning all nations as a whole? Can they combine and unite their strength and accomplish anything of their own power? Let us see. All nations are “counted as the small dust of the balance.” (Is. 40:15) The small dust upon the balances that the merchant uses in weighing his commodities are so insignificant that no purchaser would ask the merchant to remove the small dust from the balances before weighing in order that what he has purchased would weigh less. If all nations

combined would be so insignificant, what would one man be? We are to cry that they are less than that! **(Isaiah 40:7)** **“An nations before Him are as nothing; and they are counted to Him LESS THAN NOTHING and vanity.”** If all nations are counted to Him as nothing and less than nothing — what would one man be counted as? Using the expression of the late Elder A. D. Wall, of Amity, Arkansas —: “Nothing split open and both halves thrown away, would be about the best way I know to express the size of one man’s power as counted by God.” Who can boast of the power and righteousness of puny man in the face of these startling statements! God forbids His people to boast of their righteousness and power because of the withering and fading effects brought about by the Spirit.

What shall I cry concerning God? **“It is He that sitteth upon the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants there of are as grasshoppers.” “That bringeth the princes to nothing; He maketh the judges of the earth as vanity.” (Is. 40:22-23)** He did this to Hezekiah though he was a king. Each and every one upon whom the Spirit blows (read v. 24) is brought to nothing and vanity whether they be king, prince, judge, rich or poor, bond or free, — regardless of their status in this world they are all brought to the same low level. What shall I cry concerning that which God does for those upon whom He hath blown His Spirit to wither and fade into faintness and weariness? **“He giveth power to the FAINT; and to them that have NO MIGHT He increaseth**

strength.” (V. 29) When their life ends; He adds His Life. (See Isaiah 38:5) When their power becomes as vanity He gives His power. When they are weak then they become strong in the Lord. When the Lord is your strength you run and do not become weary because **“He is strong in power; not one faileth.” (V. 26)**

What shall I cry to the Lord's people? **“Behold the Lord God will come with STRONG hand, and His arm shall rule for Him; behold His reward is WITH Him, and His work before Him. He shall feed His flock like a shepherd ; He shall gather the lambs with His arms, and carry them in His bosom.”** I am persuaded that Jesus and the Spirit are the strong arm and hand that shall rule for Him in the lives of His people. He gathers, carries, and feeds those that are His. Jesus came to seek and save that which was lost. It is not left upon the volition of the creature to find God. This is the work of the strong arm and hand of God. He carries them in His bosom. They were chosen in Him before time began. They are bone of His bone. None of these shall fail for the Lord carries them and feeds them. **“My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me: and I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man PLUCK THEM OUT OF MY HAND. My Father, which gave them me is greater than all; and NO MAN IS ABLE TO PLUCK THEM OUT OF MY FATHER'S HAND” (St. John 10:27-29)** We see the certainty of all the sheep of God hearing the voice, follow-

ing after, and persevering unto Life Eternal without the loss of one.

What shall I cry to Jerusalem, God's people? **“Comfort ye, comfort ye MY PEOPLE, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to JERUSALEM, and CRY unto her, that her WARFARE IS ACCOMPLISHED, that INIQUITY IS PARDONED; for she hath received OF THE LORD'S HAND DOUBLE for all her sins.” (Isaiah 40:1-2)** Take notice that the cry is to be made only to God's people. This cry is to be of comfort to the church or those whom He hath called out. God's ministry tell her that Jesus was the lone warrior who accomplished this warfare by fulfilling all the requirements of the law in her stead. He is a warrior in whom God was well pleased. He came to **“give eternal life to as many as thou hast given Him.” (St. John 17:2).** **“And this is the record, that God hath given us eternal Life. and this life is in His Son.” (1 John 5:11)**

Not only did he accomplish OUR WARFARE but also paid the penalty for our iniquity! He suffered and died that Holy Justice might be perfectly satisfied, the penalty for our sins fully paid; that we might appear before His judgment seat with a record without blemish. He did not stop by just accomplishing the law for us, which would have left us with our sins against us. Neither did He only atone for our sins, which would have left the task to us of strictly obeying the ten commandments with all of its supporting laws. But, He performed DOUBLE for us. He reconciled us unto the Father by His death, and He also saves us by His

life. (see ROM. 5:10)

We receive of the Lord's hand DOUBLE in all things pertaining to eternal life. He speaks and also does it. He commands and causes it to come to pass. Jesus is AUTHOR and FINISHER of our faith. He works in us BOTH TO WILL and TO DO of His good pleasure. He commands to repent, and gives you repentance. He says, "**Awake,**" and awakens you. He commands to live, and gives you life. He says, "**Come unto me**", and DRAWS you to Him. He says, "**Hear,**" and gives you a hearing ear. He says, "**Cry,**" and puts the words into your mouth to cry. He says to Zion, "**Get thee up into the high mountains,**" and sets them on high.

What shall I then cry concerning the salvation of God's people? I must cry that salvation is solely by the grace of God through the merits of Jesus Christ both in time and unto eternity. I must do as Jonah, acclaim that salvation is of the Lord. I must cry that it is certain and sure to each and everyone of the subjects of His amazing grace. I must cry that boasting is excluded. I must praise Him for His wonderful goodness to the children of men. In Him we move and have our being. The breath that we breathe belongs to Him. Even natural possessions are in His hand and He distributeth them to whomsoever He will. All the hairs of your head are numbered by Him and not even a sparrow falls without Him.

What shall I cry to the discouraged? God providentially cares for you and so sovereignly controls ALL THINGS that they work together for your good. God has a noble purpose for you to fulfill in

life and He will so protect you and guide you that you will completely fulfill this purpose before He takes you from this sojourn of sin and sorrow. Even though you feel so insignificant, God's purpose in you being here is just as important as the greatest ministerial gift that has ever graced the pulpit. May God bless you to take courage with these thoughts and press on toward the mark of the prize of the high calling — looking unto Jesus who is the author and finisher of this precious faith. God has so arranged, fixed and decreed that we have need of each other and we do serve one another; thereby serving Christ. (See Matt. 25:31-40) We are made to do as Paul — thank God for the brethren.

What shall I cry concerning our conduct one toward another? Forgive a brother his trespasses as our heavenly Father hath forgiven us. Esteem a brother higher than ourselves. Do good unto all men; especially unto the Household of Faith. As much as in you is live peaceably with all men. Do unto them as you would have them do unto you. **"And above all things have fervent charity among yourselves: for charity shall cover the multitude of sins. Use hospitality one to another without grudging. As every man hath received the gift, even so, minister the same one to another, as good stewards of the manifold grace of God."** (1 Peter 4:8-10) **"But let none of you suffer as a murderer, or as a thief or as an evil doer, or as a busy body in other men's matters — yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him not be ashamed; but let him glorify God on**

this behalf.” (1 Peter 4:15-16) As the body has need of each and everyone of its members, so the church has need of each other.

What shall I cry to God? **“Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy Loving kindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies, blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin.” Psalm 51:1-2. “Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me.” (Psalms 51:10)** Perform for me that my walk and conversation may be godly in this life. **“Do good in thy good pleasure unto Zion.”** Cause strife and confusion to cease — if it be thy will — that God’s little children may live together in sweet fellowship one with another. Cause us to be content with our lot and reconciled unto Thy will. Give us this day our daily bread. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. Finally, save us in that eternal abode where and when all will be peace, love, joy, and fellowship forever and ever is the prayer that we beseech in the name of Jesus Christ who art Thy Son, and our redeemer. Amen.

Elder E. J. Lambert

PSALM 113: 1-2.

Praise ye the Lord. Praise, O ye servants of the Lord, praise the name of the Lord.

Blessed be the name of the Lord from this time forth and forevermore.

“And I will bring the third part through the fire, and will refine them as silver is refined, and will try them as gold is tried; they shall call on my name, and I will hear them; I will say, It is my people: and they shall say, The Lord is my God.” — Zechariah xiii.9.

It is a mercy to be in the furnace, and it is a mercy to be brought through it. The Lord’s promise to the third part is, that he will bring them through the fire. They must therefore, according to his own word, be put into it, and yet not left in it. It is “through the fire” — right through it from beginning to end, whether it be a long and slow one or short and fierce one. The Lord knows exactly what we can bear, and it is not always the hottest fire which produces the most softening effects. Some metals indeed are so stubborn, and the dross is so deeply engrained into them, that they seem to require a hotter fire than others. But after the law has done its work, and the dross and tin have been purged away, the Lord does not usually bring again so hot a furnace. It is rather one of trial, temptation, sickness, family affliction, straits in providence, persecution, deep and daily discoveries of the body of sin and death, the hidings of the Lord’s face, and denials of his presence which seem to make up that trial which tries every man’s faith of what sort it is. By these trials and exercises there is a gradual weaning from the world, a hu-

mility, meekness, and brokenness of spirit before the Lord, a greater simplicity and godly sincerity, more willing obedience to the precepts of the gospel, and a greater desire to know the will of God and do it. O that these fruits of the Spirit might abound in us and all the saints and servants of God!

J. C. Philpot

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 9/11
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

PSALM 93.

The Lord reigneth, he is clothed with majesty; the Lord is clothed with strength, *wherewith* he hath girded himself: the world also is stablished, that it cannot be moved.

Thy throne *is* established of old: thou art from everlasting.

The floods have lifted up, O Lord, the floods have lifted up their voice; the floods lift up their waves.

The Lord on high *is* mightier than the noise of many waters, *yea*, than the mighty waves of the sea.

Thy testimonies are very sure: holiness becometh thine house, O Lord, for ever.

MEETINGS

**EASTERN KEHUKEE PRIMITIVE
BAPTIST ASSOCIATION**

The 2011 session of the Eastern Kehukee Association will convene, the Lord willing, with Hancocks Church located near Ayden, North Carolina. The meeting will be held on Saturday, October 1 and Sunday, October 2, 2011. Preaching services will begin each day at 10:30am.

From Raleigh, take US 64 East. Then take the US 264 exit to Greenville. When you get to Greenville, take Hwy 11 South to Ayden. Turn left on Hwy 102 East. Go through Ayden and about two miles turn on the first paved road to the left. This will be Ayden Golf Club Road. Go about 1 1/2 miles and the church will be on the left.

We invite the ministers of our faith and order, our brethren and all lovers of the truth of meet with us.

Naomi Coker
Association Clerk
252-823-0786

REVELATION 2:29.

He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches.

NEW RIVER ASSOCIATION

Ned Barron
 Association Clerk
 318-778-4217

The two hundred, and eleventh session of the New River Association will convene the Lord willing at Indian Creek Primitive Baptist Church located in Floyd County, Va. This session will be entertained by Indian Creek (P.B.C.) located in Floyd County, Va.

Beginning on Sat. before the fourth Sunday and continue on Sunday with dates being Sept. 24th, and 25th, 2011 the Lord willing.

Indian Creek Church is located on highway (787) in Indian Valley, Va. Those coming by Route (221) or (52) or (8) come to Willis, Va. Turn on (787) go approximately (7) miles to church on left.

We invite the ministers of our faith and order also our Bro. and Sisters and Friends to be with us Lord willing.

Thomas Pegram, Moderator
 J.B. Mitchell, Jr., Clerk

SOUTH OUACHITA ASSOCIATION

The South Ouachita Association will be held, the Lord willing, on Saturday and Sunday, September 24 & 25, 2011.

New Hope Church, located at Spearsville, Louisiana will host the Association. All lovers of the truth are invited to come and meet with us.

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR JUNE 2011

Amy Heppler, AZ	5.00
Gladys Shelton, NM	20.00
Mamie Ferguson, VA	5.00
Buford Thompson, VA	5.00
Sarah M. Sidbury, NC	5.00
Arlene Hole, NC	5.00
Ila Leary, NC	5.00

FOR JULY 2011

Lowell Hopkins, VA	5.00
Glenna Link, TN	15.00
James Pugh, AL	5.00
Ruby Queen, KY	10.00
Florence B. Knight, NC	15.00
Ralph Dale, NC	5.00
Neal Reed, OH	15.00
Elder Larry Hollandsworth, VA	5.00
Vivian Underwood, VA	5.00
Walter Craft, WV	5.00
Lessie Smith, OK	25.00

OBITUARIES

LESSIE LOUISE LANCASTER

Sister Lessie Lancaster was born October 14, 1919 and passed from this life on February 12, 2011. A dear sister in Christ, having united with Pleasant Hill Primitive Baptist Church August 20, 1948. enjoyed 62 1/2 years holding fellowship with those she loved.

There was an unusual circumstance prevailing at the time she was received into fellowship. Back in the days that she united with the church, it was customary for Pleasant Hill members and friends to meet on Friday before the August meeting to clean the house and grounds. Sister Lessie was there to help with the chores. After the work was done on this occasion, it was suggested everyone go inside and sing a few hymns before leaving. According to the church minutes they were not holding a formal church service and no official business was taking place. However, Sister Lancaster said all of a sudden she felt something telling her to move. She left her seat and went before those who had gathered for the worktime and let it be known she wanted a home with them. The group was called to order and they opened a conference after which they announced an open door of the church for the reception of new members.

Sister Lancaster was received and faithfully attended meeting there as long

as she was able. Her health began to fail in 2001 and by 2003 she was rarely able to fill her seat. We at Pleasant Hill will continue to miss her and her soft spoken voice as she quietly moved among the congregation.

Preceding her in death were her father and mother, Thad Lancaster and (Sister) Nora Williams Lancaster; two brothers, James Lancaster and (Brother) Alvin Lancaster; one sister, Myrtle L. Proctor.

She leaves to cherish her memory three sons, Frank and wife Ida Lancaster; Tommy and wife Jo Rita Lancaster and John W. Lancaster and special friend, Sue Pierce; Four grandsons and a great granddaughter.

Her funeral was conducted graveside by her pastor, Elder Cleo Robertson and Elder Autry Pridgen at Pineview Cemetery in Rocky Mount, North Carolina.

Written at the request of Pleasant Hill Church by one who loved her and will miss her. Our hope is that she has inherited that eternal home where all is well and she would not wish to be back here.

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

Peggy V. Brake

Elder Cleo Robertson, Moderator
J. Carroll Williams, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

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LORD, HOLD MY HAND!

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

1429 Howlett Street
Hillsville, Va. 24343

Lord, hold my hand! The way is rough and wild.

I stumble oft by self and sin beguiled.

Pitfalls and snares lie thick on either hand;

Unless thou dost uphold I cannot stand.

I grope in darkness, vainly seeking light;

Teach me to trust, and walk by faith, not sight.

I cannot hold thy hand - do thou hold mine,
And let thy love upon my pathway shine.

Though all unheeded, through life's devious way

Thine everlasting arms have been my stay;
And when I shrank appalled from sorrow's cup,

Thy hand unseen gave strength to drink it up.

Be with me still - I need thee every hour,
To shield and keep me from the tempter's power.

In crooked by - paths oft I wander wide;

If thou wilt lead no harm can me betide.

Thou who hast said, "Ye needy, come to me,"

Behold, I'm needy, therefore come to thee;

And though a beggar vile, ask nothing less,

The glorious robe of thine own righteousness.

ABBY G. CLARK.
SANFORD, Maine,
July 17, 1888.

CONTENTS

EDITORIAL 218
 Elder Cleo Robertson

CORRESPONDENCE 220

ARTICLES 220

VOICES OF THE PAST 225
 Elder Frederick W. Keene
 Elder D.V. Spangler
 Elder William Quint
 J. C. Philpot

MEETINGS 237

CONTRIBUTIONS 239

OBITUARIES 239
 Tillman Rupert Pullig
 Sister Agnes Viola Nichols Sutphin

EDITORIAL



Elder Cleo D. Robertson

Matthew 27:38, "Then were there two thieves crucified with him, one on the right hand, and another on the left." Christ hung on the cross between two thieves. Have you ever thought why He was between the two thieves and not on one end? I do not believe that Pilate nor the Roman soldiers cared where He hung. The chief priests and others just wanted Him crucified. It did not matter to them what order the three were in. But, God had a purpose for Jesus to be between the two thieves and thus, it must

be. The two thieves represented not just two individuals who had transgressed, but two peoples.

In Matthew 25:31-34 Jesus says, "When the Son of man shall come in his glory, and all the holy angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory: And before him shall be gathered all nations:

And he shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats: And he shall set the sheep on his right hand, but the goats on the left. Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." Matthew 25:41, "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."

I understand that Christ is speaking of the end of time when He shall come to take His elect to their eternal home. But, hanging on the cross between the two thieves manifested the separation or dividing of the two peoples, the sheep and the goats. It sets forth His suffering, shedding of blood, death and resurrection for one people and not the other. One of the thieves was a sheep and the other one a goat. There is no evidence that either thief had any knowledge of Christ before the cross. One of the thieves "railed on him, saying, If thou be Christ, save thyself and us." This thief, I am given to believe, hung on the left of Christ and was a goat. He was not given to believe on Christ and

mocked Him. This thief did not believe that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of the living God. He could not believe because he had not been given faith. As Jesus told some of the Jews on one occasion, **“He that is of God heareth God’s words: ye therefore hear them not, because ye are not of God.”** Jesus never responded to him.

The other thief rebuked him saying, **“Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: But this man hath done nothing amiss,”** The thief on the right of Jesus confessed that he was a sinner and that his condemnation and punishment were just. The Apostle Paul writes that we all **“were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.”** So every little lamb and sheep experiences the righteous and holy law of God applied to their hearts showing them their sinful condition. **“For by the law is the knowledge of sin.”**

Galations 3:22-26, “But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe. But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed. Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster. For ye are all the children of God by

faith in Christ Jesus.” So then you are saved by grace through faith and not of works.

Then the little sheep hanging on the right of Christ cries unto Him, **“Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom.”** He had been given faith to behold the Son of God, his Lord, in a body of flesh, pure and holy, beside of him. He had said **“this man hath done nothing amiss.”** How did this thief know that? The same way that Peter could say **“Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.”** Because the Father which is in heaven revealed it to him. There was no so-called witness or missionary trying to introduce this man to Christ and save his soul. His Lord was there with him in such a precious and comforting way. This thief beheld the one beside him as the King of kings and the Lord of lords. He was blessed to see beyond the veil of flesh to behold the fulness of the Godhead. He was given to understand by faith that death and the grave would not hold the Lamb of God. For he said unto Jesus, when, not if, thou comest into thy kingdom. O, his cry was, Lord, remember me. How many times we have cried unto the Lord to remember us!

Jesus did not respond to the thief that mocked Him. But this little one was a child of grace that the Father had given Him from the foundation of the world and He had said that He had lost none that the Father had given Him. So to this one Christ said, **“Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise.”** What comfort and peace that thief had been given! The

faith that he had been given was sufficient to endure the pain and suffering that he was experiencing. His Saviour was there with him. Any time that Christ is manifested to one, its paradise. To feel His love and mercy and His grace and comfort, there is a joy in the midst of the greatest sorrow or trial. We can't adequately describe it to someone else because it is for us.

Christ has promised never to leave nor forsake us. This includes through the severest trial, the deepest sorrow, the most hurtful persecution and even death itself.

May the Lord be with each of you, my dear brethren and friends, as you continue to **"press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."**

Your unworthy brother and friend,
Elder Cleo Robertson

CORRESPONDENCE

8-8-2011

Dear Cleo,

I hope this note finds you doing good. Neal and I really did enjoy our visit at the Pigg River Association, and meeting once again with all those lovely people.

This is the Biography and Experience of Elder Frederick W. Keene that I was speaking to you about that touched my heart so deeply.

It is unimaginable for me to have had the privilege to read someone else's experience that was described so closely to the travels that I have gone through for many years. I believed, most times, I was undeserving, a deceiver, and most of all a hypocrite. But, when I was blessed to read Elder Keene's experience about a stricken deer, it was as if a bucket of water has been dumped on me. Reading Elder Keene's experience has helped me to feel that I have not been left abandoned in this condition. Please, excuse my many errors.

In Hope,
Sue Reed

ARTICLES

Having had some considerable meditation on the 4th chapter of the Gospel according to John and in particular his account of the Samaritan woman at Jacob's well, I am of a mind to pen some thoughts on this passage of scripture in hope they will be found profitable. As the passage of scripture under consideration is quite lengthy, I will not include it in this writing, other than to quote certain verses that are of particular interest. I encourage the reader to stop here and read this passage from John Chapter 4: 1st thru 34th verse.

I will begin by noticing that Jesus was departing the area of Judea, where his disciples were baptizing in the river Jordan, and traveling to Galilee. If one looks at a map of the Holy Land, it

seems clear the most pleasant and direct route to Galilee would be north up the Jordan River valley. Indeed there were ancient trade routes on either side of the Jordan River that appear far more convenient than the route our Lord traveled. Clearly, if this were simply a journey taken by a natural man with no other purpose than to travel to Galilee, there would be no necessity laid on him to go in the way that Jesus traveled. Therefore, one must conclude there were far weightier matters under consideration than simply removing to another region of the country, for the scriptures say, **“He must needs go through Samaria.”** If not deceived, the meeting that subsequently took place between Jesus and the Samaritan woman, and the circumstances of it, is an illustration of the relationship between Christ and His church and the way and manner in which He makes Himself known to each of His children. There was a work to be accomplished at a certain place and at precisely the time appointed, hence the necessity that He go through Samaria arriving at the appointed place, Jacob’s well in this illustration, at the appointed time; “about the sixth hour” of the day. His purpose there was to do the will of his Father that sent Him and to finish His work. (see vs. 34). He arrived “in the fullness of time,” about the sixth hour (prophetically referring to the sixth day), and was there “to seek and to save that which was lost.” **“For in six days the Lord made the heaven and earth, and on the seventh day He rested, and was refreshed.”** The six days represent the time in which the Church labored in

bondage to the law waiting for the coming of the Messiah and the completion of His work under that law, that being the redemption and justification of His bride (the Church). Jesus Christ completed that work declaring at the end of it, **“It is finished.”** That work being accomplished He, who by virtue of his resurrection, is our, “bright and morning star”, brought into being the advent of the Sabbath or Gospel Day wherein His children, having been delivered from under bondage to the law, would cease from their own vain works, and by virtue of His righteousness imputed to them by His grace, enter into His rest. **“For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from, his own works, as God did from his.” (Hebrews 4:10)**

“There cometh a woman of Samaria to draw water.”

Now there are some things particularly to be noticed about this Samaritan woman with whom He had much to do. She was about the business of the day which entailed a journey from the neighboring city of Sychar to draw water from what was apparently the community well. We understand this well to be necessary -especially in this arid region of the world, in order to maintain life. As water is the primary substance of all living tissue, natural life cannot be sustained without it. When confronted by Jesus at the well, this woman was not seeking anything other than the sustenance of natural life. Her concern was for the things of this world only. Certainly this illustration holds true to everything the scriptures teach concerning the condition of God’s children having natural life

only; and dead to things spiritual. **“And you hath He quickened who were dead in trespasses and sins.”** Hence, she did not come to this well seeking a Savior, but rather, her Savior came seeking her.

Jesus' first words to her are, **“Give me to drink.”** In order that she (the church) partake of the spiritual life that was hers in Christ, He must leave His heavenly abode and the glory He had with the Father, be made **“manifest in the flesh, justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.”**

“For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church.” (Eph. 5:31-32)

Adam, because of the love for his bride, Eve, followed her in the transgression of the law. Christ, because of the love for his bride, the church, came under the same law she was under to fulfill it for her. **“For what the law could not do in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.”** **“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.”**

Now this woman, being a Samari-

tan, marveled that He would even speak to her much less ask her for water. Does this not fit the experience of God's children when overwhelmed by the exceeding sinfulness of sin, perceiving themselves to be altogether wretched and vile, wallowing in the stench of sin and death, when confronted with the righteousness and spotless purity of an high priest **“who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens”**; do we not marvel that He would consider our case and undertake to remedy our undone condition knowing that in order to do so He must bare our sins in his own body on the tree, be wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities, bear the shame of the cross, and pour out His soul unto death.

He tells her of *living* water and describes it thus:

“Jesus answered and said unto her, whosoever drinketh of this water shall thirst again: But whosoever drinketh of the water that I shall give him shall never thirst; but the water that I shall give him shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.”

She came to this well seeking the water that gives natural life which is temporary. Jesus tells her of water that gives spiritual life which is everlasting. Though she does not yet understand the things under consideration, nor who it is she is speaking to:

“The woman saith unto him, Sir, give me this water, that I thirst not, neither come hither to draw.”

Here is the moment forever sus-

pendent in time for all of God's children. Now is the time appointed when she must come to know this is not an ordinary man she is speaking to. Neither is He speaking to her of natural things. Indeed, she has met her maker, the light of revelation is about to shine upon her, and things will never ever be the same for her again.

But first there are some legal matters to be taken care of. **"Jesus saith unto her, Go, call thy husband, and come hither."** She has no husband. Jesus then reveals to her that he is well aware of her marital state, that she has had five husbands and is now in an adulterous relationship with one who is not her husband. Here, if not deceived, these five husbands are typical of the five books of Moses which represent the law. As she was married to these five husbands, so too was the Church entered into a marriage relationship to the law under the Mosaic covenant. That marriage relationship in covenant to the law typifies the bondage under which she was legally held. The Apostle Paul in writing to the church at Rome gives this account of the relationship God's children have to the law: **(Romans chapt.7: vs. 2 thru 4) "For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband. So then if, while her husband liveth she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she**

be married to another man. Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ," that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God."

She (the church) was bound to the law as a wife is to her husband. Not only was she bound to the law, but was under condemnation of death under it, by reason of her adultery.

Judges 2:17 "And yet they would not hearken unto their judges, but they went a whoring after other gods, and bowed themselves unto them: they turned quickly out of the way which their fathers walked in, obeying the commandments of the LORD; but they did not so."

Jeremiah 3:2 "Lift up thine eyes unto the high places, and see where thou hast not been lien with. In the ways hast thou sat for them, as the Arabian in the wilderness; and thou hast polluted the land with thy whoredoms and with thy wickedness."

Jeremiah 13:27 "I have seen thine adulteries, and thy neighings, the lewdness of thy whoredom, and thine abominations on the hills in the fields. Woe unto thee, O Jerusalem! wilt thou not be made clean? when shall it once be?"

Countless scriptures can be quoted illustrating the adultery of the Church. Suffice to say that time after time the old covenant Church, personified by the nation of Israel, fell into idolatry (spiritual

adultery) and at the time of Christ's coming her idolatrous practices had taken the place of true worship. The temple was made a "house of merchandise" and they had made the word of God of none effect by their vain tradition. Natural, man-made religion had replaced the precepts of the law and true worship of the God who had given that law.

Jesus not only tells her of her five husbands and her state of adultery, but "all things that ever she did" Make no mistake about it. He was intimately familiar with all that she ever did, as He was going to the cross to answer for each and every one of her sins, and pay the full penalty of the law for them (which was death). Having fulfilled the law to the jot and the tittle by His perfect obedience to it in her stead; and then suffering the penalty of the law in her stead, He thereby satisfied all that was required by divine justice to remove her from under the condemnation of that law. Her Indebtedness to the law was satisfied by His death, for she being in Him and one with Him, through the death of His body would also become dead to the law, that she might be married to another, which is Christ.

As He begins to enumerate the sins of this woman, no doubt, they rise up before her as an unmovable mountain casting a shadow of death over her that she cannot escape. She is confronted with her sin in illustration of the way God's children are made sensible to the exceeding sinfulness of sin and are crushed under the burden of it. She now realizes this to be no ordinary man. She says to him, "**Sir, I perceive that thou**

art a prophet." Then later to those in the village; "**is not this the Christ?**" She has fallen into the hands of the living God. Her manner of speaking abruptly changes. Until this point in the conversation, she has scoffed at Him and seemed to be little more than amused. Now, she is suddenly concerned with the condition of her immortal soul, for she begins to inquire after the true place of worship. "**Our fathers worshipped in this mountain; and ye say, that in Jerusalem is the place where men ought to worship.**" Here are the feelings of God's children when confronted with their sins; they seek a place of worship where sacrifice can be made. Dissatisfied with their own vain attempts at worship, they are made to know that Divine Justice requires the shedding of blood to pay for sin and except a sacrifice be made to appease the wrath of a Just and Holy God, they must surely die in their sins. Yet, they are made to wonder; can there be a sacrifice sufficient to take away such a great multitude of sin? Like Isaac they ask, "**where is the lamb for a burnt offering.**" True to the words of Abraham, "**My son, God will provide himself a lamb for burnt offering.**" Hear the words of John the Baptist while baptizing in the river Jordan as he looked up and saw Jesus coming to him; "**Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.**" Then, do they see Jesus as the only sacrifice sufficient for their sin. Looking to Him, they are made to "stand still and see the salvation of the Lord." Jesus Christ is the Captain of their Salvation, the Author and Fin-

isher of their Faith, and forever more they will call Him "Lord and Master."

This woman now inquires after the Messiah, "the one called Christ."

"Jesus saith unto her, I that speak unto thee am he." "The woman then left her waterpot, and went her way into the city, and saith to the men, Come, see a man, which told me all things that ever I did: is not this the Christ?"

The work is accomplished. The change has been wrought. She leaves her waterpot behind, never again to thirst after the water that gives temporal life only. The Spirit of Christ which now dwells in her is become a well of water springing up into everlasting life. Henceforth she will hunger and thirst after the righteousness that is her Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. No longer will the things of this world hold the allure they once held. Her affections are now set on precious things of a heavenly nature, that belong to her Lord. She goes into the city, for her desire is to tell her brethren of the things the Lord has done for her. But she can no longer fellowship the things of this world. She has passed from death to life and henceforth will go about seeking fellowship with those of like faith and experience.

Humbly submitted
in bonds of love,
Kenneth R. Adams

VOICES OF THE PAST

The following Experience of Elder Frederick W. Keene was first published in *The Signs of The Times*, April 1937 edition.

"I was a stricken deer that left the herd
Long since. With many an arrow deep
in fixed
My panting side was charged, when I
withdrew
To seek a tranquil death in distant
shades.
There I was found by One who had Him-
self
Been hurt by archers. In His side He bore
And in His hands and feet the cruel
scars.
With gentle force soliciting the darts,
He drew them forth, and healed, and
bade me live.
Since then, with few associates, in re-
mote
And silent woods I wander, far from those
My former partners of the peopled
scene;
With few associates and not wishing
more."

Cowper, "The Task," Book III

How blessedly is the story told of the work of the Spirit; of the favored sinner's experience who is called by grace; of the comforting revelation of salvation and the heavenly effects and fruits felt and brought forth in God's elect who know the grace of God in truth (Col. 1:6).

"I was a stricken deer that left the

herd long since." **"Thine arrows are sharp in the heart of the King's enemies; whereby the people fall under Thee" (Psa. 45:5).**

When God sends forth His arrows, he does not draw "a bow at a venture" (2 Chron. 18:33). Such a thought has no place in the doctrine of God our Savior, but has its place in "another gospel which is not another" (Gal. 1:6-7), proclaimed by men who know not the truth as it is in our precious Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ.

But thus the eternal counsel ran,
Almighty grace, arrest that man;
I felt the arrows of distress,
And found I had no hiding place.

When the set time is come it pleases God, not to propose but call by grace, Jehovah the Spirit sends forth His arrows like lightning (Zech. 9:14). Not an arrow misses its mark, for the Almighty is the Archer (Job 6:4). No armor that the sinner has arrayed himself in is of any avail. No matter how much he may have hardened himself in sin and has flattered himself he was proof against the lightnings of the thunder of God in the law (Ex. 19: 16). "Thine arrows are sharp in the heart." "They were pricked in their heart." (Acts).

"Deep are the wounds Thine arrows give

They pierce the hardest heart;
Thy smiles of grace the slain revive,
And joy succeeds the smart."

Who was more sinful, more hard-

ened than I? With the herd, I ran in pursuit of fleshly lusts, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, a child of wrath even as others. But the Holy Ghost sent forth an arrow and hit me, the chief of sinners. Oh, what amazing grace! What divine love and tender mercy was this a proof of? Was the whole herd of mankind shot at? Was it a random shot that by chance struck me, and brought me down? Oh no! The work of the Lord is perfect. I was the one aimed at, and with no uncertainty does the Lord send forth the arrows from the quiver.

"I was a stricken deer." As I review all the dealings of the Lord of Hosts with my soul, how sovereign are all His acts of grace, how distinguishing His love and mercy to such a vile sinner like me. Oh that I could love and praise the precious and glorious name of God, my Redeemer for His marvelous loving-kindness to my soul. The Lord wounded me. His sovereign grace singled me out, and I truly found His "arrows sharp in my heart," and I felt in my soul, Oh what a sinner I am. A rebel, an enemy of God, a hell-deserving wretch, God is against me. **"The arrows of the Almighty are within me, the poison whereof drinketh up my spirit: the terrors of God do set themselves in array against me" (Job 6:4).** As Job thus expresses himself, thus I found it.

That Scripture, **"Boast not thyself of tomorrow; for thou knowest not what a day may bring forth," (Prov. 27:1),** dashed me to the earth. My contemplated life in the pleasures of sin was blighted. My sins so many and so great as sharp arrows of the law of God I found

to be unto death. It was the ministration of condemnation and death to me, a vile transgressor (2 Cor. 3:7-9). My sin taking occasion by the commandment deceived me, and by it slew me (Rom. 7:11). Sin revived and I died; the commandment which was ordained unto life I found to be unto death. "I was a stricken deer." Stricken by the Lord. I felt I must perish, for the arrows of eternal justice pierced me and the poison thereof drank up my spirit. They were indeed deadly arrows... Jehovah's holy and just condemnation convicted my soul of guilt. His terrors made me sore afraid.

Yes, I feared there was no escape for such a sinner. I said in my soul, Hell, the damnation of hell, is surely my destination and justly my portion. Oh, what pain and grief possessed my soul.

I remember one day, when in the midst of my distress, I sat in anguish of soul pondering over my awful condition. Oh so vile and abominable did I feel I was, such a mass of sin. I was well-nigh plunged into utter despair, and I felt there could be no mercy for such a vile transgressor. On every hand, I could see that which brought my sins to view and the law that I had transgressed poured forth its curses on my sinful head. What was I to do to assuage my wounded heart? Filled with anguish because of my sin, my soul fainted within me, realizing by the wonderful teaching of the Holy Spirit my lost and undone condition.

While in this state, little did I know the mercy, the rich mercy, in store for my soul. The wounds which God's truth made in my heart I could not heal, and I thought they were forerunners of my

eternal destruction, and now the Lord was about to destroy me utterly.

"I was a stricken deer that left the herd long since." Yes, some sixty-five years from now past the Lord separated me from the herd. The work of Jehovah the Holy Ghost in my soul was such that I could not run to the same excess of riot with my companions in sin. The time past of my life sufficed me (1 Peter 4:3). I now loathed the paths of sin, and sought to find the way of holiness. Before I was a stricken deer I could run as eagerly as any of the herd in transgressions, in vile practices and filthy conversation. In all ungodliness I reveled and banqueted, taking my fill of sin. But when Jehovah's arrow wounded me, "I was a stricken deer." My heart was faint, the pleasures in the pursuit of sin languished and died. I had no heart to keep up with the herd. God's voice in the law gave me (so I felt) my death wound, and His gracious and divine work in my soul had implanted and begotten hatred of evil, and hungering and thirsting after righteousness (Matt. 5:6; Prov. 8:13).¹ "turned from transgression" (Isa. 59:20). I wanted the companionship of the herd no longer. God's arrows within me distressed me and drinketh up my spirit (Job 6:4).

My sinful and perishing condition occupied all my thought, cut me off from the pursuit of the pleasures of sin, Others might run after vain and vile delights, but as for me, "I was a stricken deer," Jehovah's arrow had arrested me; forbade my continuance with the herd in their vile and wicked ways. I left the herd long since; yes, I shunned my former associates, their very presence and sin-

ful conversation aggravated my painful wounds. As I evaded them and secluded myself, some of them sought me, and inquired what was the matter with me, was I sick? What made me so sad looking and lonely?

After persistent inquiries I told them what was the matter with me, and how I could no longer run with them in sin. At this they laughed and jeered, and I became the laughing stock and the butt of many of their sinful jokes.

But "with many an arrow deep infixed, my panting side was charged." They were no skin-deep wounds God's arrows made in me, but "deep infixed." His arrows were lodged by His almighty power and love, and thus I entered into the experience of one who cried out, **"Thine arrows stick fast in me, and Thy hand presses me sore" (Psa. 38:2)**. No creature power can extract the arrows of the Almighty. It is the Lord who says, **"I wound, and I heal" (Deut. 32:39; Job 5:18)**. His own gracious hand removes the arrows and binds up the wounds. Truly, Thou art glorious and wonderful in all Thy works, O Lord. How surprisingly gracious, teeming with loving-kindness and infinite tender mercy have all Thy dealings been with a poor sinner like me. Oh that I could love Thee and praise Thy glorious matchless name.

"With many an arrow deep infixed my panting side was charged." All my attempts to draw forth these arrows lacerated my soul the more. God's barbed arrows pierced my heart, not one of which could I remove. Each day fresh arrows from Jehovah's bow were "deep infixed" in me, and oh what pangs and

sorrows my soul underwent. I mourned and wept in solitude, distressed by my hateful, cruel sins, harassed by the devil, and the curses and arrows of the law drank up my spirit. "I was a stricken deer that left the herd long since, with many an arrow deep infixed, my panting side was charged," and in the depths of my troubled soul my agonized soul for mercy cried unto the Lord. Yet did I fear and feel myself too vile for God's mercy to reach me. "I withdrew to seek a tranquil death in distant shades." The stricken deer, with its life blood ebbing away, faint and exhausted, retires to die. "I was a stricken deer" in whom God's arrows were "deeply fixed." The sorrows of death encompassed me and the pains of hell got hold of me; I found trouble and sorrow. "Ready to perish," was I to die in my sins (Deut. 26:5; Isa. 27:13)... None but those who have been stricken by the arrows of the Lord know what are the sorrows of this death. Sin is the poison of the Almighty's arrow in the law. Sin drinketh up my spirit (Job 6:4). Sin is the sting of death (1 Cor. 15:56).

And when the Holy Ghost convinced my soul of sin by the arrows of the law I felt there was no hope for me. I was ready to die. How could I survive the sting of death? What could save me from my sin? **"Sin, taking occasion by the commandment deceived me, and by it slew me" (Rom. 7:11)**.

Thus I was taught and thus prepared to know and confess to the praise of the Lord of hosts that "salvation is of the Lord" (Jonah 2:9). "There I was found by One who had Himself been hurt by archers." It was the Lord who found me.

As it is written, **“The Lord’s portion is His people; Jacob is the lot of His inheritance. He found him in a desert land, and in the waste howling wilderness; He led him about, He instructed him, He kept him as the apple of His eye”** (Deut. 32:9-10). Oh can I ever forget, ever unmindful be, of the wondrous acts of tender mercy to my soul? Oh what proofs of Thy eternal love hast Thou revealed to my soul’s everlasting consolation. It passes knowledge, passes all telling, that dear love of Thine, O my God. A poor, vile, sinful worm am I, and yet Thou lovest me, and hast redeemed me from all my sins, from all my woes. Thou hast put gladness in my heart, and the earnest of Thy Spirit in my heart. I rejoice in hope of the glory of God, that I, a poor vile transgressor, with all the elect and blood-bought flock, shall be glorified with Thy dear Son, our Jesus Emmanuel.

“Immortal honors be unto Thy glorious name,

I would Thy praises evermore proclaim;

My soul all grace and power ascribe to Thee,

For Thou, O Lord, has saved a wretch like me.”

When in a solitary way (Psa. 107:4), sick and wounded and ready to die, “There I was found by One who had Himself been hurt by the archers.” Jesus sought me and found me. He is the great Shepherd of the sheep (Luke 15:4-6; Ezek. 34).

Well do I remember the time when

in my soul’s distress I first saw Jesus with an eye of faith. When He was thus revealed to my soul I saw He “had Himself been hurt by the archers.” Never shall I forget the sight that the Holy Ghost gave to me, a poor, wounded, sin-stricken, ready-to-perish sinner, of Christ crucified. I beheld Him the anti-typical Joseph. **“The archers have sorely grieved him, and shot at him; and hated him: but his bow abode in strength, and the arms of his hands were, made strong by the hands of the mighty God of Jacob”** (Gen. 49:23-24).

In grateful remembrance I now remember that night when “I was found by One who had Himself been hurt by the archers.” For some time before this I had gone sighing in the anguish of my soul because of the arrows of the Almighty within me. At first I thought it was useless to cry for mercy, for I felt I was altogether too vile a transgressor; that there could be no hope for a wretch like me. The terrors of Jehovah’s justice made me afraid, and I could see nothing before me but to perish in my sins. But at length the Holy Spirit spoke these words in my heart, “God is love.” A little hope sprang up in my distressed heart, and in bitter anguish over my sins I cried, God, be merciful to me, a sinner.

It was the dear Lord who taught me thus to pray, and thus I became one of those whom He calls “My suppliants” (Zeph. 3:10).

Years have passed since first I cried unto the Lord in my distress, and to this day I am often found a suppliant at the feet of the Lord. Oh what marvel-

ous grace to me is shown! Yes, by the loving-kindness of the Lord I can sing, **“I love the Lord, because He hath heard my voice and my supplications. Because He hath inclined His ear unto me, therefore will I call upon Him as long as I live” (Psa. 116:1-2).**

When first my soul was exercised to cry to God for mercy, I felt indeed my need but I did not know, I did not see how mercy could reach me. How could the holy and just God pardon my sins? But when Jesus found me, oh what a revelation of mercy and salvation I beheld in Him. There in my grief and wounds, a stricken deer with many arrows deep infixed, I was found by One who had Himself been hurt by the archers. It was nighttime, in the darkness of the night, in my bedroom, imploring the Lord to have mercy upon my soul and to pardon all my sins, that Jesus the dear Savior was discovered to me. There was presented to my mind a vision of Christ crucified. Not with my natural eyes. There was nothing before my mortal sight in the midnight darkness in my bedroom. I saw Jesus, the dear Redeemer, on the cross, and while thus I gazed upon Him, a voice in my soul said, “Salvation is in My dear Son.” Then for the first time it was revealed to my soul Jehovah’s way of salvation. As one perishing, my heart went forth in cries and sighs and bitter weeping unto Jesus to save me. I saw indeed that He was the One who had Himself been hurt by the archers. In His side He bore, and in His hands and feet the cruel scars.” Never shall I forget the sight that the Holy Spirit gave me of the crucifixion of the Son of

God. Oh how hideous and hateful did sin appear, that Christ should so suffer. He, who knew no sin, was made sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.

For some time on bended knee that night, with cries importunate I besought the Almighty to show me mercy, and all the while I saw the dear Savior extended on the cross in agony and blood. “In His side He bore, and in His hands and feet the cruel scars.” Yes, Emmanuel, our Lord Jesus Christ was the One hurt by the archers (Gen. 49:23-24). To save His people from their sins He came into the world. He, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but He took upon Himself the form of a servant. He came to do the will of the Father. He was made flesh, and made sin, and made a curse for the sins of His people, His elect, His bride. He bore our sins in His own body on the tree. Yes, when the “due time” was come (Rom. 5:6). He was smitten by the arrow of the Almighty. He was smitten of God and afflicted. For the transgression of My people was He smitten (Isa. 53:8).

Oh what a sacred awful sight, to view Christ crucified while the Holy Ghost opens up to the soul the unfathomable depths of Jehovah’s justice and grace declared in the atonement made by the sacrifice and precious blood of Christ, the dear Lamb of God. While thus at the feet of the crucified One, longing for some word, some glance to heal my painful wounds and save me from my sin and misery, I thought the dear Redeemer looked down upon me from the cross with such compassion and tender love

in His countenance that it seemed to my soul that "He with gentle force was soliciting the darts" that lacerated my soul. I felt to cast my all on Him, to repose my soul alone in, His sufferings and blood to save me from my perishing condition, to heal all my wounds.

And this He did, for at length He looked with surpassing love upon me, and said in my heart, I suffered for thee; I did this for thee. The arrows that stuck fast in me, His own hand, His salvation, "drew them forth, and healed, and bade me live." Oh, what mercy to a vile sinner like me! What comfort and rejoicing filled my heart! My wounds were healed, my pain and anguish were gone. I believed in Him by the mighty power of God, believed He had suffered and died and was crucified for me, and had purged away my sins in His precious blood.

The remainder of that (to me) memorable night I spent in sacred, joyful meditation upon the wonders of mercy, love and grace revealed to me, a poor sinner. My ransomed, healed soul was filled with love and adoration, and I walked up and down that dark room in joyful praises. A brother of mine, who had been sleeping in the next room, cried out, "I wish you would hold your tongue and let me go to sleep." I did not wish to hinder him getting his sleep, so I tried to be quiet, but my heart was rejoicing in God's salvation.

"Since then, with few associates, in remote

And silent woods I wander, far from those

My former partners of the peopled scene;

With few associates, and not wishing more."

Jehovah's discriminating grace so wrought in my heart that I could no more associate "with my former partners of the peopled scene." Poor sinners saved by grace are those whom I now love to meet, and in sweet fellowship hold sweet converse upon the matchless, glorious and gracious works of the Lord our God in the salvation of sinners. Those who, like myself, can say, "I was a stricken deer," who have known the wounds that God inflicts (Jer. 30:14-17; Hosea 6:1), and who by the power and grace of Jehovah can say, With His stripes we are healed (Isa. 53:5). Such associates as these I crave. These in the gospel of Christ are my bosom companions (Psa. 119:63)... So precious is their companionship that I feel I owe a debt of gratitude to the blessed Jehovah Father, Son and Holy Ghost, that He has cast my lot where I am favored with a few such companions, some of the blood-bought flock of Emmanuel.

It is written that Lot was vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked; for that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds (2 Peter 2:7-8). So in some measure it is with all of "the taught of the Lord." The child of God soon learns that he is a pilgrim and a stranger in the world, and he need not marvel if the world hate him. But with those of like precious faith (2 Peter 1:1), they desire to walk and sojourn while in this present evil world.

“Midst scenes of confusion and
creature complaints,

How sweet to my soul is commun-
ion with saints,

To find at the banquet of mercy
there’s room,

And feel in the presence of Jesus
at home.”

(Elder) Frederick W. Keene,
Raleigh, NC (about 1937)

A DEACON’S DUTIES

We have been requested by one of the brethren to present our views as to the duties of deacons, and will endeavor to do so with such understanding as I have. This is an important church service, which is sometimes abused by those who hold the office — it is an important office in the church, when administered in accordance with the Word of God, and the Spirit of the Lord.

Our first thought in this matter is an inquiry in the Word of God as to the reason the church needed deacons. In the early days of the apostolic church, we find a unity in the church that has not been equaled since: “And the multitude of them that believed were of one heart and one soul, neither said any of them that ought of the things he possessed was his own: but they had all things common. Neither was there any among them that lacked: for as many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them, and brought the prices of the things that were sold, and laid them down at the Apostle’s feet: and distribu-

tion was made unto every man according as he had need.” Hence it fell to the apostles to distribute to each one according to their several needs. It was part of the work of the ministry to administer to the needs of widows, whose whole support was probably from the treasury --- at least the aged ones who were unable to work. Among these widows were two classes: the Hebrew and the Grecian --- the Hebrews who lived in Judea, and worshipped in the synagogues at Jerusalem and vicinity; and those Jews who lived outside of Judea, and who were accustomed chiefly to the use of the Greek language, into which the scriptures had been translated. As the number of the disciples multiplied, we are told in the sixth chapter of Acts that, **“There arose a murmuring of the Grecians against the Hebrews because their widows were neglected in the daily ministration. Then the twelve called the multitude of the disciples unto them, and said, It is not reason that we should leave the word of God and serve tables. Wherefore, brethren, look ye out among you seven men of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom, whom we may appoint over this business. But we will give ourselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word. And the saying pleased the whole multitude: and they chose Stephen, a man full of faith and of the Holy Ghost, and Phillip, and Prochorus, and Nicanor, and Timon, and Parmenas, and Nicolas a proselyte of Antioch: whom they set before the Apostles: and when they had prayed, they laid their hands on them.”**

Here we have the scriptural reason for the first church at Jerusalem appointing deacons. The primary reason was to relieve the ministry of serving tables. We will do well to keep in mind that the reason these men were chosen was that the Apostles might give themselves continually to prayer, and to the ministry of the word.

The qualification required by the Apostles was that the ones appointed be of honest report, full of the Holy Ghost and wisdom. This was enlarged upon by the Apostle in his epistle to Timothy: **“Likewise must the deacons be grave, not doubletongued, not given to much wine, not greedy of filthy lucre; holding the mystery of the faith in a pure conscience. And let these also, First be proved: then let them use the office of deacon, being found blameless. Even so must their wives be grave, not slanderers, sober, faithful in all things. Let the deacons be the husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their own houses well. For they that have used the office of a deacon well purchase to themselves a good degree, and great boldness in the faith which is in Christ Jesus.”**

The epistle to the Philippians is addressed to all the saints in Jesus Christ which are at Philippi, with the bishops {ministers} and deacons; showing that these were the only ones recognized as composing the church, and officers, at that place. And today, these are the ones that are recognized as the church and her officers.

The Apostle Peter made use of the expression “serve tables”, showing that

there was more than one table to be served by deacons. It has been considered in years past that there were mainly three tables to be served by deacons. First, the serving of the poor of the flock; which would embrace widows, and all others that might at any time be in need of help. Second, seeing that the minister is receiving from the flock the things that are necessary for him in a material way, that his hands will not be tied in his serving the church; that he will be free to visit the sick, and attend to any other duties that falls on him in his ministry. The deacons should know at all times what a church is doing in financial matters; and all funds, whether for the poor of the flock, or the help of the ministry, should pass through the deacon's hands, so they may know how much each one is doing toward relieving the needs of the church. A deacon cannot faithfully perform the duties of his office unless the church holds up his hands in his work; and this responsibility falls to the church. It is commendable indeed when deacons are favored to administer their office according to God's word: to remind the church of the duties of members; and to see a church responding to the requirements of the church, not from a dead letter but out of a ready mind, and in love one to another. “But whoso hath this world's goods, and seeth his brother have need, and shutteth up his bowels of compassion from him: how dwelleth the love of God in him.” The third table is the Lord's supper: it falls to the deacon to administer this ordinance to the church from the hands of the minister.

We have tried to briefly set forth, first: the need of deacons; second, the qualifications of deacons; and third, the tables they serve. When summed up, we would describe a deacon as an office bearer charged with the temporal affairs of the church.

If deacons be filled with the Holy Ghost and wisdom, as required in the scriptures, then they are qualified to attend to any matter the church appoints them unto. Yet, we are to remember that they are servants of the church, and whatever work falls to them is by the voice of the church, and by reason of their office, when it relates to the fellowship and discipline of the church.

We will now show some of the things not required of deacons, and unscriptural for them to assume as power that belongs to their office: They have no power to dictate to a church, or usurp authority over the body; they have no power to call, or dismiss, a minister; they cannot act for a church in citing a member to the church unless the church authorized them to do so. There seems to be in the minds of some in some sections that their office is to rule the church — nothing could be farther from the Word of God than such a practice.

In 1st Timothy 5:17, it is said, “**Let the elders that rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially they that labor in word and doctrine.**”

This “ruling well” has reference to the minister whose lot is to see that the order of the house according to the word of God, is maintained. He is forbidden to lord it over God’s heritage, but is to

be an example to the flock. He is required to be faithful as a steward in the house of God, and to serve in the sense that he is the servant of God unto them. No where in God’s word does it say, the deacons that “rule well”, but it seems that the rule is sometimes reversed.

The office of deacon is indeed a high office, and one of the great blessings to the church, when administered according to the Word of God. There is, indeed, a close tie between pastor, deacon, and church; wherein there should be mutual love and confidence, with all our service overshadowed by the spirit of humility and meekness, that the Lord’s house be found the house of prayer and supplication.

He that has used the office of deacon well, has purchased to himself a good degree, and great boldness in the faith.

Elder D. V. Spangler

PSALM 67: 1-4.

God be merciful unto us, and bless us; and cause his face to shine upon us; Selah.

That thy way may be known upon earth, thy saving health among all nations.

Let the people praise thee, O God; let all the people praise thee.

O let the nations be glad and sing for joy: for thou shalt judge the people righteously, and govern the nations upon earth. Selah.

Corresponding Letter.

The Maine Old School Baptist Conference, held with, Old School Baptist Church of' North Berwick; York Co., Maine, Sept. 9th, 10th, and 11th, 1859, to all with whom we correspond.

BELOVED BRETHREN IN CHRIST: — Through the abounding mercy and grace: of our unchangeable God, we have been permitted to assemble again according to our usual custom for another yearly meeting, to transact business pertaining to the order of God's lower house, and to mingle together in christian fellowship, and to speak of the goodness of our God, and to talk of his power.

"While we are made sensible of our wicked and depraved natures, the total depravity of the human heart, its proneness to follow after sin; we acknowledge and rejoice that God is holy, and that in Him all fulness dwells; and from that fountain poor sensible sinners do receive grace for grace. Therefore the sons of Jacob are not consumed. God has informed us in his word that he is love and he that loveth is born of God, and that we love God because God first loved us. How great then is the love of Him who perfected the plan of salvation by grace, that glorious plan which the ransomed of the Lord of all ages have delighted to dwell upon, singing the song of redeeming grace and dying love, which is known only by those who have been born again, not of corruptible, but of incorruptible seed, and have the

assurance that God is their Father, Christ their Redeemer; and that his Spirit is their comforter. But we are often so burdened with the sinfulness of our corrupt natures, this body of sin, that we doubt at times our possession of the spiritual birth, and are led to abhor ourselves, and to exalt Christ as a prince and a Savior that gives repentance and forgiveness of sin — for the word says: We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren. We have the pleasure to inform you that peace and love dwells in our Churches, and we would tender our love to you, and hope that the best of Heavens blessings may rest upon you — that we may all as the beloved children of our Heavenly Father 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. What a happy thought to know that our sins are forgiven through the atoning blood of Christ, and. to have an interest in that love which dwelt in the bosom of the Father ere time began. The Christian hope rests upon the promises of God. May we have faith to take hold of the promises, and grace to obey and keep his commandments, walk worthy of that high vocation with which we are called, giving glory to God with our bodies and spirit which are His.

Our meeting has been well attended, and the preaching throughout has been all of one piece, salvation by grace and not of works. Our next yearly meeting is appointed to be held with the church at North Berwick, York Co.,

Maine, and to commence on Friday before the second Monday in Sept., 1860; and to continue three days.

Elder William Quint, *Moderator*.
Wm. J. Purington, *Clerk*.

“Be thou in the fear of the Lord all day long. For surely there is an end; and thine expectation shall not be cut off.” -- Proverbs xxiii. 17, 18.

The Lord is here addressing himself to a soul labouring under temptation, and passing through peculiar exercises; and this is the exhortation that he gives it: “Be thou in the fear of the Lord all the day long;” watching his hand, submitting to his will, committing everything into his care and keeping; not hardening your heart against him, but looking up to him, and worshipping him with godly fear; “for surely there is an end.” You may be tempted, exercised, and surrounded with difficulties, and see no outlet; but “surely there is an end;” and, when the end comes, it will make all plain and clear. This quiet submission, this watching and waiting, a man can never be brought to unless he has seen an end to all perfection; an end of his own strength, wisdom, and righteousness. To sit still is the hardest thing a man can do. To lie passive at God’s footstool when all things seem to be against us; to have a rough path to walk

in, to be surrounded with difficulties, and yet to be in the fear of the Lord all the day long, watching his hand, desiring to submit to his will, seeking only that wisdom which cometh from above, and trusting that he will make the way straight; not putting our hand to the work, but leaving it all to the Lord — how strange, how mysterious a path! And yet it is the only one that brings solid peace to a Christian; “for surely there is an end.” Whatever sorrows and troubles a man may have to wade through, there will surely be an end of them. If we try to get ourselves out of perplexities, we are like a person trying to unravel a tangled skein of silk by pulling it forcibly; the more it is pulled, the more entangled it gets, and the faster the knots become. So if we are plunged into any trial, providential or spiritual, and we attempt to extricate ourselves by main force, by kicking and rebelling, we only get more entangled. The Lord, then, to encourage us to wait patiently upon him till he shall appear, says, “Surely there is an end.” This is the universal testimony of the Scripture, that the Lord appears and delivers, when there is none shut up or left; and the experience of the saints agrees with the testimony of the written word: “For I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end.”

J.C. Philpot

“A prudent man foreseeeth the evil, and hideth himself; but the simple pass on, and are punished.” --- Proverbs xxxii. 3.

Noah, warned of God, prepared an ark to the saving of his house. Lot, admonished by the angels, fled out of Sodom. So there is a fleeing from the wrath to come. How careless, how secure, and unconcerned are we till quickened with spiritual life! Solomon speaks of those who sleep on the top of a mast, where on jerk of the wave, or one turn of the sleeper may precipitate him into the boiling ocean. God's anger is gathering against a wicked world. Who will escape this fearful storm of eternal, unmitigated wrath? Those who flee to Jesus. Who flee to Jesus? Those only who feel their need of him. How are they made to feel their need of him? By the flashes of God's anger. Whence issue these flashes? Out of the thunder-cloud of God's holy law--- the revelation which he has made of his anger against transgressors. How necessary then to feel the application of the law to conscience, to experience what Job calls, “the terrors of God,” that Jesus Christ, who is a “covert from the tempest,” may be seen and fled unto! It is like the warning given in Egypt of the grievous hail: “He that feared the word of the Lord among the servants of Pharaoh made his servants and his cattle flee into the houses: and

he that regarded not the word of the Lord left his servants and his cattle in the field” (Exodus ix. 20, 21). Faith credits what unbelief derides. As is their nature and operation, so is their end. Faith ends in salvation; unbelief in perdition.

J.C. Philpot

Romans 8:4.

That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

MEETINGS

CONTENTNEA ASSOCIATION 2011

The Lord willing, the 181st session of the Contentnea Association will convene with North Creek Primitive Baptist Church located in Beaufort County, NC on October 8-9, 2011.

The Church is located on highway NC99 between Bath and Belhaven, NC.

We invite all our Brethren and friends to come worship with us.

Elder Gene Lupton
Association Clerk
252-745-0441

**SKEWARKEY UNION
(EASTERN KEHUKEE
ASSOCIATION)**

Tarboro Primitive Baptist Church will host the next Skewarkey Union, the fifth Sunday in October 30, 2011. From US 64 take Exit 485. Go over the overhead bridge. At the second stoplight, turn right onto St. James Street. Go about one mile and the church is located on the right at the corner next to the railroad tracks. Preaching services begin at 10:30am.

We extend a welcome to all lovers of the truth and especially all ministers of our faith and order .

Naomi Coker, Clerk
252-823-0786

**STAUNTON RIVER
UNION MEETING**

The Lord willing, the Staunton River Union Meeting will be held at Springfield Primitive Baptist Church, located on business 29, 708 South Main Street, Gretna, Va. (Pittsylvania County) on Saturday 29th before the 5th Sunday in October.

Singing will start at 10:00 am and preaching at 10:30 am.

We welcome all ministers of our faith and order, our brethren and friends to be with us.

Moderator: Elder Marvin Brumfield
Clerk: Oscar Pickral

**WEST COUNTRY LINE
UNION MEETING
SUNDAY, OCTOBER 30, 2011**

Big Meadows Primitive Baptist Church will host the next West Country Line 5th Sunday Meeting on Sunday, October 30, 2011. Singing will begin at 10:00 am and preaching service at 10:30 am.

From I-40 take highway 87 south at Graham, NC towards Pittsboro, NC. Go 14.8 miles and cross Cane Creek. Turn right onto first road past Cane Creek which is Greenhill Road. Go 3.7 miles and turn left on Old Switchboard Road. Church is 1.3 miles on right.

From highway 64 take highway 87 north to Castle Rock Road and turn left. Continue on this road to church on left.

We would welcome those of like precious faith who have been given a mind to be with us.

JoAnn Self, Clerk
Elder Cleo Robertson, Moderator

ST. LUKE 10:21.

In that hour Jesus rejoiced in spirit, and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, that thou hast hid these things from the wise and the prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes: even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight.

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR AUGUST 2011

Henry Lanier, NC	5.00
Loy Rodgers, AR	5.00
Elder Barnabas Brammer, PA	5.00
Erma Sowers, VA	5.00
James Shelor, VA	5.00
John Ballard, TX	5.00

PSALM 69:13.

But as for me, my prayer is unto thee, O Lord, in an acceptable time: O God, in the multitude of thy mercy hear me, in the truth of thy salvation.

OBITUARIES

8-15-11

Fellow Christian,

I would like to report to you the death of one of your faithful, Tillman Rupert Pullig.

Am enclosing an obituary and memorial tribute.

Thomas A. Pullig
(Brother)

**In Loving Memory
of
Tillman Rupert Pullig**

Born

December 13, 1922

Entered Into Eternal Rest

June 1, 2011

Graveside Services

2:00 p.m. - Saturday

June 4, 2011

Ramah Cemetery

Ashland, Louisiana

Officiating

Brother Carl DuBose

Brother Lynnwood Jacobs

Loving Family

Brother

Thomas Allen Pullig & wife Sandra

Sister-in-law

Louene Pullig

Also survived by
two nieces & two nephews.

IN LOVING MEMORY OF SISTER AGNES VIOLA NICHOLS SUTPHIN

If the Lord will bless me, I will attempt to write this obituary for our lovely Sister in Christ, Agnes Viola Nichols Sutphin, who fell asleep in Jesus on June 10, 2011 at the age of 86.

She was the daughter of the late Leonard and Maggie Nichols. She was married 43 years to the late Jessie J. Sutphin, and to this union they were blessed with three sons and a daughter.

Left to cherish her memories are Charles and Maggie Sutphin, Jesse and Diana Sutphin, all of Floyd, VA, Janet and Jerry Hunter of Salem, VA. One sister and brother-in-law Verla and Ralph Lawson of Lawsonville, NC. Five grandchildren, Debbie Sutphin (wife of the late Mark Sutphin), John Sutphin, Angela Hunter, Hannah Sutphin, and Mary Beth Sutphin. Three great-grandchildren, Corey Sutphin, Cameron Sutphin, and Jayde Dudley. Five step grandchildren, twelve step great-grandchildren and two step great-great-grandchildren. She was predeceased by her husband Jesse J. Sutphin, son Robert Dale Sutphin, and grandson Marcus James Sutphin.

Sister Agnes was a member of Paynes Creek Primitive Baptist Church for almost 50 years. She united with the church October 13, 1961 and was baptized by Elder Odell Thompson.

She spoke of her experience, the day she was baptized, she said, when she came up out of the water, the Breth-

ren standing on the bank were the most beautiful flowers she had ever seen. They were her flowers from then on. She could relate many lovely spiritual experiences. She dearly loved her church, her pastors, and her brethren. She was a firm believer in Salvation by Grace and Grace alone. She was blessed to know where all her help and strength came from.

Sister Agnes could light up a room with her smile. Her love and laughter was contagious. She was blessed with a wonderful family and many friends who loved her. The times we spent together were very special, she talked about her family, her life, her experiences, and she always found good in everything, no matter how bad the situation. We will miss her sweet smile and big heart. She was truly a gift from God.

Funeral service was held June 13, 2011 at 11:00 a.m. at the Salem Primitive Baptist Church (Head of the River) by her Pastor Elder Larry Hollandsworth, Elder Alan Terry and Elder Carl Terry. She was laid to rest in Restvale Cemetery beside her husband.

In her final hours on earth, blessed with her children by her bedside, she was still praising God. May God's name be praised above all other names. We feel she lived and died in the faith. May we be reconciled to the will of God.

Written in request of Paynes Creek Church.

Elder Larry Hollandsworth, Moderator
Karen Link, Clerk

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

“The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon”

VOL. 179

HILLSVILLE, VA., NOVEMBER 2011

NO. 11

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

1429 Howlett Street

Hillsville, Va. 24343

Lord, didst thou die, but not for me?
Am I forbid to trust thy blood?
Hast thou not pardons, rich and free?
And grace, an overwhelming flood?

Who, then shall drive my trembling soul
From thee to regions of despair?
Who has surveyed the sacred scroll,
And found my name not written there?

Presumptuous thought! to fix the bound,
To limit mercy's sovereign reign:
What other happy souls have found,
I'll seek, nor shall I seek in vain.

I own my guilt; my sins confess;
Can men or devils make them more?
Of crimes, already numberless,
Vain the attempt to swell the score.

Were the black list before my sight,
While I remember thou hast died,
'Twould only urge my speedier flight
To seek salvation at thy side.

Low at thy feet I'll cast me down,
To thee reveal my guilt and fear;
And, if thou spurn me from thy throne,
I'll be the *first* that perished there.

Cruttenden.

CONTENTS

EDITORIAL 242
 Elder J.B. Farmer

CORRESPONDENCE 247

ARTICLES 248

VOICES OF THE PAST 249
 Elder Frederick W. Keene
 Elder B. F. Coulter
 Elder Gilbert Beebe
 Elder William Quint
 Elder D.V. Spangler
 Elder Clifford Wilbanks
 J.C. Philpot

CONTRIBUTIONS 263

EDITORIAL

“And Hezekiah received the letter from the hand of the messengers, and read it: and Hezekiah went up unto the house of the Lord, and spread it before the Lord. And Hezekiah prayed unto the Lord saying, O Lord of hosts, God of Israel, that dwelleth *between* the cherubims, thou *art* the God *even* thou alone, of all the kingdoms of the earth: thou hast made heaven and earth. Incline thine ear, O Lord, and hear; open thine eyes, O Lord, and see: and hear all the words of Sennacherib, which hath sent to reproach the living God. Of a truth, Lord, the kings of Assyria have laid waste all the

nations, and their countries, and have cast their gods into the fire: for they *were* no gods, but the work of men’s hands, wood and stone: therefore they have destroyed them. Now therefore, O Lord our God, save us from his hand, that all the kingdoms of the earth may know that thou *art* the Lord, *even* thou only.”
 Isaiah 37: 14-20.



Elder J. B. Farmer

Why is it that certain scriptures are made to be so precious to us, and cause us to rejoice with joy unspeakable? Is it because God has brought them unto us for our comfort, edification and strength? Is it because they strike our heart’s chord and make us sing praises to our God? Is it because we feel some kinship with the ones being described in the texts? Is it because our hearts yearn to hear of the goodness and power of God as he looks over, and cares for, and delivers His little ones out of all their troubles? Is it because we also dwell in a strange land in which we are strangers and pilgrims, and are so troubled by the things we see about us? Is it because we feel to be so weak and vulnerable in ourselves, and not able to keep ourselves from harm and evil? Is it because we are made glad when the name of our God is exalted above all things in making His strength perfect in our weakness?

I am made to believe that these are a few of the reasons that we so love to hear the gospel, whether it be pro-

claimed from the stands to the congregations of the Lord's people; whether it be proclaimed in the written pages; or whether it be proclaimed directly and individually into our hearts while alone in the yard, in the garden, in the car, upon our beds, or wherever we might be when He visits us. The gospel is the power of God unto salvation to them who believe. God is merciful to all His children to give them eyes to see, ears to hear, and hearts to understand. He causes them to look unto Him, who has all power and all wisdom. He has never failed even one of His children. And God blesses each one of them to be thankful for His mercies, and to show forth His praise, for He alone is worthy to be praised.

Have you ever been in a situation where all things seemed to be against you, and where you saw no earthly remedy or no way of escape? Have you ever felt to be so inadequate in yourself that you thought you would surely perish in the trial if something were not done for you? Have you ever heard the lying whisper of the devil saying, that not even God is able to get you out of this pit? I am made to believe that this is some of the experience of all of God's little ones from time to time. The Lord Jesus Christ spoke to the children of God through the apostle Peter saying, **"Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you: but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings; that, when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding**

joy." Your God given faith must be tried in the fiery furnace of affliction, that when you are tried, you may come forth as gold, to the praise of the glory of His grace.

In Hezekiah's day, when the Assyrian king's host came through the land conquering and destroying all before them, the city of Jerusalem came to be their next objective. No doubt, it seemed apparent to anyone in a natural mind that the Assyrians could easily overwhelm and capture the city because of Assyria's greatly superior forces. They had already taken many of the cities round about and had even taken all the defenced cities of Judah. With more than 185,000 men, the Assyrians seemed to be invincible. They advanced and made their boasts, and told the men of Jerusalem that stood upon the wall not to trust in Egypt, not to trust in Hezekiah the king, neither to trust in their God. They said that no other people or no other god had been able to stand against them. They told the people to surrender and become servants to the great king of Assyria.

But king Hezekiah was a man that believed in God and trusted in Him. He was blessed to understand that the Lord is the God of all the kingdoms of the earth, and even more, that the true and living God had made heaven and earth. The God that had done all these things could surely handle an army of puny men, no matter how great their numbers or how seemingly impressive their military might. The God of heaven and earth has all power and all wisdom and does all His will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of the earth. With

this belief in his heart, Hezekiah took the boastful letter that the great king of Assyria sent to him and read it. Then he went up to the house of the Lord and spread the letter before the Lord and prayed for deliverance, and that the Lord God should be glorified in all these things.

Is this not the pattern of all of God's little ones when they are overwhelmed by the enemy? They are blessed to trust not in the arm of the flesh, and to lean not to their own understanding. But they are made to trust in the Lord and the power of His might. And, in all ages, they found Him to be faithful and adequate to give them the victory. When we look back through the scriptures, we see many examples of the deliverance of the children of God when they were unable to help themselves. Jacob was returning home with his family at the commandment of God. And he was coming toward his brother Esau, who had purposed to kill him. Having been told that Esau had four hundred men with him, Jacob went to the Lord and begged for mercy at the Lord's hand. And Jacob said, **"O God of my father Abraham, and God of my father Isaac, the Lord which saidst unto me, Return unto thy country, and to thy kindred, and I will deal well with thee: I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth, which thou hast shewed unto thy servant; for with my staff I passed over this Jordan; and now I am become two bands. Deliver me, I pray thee, from the hand of my brother, from the hand of Esau: for I fear him, lest he will come and smite**

me, and the mother with the children. And thou saidest, I will surely do thee good, and make thy seed as the sand of the sea, which cannot be numbered for multitude." And God delivered him and his family and was glorified in the deliverance.

Remember the three Hebrew children, who would not bow down at king Nebuchadnezzar's command and worship his image of gold. The king threatened to cast all who obeyed him not into the midst of the burning fiery furnace. Believing that God was able to deliver them, they said to the king, **"O Nebuchadnezzar, we are not careful to answer thee in this matter. If it be so, our God whom we serve is able to deliver us from the burning fiery furnace, and he will deliver us out of thine hand, O king. But if not, be it known unto thee, O king, that we will not serve thy gods, nor worship the golden image which thou hast set up."** The king in his fury had the furnace heated seven times more than it was wont to be heated, had the men bound, and had them cast into the midst of the burning fiery furnace. The king was astonished when he looked into the furnace and saw four men loose and walking in the midst of the fire, and that the form of the fourth was like the Son of God. When the three children came forth from the furnace at the king's command, it was found that the fire had no power upon their bodies, nor was a hair of their head singed, neither were their coats changed, nor the smell of fire had passed upon them. God completely delivered them, gave them favor with the

king, and brought glory and honor to His great name.

Remember Daniel, who refused to hearken to king Darius's written command that no man should ask a petition of any God or man for thirty days. Wicked men had manipulated the king to make the command in order to entrap Daniel. But Daniel was not hindered from serving God. **"Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house; and his windows being open in his chamber toward Jerusalem, he kneeled upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime."** When the king realized that Daniel was found guilty of breaking his command, he sought to deliver him. But according to the law of the Medes and Persians, no law or decree, which the king had established could be changed. So Daniel was cast into the den of lions as punishment for breaking the law. God sent His angel and shut the lions' mouths so they could not hurt Daniel. So Daniel was taken up out of the den, and no manner of hurt was found upon him, because he believed in his God. **"Then king Darius wrote unto all people, nations, and languages, that dwell in all the earth; Peace be multiplied unto you. I make a decree, That in every dominion of my kingdom men tremble and fear before the God of Daniel: for he is the living God, and stedfast forever, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed, and his dominion shall be even unto the end. He delivereth and rescueth, and he worketh signs**

and wonders in heaven and in earth, who hath delivered Daniel from the power of the lions. So this Daniel prospered in the reign of Darius, and in the reign of Cyrus the Persian."

We see this experience repeated over and over again in the scriptures. God makes a highway for His people when there is no way. Consider Joseph, when his brothers sought to kill him, and put him in a pit, and then sold him into bondage, then was taken into the foreign land of Egypt, where he was falsely accused and cast into prison and forgotten. Consider Moses and the Hebrew children at the Red Sea, with the army of Pharaoh pressing down upon them. Consider the lad David, in the face of the great giant Goliath. God delivered them all without fail. And he delivered Hezekiah from the Assyrians. God caused the Assyrians to hear a rumor and to return the way they came. **"Therefore thus saith the Lord concerning the king of Assyria, He shall not come into this city, nor shoot an arrow there, nor come before it with shields, nor cast a bank against it. By the way that he came, by the same shall he return, and shall not come into this city, saith the Lord. For I will defend this city to save it for mine own sake, and for my servant David's sake. Then the angel of the Lord went forth, and smote in the camp of the Assyrians a hundred and fourscore and five thousand: and when they arose early in the morning, behold, they were all dead corpses."** God saved His strengthless people and destroyed the bold and ar-

rogant Assyrians.

The promise of protection and care also continues to God's chosen people today. Concerning the church, Jesus said, **"Upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."** He also said, **"I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee."** And He said, **"Lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world."** To each one of His little lambs the Lord God promised, **"Behold, the Lord God will come with strong hand, and his arm shall rule for him: behold, his reward is with him, and his work before him. He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young."** And he said, **"Hearken unto me, O house of Jacob, and all the remnant of the house of Israel, which are borne by me from the belly, which are carried from the womb: and even to your old age I am he; and even to hoar hairs will I carry you: I have made, and I will bear; even I will carry, and will deliver you."**

"If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?" God loves His people with an everlasting love. Through all the ages, God has been mindful of each little one and has, as a loving Father, led them about, taught them, and kept them as the apple of His eye. His mercy endureth forever. It is impossible for Him to lie or to fail in a

promise. And He has promised to save to the uttermost all who believe and trust in Him. He has given unto each one of His own the gift of faith. And it is by this faith that salvation is assured to all His people. According to the scriptures, **"It is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed."** And we are taught that, **"For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us."** And the beloved apostle was blessed of the Spirit to tell of God's continual deliverance of himself and others, **"But we had the sentence of death in ourselves, that we should not trust in ourselves, but in God which raiseth the dead: who delivered us from so great a death, and doth deliver: in whom we trust that he will yet deliver us."** God has delivered His people from every trouble, He is now delivering them, and we trust that He shall yet deliver. May God be praised, world without end.

The last great enemy we must face is death. When we are brought to the end of our journey, we shall have the utmost fiery trial of our faith. All creature helps shall flee away. May we be blessed to be faithful unto death, believing in Him who promised us that He would not suffer us to be tempted above that we are able, but would with the temptation make a way of escape. May we be given to look continually to the Author and Finisher of our faith, and to trust Him even as we draw our last earthly breath. May we be given confidence that our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ has accomplished our warfare,

that He has pardoned our iniquity, and that we have the victory in Him, world without end. May God be glorified in all things.

This was written, I trust, in love and in hope of eternal life, which God has promised to His own people.

Elder J. B. Farmer

CORRESPONDENCE

8-26-2011

Dear Brother Horton,

Please renew my subscription for two years. I enjoy receiving the Signs every month and read it most time before I go to bed.

Thanks,
Gradie H. Strader

Enclosed you will find my check for \$15.00 for another years subscription to the "Signs of the Times." I enjoy it very much. I have had two miracles in the past year, so I really feel God is with me.

God Bless,
Elizabeth Webb

PSALM 64: 10.

The righteous shall be glad in the Lord, and shall trust in him; and all the upright in heart shall glory.

August 22, 2011

Mr. Tony R. Horton
1429 Howlett Street
Hillsville, Va 24343

Dear Mr. Horton,

SUBJECT: SIGNS OF THE TIMES
PUBLICATION

My mother, Edith Thompson, has enjoyed reading the Signs of the Times publication for many years. She is a member of the Dan River Primitive Baptist church in North Carolina. We have always lived in Pittsylvania County, Virginia and I remember many trips with my mother over those country roads to that church and several others in our area. She is now in Riverside Nursing Home in Danville Virginia and still receives the publication that you generously continue to send to her. I am writing to request an additional copy of the May 2011 copy that you sent to her. It was an especially good sample and I would like a copy for myself as my sister wishes to keep the copy you sent my mother.

I am enclosing payment for two years of the publication for my mother and an additional amount that, hopefully, will cover the cost of the copy that I am requesting. My address is 300 Hollyville Drive, Dry Fork, Va. 24549. You are currently mailing my mother's publication to her address at 1829 Tunstall High Rd. Danville, Va 24541, and my sister is delivering it to her in the nursing home. Thank you for all that you do. Receiving

this publication is a bright spot in my mother's life and she enjoys sharing with others.

Sincerely,
Kristi Abbott

ARTICLES

SPACEMEN FIND UNIVERSE'S LOST DAY-IN BEGINNING OF PROGRAM

Mysterious events in space exploration found a missing day on the universe to prove supernatural phenomena, reported in the Bible but classified as myths by many scientists and students of religion, according to a long-term space program consultant.

Space program consultants in orbital mechanics for 11 years - since the Mercury - Gemini program began, said God gave the missing day to Joshua and Isaiah.

Mysterious events took place as astronauts and space scientists in the space Astronomy Laboratory at the University of Wisconsin, checked positions; of the sun, moon and planets 100 and 1,000 years from now.

"WE HAVE TO KNOW THIS, so we don't send a satellite up and have it bump into something later on its orbits. We have to lay out the orbits in terms of the life of the satellite and where the planets will be, so the whole thing will not bog down."

Astronauts and space scientists reportedly ran the computer measurement back and forth over the centuries and it

came to a halt, then the computer stopped and a red signal indicated something was wrong, either with information fed into the computer or the results as compared with the standards.

The service department checked out the computer and computer programming by the space team, then reported, "Its perfect."

Nobody was able to explain "a day missing in space in elapsed time," but a space team member referred them to Joshua 10: 12-13 in the Bible. The biblical reference tells of God stopping the onslaught of the nightfall to give Joshua "about a day" of extra daylight to help his army overpower the enemy.

SPACEMEN CHECKED the computers, going back into the time of Joshua and found their calculations were close - but not close enough. The elapsed time missing in Joshua's day was 23 hours and 20 minutes not a whole day.

The space consultant said astronauts and scientists remained puzzled and "still in trouble because if you can't account for 40 minutes in space science, you'll be in trouble 1,000 years from now; 40 minutes had to be found because it can be multiplied many times over in orbits." The space team was then referred to II Kings 20: 3-10 when God "Let the shadow return backward 10 degrees for Isaiah". Ten degrees is exactly 40 minutes. Twenty-three hours and twenty minutes in Joshua, plus forty minutes in II Kings make the missing, twenty-four hours the space travelers had to log in the log-book as the missing day on the universe.

VOICES OF THE PAST

THE LOVELINESS OF CHRIST

BELOVED IN THE LORD:

It is good to trace the dealings of God with his people as portrayed in the Holy Scriptures, and it is also profitable to contemplate those things which we ourselves are taught of the Lord that the things written in the Word, concerning his elect, his saints, become intelligible and of comfort to our souls. Now, while there ever remains ground for our abasement and contrition of heart before our God, yet it is in our low estate that our beloved Christ becomes more and more endeared, and he is extolled in our hearts as the chiefest among ten thousand and the One ***“altogether lovely”*** (Song. 5:16). So needful is he, so precious. I find it is a frequent grief to my spirit that I remain a sinful being. Often I am “weary of earth, myself and sin,” and the only balm of my wounded spirit is Jesus’ precious atoning blood. The blood of the Lamb cleanseth us from all sin. The apostle saith, ***“Ye are come unto...Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel,”*** (Heb. 12:24).

Ah! I am not always so sensible of my sinnership. There are times when this tenderness of heart is not felt. I am as if my heart were asleep, as if I had no heart, as if it had died within me. I am so dull, insensible of the depravities

of my nature; I am hard of conscience, dull. Then how heartless are all exercises of worship, - how cold, formal, heartless are all my prayers, and the more the utterance of the lips, the more manifest is my lifeless estate. All acts of supposed worship appear as a sham-mere machine work, mere bodily exercise. I am in confusion, for all seems to be a mere pretense. I am then a wretched man-a form of godliness does not suffice. What do all external observances, all lip-worship amount to, if faith and love, sighs and cries and ardent longings, holy delight and peace and gratitude are absent? What a wretched state to be in! Ah, I sometimes see the state I am in, and find myself unmoved, hardened, as one destitute of heart toward the Lord. Truly, I am a base, worthless, lifeless thing without the ministrations of the Holy Spirit. But a crumb of mercy, a sip of the water of life, one kind glance from the Savior, one word from his mouth most sweet, and how changed is my estate. I sigh, I moan, I confess before him my dismal, sinful case. “He smiles and my comforts abound,” and my heart, melted with gratitude, is favored for a few moments to hold communion with our fairest, sweetest, dearest Friend, Jesus, the Friend of sinners.

“I did know thee in the wilderness.” Yes, the Lord our covenant-loving God, seeks us, finds us, binds up our wounds, speaks comfortably to us, speaks forgiveness, speaks of his mercy, and of his faithfulness. Then we are smitten, we chide, and loathe ourselves; we are broken and contrite in heart; we are meek over our past sinful-

ness, ingratitude, and unbelief. We in our hearts confess it all unto the Lord. Oh, it is wonderful! We find he will abundantly pardon, and we trust in him, believing in his grace; we lean upon our God; we embrace his promises; and leaning upon our dear Savior, we come up out of our straits, upheld by his gracious, omnipotent hand. Let me tell you, dear fellow-pilgrim, that in those sacred moments when Jesus restoreth my soul, quiets my fears, shames away my murmurings, and tells my heart that he is mine, my Savior, my unfailing Friend, then my heart is saying, "I love him." I rejoice in him; my heart sings his praises, and I am saying half aloud, "How lovely Jesus is; Oh, how dear is my Savior!" He satiates the weary, and replenishes every sorrowful soul. Oh, does not such pitying love to sinners, so vile, so unworthy, pass all telling? I sing:

"Up to the throne I soon shall go,
More of his loveliness to know.
Where ransomed millions shall declare,
He's altogether lovely there."

Some seek and have their portion in this life, in the world. Mine is not in the earth, and I do not want to seek an inheritance in this tinsel world; but I would be more and more drawn to seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. These are all my happiness, everlasting joy, my all.

Now it is but the earnest of the inheritance that I am tasting, - just now and then a crumb, a sip by the way; but when,

as I hope, God shall receive me to glory then "**face to face**," redeemed from corruption, conformed to the image of the glorified Savior, I shall be satisfied. Amen.

ELDER FREDERICK W. KEENE.

HUMILITY.

It seems very strange to me that my mind should be impressed to write on the subject of humility, when I cannot find one particle of it in myself, and when I firmly believe we cannot tell anything to profit except we have learned it by experience, and that the revelation of Jesus Christ as our Savior comes to us through the exercise of divine grace in our hearts, which is christian experience. Yet being impressed, I feel it a solemn duty. If I have an earthly master, and he tells me to do certain things, I have no right to question, and ask the reason why, but my duty is to obey. And now as I start out in this task I am already encouraged and comforted, because as I hope my Master has at this moment caused me to perceive that he does not require humility at My hands; that He is my humility, and he graciously and in mercy supplies every need and deficiency in me. If I have quit the service of my former master, whose reign over me was in darkness unto death wherein sin prevailed, calling forth every inch of the flesh, and have entered the service of him who reigneth in righteousness, then would I yield my "members servants to righteousness unto holiness." For the apostle tells us, "When ye were the servants of sin, ye were free

from righteousness." There is no fruit yielded in our service as servants under sin. The end thereof is death. "But now being made free from sin, and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto holiness and the end everlasting life." Humility is not one of the results of any of the works of the flesh. "The works of the flesh are manifest, which are these: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings and such like." Is it any wonder then when I search in my own flesh for humility, that I find it not! Every possible emanation from the flesh is in direct opposition to an humble and contrite heart. The natural heart is filled with pride and self-esteem. It is continually in conflict and in battle for supremacy. It even presumes to say that the arm of God is shortened that he cannot save, unless mighty man humbles himself and accepts the proffered salvation. When I deplore in myself the absence of humility, and grieve and mourn because of the presence of every opposition to it, I discover I am not looking for it in the right direction. I want to do something that will ape humility, and try to deceive myself into thinking it is the real thing. In other words, I am trying all the time to get religion. and I am proud (not humbled to think how well I get along. I search out my brother's faults. and talk to others about him in an ugly way, saying, (if not in words) in my arrogance, if he would do as I do he would be above reproach. Is that humility? When the tree is corrupt, the fruit must of necessity be corrupt

also. A clean thing cannot come out of an unclean. Of the olden time before the flood we read this Scripture: "And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually." So also throughout all the Scriptures the same truth is set forth; that man is totally depraved. and in him is no good thing. Again it is written, "God looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, that did seek God. Every one of them is gone back; they are altogether become filthy; there is none that doeth good. no. not one." Now when the children of God look to themselves for good deeds, looking away from Christ, and depending upon the deeds done in their body, they find the filthy self-righteousness of the proud spirit of the pharisee. Hide thy drooping head, O humility, thou hast no place there. And yet it is in this very proud Pharisaic heart that the sweet spirit of grace takes up its abode, and causes the lofty head to bow low, the proud body to fall prostrate in the dust in humble acknowledgment and gratitude to a covenant-keeping God for his gracious and tender mercy. When we discover the superabounding of grace where sin did abound. what a change has taken place. The poor child has had his fill of sin; that which he once loved he now abhors. He sees himself as he never saw himself before: a vile and depraved sinner. From the moment this work of grace begins, we observe the fruit that is yielded. The growth of the old, corrupt tree has ceased, its leaves faded, its beauty

gone, its force abated, "a corn of wheat" has fallen into the ground, an incorruptible seed "by the word of God which liveth and abideth forever." This seed takes root in the corrupt soil of the heart. The Husbandman careth for it in such a way that soon is manifested the upward growth: "First the blade, then the ear, after that the full corn in the ear." The foul growths and evil weeds so conspicuous before, are cut down and dug up by the roots, by the hand of him whose Spirit worketh grace in the heart. How interesting to watch the growth of the tender plants, from the time they begin the christian journey, and how anxious we are for them, and how careful of them when, they have entered the warfare. The nursing mothers in Israel bathe their scars, and pour oil into the bleeding wounds. And then we rejoice as we see tribulation working patience. The frequent conflicts cause them to endure hardness as good soldiers. Now the work of the Spirit in this earthly soil, what does it produce! The apostle tells us, "The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance, against which there is no law." But one might ask, Can a clean thing come out of an unclean! We answer, no, emphatically no. Well, that one may say, you have been comparing this fruit-yielding work of the Spirit to natural seed sown in the earth. Has the earth been changed, that it should bring forth "bread to the eater," when before it brought forth briars and thorns! No, the earth has not been changed, but it has been subdued, and the briars and thorns have been plowed

under, and they die, and the soil is prepared and made ready for the sower. So this corrupt heart: of ours. The plow and harrow of divine grace is set to work by the spiritual Husbandman, causing death to the unwholesome and corrupt works of the flesh. They are trodden under foot, they die. "Our old man is crucified with him, [Christ] that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin." Christ died; by his death the law which condemned us was satisfied. the sword of justice was removed from the way of the "tree of life." Christ arose from the dead. and all the Father had given him arose with him to newness of life. And this is what the work of the Spirit now makes manifest. The saints of God, as such, are pure and holy, as he is pure and holy. The bodies were prepared for the sowing of the seed. The incorruptible seed has been sown; it has taken root downward, and bears fruit upward. And now we enter the vineyard of our Lord, and eat his pleasant fruits. Again the apostle tells us, "The fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, and righteousness, and truth." Well, what of the production? The first thing we discover in this new conception and birth is, that the Lord has fulfilled his promise that he would "take the stony heart out of their flesh, and give them an heart of flesh." They manifest a broken heart, which is an humble heart and a contrite spirit. So the very first result of fruit yielding in the new born soul is humility; and what did the man do toward bringing about that result? I will tell you what he did, he fought against it with all the power of all the pride of his natural heart.

But glorious news, "Where sin abounded, grace did much more abound," Ever afterward when you meet and talk with that child, you will discover the meek and humble spirit. As the garden needs the hoe to keep down the weeds of evil growth, so also there is a need that the spirit be in continuous exercise. The law of God is written in our heart, and when we violate that law we are chastised, which chastisements in the end "yield the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby," Each one of us remembers the humility of soul we have felt after a spiritual whipping; how we were ready to crawl in the very dust to the feet of our brethren, imploring forgiveness. O humility, thou canst now raise thy bowed head, for now thy light shineth, and the angels of God rejoice. Wisdom tells us, "Before honor is humility ." Also, "By humility are riches and honor and life." And the apostle warns you to "Let no man beguile you in a voluntary-humility ," And he also admonishes you to "Be subject to one another, clothed with humility ." How rich the clothing, wrought gold, as the clothing of the daughter of the King. If you ask me if I ever knew a time when I realized that I was truly humble, I would answer, no, and I would tell you, too, that the times when I thought I was humble, I found it to be pride of the worst sort. The natural man for his own ends will sometimes sham humility; the truly penitent child of God never, The power of God which works humility caused the persecuting Saul of Tarsus to become Paul (the little). The same power also filled the mouth of the

psalmist with these words: "I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of the Lord, than to dwell in the tents of wickedness." Now, O humility, blessed is thy condition; salvation has entered thy portals; thou art clothed with righteousness. The mighty man of war is brought low, behold him now, a child of peace. Jesus, clothed in thy habiliments, has set up his temple in the hearts of the inhabitants of Zion, and great is the joy and rejoicing in Jerusalem.

Elder B.F.COULTER.

Philadelphia, Pa., June 14, 1901

JOB 19: 25-27.

"FOR I know *that* my Redeemer liveth, and *that* he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth: and though after my skin *worms* destroy this *body*, yet in my flesh shall I see God: whom I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another; though my reins be consumed within me."

The book of Job is supposed to have been written by Moses, and is regarded as a most sublime and sacred poem, parabolically presenting the church of God in the person of Job, in all her various phases, in which her patience and integrity are subjected to the severest tests, and the end of the Lord, or design and purpose of God, in suffering Satan to afflict his chosen ones, is made to appear. **"Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen**

the end of the Lord.”- James 5:11. Like all other parts of the holy Scriptures, this book of Job was written by inspiration of God, for as the inspired truth of God it is referred to and recognized by prophets and apostles. That there was a man that dwelt in the land of Uz, whose name was Job, is beyond all contradiction true, for God himself declares it, and that all that is written of him in this book is strictly true we have no doubt. But while such are our firm convictions, we still believe that, like David and others, what was written of Job was designed to allegorically apply to the church and people of God. As his name signifies patience, it is applicable not only to him as an individual, but is applicable to the patience of all the people of God. As Job’s patience was sorely tried by afflictions, temptations, bereavements, physical and mental sufferings, by disappointment in those whom he had once regarded as his friends and confidential advisers, and by cruel persecutions, so also have all the people of God been tried in all ages. A poor and afflicted people, who trust in the name of the Lord. For if any man will live godly in Christ Jesus, he shall suffer persecution. Satan thought, and many of his ministers have fallen into the same error, that Job was what in modern times is called an Arminian; that he served God for pay, and from selfish motives, and not from the power and vitality of the love of God implanted in his heart, and hence his challenge: **“Doth Job fear God for nought? Hast not thou made a hedge about him, and about his house, and about all that he hath on**

every side? Thou hast blessed the work of his hands, and his substance is increased in the land: but put forth thy hand now, and touch all that he hath, and he will curse thee to thy face.”- Job i. 9-11. How many such dialogues as are described in this connection have transpired in the experience of the children of God, by the Spirit of the Lord in the saints, and the spirit of Satan in the flesh. How keenly do the saints of God from time to time, writhe with pain from the envenomed suggestions of the devil, suggesting to them that their religion is only natural and selfish, and that their devotion and obedience to God springs not from the power of an endless life, but from the law of a carnal commandment. Now the end of the Lord, that is, the purpose of God in all the trials and afflictions of his people, is to prove the power of his sustaining grace, by the trial of their faith, and patience, and to show beyond all controversy that their righteousness is of the Lord and that their faith, patience, submission and hope are fruits, not of their carnal nature reformed, but of his own Spirit implanted in them. Now carefully review the whole experience of Job, and see if we do not find in it portrayed the general experience of all the children of God. Plunged in deep distress, stripped of his worldly subsistence, bereaved of his children, tortured with distressing, loathsome boils, surrounded with miserable comforters, who instead of condoling sympathy and words of comfort, reproach and taunt him, while he vainly appeals to them for pity, and to make his misery complete, the pres-

ence of his God is withdrawn, and in bitterness of spirit he cries out, O that I knew where I might find him. Under all this weight of sorrow and distress his faith in God shines out from his darkness like the bow of divine assurance painted in living colors on the lowering cloud, or as the rising sun in his radiant strength dissipating the lowering shades of unbelief. Faith triumphant over fear shouts the victorious victory, "I know that my Redeemer liveth." Although a sinner needing redemption, and without the least power of my own to make myself just with God, (Job ix. 1,) God has graciously provided for me a "Daysman," one who can lay his hand on both, who can secure all the honor of the throne of God, magnify and honor the divine law which I have transgressed, meet and cancel every demand of God's eternal justice, and yet deliver me from death, save me from hell, clothe me with the righteousness of God, and freely, effectually and forever justify me through the redemption that is in him. Such a Redeemer was seen clearly by the faith of the Son of God as exemplified in Job fifteen hundred and twenty years before the advent of our Lord Jesus Christ to our guilty world. This is the cheering language of faith, living faith, tried faith, and faith that overcometh the world. Dark, gloomy clouds may gather thickly around, tempests may spend their mightiest storms, and bellowing thunders shake the skies, but the undaunted faith of God's elect will surely reassert its conquering power, and bear its humble possessor safely through the fi-

nal "wreck of matter and the crash of worlds." Esteemed friends, as in the case of Job, may withhold their tender sympathy in the time of our severest trials, and even load us with their cruel reproach, but as the lightning's brilliant flash upon surrounding darkness, our faith will disclose to us the cheering knowledge that our Redeemer liveth. Through the dim vista of more than fifteen centuries intervening between the day of Job and the incarnation of the Son of God, like Abraham at a still more distant standpoint, he saw the day, rejoiced in it and was glad.

"He shall stand at the latter day upon the earth." This testimony of Christ was and is the spirit of prophecy. It was the Spirit of Christ in Job and in the prophets that in them did testify of his coming, of his sufferings and of the glory that should follow. So far as the first advent of the Redeemer is expressed in our text, it was fulfilled when the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us. From the assurance expressed by Job that he should see him, and his eyes should behold him in the latter day, we understand him to be speaking of the second coming of the Son of God, as it is testified by Paul, Hebrews ix. 28: "**And unto them that look for him shall he appear the second time without sin unto salvation.**" When he shall come to raise the dead and judge the world at the last day. This application of the prediction seems in harmony with the assurance of the faith of Job that he should personally see him, and his eyes behold him, and in his flesh, even after his flesh

should be destroyed by worms, and his reins consumed within him. This seems to be in substance what Paul expressed to the Philippians, iii. 10: **"That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings,"** &c. As the faith of all the saints looks for a blessed resurrection and happy immortality, so Job, after conceding the weakness and mortality of his flesh, and all his fleshly powers, admitting that my property may perish, my children die, my earthly joys may all be blasted, and my skin and my body become food for greedy worms, and my reins, or all my vital fleshly powers, possessions, affections and interests must fail, and decompose in the grave, this, even this shall not disturb the purpose of God or hinder the fulfillment of his promises. **"I shall see for myself, and mine eyes shall behold, and not another."** This faith was the same in the psalmist: **"As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness."** - **Psalms xvii. 15.** The deep afflictions through which Job was passing were breaking down his mortal powers and consuming his life, and wearisome nights were appointed to him, still, like the psalmist, he could say, My flesh and my heart faileth, but God is the strength of my heart, and my portion forever. Although to the grave I bow down my head and yield my flesh and say unto corruption, Thou art my father; to the worm, Thou art my mother and my sister, yet with the perfect assurance that I have a living Redeemer, who shall deliver me

from death and bring, me forth at last in triumph from the grave.

MIDDLETOWN, N. Y.,

January 15, 1867.

Elder Gilbert Beebe

BROTHER BEEBE-As I have to write to you on business, I feel that if my pen could be directed aright, that I should be glad to write a few lines for my brethren and sisters who read the *Signs of the Times*.

One thing I have noticed: about every piece that I have written for the SIGNS, some one of its readers have responded and given in that they have been some edified or strengthened in what I had written. This has been a mixture of joy and grief to me; sometimes feeling to thank the Lord that such a miserable creature as I should be an instrument in his hands of comforting any of the children of God in this wilderness world of sin and rebellion, on their heavenly journey; and then again I fear that I have deceived them - that I am not what they take me to be - that if they knew my inward corruptions, they would say that my words are no better than the sounding of brass or the tinkling cymbals. I find that it is out of my power to rise above those ups and downs, and yet I have no desire to stop, nor to go back, for that would be all death to my feelings; but there seems to be an irresistible power drawing me forward to action in the cause of God, contending for God's truth

and to try to encourage all who are engaged therein; so much so, that it is out of my power to enjoy myself in anything else. I think that I am fully satisfied of one thing, that if there was not any on earth that did talk the language of the Old School Baptists, that I should be alone, and I can't see anything that I should want to live any longer for on earth. It seems that since I have been here at North Berwick, I have been greatly blessed in this, that the church and society have been willing to bear with all of my inabilities and short comings, in every sense of the word; so much so, that there has not been anything to my knowledge transpired between them and me to cause any hard feelings. It has been eight years since I came here to preach; - a large number of the church within that time God has taken home; so much so, that if we had not had some additions within that time, we now must have been reduced very small; but within these eight years we have added forty-nine by baptism, besides some others that used to belong to other churches before the division. There has not been any time since I have been here, that our meetings have been more interesting than this season; some of the church have been much revived, and thirteen of the above number have been added this sealed by baptism. May the Lord continue to bless us with all the household of faith now scattered in this world. Yours as ever.

ELDER WILLIAM QUINT.

Jan. 1, 1858

THERE ARE MANY DEVICES IN A MAN'S HEART; NEVERTHELESS THE COUNSEL OF THE LORD, THAT SHALL STAND. Proverbs 19:21

A short time ago we used the above Scripture for a text. Afterwards we were asked to use the same subject for our December editorial. We shall endeavor to do so, hoping that He who is unerring may guide our pen.

When considering a point of doctrine, one of the first thoughts is, what is the scriptural proof of it. To find comfort in such things we must behold more than the scriptural proof, for we must see the relation of it to God's chosen people, in this pilgrimage journey here, as it affects their lives and glorifies God.

There has been in the past, is now, and there will no doubt be in the future many devices in the hearts of men. Some of these appear good and some of them bad, but whether they be good or bad, they shall not interfere with the counsel of the Lord. After the apostle Paul had visited Jerusalem on one occasion and been persecuted and beaten because of his defense of the gospel, the Lord stood by him one night and said, "Be of good cheer, Paul, for as thou has testified of me in Jerusalem, so must thou bear witness also at Rome." Following this experience, we see some of the devices of men; their scheming and planning to take the life of the apostle, but his life was not in the hands of men, and none could destroy him, because God had said, thou shall bear witness at Rome. Shortly after being told by God that he should go to

Rome, forty Jews bound themselves under a curse, saying they would neither eat nor drink until they had killed Paul. The devices of these men, although wicked, was the way ordained to start Paul on his trip. Their planning must fail because God was sending him to Rome. From this time until the apostle reached Rome he was a prisoner of men, but the gospel of Jesus, his Lord, was carried on the wings of persecution. In every instance, beginning with his defense of the gospel before Felix and his personal experience before king Agrippa, we behold the efforts of the Jews to convict him of some crime. If they could have done that his journey to Rome would have been stopped. This could not be. As Paul appealed his case from one court to another he was moving towards the place appointed unto him - to Rome. In all this he was from time to time seeing the hand of God in the matter, and he was to be assured that God was yet mindful of him. One of these times was when he was placed on a ship with other prisoners, and was sailing towards Italy. During the voyage the boat was overtaken by a storm, and the ones with him felt they were going to perish, but the Lord stood by Paul that night and told him that he had given him all that traveled with him and that none should perish.

God today remembers his people, and although they are all prisoners of hope, he assures them from time to time that all is well, saying, "Be not afraid, it is I." In God's own time and way Paul reached Rome and all the devices of men were only to the furtherance of the

gospel of God his Savior.

We will briefly mention a few of the things connected with the life, sufferings, death and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ in which the devices of men were manifested, yet in the end we find that they worked only to the fulfillment of God's word and counsel. When Jesus was born in Bethlehem of Judea, Herod the king of the Jews began at once to seek his life, but Joseph was warned of God to take the young child and flee into Egypt, so the prophecy might be fulfilled which had said, Out of Egypt have I called my Son. The devices of the one who sought his life were to lead up to the things which had been promised before. When Herod was unable to find Jesus, he sent forth and had all of the children in Bethlehem, and in all the coasts thereof, from two years old and under slain, believing that in so doing he would certainly take the life of the babe of Bethlehem. In all this he was only fulfilling the prophecy of Jeremiah, which said "A voice was heard in Ramah, lamentation, and bitter weeping; Rachel weeping for her children refused to be comforted for her children, because they were not." All things written in the prophecies concerning him had to be fulfilled. The counsel of the Lord must stand, regardless of the devices of men. It was written of him, a bone of him shall not be broken, and when he had been crucified soldiers came to take down his body, and the bodies of those who were crucified with him, it not being lawful to leave them hanging on the Sabbath day. The legs of the two who died with him on the cross were broken by the sol-

diers, but when they came to Jesus they said he is dead already. Then his side was pierced with a spear, thus fulfilling the word which had declared, They shall look on him whom they have pierced. Those who did these things knew nothing of what had been promised before of God; they were only following their own plans and devices, but at the same time they were fulfilling the purpose of God.

When the Savior was crucified and buried, there lingered with the Jews a fear that something might happen to their plans and that his disciples might steal his body at night. Soldiers were, therefore, placed around his tomb and a great stone was rolled unto it, and the king sealed it with his seal. Everything was done that men could do to prevent his resurrection from the dead. We are glad it was so because there might be the manifestation of that power that overcomes all things to God's eternal glory. We could go on mentioning scriptures as proof of these things, the devices of men being worked according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, but we will just mention a few briefly to stir up your pure minds, God willing, and pass on. Haman a wicked man sought the life of Mordecai, and even prepared a gallows to hang him on, yet, when the time came for the hanging Haman himself was hung on it. The devices of the enemies of Daniel, and the three Hebrew children, caused them to be cast into the den of lions and the fiery furnace, yet it only served to the manifestation of God's delivering hand unto them. When

God told Jonah to go to Nineveh and to cry against the city, he immediately set about to go another way; he paid his fare and started to Tarshish. He was yet to learn that, salvation was of the Lord; that God's counsel would stand, and although he had to go through the belly of hell, he was to reach Nineveh as God had told him. His devices must fail, whether they were good or bad. The planning of Joseph's brethren to do away with him, only carried him into Egypt to store up corn for the day of famine.

As to the day we live in, it is a dark and dreary day, and the devices of men are at work; Hitler seeking to rule the world. Planning and scheming has been going on for years, bringing us to the places and conditions in which we live; yet, we are sure, it is for a wise purpose of God. Not a dart of Satan can hit, except what the God of heaven sees fit. They are working together for good to them that love God. Oh, that we might have the assurance that we love him! We are sure that the wrath of man shall praise him and the remainder he will restrain. God's sword is hanging over the earth and we believe God's humble poor are being brought closer together. We know by experience that we are often thinking of our beloved brethren in the Lord, in their trials, hoping that we might be blessed of God to speak some word of comfort to them. Yet the minister must have like trials as his brethren before he can comfort them with the same comfort wherewith he is comforted of God.

May God give us grace to love one another freely, be affectionate one to another, gentle, forbearing, kind, manifesting a brotherly kindness, for if these things be in us we shall never fail.

Elder D. V. Spangler,
December, 1942

JUSTICE

Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the faith of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the faith of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified. (Gal. 2:16)

We know that the word justice has more than one meaning, but it is our intent to use it only as it applies to the law. Without justice under the law, the law would be dead: no one would benefit from it nor be punished by it: but God's law is holy, just and good, and justice must be rendered under it. The only plea is "guilty" and the only sentence "death". That all men are sinners and deserving of death and everlasting damnation we feel no need to prove here.

To be justified means that one has been freed from the law, and God's law does not free anyone until the penalty of transgression has been paid in full. There are many people today, as there has always been, who do not yet know that a man is not justified by the works of the law and are constantly striving to

effect their own salvation. I have been listed among these people, and still have many friends there. But we know (I hope that I am included) that our justification is only in Jesus Christ in whom we believe. Jesus suffered shame, agony and death on the cross of Calvary that sinners such as you and I might live. He was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification. Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.

Let us now ask the question, how is it possible for Jesus to satisfy the law and justice by dying in our room and stead? Is there a law anywhere that would allow an innocent person to be slain for the guilty one? If such a law exists, can it be just? If a man be executed for a friend who is worthy of death, would his friend be any less guilty or less worthy of death? Would justice be served by slaying the innocent? Would not the executioners be guilty of murder? I believe justice would be perverted in such a case, yet we see Christ dying for us, the Just for the unjust.

God created man in his own image. Male and female created he them. And he called the man Adam. Adam was a figure of Him or an image of him that was to come, or Christ. An image or figure is an exact likeness. It may be made of wood, iron, clay, dust or some other material, and it may be smaller or larger, but it must portray the true body exactly. Therefore Adam was an exact likeness of Christ, and should be viewed in that perspective. Eve was created in Adam and is a type of the church, showing that

the church was in Christ before the foundation of the world. God took a rib from Adam and made it a woman, this representing the church being given to Christ for his bride. And Adam said, **"This is now bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh."** **The Church is the mystical body of Christ, "For we are members of his body, of his flesh. and of his bones. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery; but I speak concerning Christ and the church."** (Eph. 5: 30-32).

Exactly as Eve was to Adam so is the church to Christ, for the image must be perfect. Eve, the church, was deceived by the crooked serpent, ate of the forbidden fruit, and fell under the curse of the law. Adam, the figure of Christ, was not deceived, for that was not possible, but because of his great love for her, he partook of the forbidden fruit. The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second man is the Lord from heaven. The first Adam had no power to redeem his bride nor himself from the curse, therefore they must die, for God had said, "In the day thou eatest thereof, thou shalt surely die." Jesus Christ also loved his bride and would die with her, but in his Godhead he could not die, therefore he became incarnate. **"But when the fulness of time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, to redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons."** (Gal. 4: 4-5). **"Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and**

blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil." (Heb. 2:14). In his flesh, Christ could and did suffer and die to pay the penalty for his bride and redeem her from the curse of the law. Christ was righteous, he knew no sin, neither was guile found in his mouth and he kept the law to a jot and to a tittle, therefore the law had no claim against him, and in his righteousness he was the perfect sacrifice for his fallen bride. In a mystical sense she died with him and was buried with him by baptism into death. Jesus Christ, who is holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens, the only begotten Son of the Father, took all our sins upon himself and suffered the penalty of death in our stead. "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. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned everyone to his own way; and the Lord hath laid on him the iniquity of us all. 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: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. He shall see the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied; by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall

bear their iniquities." Read the whole 53rd chapter of Isaiah: it is so beautiful. Can any man comprehend the beauty of such a love as Christ bestowed upon his chosen people? Surely not! We may view it through a glass darkly, but we will never understand it fully in this sin filled life, because sin so dulls our vision.

"But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident; for the just shall live by faith." If we could attain unto righteousness by the works of the law, then Christ died in vain; the old covenant would still be in force, and there would be no new covenant of grace; but God has made a new covenant with the house of Israel, saying, "I will put my laws in their mind, and write them in their hearts; and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people." If we live, we must live by faith, and the law is not of faith. "Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us; for it is written, Cursed is everyone that hangeth on a tree." Paul said, "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." If we are what we hope to be, we can witness to this with faithful Paul. We are told by many that all we need do is have faith. This is true, but faith is not something we can take hold on at our leisure, as they would have us believe; for faith is a gift of God. "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God." As our sins and iniquities were charged unto our Savior, so is his righ-

teousness imputed unto us who believe in him.

"But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness." Abraham believed God and it was imputed unto him for righteousness, and if we walk in that same faith, righteousness shall also be imputed unto us, for we are his seed. "For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith." Why must it be by faith and not by the law? Because the law worketh wrath: for where no law is, there is no transgression. We are no longer under the law, for Christ is the end of the law to all who believeth. Therefore righteousness is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed. Is this not beautiful? Can a poor sinner find a better promise than this?

Abraham was strong in faith, and was fully persuaded, that what God had promised, he was able to perform, therefore his faith was imputed unto him for righteousness. Now it was not written for his sake alone, that it was imputed to him; but for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead; who was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification.

Brethren, if we believe in Jesus Christ, then we are in him and he is in us, and we were chosen in him before the foundation of the world.

I realize that I have only touched this vast subject, and it seems that my thoughts have been very scattered, but I

trust they are of the Lord, and that he might use them to glorify his gracious and holy name, and comfort and edify some of his blessed little children. Charge all errors to my account, and when at the throne of grace, may it be God's holy will that you remember this poor sinner.

Clifford Wilbanks
Louisiana

with him, " that when his glory shall be revealed, they may be glad also with exceeding joy." And this suffering with and for Christ in the furnace of affliction salts the soul, preserves it from corruption, communicates health, gives it savour and flavour, is a token of interest in the everlasting covenant, and is a seal of friendship and peace with God.

J.C. Philpot

IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 11/11
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE.

"Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you."- 1 PETER iv. 12.

The "fiery trial," then, is not a strange thing which happens only to a few of the Lord's family, but is the appointed lot of all. Do we not hear the Lord saying to his Zion, "I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction?" All then that are chosen must pass through the furnace of affliction, and all know experimentally the fiery trial, for by it they are made partakers of Christ's sufferings. But this is indispensable in order to be partakers of his glory. "If so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together." Thus they suffer

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ST. LUKE 9:57.

And it came to pass, that, as they went in the way, a certain *man* said unto him, Lord, I will follow thee whithersoever thou goest.

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*Sweet from bitter. light from darkness,
Good from evil God can bring;
Over all the clouds of sorrow
He a glorious light can fling.*

*Walking on the angry waters,
Jesus Christ is often seen;
Thus the rolling waves or trouble
Messengers of peace have been.*

*Prayers of saints are often answered
By some trying providence,
God unto our faith appearing
Not unto our sight und sense.*

*The believer thus discovers
He is foolish, God is wise;
Man is born to pain as surely
As the sparks will upward rise.*

*Seek not then, my soul, a pathway
Pleasing to the carnal mind;
Ask for grace, that in the roughest,
Thou mayest peace and profit find.*

*Ask thy God that from the bitter
Sweet may come, and that the light
Issuing from the clouds or darkness
Show you how that all is right.*

*O let my trembling soul be still,
And wait Thy wise, Thy holy will!
I cannot Lord, Thy purpose see,
Yet, all is well since ruled by Thee.*

Author Unknown

CONTENTS

EDITORIAL	266
Elder Cleo Robertson	
CORRESPONDENCE	269
ARTICLES	270
VOICES OF THE PAST	271
Elder William Quint	
Elder George Ruston	
Elder E. J. Lambert	
Elder C. W. Vaughn	
Elder Frederick W. Keene	
Elder D. V. Spangler	
J. C. Philpot	
CONTRIBUTIONS	288
OBITUARIES	288
Brother Curtis Cobb	

EDITORIAL

TITHING

Elder Cleo D. Robertson

To many it seems that tithing is the very foundation of salvation. They preach it often and try by every means possible to instill it in their followers.

Tithing is in fact the means of monetary support for their ministers, church staff, various programs, and missions. Tithe means tenth. So these are expected to give a tenth of their income to support their church. Certainly then, it is important to these people. However, is tithing

a commandment to the church in the day of grace as many claim? If so, why do Primitive Baptist not believe in it?

When God brought Israel out of Egypt and formed them into a nation, He gave them laws and a priesthood with Aaron as high priest. The tribe of Levi was the priesthood and was not to receive any inheritance with the other tribes as far as any land in Canaan was concerned. The Levites were not to grow crops or raise livestock, but were to conduct the services of the Lord and minister to the other tribes. Therefore, God commanded all the other tribes to give a tenth of their crops and livestock to the Levites. **Numbers 18:20-21, "And the Lord spake unto Aaron, Thou shalt have no inheritance in their land, neither shalt thou have any part among them: I am thy part and thine inheritance among the children of Israel. And, behold, I have given the children of Levi all the tenth in Israel for an inheritance, for their service which they serve, even the service of the tabernacle of the congregation."** God told Moses that the Levites were to take a tenth part of the tithe, the best part, and offer a heave offering for the Lord and they were to eat the remainder. Hebrews 7:5 says, **"And verily they that are of the sons of Levi, who receive the office of the priesthood, have a commandment to take tithes of the people according to the law, that is, of their brethren, though they come out of the loins of Abraham."**

Thus, God commanded Israel to tithe or give a tenth part to the levites or

priesthood for the purpose of offerings to the Lord and to feed the priests. In addition, every third year there was to be tithe for the stranger, the fatherless, and the widow. This commandment was given to no other people or nation and was a necessary part of the Levitical Priesthood. This priesthood had a beginning and an end. It was under the first covenant or law covenant. The office of high priest of this covenant was filled by men who were sinners as you and I; by men who died and another would take their place; by men who could not atone for the sins of themselves or the people; by men who offered sacrifices and offerings that were only types and shadows of better things. If the first covenant had been faultless then should no place have been sought for the second. But, the first could not save anyone from his sins. Rather, it brought condemnation and the ministration of death. Therefore, the Lord said, I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah. I will put my laws into their minds and write them in their hearts; and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people. Christ is the mediator of a better covenant established upon better promises.

The Levitical Priesthood made nothing perfect. It could not cleanse anyone. Therefore, it was necessary that another priest should rise after the order of Melchisedec and not after the order of Aaron. Christ is our high priest without beginning of days or end of life. He abideth a priest forever. Our high priest can be touched with the feeling of our infirmities and was in all points

tempted as we are, yet without sin. Christ, as our high priest, doesn't need to offer sacrifices daily as did the ones under the Levitical priesthood. He offered up himself once and it was sufficient. "Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them."

Now, there being a change in the priesthood, there must also be a change in the law. Hence, the new covenant with God's laws being put into your minds and written in your hearts. Since there is a change in the priesthood and in the law, what need is there for tithing? What can you give Christ? Rather, it is he who gives to you. Would your money help spread the gospel? The scripture says that the word goeth forth out of his mouth and shall not return unto him void, but shall accomplish that which he pleases, and shall prosper in the thing whereto he sent it. Tithing can't take the gospel anywhere. There is no precious little lamb of God that will be too far away or in such great affliction that the word of God cannot come to where he or she is. It came to the one thief on the cross in his dying moments. It came to the man with an unclean spirit dwelling among the tombs, crying, and cutting himself with stones. This is the experience of a child of God under the conviction of sin condemned under the law who sees only death. The word came and the man fell at his feet and worshipped Christ. He was now clothed and in his right mind.

There is no commandment in the new testament by Christ or instruction

by his apostles to the gospel church to tithe. The Apostle Paul speaks of it only in reference to the Levitical Priesthood and Christ mentions it twice and both times in relation to the scribes and Pharisees. The scribes and Pharisees believed that one must keep the law under the first covenant in order to obtain salvation. In Matthew 23:23, Christ said, **“Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye pay tithe of mint and anise and cummin, and have omitted the weightier matters of the law, judgment, mercy, and faith: these ought ye to have done, and not to leave the other undone.”** In other words, “Whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.” The scribes and Pharisees claimed to be so religious and boasted of keeping the law, yet they could not any more than we can. They did not know Christ who fulfilled the law to a jot and tittle for his little flock. The second occasion that Christ spoke of tithing was Luke 18:9-14, **“And he spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others: Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God, I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess. And the publican, standing afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his**

breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted.” People like to boast of all that they do for the Lord. However, it is “by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast.” God’s humbled poor would but cry: when did we do any of these things? The book of Hebrews mentions tithes only in reference to the Levitical priesthood.

Certainly, we are not to neglect those brethren who are in need of some natural assistance in this life, or the expenses of our ministers, or the maintenance of our church properties. The Apostle Paul admonished the Church at Corinth, “Now concerning the collection for the saints, as I have given order to the churches of Galatia, even so do ye.” This collection was for the poor in Jerusalem. In Romans Paul says that we are to distribute to the necessity of saints. In his epistle to the Corinthians, Paul also says, “If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things?” Our brethren are very diligent in caring for the needs of their brethren in this world, the expenses of their ministers, and repair of the church properties.

To summarize, tithing was commanded only under the law covenant for the necessity of the Levitical Priesthood. No where is it set forth for the gospel church. When the Levitical Priesthood ended, there was a change in the law. A

new covenant was given with Christ as high priest and therefore, a completely different priesthood. Our high priest doesn't need tithes and offerings. He has all power and authority .”He doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth: and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, what doest thou?” The Lord said, “For every beast of the forest is mine, and the cattle upon a thousand hills. I know all the fowls of the mountains; and the wild beasts of the field are mine. If I were hungry, I would not tell thee: for the world is mine, and the fulness thereof.” Whose image is on all the money? Man's! As Christ instructed his disciples, “Render therefore unto Caesar the things which are Caesar's; and unto God the things that are God's.” If he needed our money or help in any way, he would not be the true and living God.

May the Lord keep us ever humble before him in love esteeming our brethren better than ourselves.

Elder Cleo Robertson

CORINTHIANS 12: 6-8.

And there are diversities of operations. but it is the same God which worketh all in all.

But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal.

For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit.

CORRESPONDENCE

Please renew my subscription for the Signs of the Times. I have been with my daughter for some time but now I am back in Louisiana at this address:

Katherine Mathews
2140 Airline Dr. - Apt. 142
Bossier City, LA 71111

I am sending a check for \$30.00 for 2 years any left use it as you see fit.

Thanks so much - I love the Signs so much it keeps getting better all the time.

We have had to close our church doors - as my brother David Godwin, our minister is or will be 103 years of age but still God has kept his mind clear on scripture, and other things as well.

May God Bless you all at the Signs and just keep bringing us good true reading.

Katherine Mathews

October 3, 2011

Dear Brother Horton,

Please renew my Signs of the Times for 2 years.

I really enjoy reading my Signs and thanks for every one who helps with the Signs.

Thanks,
Sister Sallie Hodges

ARTICLES

***“Sovereign Ruler of the skies,
Ever gracious, ever wise.
All my times are in His hand,
All events at His command.”***

I was awakened around 2 a.m. this night with the above lines running through my mind. I believe it is the first verse of a song. I lay there in the darkness, thinking about it and my feeble mind could not begin to grasp the depth and meaning of those words. Oh, how much is expressed in those four little lines. Truly, He is the ruler not only of the skies, but He created them, as well as everything else - the earth, land and waters, the rocks and mountains - everything that is in existence. The gentle breezes and the loud howling winds with their destructive powers are part of His handiwork. Nothing exists that He did not create or fix. Last of all He created poor puny man both male and female out of the dust which the winds blow around. He gave the man love for the woman which was created from man's rib and made the woman to cleave to the man.

Lying there in the darkness I tried to imagine the greatness of this God who fixed and ordained everything just as He would have it to be. If not, why not? He has all power over everything He created and each thing moves, acts, or turns at His will and purpose.

He is so great He fills the world, the heavens and the seas, yet He is small enough to come into the heart of His chosen ones.

Truly, He is ever gracious, ever wise. The devil was in His mind and purpose through the serpent which was also His creation, put here for the purpose which he fulfilled.

This is too mysterious for my little mind to fathom. I can only get a glimpse sometimes of these things but when I try to express what I hope I see it leaves me.

I am so weak and helpless, depending on Him for everything, my every breath. He decreed who my natural parents were and the place of my birth. If I have a second birth it was also given by Him. All my trials, troubles and afflictions were appointed before the world was created, as well as my joys and my hope of Life Eternal. May I ever praise Him who doeth all things well.

By: Sister Edrie Clifton
Elder Bennie Clifton's Widow.
7-2-1999

PSALM 17: 7.

Shew thy marvellous loving-kindness, O thou that savest by thy right hand them which put their trust in thee from those that rise up against them.

VOICES OF THE PAST

**NORTH BERWICK, Me.,
Nov. 8, 1883.**

THE following letter was read in our last church meeting, and the church was so much edified in it that it was their wish that it should be published in the SIGNS OF THE TIMES. I will now inform the readers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES that on Sunday, the 4th of this month, I had the pleasure of baptizing her in the name of Christ. That morning it looked like it would be a stormy day, and as she lived seven or eight mites from, the meeting house, it looked very doubtful about her being there that day. But she ventured to start, and by the time she arrived at the meeting house the clouds began to break, and by the time meeting was out the sun shone bright and warm, so that we had a pleasant time in going to the water and in administering that gospel ordinance. We felt to say that not only the natural sun, but the Son of Righteousness did shine in its glory on us.

WM. QUINT.

NORTH BERWICK, Me.,
Jan. 3, 1884.

BRETHREN BEEBE: - As I have sent you a letter that sister A. G. Clark wrote, telling us the travel of her mind before she was baptized, I now send one that she wrote two weeks after she was

baptized, and I think that the readers of the SIGNS OF THE TIMES would like to read this one. Yours as ever,

WM. QUINT.

SPRINGVALE, Me., Oct. 8, 1883.

ELDER WM. QUINT-RESPECTED FRIEND :-I dare not call you brother, because I know that I am not worthy. No doubt you will be surprised when you see the name of the author of this letter; but the desire to communicate with some one on the subject of religion must be my excuse. Please bear with me as patiently as you can, while I try to tell in my feeble way of the many and devious ways through which I have wandered, like one blindfolded; but please do not make it too public, for I do not wish to thrust myself into notice, but would rather shrink out of sight. Of course I am willing you should speak of it to my sisters, Mrs. Staples and Mrs. Chadbourne, although we have never talked on the subject. To begin with my childhood, I suppose I was rather a wayward, peculiar tempered child; but from my earliest recollections, at times, I have had awful and serious thoughts of the future, death and eternity, and what would be my portion in a future state. When a very small girl, attending school, I had such overpowering feelings come over me on the subject, that to get rid of them I have got excused from the schoolroom and gone out to run and play for awhile; but I never told anyone my feelings, and do not think they were suspected. At that time I did

not have any realization or sense of being a sinner, only in a sort of general way, as I had been taught that we were all sinners. But I had a strong desire to be a christian. I remember once reading a little book for children, in which the Savior was represented as a shepherd carrying the lambs in his arms, and I had such yearning to be one of his lambs; but still I had no strong conviction of being a sinner more than others. The Old School Baptists used to visit at our house, and I would hear them talking, and would listen attentively to their conversation; still I think no one ever suspected me of being at all interested in what they were talking about. And sometimes I heard some good old saint give an exhortation in meeting, and relate some of their own experience, and tell of going away alone to pray; and I would think that if they were christians, (and I never for a moment doubted it), perhaps if I would go away by myself and pray, I, too, might become one. And I have wandered away to some secluded place for that purpose, when it would seem to me to be almost blasphemous, and I would not even dare to fall on my knees; and if I did get as far as that, I neither knew how to pray nor what to pray for. I remained in this frame of mind until about the time I was fourteen years of age, when I went to Great Falls to work in the mill, and for a time attended the New School Baptist meetings. I have no recollection of any serious impressions at that time, only after a time I began to reason like this, that the Baptist doctrine was selfish anyway; that the Bible said, "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye

to the waters ;" and it seemed to me like chaining one who was starving, and placing food, just out of reach, and saying, Help yourself. After awhile I began to attend the Methodist meetings. and they seemed to be decidedly more generous. Still, if I became a christian according to their creed, I must work for it, and must attend all the "means of grace," as they call it.

And although I was fond of attending their meetings, I could not for many years get up courage to rise in public for prayers, which is part of their form of worship; and as it is not agreeable to my nature to be an object of public attention, it was a great trial; but at last I gave in. I was then living at Lewiston. One evening, at a prayer meeting, the invitation being given to those wishing to become christians to rise, I struggled to my feet. A few days after, the pastor called on me, and in the course of our conversation I related to him the foregoing narrative in substance; and I think I need not tell you that I was very much disappointed and surprised when he said to me that I had told a good christian experience. I did not believe it then nor do I now. I had not had one ray of hope, nor a taste of the peace that passeth understanding; indeed I do not think I had a true sense of my real condition as a blind, miserable sinner. But he addressed me as sister ever after, and requested me to attend the class-meeting, where each one is called upon to relate their week's experience. There was one held in an upstairs tenement, in the house where I lived, and I had sometimes stealthily crept out on the stairs

and listened to the praying and singing. So when they invited me to go in I did so; but when they called on me to tell of the dealings of the Lord with me during the past week, I rose to my feet, but my tongue refused to perform its office. The pastor himself was present, and came to the rescue by telling the class leader, "The sister has just found the Savior," whereas I had not found him at all. I did not feel his blood applied to me to cleanse me from sin. Although I did not doubt its power for others, it did not seem to be for such as I to receive. I attended class-meeting but a few times, and left the town, and then could not say anything like what seemed to me to be christian experience; but they all spoke to me as if they thought I was a christian, whereas I did not feel one whit different than I had for years, only that I had let people know that I wanted to be a christian. Shortly after this I was called away for a short time. After my return the minister talked to me, and told me that they were to have a baptism, and he wished me to go forward. I objected, as I did not feel that I was a fit subject. They had had a church gathering, and the candidates had given in their experience. He said he could present my case to the church, and I need not be obliged to relate an experience. I did not feel right about it, as I did not feel a sense of sins forgiven; but he urged and advised until I thought perhaps if I went forward I might feel better; so I allowed myself to be overpersuaded, and was "smuggled" into the church by sprinkling, a mode of baptism I do not believe in, and without a clear idea of its sacredness. But it

made no difference with my feelings. I very soon found that I could not keep my religion, nor my religion keep me. About that time I left Lewiston for good, and went to Great Falls. They gave me a letter to the church there, and although urged to hand it in, I did not, and finally put it into the fire. Now comes the worst of this narrative. At that time there was a band of Spiritualists there, and I got hold of Spiritualism, or that got hold of me, and then for a few years I was a believer in that. Still I could not, as some of them did, ridicule the Bible or christians; yet I did say (and I tell it to my shame) that I thought that Christ lived our example, but did not die our sacrifice; and that has caused me more wretched hours than anything else. I said, too, that when I gave up Spiritualism I should not believe anything; but by strange circumstances I was released from that snare, and then truly for a long time I doubted everything, the Bible and christianity; and about everything good. Those were truly dark days. I had an awful sense of my guilt and condemnation all the time, with all my doubts. At length my belief in the Bible and the truth of christianity was restored, but my sins seemed ten times more heinous. I felt as if I had committed the unpardonable sin, and the fourth, fifth and six verses of the sixth chapter of the epistle to the Hebrews were all the time before me, and all that kept me from despair was the thought that although I had allowed myself to be drawn into the church, I had never "tasted of the heavenly gift." I cannot tell exactly how long I was in this frame of mind, but it was a long time. At length one day, two

years ago last January, I was sitting and running a sewing machine, and thinking of my sinful condition, when I began to sing a hymn which the Methodists sing in connection with the invitation to go forward for prayers, commencing,

"Come, humble sinner, in whose breast

A thousand thoughts revolve."

When I have got to the last verse, which reads,

*"Perhaps he will admit my plea,
Perhaps will hear my prayer;
But if I perish I will pray,
And perish only there,"*

I felt that I could do nothing, and that Christ alone could save me. At once a calm came over my troubled spirit. I seemed to feel that my sins were forgiven. Still I hardly dared to hope in his mercy, for I felt myself to be the chief of sinners. Yet for weeks I did truly and for the first time enjoy that peace that passeth all understanding. One year ago last September it was ordered so that I attended the yearly meeting of the Primitive Baptists at Oakwoods, and it seemed to me that I never had heard preaching before; and this year I attended again, when I heard so much of my own feelings portrayed that I felt emboldened to pen this. I hardly know why, only that I wanted to. I have many doubts and fears, and hardly dare hope, for it seems almost impossible that there can be mercy for so vile a sinner as me. Yet I never have felt a return of that feeling

of almost despair, since I first felt the calm I have spoken of. But O! I do not want to deceive, nor be deceived. If my hope is genuine, to God be all the praise, for nothing but his almighty power has wrought the change. I might write more, but this perhaps is more than will be at all edifying; so I will close by subscribing myself a poor, blind, unworthy sinner.

ABBY G. CLARK.

P. S. - In looking this over I see I have omitted to speak of what I most wanted to. Sometimes I have had a strong desire to cast in my lot with the Oakwoods Church, but fear I am not worthy. My hope is so faint, yet I cannot give it up. I cling as a drowning man to a straw, yet I dare not ask the good men and women of the church to receive me as a sister, for I fear they would think it the height of presumption. Will you tell me candidly if you think my hope is well grounded? I know it will make no difference, but I feel so small and weak that I feel like calling for help.

Abby G. Clark
1826-1922.

SHAW'S RIDGE, Me.,
Nov. 18, 1883.

ELDER QUINT - KIND FRIEND: - Two weeks have passed since I was led into the water by you in the ordinance of baptism. At that time my sister wished to know the state of my mind after coming out of the water. I told her I could

hardly tell then, as I am not as impulsive as some in regard to my feelings. But I have since thought, perhaps it might be interesting to her, and others who so kindly gave consent to receive unworthy me as a sister in the church, to know something of the state of my feelings since that day. Of the day itself I can truly say it was peaceful. I felt that I was doing right. I had been led to suppose it must of necessity be a great cross. But it did not seem thus to me at that time. It was what I had an anxious desire to do; and as the way was opened, I went steadily forward with no thought of what this or that one might say, so long as the church saw fit to accept me. The following day was one of the best days I ever knew. And finally, ever since I have had more than an ordinary degree of peace. But O what if I am deceiving myself! Before I had obtained peace or hope in Christ, all enjoyment in the things of this life was torn from my grasp, and I was left quite or nearly in despair. I thought it was decreed that there was no good thing for me, either temporal or spiritual. Still I felt that God would be just in casting me off. I know we read that "God is love;" but how can he love me?

It is my sincere prayer, in all humility, that I may never bring a reproach upon the church. But I have many fears at times that I may not be able to walk worthy of my profession; that I shall not be able to keep myself; forgetting for a time that it is impossible for me to do so, in and of myself. At such times the closing words of Jude have been very encouraging and soothing to my mind. Perhaps you may think it a strange pas-

sage to look to for help. But to one who has learned that they cannot keep themselves, are not the words comforting, "Him that is able to keep you from falling."

Abby G. Clark.
1826 -1922.

"And the cup was found in Benjamin's sack." (Genesis 44:12)

The sons of Jacob had already been down to Egypt for corn, and had left Simeon there bound and in prison. When the corn was gone their father said unto them, "Go again, and buy us a little food." Judah assured his father that they could not possibly go unless Benjamin accompanied them. Jacob hesitated, for he had lost Joseph, and Benjamin, the only remaining child of his beloved wife Rachel, was very dear to him; but at last he bade them take of the fruit and carry it down to the man as a present. Also said he, Take double money in your hand, and the money that ye brought again in the mouth of your sacks, carry it again in your hand, and take Benjamin; and Jacob concluded, "If I be bereaved of my children, I am bereaved."

They returned to Egypt with Benjamin, and when Joseph saw them, he commanded the ruler of his house to slay and make ready, for these men shall dine with me at noon. The brethren were filled with fear because they were brought into Joseph's house, thinking that Joseph sought occasion against them. They communed with the steward

of Joseph's house regarding the money that was returned in their sacks, but he said, "Peace be to you! fear not." When Joseph came home they bowed themselves to him to the earth, and he lifted up his eyes and saw his brother Benjamin, his own mother's son, and said, "Is this your younger brother, of whom ye spake unto me? And he said, God be gracious unto thee, my son."

Joseph made haste, for his bowels did yearn upon his brother, he sought where to weep, and entered his chamber and wept there. After he had washed his face and refrained himself, he commanded his servants to set on bread. His brethren were then seated before him, the first-born according to his birth-right, and the youngest according to his youth; and the men marvelled one at another. And Joseph sent messes unto them from before him, but Benjamin's-mess was five times as much as any of theirs. Then Joseph commanded his steward to fill their sacks with food, as much as they could carry, and to put every man's money in his sack's mouth; and to put his silver cup in the sack's mouth of the youngest, as well as his corn money.

When they were gone out of the city, and not yet far off, Joseph commanded the steward, "Up, follow after the men; and when thou dost overtake them, say unto them, 'Wherefore have ye rewarded evil for good?' He overtook them, and spake unto them these words. Then took they down every man his sack to the ground, and opened every man his sack. The search began at the eldest and left at the youngest, "and the cup was found

in Benjamin's sack."

Here we shall cease to follow the narrative, as our intention is to write of the cup in its spiritual significance; also of the characters with whom this cup is found. Rachel, the beloved wife of Jacob, bear him two sons: Joseph first and then Benjamin. Jacob loved Joseph more than all his sons, and Benjamin, being the youngest, was also greatly beloved, for it is written, Jacob's life was bound up in the lad's life. Joseph was therefore Benjamin's elder brother, and Joseph being a lively type of Christ, Benjamin, to our understanding, is a wonderful type of the church in the gospel dispensation. The steward is the servant of Joseph, and represents the gospel ministers, who are stewards of the manifold grace of God.

It was the steward who ministered to the brethren when in distress over their returned money. He said, "Peace be to you! fear not: your God, and the God of your father, hath given you treasure in your sacks." He it was also who searched the sacks; he stood in Joseph's stead and spoke the words given him by Joseph. He also declared that they had the divining cup, and they denied it, for the thing was impossible with them. So wherever there are those whose iniquities encompass them around, they stand before their Judge self-condemned, depending entirely upon the mercy of him with whom they have to do. Such, in their confession, deny that they have the cup.

The cup represents the sorrows, travail and separation which Joseph experienced while passing through the afflict-

ions that were his lot according to God's purpose. The cup therefore was a type of the cup of our Lord Jesus Christ. He came down to the Egypt of this world where he was crucified, was sold by his brethren, and at Gethsemane he said, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death." He fell on his face and prayed, saying, "Oh my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me! never-the-less, not as I will, but as thou wilt."

"How bitter that cup, no heart can conceive,

Which he drank quite up that sinners might live."

As Joseph partook of his cup, he divined the very things transpiring in his life to be according to the purpose of God revealed to him in the two dreams given him long ago. It was in a sense of loneliness he partook of that cup. It could not be shared with the Egyptians: he was alone. As our Lord partook of his cup, he divined, and could say, "This day is this scripture fulfilled in your ears." He had a full cup. "He was oppressed, and he was afflicted; yet he opened not his mouth: he is brought as a lamb to the slaughter, and as a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he openeth not his mouth." This blessed Person is none other than our Elder Brother, though we knew it not. We have seen him pierced, and we mourn for him; when brought into judgment, we expect chains and death, and say, "What shall we speak?" We know not what to say, nor how to clear ourselves.

The brethren on their second visit for corn, dined with Joseph; and it is written, "Joseph made haste, for his bowels did yearn upon his brother: and he sought where to weep; and he entered into his chamber, and wept there. Whilst here on earth our dear Redeemer ate with publicans and sinners, and his bowels of love yearned over them. Often in the secret chamber of his solitary life, he offered supplication with strong cries and tears for them, and for all his brethren. It is said that Joseph took and sent messes unto all of them from before him, but Benjamin's mess was five times so much as any of their's.

The least notice or favor of our Lord to a poor sinner, is not according to good works, but according to his love, and love is the fulfilling of the law. While the brethren representing the Jews received the law, yet Benjamin (the gospel church) received five times as much: which signifies a fulfilled law. With those who are born of the same mother (Jerusalem above) the cup is found. They say it is not in their sack of life, yet they are grieved for the afflictions of Joseph: they are vile, sinful. When they would do good, evil is present with them. This is my cup. Yet when it is shown to them, they tremble, for they fear it is stolen, that they are taking that which belongs to another. They feel God-forsaken, are fearful of death and offer supplications with strong cries and tears; they hate sin, but find it in their members, and are made to cry out, "Not my will, but thine be done."

As the steward, or preacher, by the Holy Spirit's guidance, searches, the cup

is found: and it is in Benjamin's sack; that is, in his who is the smallest and least in the family. There is little Benjamin with their Ruler, partaking of the same cup. "And of Benjamin he said, The beloved of the Lord shall dwell in safety by him; and the Lord shall cover him all the day long, and he shall dwell between his shoulders."

The rest of the brethren could return to their father, but Benjamin shall dwell in safety by him. Only in a realizing sense of our own weakness, is there safety, and then we know we have no righteousness; nevertheless our near kinsman Jesus the Lord shall cover us with his righteousness all the day long, and we shall dwell between his shoulders. What a safe place for poor weak sinners: between his shoulders. He carries the lambs in his bosom. It is also written, "The government shall be upon his shoulder." As partakers of his cup, though babes, they yet divine and see things that are hid from the wise and prudent. They clearly discern what holy men of old wrote as moved by the Holy Ghost. To the Jews under the legal covenant, it was not revealed, but it is revealed unto us. In these things we have fellowship with God, and are partakers of his cup. Not one shall come short of his glory, for if we suffer with him, we shall also reign with him. The father's life was bound up in the life of the child. Jesus, our Elder Brother, is God-man, therefore in him God's life is bound up in our life.

As Joseph made himself known unto his brethren, so does our Lord Jesus make himself known with the glory of a risen Lord, who, like a bridegroom

coming out of his chamber, rejoiceth as a strong man to run a race. He showed to the two disciples on their way to Emmaus that his going forth is from the end of heaven, and his circuit unto the ends of it. His blessed presence gives joy and gladness; and the five changes of raiment given Benjamin, are but a faint type of the blessed raiment with which, from time to time, his bride, the gospel church is adorned.

Elder George Ruston

(The above Editorial by Elder Ruston was published in the Signs August 1, 1923. It was his first after his announcement that he would consent to be an associate editor.)

ROMANS 5: 1-5.

Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:

By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience.

And patience, experience; and experience, hope:

And hope maketh not ashamed; because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us.

HOW LONG HALT YE BETWEEN TWO OPINIONS?

“And Elijah came unto all the people, and said, How long halt ye between two opinions? If the Lord be God, follow him: but if Baal, then follow him. And the people answered him not a word.” - 1 Kings 18:21.

This text has been misinterpreted and misapplied by many worldly wise professors. Most of the people try to change this important question that Elijah asked to WHY halt ye between two opinions, and they try to make it applicable to the whole Adamic family. This question does not even favor WHY but HOW LONG halt ye between two opinions? You will find by reading the context that the question does not apply to the entire Adamic race but specially to the children of Israel. I believe Elijah knew how long they would halt between two opinions.

He knew that they would halt between two opinions until God made himself manifest unto them that he was God. Then they would cease to halt between two opinions. I think that this text was for the specific purpose of showing Israel that the Lord was God; and to eradicate the other opinion that was possessing their hearts that Baal was God. Baal had 450 prophets and Elijah was the only true prophet at that time. The hearts of the children of Israel were halting between two opinions. Outwardly, Baal had 450 prophets to one of the Lord. False prophets today are about the same ratio and even the children of God, when

left to themselves, wonder if there is something to their false doctrine — seeing that they have so many advocates. You will notice, in the text, that Baal’s prophets were to choose between two bullocks. False prophets today make their own choice, they even advocate that the people may choose their Saviour and direct their own steps and seal their own destinies. This is a false opinion as we hear Jesus saying: “Ye have not chosen me, but I have chosen you.” Yes, Paul wrote to the Thessalonians that “God hath from the beginning chosen you.” Peter said: “Ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood.” Paul writes to the Ephesians: “According as he hath chosen us in him.” This is the opinion as rendered in the Bible, which is different from the opinion as advocated by the false prophets. Thus here are two opinions; one is opposite to the other. False opinion: You are obliged to choose God. True opinion: God hath chosen his people. This false opinion will even be in the hearts of God’s people until God sees fit to burn out this false opinion by making himself manifest. Baal’s 450 prophets were to have the choice of the two bullocks, the first call to their gods and the heat of the day as well as the dry wood on the altar to prove their gods. They called loud and long and even cut themselves until blood gushed forth for their gods to answer by fire. At the time of the evening sacrifice, Elijah repaired the altar by building one of twelve stones and ordered great quantities of water to be poured on the wood and around the altar, so as to fill a trench. After doing this he prayed qui-

etly to the Lord to make himself manifest and to prove to Israel that he was the Lord God and that he had turned their hearts back again. **“Then the fire of the Lord fell, and consumed the burnt sacrifice, and the wood, and the stones, and the dust, and licked up the water that was in the trench. And when all the people saw it, they fell on their faces: and they said, The Lord, he is the God; the Lord, he is the God.” 1 Kings 18:38-39.**

Yes, our God is a consuming fire and it burned up every trace of man's work and left nothing. The false opinion had been burned from the hearts of this people and then (not before) did they cease to halt between two opinions.

Dear child of God, have you not experienced the consuming fire of Israel's God? Have you not experienced the burning that consumed every false opinion; all of your self-righteousness; every ounce of your seeming ability - in fact - everything, deed, or thought that you had ever trusted in in a natural way? Yes, our natural opinion is that we can direct our steps. The opinion as stated in the Bible is, “It is not in man that walketh to direct his steps.” How long will ye halt between the two opinions? Ye will halt between the two opinions until God the Lord makes himself manifest by proving to you that you cannot walk as you would. It is the opinion of the natural man that he can choose light; yet, the true opinion is that man chooses darkness rather than light. The opinion of man is that the natural man can receive the things of the Spirit and by studying and applying himself know them. This opinion is a con-

trast to the scripture; “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.” Man's opinion is, that surely, part of the way to heaven and eternal life is by the works of the creature. Yet, the opinion of the Bible is: “For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.” Peter was halting beteen opinions on the mountain of transfiguration when he said: “let us make three tabernacles; one for thee, and one for Moses, and one for Elias.” I think Moses represents the law and Elias represents prophecy in that trio. Peter was halting between two opinions as to which should be given the most honor. He continued to halt between these opinions until Moses and Eljas disappeared and the Lord God answered from the cloud and said: “This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him.” The false opinion of the law having any dominion over God's children was eradicated. We hear Jesus saying: “I am the way, the truth, and the life.” Then it is not part by law and part of grace but solely an unmerited favor through Jesus Christ. The opinion of some men is that they are enabled through the act of regeneration to perform or not to perform upon volition of their own will and receive blessings in this time because of their obedience and cursings because of their disobedience notwithstanding the scriptures which say: “Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until

the day of Jesus Christ." Also, "For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure." And many other scriptures too numerous to mention which is in contrast to this false opinion. It is the opinion of man that he can live perfect in this present life. This opinion is not in accord with apostolic experiences, therefore, it is a false opinion that must be burned out. People of God will halt between these two opinions - opinion of man and opinion of God - until the opinion of man is burned out. The opinion of the apostle is plain: "when I would do good, evil is present with me." "For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that I do not; but what I hate, that do I." And "I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me." Also, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

So, we are hoping; and looking forward to the day when this corruptible should put on incorruption and this mortal shall put on immortality and this natural body shall be raised a spiritual body. Yes, we are awaiting the time when the creature shall be delivered out of the bondage of corruption unto the glorious liberties of the children of God, then we will cease from every false opinion.

(Elder) E. J. LAMBERT.

"The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him; and he will show them his covenant." — Psalm 25:14.

We know of no other scripture that contains so much meaning, and is of such vital importance to the child of God. David speaks with much assurance as to the dwelling place of the secret of the Lord, and he also declares that, "**He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.**" **Psalm 91:1.** We hope we have some feeling relative to the secret of the Lord, and being fearful of his wrath being poured out against us. The secret of the Lord was in the beginning with God, and some of the revealed things of God as recorded in the Bible are his love, predestination, election and the calling of the saints to glory through grace given in Christ Jesus, his Son. Strange as it may seem to the carnal mind, no one has learned this secret through tradition, or the keeping of the commandments of men, but "the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom," and the secret of the Lord is revealed to the one fearing the Lord. It is God that is working in him both to will and to do of his good pleasure and the demonstration of spirit and power manifested makes every one fear him, but instead of his wrath he shows mercy which reveals the secret of the Lord toward a poor sinner. We recall the parable of the prodigal son spoken by Jesus to the scribes and Pharisees. All the time of his life the love of his father was a secret in the heart of his father until all his

substance was wasted; then he remembered his father's house with its abundance of everything necessary, but his unworthiness was realized which brought him to repentance, but the secret of his father's love did not fail which caused him to kill the fatted calf, put on him the best robe, a ring on his hand and shoes on his feet. The father treasured the secret of his love for his son all the time of his waywardness from him. Those that have the secret of the Lord shall rest or abide under the shadow of the Almighty, and he will shew them his covenant. God made his covenant with Abraham and fulfilled that covenant in the flesh; those that were exercised by the Spirit of God realized his power over their mortal flesh, but this is not the covenant David is referring to for he was led by the Spirit of God. We believe the covenant ordered in all things and sure is the covenant that is shown to those that fear the Lord. **"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. And they shall teach no more every man his neighbour; and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord: for I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more."** Jer. 31:33-34. **"Whereof the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us: for after that he had said before, This is the covenant that I will make**

with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them; And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more." Heb. 10:15-17, We quote from the apostle Paul as he continues in this chapter, **"Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin, Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; and having an high priest over the house of God; Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water. Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised); And let us consider one another to provoke unto love and to good works: Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is but exhorting one another: and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching."** We have given you the quotation of Paul's exhortation to the brethren recorded in the tenth chapter of Hebrews. This exhortation is to those that fear God and have within their inward parts God's covenant, and all of like precious faith expect the fruit the spirit will manifest, and see them as Paul contending that they, by the blood of Jesus, enter into the holiest of holy. How sweet it is to meet with such precious ones, and hear them tell of the rev-

elation of God to them when they were so cast down, with no one to pity or hand to help, and when the riches of God's grace was opened to them they could see him pure, holy and undefiled, which caused them to exclaim, oh! I am so vile and unworthy to come into his presence, but Jesus says, **"Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart; and ye shall find rest unto your souls."** Matt. 11:28-29. Those that fear God have in abundance hearts filled with groanings.

*Prayer is the soul's sincere desire.
Unuttered or expressed;
The motion of a hidden fire.
That trembles in the breast.*

*Prayer is the burden of a sigh.
The falling of a tear;
The upward glancing of an eye,
When none but God is near.*

*Prayer is the simplest form of
speech
That infant lips can try;
Prayer the sublimest strains that
reach
The Majesty on high.*

*Prayer is the christian's vital
breath.
The christian's vital air;
The watchword at the gate of death;
He enters heaven with prayer.*

The last words in the above hymn says, "He enters heaven with prayer." Ac-

ording to me Scriptures we are made to question for the prayer of the saint has been answered, and he is filled with praise and caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, to ever be with the Lord. Then the fulness of the secret of the Lord will be revealed. As we write unto the household of faith expressing words of truth, we question whether these wonderful things are for a poor sinner like the writer, and it is while viewing these glorious things we feel they are for a sinner like we feel to be, but we feel assured they belong to the child of God those home is in heaven. We have had demonstrations proving that the salvation of a sinner is by grace and grace alone, and by the revelation of God through Christ Jesus and the Holy Ghost the gospel is preached and the flock of God fed and built up. It is written **"that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope."** Rom. 15:4. The scriptures cannot give life, but being born again and passing through tribulation which worketh patience, and the spirit taking of the things of God written in the scriptures and showing them unto us, we have hope in the mercy of God, and the secret of the Lord is opened to every one that is taught of God. According to the measure of the grace of God given, they are made to live in the church of God militant, or in this time state, and fill the place in a living body, the bride of Christ, the pillar and ground of the truth, We truly hope everyone reading these lines will examine themselves as to whether they are in the faith, and are obedient unto the commandments given to them in

their heart to follow in the ordinances of the church of God as you feel one who is Christlike should walk. To us, who have made a profession before men and to the church of God, all the epistles are directed as much as if we had lived in the church to which it was written at the time it was written, and we should not put them off, saying they were for others and not for us, We have a secret in our own hearts of the sufferings for sin in ourselves but God knoweth our hearts, Submitted in love.

Elder C.W. Vaughn
July, 1945

The Old School Baptist Conference of Maine, assembled with the church in North Berwick, sendeth greeting to the churches composing the associations with whom she corresponds. (1901)

DEAR BRETREN, BELOVED IN OUR LORD JESUS CHRIST: - We much desire your peace and prosperity in the kingdom of Christ. We well know from divine teaching that our prosperity cometh only from the Lord, and the cry of the church is, "Send now prosperity." We need God's heavenly husbandry that we, his garden and vineyard may flourish in his sight. We need our gracious Lord to dress and keep the plants that his own right hand hath planted, then,
"Each moment watered by his care,

*And fenced with power divine,
Fruit to eternal life shall bear
The feeblest branch of thine."*

Our times in this world (like all the times that the church has experienced in the preceding ages) are such that we need to be well fenced with the loving-kindness of the Lord or else all they which pass by the way will pluck the vineyard and the boar out of the wood, and the wild beast of the field will waste and devour us. (Psalm 80: 12, 13.) It is written for our comfort, "**Thou Lord, wilt bless the righteous, with favor wilt thou compass him as *with a shield.***"—Psalms 5:12, and, "**He that trusteth in the Lord, mercy shall compass him about.**"- Psalm 32:10. Thus hedged in by our God, and nourished by his doctrine, the churches shall flourish to the praise of the Lord. There are indications that in some parts of our land, inroads in the vineyard have already been made by the wild beast of the field. Perverse disputers of the doctrine of grace have risen up teaching perverse things to draw away disciples after them, and bringing into bondage some of the blood-bought saints of God.

The members of Christ's body do not thrive upon erroneous doctrines, but the pernicious effects of the entrance of that which is contrary to the gospel of Christ will in due time be manifest in the blighted and wasted condition of the church. Seeing then, beloved, that we are so dependent upon the mercies of the Lord for our health and blessedness, it becomes us to cleave unto the Lord with full purpose of heart, and to beware of every false way, and all doctrines that would ensnare us away from the gospel of the grace of God. We are assured

“that they which receive abundance of grace and the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.” (Rom. 5: 17.) And this abundance of grace comes unto us not only when we were first called by grace and given to taste the blessedness of redemption and forgiveness of sins, (Eph. 1:7) but every moment since then we have continued so poor and needy and unworthy that we have only continued to this day by the ministrations of the Lord’s abundance of grace. “He holdeth our soul in life and suffereth not our feet to be moved.” “We shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ.” We shall be triumphant over all adversity, for our Savior who hath loved us and washed us from our sins in his own blood, will not suffer us to perish. “For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.” We shall be more than conquerors through him that loved us.

We have appointed, the Lord willing, our next yearly conference to assemble with the church in North Berwick, Maine to commence on Friday before the first Monday in September, 1902, and continue three days, when we hope to receive again, your kind correspondence and messengers.

Elder Fred. W. Keene, Moderator
Joseph Hall, Clerk.

“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.” Philippians 2:12-13)

Recently I have had a request to write an article on this subject. We have, especially of late years, been inclined to ascertain whether a scripture is addressed to a church of organized believers, to individuals as believers, or whether it has reference to those who know not the truth. We cannot truly expound a subject, unless we know to whom the scripture was addressed. Sometimes a scripture would apply to a church as regularly constituted the church of Jesus Christ, and we could not apply the interpretation to individuals: some portions of the word would apply both to individuals and churches.

The afore quoted portion of the word is part of an epistle to the church at Philippi, and was especially for their comfort, and instruction. If we examine the salutation, “Paul and Timotheus, the servants of Jesus Christ, to all the saints in Christ Jesus which are at Philippi, with the Bishops and Deacon.” Then the writers assure the church, together with the Bishops and Deacons, of their joy and confidence in them. The prayer of the apostle was that their love might abound, more and more, thus showing that they were a church blessed with the

fruits of the Spirit, and walking in the Commandments of the Lord. To try to apply this portion of God's word to unregenerated people would be a gross error, though this scripture is often quoted by work-mongers to try to prove that an individual is commanded to work out his eternal salvation.

The text first shows conclusively that Paul was addressing a people that were beloved. Second, that they were a people who were already obedient. The epistle was a letter of instruction and assurance, and they are assured that in the absence of the writer, they would have problems that would require the same obedience as that already manifested. Yet he exhorts them to work them out with fear and trembling. He has reference to things they will be called to meet as a church, Deacons and Bishops. Their own salvation has reference to the peculiar problems the church may have: the trials they may be called to undergo, and their church relationship one with another. All churches at some time or other have problems and trials, and this church had been blessed more than many to obey from the heart that form of Doctrine delivered to them, yet he knew sooner or later there would be in his absence their own salvation to work out. Paul had been present with them to counsel and advise, to admonish and exhort, and in his absence, he gives them explicit instructions of what they would need.

Work out your own salvation, (that which belongs to you as the church of Jesus Christ) with fear and trembling. How true this is that the only true mark

of grace manifest in a church, is when they are favored to work out their problems, with fear and trembling. No church is prepared to transact the affairs of their body, and to judge matters among themselves, unless they are blessed with fear and trembling, knowing what a solemn thing it is to have the ordinances of God delivered to them. Surely it calls for fear and trembling, as those so led know that worldly wisdom will not supply their needs: that they must look to God for guidance and seek to know, and do His will.

If they are blessed with fear and trembling, unwilling to look to their own wisdom for guidance, but to God, they have assurance that it is the Lord working in them both to will, and to do of His good pleasure. The Lord must work the will in us before the doing is acceptable in His sight. When a body of believers are found who, both laity and minister, enter into their duties with fear and trembling, it is evident that they are a God fearing people, seeking to honor Him who had called them out of darkness into His marvelous light. This fear and trembling is not the fear of men, but the fear of God. May God bless us to not look to self, or human wisdom, in our church affairs; not to the preacher, or any certain member; and to follow no man any further than he follows Christ, that we may be found among those who tremble at His word.

Elder D. V. Spangler

“The kingdom of God is not in word, but in power.”- 1 CORINTHIANS iv. 20.

It is through the word of God in the hands of the Spirit, that this kingdom is set up in the soul. All God's people are agreed on this point, that they have no more religion than they have inward power. And all the living family are sighing, each according to his measure and season, after the manifestation of this divine power in their souls. Those that are under the law, and toiling under heavy burdens, are sighing after relief, and for that relief to come in divine power-power that shall cast all their sins into the depth of the sea. Those who having tasted that the Lord is gracious have lost their first love, are at times breathing out their inmost desire after power to revive their souls. Those who are beset with powerful temptations, and struggling, often ineffectually, with base lusts, are crying after power to deliver their feet from the fowler's snares. Those who are hard, need power to soften; those who are doubting and fearing, need power to give them faith; the backsliding need power to return, and the sinking need power to swim. By power I understand something solid, real, substantial, heavenly, supernatural. How do we measure the capabilities of a steam engine? We say that it has so many horse-power. But who in his senses would construct a steam engine of two hundred horse-power to break sticks and pick up straws? We measure power by its effects. We proportion the one to

the other. Now the Holy Ghost, the God of all power and might, would not put forth his mighty and efficacious hand to break sticks and pick up straws in the soul. No. His work is worthy of a God; a “work of faith with power,” because springing from a God of power. The God of Israel is not a Baal that is sleeping and needs to be awakened, or gone a journey and therefore too far off to come when needed, but “a very present help in time of trouble.” By this secret power false hopes are swept away, rotten props removed, creature righteousness brought to an end, and the soul is helped and enabled to lean upon the Lord. This power is not noise and rant; but the still, small voice of Jesus in the soul. The people of God want no outward voice, but they are seeking after that secret voice of atoning blood in their conscience, that speaketh better things than the blood of Abel. The inward whisper of heavenly love sounding in their soul-not the earthquake of terror, not the fire of divine wrath, but the still, small voice of pardon and peace-makes them bow themselves before the Lord, and wrap their faces in their mantle. The Queen of England need not shout aloud in her palace, to give her commands effect. Where the word of a king is, there is power, whether from an earthly monarch or from the King of Zion. We want therefore no noise, bustle, and excitement, no raving and ranting about religion; but we want inward feeling, the very kingdom of God set up in the heart.

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR OCTOBER 2011

Joyce Pittman, TX	10.00
Katherine Mathews, LA	5.00
Jerry Somers, VA	5.00
Chlonetia Thompson, VA	5.00
Sallie Hodges, VA	5.00
Margie Pettis Ray, LA	50.00
(In memory of Geneva Pettis)	
Flay Mordecai, MS	5.00
Ruby Dyer, VA	5.00
David Pittman, VA	5.00

OBITUARIES

BROTHER CURTIS COBB

Brother Curtis Cobb, 86, departed from this life August 3, 2011 at Annie Penn Hospital. He joined Dan River Primitive Baptist Church April 22, 1990 and was baptized by his beloved pastor, Elder Kenneth Key.

Brother Cobb was a faithful member and served as deacon for twenty years. As long as he was able, he came to church early on Sunday mornings to get things ready to have lunch after service.

His favorite song, I believe, was hymn 161, which he called for many times in his last years.

*As on the cross the Saviour hung
And wept, and bled, and died.
He poured salvation on a wretch
That languished at His side.*

*His prayer the dying Jesus hears
And instantly replies:
"To-day thy parting soul shall be
With me in Paradise."*

Born in Rockingham County, Brother Cobb was the son of the late David and Annie McKinney Cobb. He retired from Fieldcrest Mills after 40 years of service. Along with his parents, he was preceded in death by eleven brothers and a sister. He is survived by his brothers, Brooks Cobb and wife, Geraldine, of Brown Summit, N. C., Edward Cobb of Reidsville, N.C., his sister, Ethel Shreves of Reidsville, and numerous nieces and nephews. A graveside funeral service was held 10:00 A.M. August 4, 2011 at Dan River Primitive Baptist Church Cemetery.

Written by Gradie Strader

PSALM 89:1.

**I will sing of the mercies of the
Lord for ever: with my mouth will I
make known thy faithfulness to all**

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