

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 178

HILLSVILLE, VA., JANUARY 2010

NO. 1

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

SONG

ISSN - 0199 - 0063

Subscription price \$15.00 per year - \$25.00 two
years

Published monthly by
SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

1429 Howlett Street
Hillsville, Va. 24343

**COURAGE, my soul, behold the
prize**

**The Saviour's love provides:
Eternal life beyond the skies
For all whom here he guides.**

**The wicked cease from troubling
there,**

**The weary are at rest;
Sorrow, and sin, and pain, and
care,
No more approach the blest.**

**A wicked world, and wicked heart,
With Satan now are joined;
Each acts a too successful part
In harassing my mind.**

**But fighting in my Saviour's
strength.**

**Though mighty are my foes,
I shall a conqueror be at length
O'er all that can oppose.**

**Then why, my soul, complain or
fear?**

**The crown of glory see!
The more I toil and suffer here,
The sweeter rest will be.**

Newton.

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EDITORIALS

“For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man’s wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual.” 1 Corinthians 2: 11-13.



Elder J.B. Farmer

It seems that each time I have been impressed to write on any spiritual subject, I have been first impressed with my own unworthiness, then with my great ignorance and inability to write anything of substance on my own. I am made to beg for wisdom and understanding, and for love that I may not give offense to any of God’s little ones. It seems that writing gives vent for things shut up in my bones, and allows for things to be put in order that have been going around in my mind. It also seems to give some relief for the distress I feel inside. May God give understanding to rightly divide the word of truth, and may He give grace for His little ones to receive the truth as it is in Christ, and to reject all that may be in error - all for His honor, praise and glory.

The kingdom of God is without doubt a spiritual kingdom. In order to see that kingdom and to enter it and to know anything of it one must first have been generated from above. Apart from that spiritual birth, one may only see and know the things of the natural kingdoms of this world. God has made it so. Jesus said to Nicodemus, *“Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.”* And He also said, *“Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of*

God.” And the apostle Paul, by inspiration, said, “*But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.*”

We are fully assured that many natural things are made to represent spiritual things to them who are spiritually exercised, when they are blessed with understanding from above. For example, a natural kingdom has many aspects that have a counterpart in the spiritual kingdom. Each has a king that reigns. Each has laws that apply to itself only, which must be obeyed. Both have definite boundaries, certain locations and specific periods of existence. Each kingdom has enemies that would conquer and destroy it if they had their way, so each one must necessarily have a defense. Each kingdom has an economic system that is different from other kingdoms. Each one has a religion that is particular to itself. Each kingdom has a history and a heritage that the subjects know and warmly reflect upon that is not precious to others. Those born into each kingdom are automatically citizens of the one into which they are born. They speak a certain language that foreigners cannot understand. The subjects of each kingdom wear clothes that may look strange to others. The citizens partake of food and drink of which others have no taste. They each have customs that are unfamil-

iar to outsiders. Their thoughts and ways are alien to those of another kingdom. Every kingdom must always seem very peculiar to one that is a foreigner to it.

Only God's little ones are enabled to comprehend the things of His kingdom as they are enlightened. It is here a little and there a little, line upon line and precept upon precept. They are led about by the Spirit and instructed in the things of the kingdom, as was Jacob of old. The children of God are given to know that the Lord God Almighty rules in the army of heaven and amongst the inhabitants of the earth. They are given confidence that He works all things together after the counsel of His own will, and that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them that are the called according to His purpose. Those not of the spiritual kingdom of God have no confidence that God reigns over all. They think that God only can move or work at man's bidding or that they must help Him along. They think that God can only save one who allows Him to do so. They insist on the free will doctrine because they can do no other. Those in a carnal mind cannot know anything of the power and majesty of the God of heaven and earth, or anything else of His kingdom.

The laws of the kingdom of God are the laws of love. All the laws of God are summed up in two commandments. Jesus said, “*Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with*

all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." When one's heart is filled with love, there is no hatred for a brother or even for one who has related to him as an enemy. Love does nothing amiss to anyone, but rather seeks the good of all. We see the ultimate example of this in the life of Christ, Who went about doing good. He went to the extreme of laying down His life for His brethren, and offering Himself up without spot unto God – the Just for the unjust – in order to save His people from their sins. We see this same love in the lives of the prophets who laid down their lives for their brethren, not fearing the wrath of kings, nor loving their lives unto the death. We see this love in the lives of the apostles, who like Paul, were willing to spend and be spent for the brethren. And we see this love in our brethren, sisters and friends of the gospel, as they open their homes and hearts to one another and forego the pleasures of this world to be with their kindred in Christ. The worldly professor knows nothing of the kingdom of God as it pertains to the law of love. He lives for pleasure and desires to rule over others with force and cruelty, especially those who do not agree with him. The tree is known by its fruit.

The spiritual kingdom has definite boundaries and has a specific location and has a specific period of existence. If one is not born of God, he cannot see it, find it or enter it. Those that abide in the flesh may not enter. Jesus said, *"Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter the kingdom of heaven."* Only those who have been converted from their old way of life and have been stripped of all self-righteousness and have been changed to be as little children may enter. Only those that have their hard and stony hearts replaced with tender hearts of flesh may enter. The wise and prudent professors are excluded. The Holy Spirit said by the apostle Paul, *"Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolators, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God."* The kingdom of God is invisible to the natural eye, but it is here and now with God reigning in the hearts of His people. It is no wonder that Jesus 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." The kingdom of God is an everlasting kingdom. Nebuchadnezzar the king, by inspiration said, "*His kingdom is an everlasting kingdom, and his dominion is from generation to generation.*" The religious professors who never are converted and made to become as little children, and who are dominated by sin and hatred are imposters that have not seen the kingdom of God.

The kingdom of God has many enemies that seek its destruction. Satan and his host are at the very walls awaiting and plotting its overthrow. But thanks be unto God, Jesus said, "*Upon this rock I will build my church and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.*" Those outside the walls throw their rocks and find their faults and watch for its downfall, but they shall be continually disappointed. Isaiah, the prophet of old was blessed to say, "*No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord.*" There are many enemies, but God rules over all. The inspired Psalmist said, "*Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee: and the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain.*" The wicked may only go as far as it pleases the God of

heaven and earth, but they shall never enter His kingdom. The end of all things is that God shall receive all praise, honor and glory – even over all the deceptive wickedness of the devil and his servants, even though they transform themselves and seek to appear as angels of light.

In all the kingdoms of this world, it is necessary to buy with money or to purchase with labor the things that one desires. But in the kingdom of God, all things are free and without charge or labor. Isaiah again was blessed of God to say, "*Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price. Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labor for that which satisfieth not? Hearken diligent unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness. Incline your ear, and come unto me: hear, and your soul shall live; and I will make an everlasting covenant with you, even the sure mercies of David.*" The religious world is money based and work based. They have a continual fund raising effort to keep themselves afloat financially. Take away the money and they will all suddenly sink to the bottom out of sight. They are trying to build a religious kingdom by their supposed good works. But the truth is according to the say-

ing of the Spirit by the Psalmist, *“Except the Lord build the house, they labor in vain that build it: except the Lord keep the city, the watchman waketh but in vain.”*

Their hearts cannot be right with God to think that spiritual things could be purchased with money or man's efforts. Man's work is outside the kingdom of God.

In the kingdom of God is a pure religion that is undefiled before God the Father. The true religion, according to the inspired apostle James is this: *“To visit the fatherless and the widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world.”* Who are the fatherless and the widows spoken of here if not the children of God in this world? They are a poor and afflicted people that are pilgrims and strangers in this world. And who is it that desires to be kept unspotted from the world, but the child of God? The children of God do visit one another in their affliction. They do walk together in the light and speak the comfort of truth to one another in love. They do overlook one another's faults, knowing the weakness of the flesh. They do forgive one another's trespasses even as they have been forgiven for Christ's sake. The world does not recognize the fatherless and widows as being God's little children. They have no sympathy for them and have no desire to comfort them. The world is without knowledge of the identity of God's people and is without knowledge of the

pure undefiled religion within the kingdom of God. They only have an empty form or a counterfeit copy of the pure and undefiled religion of God's people. And that false religion has no place in God's kingdom.

Within the kingdom of God is a spiritual book we call the Bible. This book was written by the Spirit of God, and was written in a mystery to the spiritual children of God. The same Spirit that wrote the scriptures is the One that must interpret the words in order for them to be profitable. Many have taken hold of the scriptures and have tried to understand the things written there with a carnal mind. It is a futile effort. Those things are as sealed to the natural man as much as the book of Life is sealed to all except the Lamb of God. This is why there are so many religions. However, there is a great effort in progress to bring the many religions together into one basic belief that may be shared by all false professors. Their main teaching is that man has a free will and that God will not violate that. It is a works system to which they all subscribe. They have arrived at a belief that is based upon carnal reasoning and which is as far from the truth as heaven is above the earth. It is outside the kingdom of God and there it must remain.

This Bible is a history book, but it is much more than that. It is a record of the life of God's chosen people in the world, and a testimony of the person of God as He has re-

vealed Himself to them. And it is an account of how He kept His people and delivered them all through the ages. It is a record of the eternal love of God for His people, Spiritual Israel, and the covenants that He made with them. It is the written manifestation of the outpouring of the hearts of God's little ones when under sore trials and temptations, and it relates their adoration of Him in their deliverances. It is the true record of the victories that God gave to His little ones over overwhelming hoards of their enemies. It is the story of the deliverance of God's people from starvation in the face of terrible droughts, and deliverance from famine, disease and oppression. Not only is it a natural history, but it is also a spiritual account that speaks of the coming of Christ, and the spiritual warfare of His little ones. It is a testament of the life experience of many of the children of God down through the ages, to which we may compare our experience. And when we see a little of our trials and deliverances there, we are given some hope that we have a part in the kingdom of God also. The Bible is the book of the kingdom of God, and only those of that kingdom ever really are given an understanding of its mysteries, and then only by revelation. It is a book of confusion for all others.

The citizens of the kingdom of God are so by birth for they are they *"which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor*

of the will of man, but of God." They speak the pure language of grace that no natural man can learn. They are the only ones given to wear robes of righteousness of spotless white made so by the blood of the Lamb. Their food is the Bread of Life, which came down from heaven. Their drink is the pure water of life that springs up in them to eternal life. Their customs are of decency and order and honesty, and of giving no offence by respecting of persons or of partiality. They are blessed to love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. They are made to forsake father, mother, brother, sister, houses and lands in this life that they may serve the living God. They are given the Spirit of power and of love and of a sound mind. They have had the fear of men cast out of their hearts by God's perfect love. They are translated from the kingdom of darkness of this world into His marvelous light. It is manifest that they have passed from death to life because they love the brethren. It is no wonder the way they are described. Peter said as he was moved by the Spirit, *"ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvelous light."*

May we be given grace to compare not only natural things to spiritual things, but also spiritual things with spiritual things to the praise,

honor and glory of the grace and mercy of God. We are made to compare our spiritual experience to the spiritual experience of the saints in all ages, from righteous Abel through the prophets and apostles, and to those that have gone before us, whom we have known and loved. When we see how righteous Abel was hated and persecuted because of the gift of faith given to him according to the grace of God, and we are made to believe that we have tasted a little of that, hope springs up. When we see Moses refusing to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction with God's people than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season, and we are made to think we have been separated from the world and caused to love God's people, we take heart. When we are given to look upon the lives of the apostles, and see their heartfelt love of the brethren and how they laid down their lives for one another, and are made to believe that we have been given a desire to do the same, we rejoice in hope of eternal life. When we remember the words of our dear brethren that have gone before us, how they were brought down into the depths of hopelessness because of their sinfulness, and how they were made to beg God for mercy, and how they were delivered from that darkness to light, and are given to believe we have been brought along the same path, we are

made to think that our journey has not been in vain.

When we read in the old scriptures how that God found Jacob in a desert land, and in a waste howling wilderness, and how God led him about, and instructed him, and kept him as the apple of His eye, we trust that God shall do the same with each one of His little ones -even with us if we are His. When we see David defeating the giant, we see Jesus defeating the devil. When we see the deliverance of Israel from Egypt, we see God's people being delivered out from under the bondage of Satan and the power of sin. The old scriptures are full of promises to Gods children, and full of prophecies concerning Christ and his kingdom. Both the Old Testament and the New Testament are spiritual books and are continually compared to one another by the children of God. When understanding is given, perfect agreement between the two is obvious. Jesus declared what the scriptures were not, and what they were in just a few words to the Jews. He said, "*Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they that testify of me.*" They are not purposed to give eternal life as some have thought, but they are they that testify of Christ reigning in the spiritual kingdom of God, and they that testify of the spiritual experience of His people, who are bone of His bone and flesh of His flesh spiritually.

When reading of the creation of the world, Jesus, the living Word of God comes to mind, by Whom the world was made. When reading of Adam and Eve, Christ and His love for His bride the church seems evident. When reading of righteous Able that was slain by wicked Cain because God had respect unto Abel's offering by faith and no respect to Cain's offering not in faith, it seems to foretell the death of Jesus at the hands of the wicked. When reading of Noah and the flood, the prophesy seems sure of the coming destruction of the world with only a few elect souls saved in the ark, which signifies Christ and the safety in Him. When reading of Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Joseph, their lives plainly appear to be the figures of the life of Christ, Who came in the flesh after them. When reading of Moses and Aaron, figures of Christ the intercessor are surely manifest. When reading of Joshua, who led God's people into the promise land, Jesus the deliverer of Spiritual Israel doubtless is revealed in a shadow. When reading of the Judges of Israel, time and again the work of Christ in delivering His people against overwhelming and oppressive adversaries is brought to mind. When reading the prophets, how could one of His people in the Spirit help rejoicing in the prophesies of the birth, life, suffering, death, resurrection and second coming of the Lord Jesus Christ, even though these prophesies are hidden to the

carnal mind? When reading of the good kings of Israel and Judah, the King of Kings and the Lord of Lords seems to reveal Himself in their lives. There are many, many more examples that could be given if time and space would permit. But since this is becoming lengthy, it seems best to rest here. All the old scriptures, according to the words of Christ, testify in a mystery of Himself and what He has done for His people, Spiritual Israel, through the ages.

It seems good from time to time to reflect on the things that God has done for His little ones, and to be given a hope in the goodness and mercy of God. I know I am full of mistakes. If I were to be judged on the grounds of my perfections according to nature, I know I would be lost worlds without end, because I have none. Please forgive all mistakes and weaknesses and, if possible, please remember me before God the Father and His Son, Jesus, Christ. I trust this was written in love, and in hope of eternal life.

J. B. Farmer
October 11, 2006.

PROVERBS 3:1-2.

*My son, forget not my law,
but let thine heart keep my com-
mandments:*

*For length of days, and long
life, and peace, shall they add
to thee.*

CORRESPONDENCE

10-16-09

Brethren,

I enjoy my magazine and the experience reading what God does for his people. I'm 91 years old and live alone. He has taken care of me all these many years. And I believe He will until the end. God's my only hope of eternal life, my all and all.

Thank you for sending my magazine if I am behind.

Sisters Love Always,
Sister Lovie A. Thompson

Nov. 8, 2009

Dear Elder Key,

As always the Signs of the Times is always relevant, no matter when articles that are printed were written or tape recorded. I joy in reading each edition, cover to cover, and find comfort when I realize that others often feel as I do in my shortcomings and while being in the "dry seasons". It is so wonderfully welcome to have that "drink" for our thirsty bodies and souls and we always seem to receive it when we most need it.

I pray you are well and look forward to the next edition and I thank all of you for your faithful service for the Signs of the Times. Please renew my subscription for two years and consider the balance a contribution to use as you deem fit.

Sincerely,
Vicki Knight,

VOICES OF THE PAST

The following is taken from the book, "A Treasure of Hymns" by Amos R. Wells. Copyright 1945, W. A. Wilde

The book Contains brief biographies of one hundred twenty leading hymn writers with their best hymns.

**"COME, THOU FOUNT
OF EVERY BLESSING."**

Robert Robinson.

This hymn, which is one of the noblest ever written, was composed by Rev. Robert Robinson. Its writer was born in Swaffham, England, September 27, 1735, and died as he had wished to die, "softly, suddenly, and alone," being found dead in his bed on the morning of June 9, 1790.

He was a poor boy, the only support of his mother, "and she was a widow." At the age of fourteen, he became apprentice to a barber in London, where he seems to have

been none of the steadiest. At one time he made a gypsy fortune-teller drunk, and while she was under the influence of liquor she prophesied that the lad would "see his children and his grandchildren."

The prophecy made a deep impression upon the young fellow, and he decided to make something of himself, for the sake of these unborn descendants. He became a convert of the great preacher, George Whitefield, and at once began to preach on his own account. He joined the Baptists, and was made pastor of a small church in Cambridge.

In that university town he passed nearly all of the remainder of his life, honored even by the scholars of the place, since he was himself also a scholar by the power of his mind, though he had none of a scholar's training. He published several volumes, and his sermons are full of a quaint common sense. The great preacher, Robert Hall, who followed him in the same church, was his spiritual successor also, just as, in later years, the eminent Spurgeon became the disciple of Robert Hall.

Robinson was a practical man, and did not hesitate to take up farming to eke out his scanty income. He was a man of large and liberal temper, though a true believer in orthodox religion. For this reason I am inclined to doubt the anecdote of Mr. Robinson's conversation with a lady whom he is said to have met in a stage coach. She forced the talk to

the subject of religion, and at last quoted his own hymn, "Come, thou Fount of every blessing," speaking of the blessings it had brought to her. Upon this Robinson is said to have exclaimed, "Madam, I am the poor unhappy man who composed that hymn, many years ago, and I would give a thousand worlds, if I had them, to enjoy the feelings I had then."

Mr. Robinson is not known to have written more than two hymns. One of these begins, "Mighty God, while angels bless Thee," and the other is the following hymn, which was composed probably in 1757.

Come, thou Fount of every blessing,

Tune my heart to sing Thy grace;

Streams of mercy, never ceasing,

Call for songs of loudest praise.

Teach me some melodious sonnet,

Sung by flaming tongues above;

Praise the mount! I'm fixed upon it,

Mount of God's unchanging love!

*Here I raise my Ebenezer;
Hither by Thy help I'm come;
And I hope, by Thy good pleasure,*

Safely to arrive at home.

Jesus sought me when a stranger,

Wandering from the fold of God ;

*He, to rescue me from danger,
Interposed His precious blood.*

Oh, to grace how great a debtor

Daily I'm constrained to be!

Let that grace now, like a fetter,

Bind my wandering heart to Thee.

Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it;

*Prone to leave the God I love;
Here's my heart; oh, take and seal it, —*

Seal it for Thy courts above!

ROMANS IX. 21.

"Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor?"

DEAR BROTHER DODSON: - Some time back you requested me to write along the line of the above Scripture. I believe I promised to do so if my mind should be led out in that way, but I have put it off chiefly because of two reasons; one is you are so far my superior in these things that anything I can write about would be of no comfort

to you or the dear readers of the SIGNS. I see your call to the work in the ministry very plainly verified by the Scripture, A man's gift maketh room for him and bringeth him before great men. These great men are God's people, whose hearts seem much drawn out after you. But I infer that you have also been on the rough billows and tried in the furnace of affliction.

I fear to make the attempt to write, lest it might only be of the flesh and will of man. But I will draw the bow at venture, hoping the Lord will direct the arrow, I hope you are able to try the spirits whether they are of God. I cannot tell you whether or not I will give you any part of the true import or meaning of the Scripture; I can only promise I will tell you what it means to me. I want to say in the beginning, I have but the two families, or generations, to write of. One is of the earth earthy, and its generation is of Adam, and the second man is the Lord from heaven, and his generation is the generation of Jesus Christ. If I can be made able to trace by the first fruits of the flock and show the eternal relationship and unity between Christ, the eternal head of this generation, and the church, his body, then I will feel I am well paid for writing this letter. I feel I am writing *"to wise men; judge ye what I say."* We see the old Scriptures stand in figures, types and shadows, and by following the shadows we can come to the substance. The trouble is that sometimes we

take the shadows and figures for the substance. In the first place, we find the clay of the same lump, all in the hands of the potter. This potter must be the Lord. No doubt but that Adam was a figure of Christ, and Eve, his bride, the church, and was called Adam until she was taken from man. Now let us take a glimpse at the first man, Adam, who was of the earth earthy, of which the whole earth is populated. Was he not a lifeless lump of his mother earth, altogether destitute of any of the faculties that go to make up the natural man, and lifeless, not able to transgress nor to be susceptible to either joy or grief or pain? This is the whole makeup of the created Adam man, and at that time was just as good and sinless as the dust, or earth, from whence he was taken. He was not eligible to anything until God "*breathed into his nostrils the breath of life and man became a living soul.*" Was he a living soul before? He surely was not. But when the eyes of both of them were opened this living soul was able to realize and experience joy and sorrow and pain. Here we find the created earthly generation of Adam and the generation of Jesus Christ, which is not an earthly creation. Solomon tells us about the developing of the generation of Jesus Christ, saying, before the mountains were settled, before the hills, was I brought forth. Here is the bringing forth of the church, or generation of Jesus Christ, as spoken of in Matthew i. 1, and that "*while*

as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world." - *Prov. viii. 26.* Before the dust was made that the Adam man was formed of. This should suffice as to the origin of God's people. All in the lump of clay in the hands of the Potter. A vessel is that which is to hold what is put in it. It is no wonder that one vessel is made unto honor when it has the promised resurrection to these vessels of honor that Paul prayed that "*your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ.*" Then in Romans ix. 22, Paul says, "*What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much long suffering the vessels of wrath fitted to destruction.*" In the eleventh, twelfth and thirteenth verses it is said, "*For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God, according to election, might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth. It was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger. As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated.*" If the doctrine of eternal personal election and unconditional salvation by grace is not a Bible doctrine, then the whole Arminian world has got us fooled, because it is not part of one and part of the other. But I do not hesitate to affirm it is all of

grace, first and last, with all of its bearings. We hear some weakened fellows saying God would be unjust if he saved a part and sent the rest down to hell. We refer such ones to the twentieth verse, which says by inspiration, *"Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus?"* The Savior says, *"But I tell you of a truth, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elias, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, when great famine was throughout all the land; but unto none of them was Elias sent, save unto Sarepta, a city of Sidon, unto a woman that was a widow. And many lepers were in Israel in the time of Elias the prophet; and none of them was cleansed, saving Naaman, the Syrian."* - *Luke iv. 25-27*. Here the carnal mind would ask, Why was not Elias sent to all the widows of Sarepta to save them all alive, and why was Elias the prophet only sent to cleanse Naaman, while there were many lepers in Israel? All one needs to know the justice of all God's works is to be brought up in grace's school. Then he will not think foolishly and wickedly, charging God with being unjust. In Romans ix. 18, Paul says, *"Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardeneth."* This shows God is a sovereign God over all worlds, pow-

ers and dominions, and does not give any reason or account to anyone for what he does. The Lord says by the mouth of Jeremiah, "O house of Israel, cannot I do with you as this potter? saith the Lord. Behold, as the clay is in the potter's hand, so are ye in mine hand, O house of Israel." - *Jer. xviii. 6*. Paul says, *"They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed."* - *Rom. ix. 8*. These are the promised children Paul spoke of: "For the earnest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God." - *Rom. viii. 19*. It is a well known fact that the manifestation of a thing is not its 'beginning, but clearly reveals its identity. Not that they are eternal children, as we are so slanderously reported saying. We preach eternal children. But we say and believe biblically the eternal life substance that is in Christ, the eternal seed and head of the body, or church, and in the manifestation in the Adam man, in whom they had a time standing, they become children in the new birth. David said by prophecy in *Psalms cxxxix. 15, 16*, *"My substance was not hid from thee, when I was made in secret, and curiously wrought in the lowest parts of the earth. Thine eyes did see my substance, yet being imperfect [not as yet manifested in Adam as children]; and in thy book all my members were writ-*

ten, which in continuance [not to remain so were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them.] The definition of the word "fashion" is to shape or form, especially in dress. It seems the Lord was speaking by the mouth of David of the developing of God's people to a higher order, and as yet there was none of them as children manifested in the flesh. This Scripture spoken of by David is often used by good brethren to prove the nonentity, or non-existence, of God's people prior to the Adam man of flesh and blood, but falls very far short of doing so. If such was biblical, and the truth, would not the Scripture have said something like this: that I Christ was the head, but as yet no body, but would some time in the future have a head of the Adam man of flesh and blood? But thanks eternal be to God, no such Scripture as this is found on the pages of eternal truth. Paul says, "*And he [Christ] is the head of the body, the church.*" - Col. i. 18. Not going to be the head, but was then, in the present tense. And these members David spoke of, their names and life substance were there in this eternal Head, awaiting their manifestation as the sons of God, and in eternal vital unity with Christ their head. Jude says they were "*sanctified by God the Father, and preserved in Jesus Christ,*" therefore in this sense are as old as Christ, because Wisdom saw their fall in Adam, and knowing these heirs would need a Savior, and he

said, To this end was I born. So the remedy was prepared for them in the annals of eternity, and God's chosen ones are safe, no harm can befall them. David again speaks of these members, or life substance, saying, "*A seed shall serve him; it shall be accounted to the Lord for a generation.*" - Psalms xxii. 30. This is the generation spoken of in Matthew i. 1. Therefore if my man be: in Christ he is a new creature. As I see it, this does not mean a new life substance, but new in the birth and manifestation of the sons of God. We have heard it claimed that there was nothing eternal about the Adam man of flesh and blood until the second, or new birth, that if there had been he could not be a new creature in Christ. This is denying the most positive covenant Scriptures, and denying God's people being given in Christ in the eternal covenant of grace, and also denying Christ's own words in his prayer to the Father, saying, "*I have manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me.*" "*Those that thou gavest me I have kept, and none of them is lost, but the son of perdition.*" - John xvii. 6, 12. Let us note the fact that the birth does not make the child, and is not it, origin or beginning, but only a change of element and manifestation of the child in the flesh. So, brethren, let us never falter nor fear. Some also ignore in the same way the sixteenth chapter and seventh verse of Romans, where Paul says,

“Who are of note among the apostles; who also were in Christ before me,” when it is very plain that Paul is here speaking of the new birth or manifestation in the flesh of the sons of God, but not of the eternal life substance that was given in Christ in the eternal covenant of grace. Then it is claimed by some brethren that these were new creatures in Christ before Paul. But this could not be if they had existed in God in eternity, thus by their own words denying that Paul ever was embraced in Christ in the eternal covenant of grace before the new birth. But when Paul comes to speak of his, and all the family’s, eternal standing in Christ, he says, ***“According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world.”***- *Eph. i. 4.* What can be any more positive? It cannot fail. We see by reason of the standing of God’s people in Adam, their earthly representative head, they fell in him and became sinners, therefore needed a Savior, as I have here before mentioned. Paul says, ***“For the creature [God’s people] was made subject to vanity [in the transgression of Adam], not willingly, but by reason of him who I hath subjected the same in hope; because the creature itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the glorious liberty of the children of God.”*** - *Rom. viii. 20, 21.* And in the nineteenth verse, as I have here quoted, Paul says, ***“For the ear-***

nest expectation of the creature waiteth for the manifestation of the sons of God,” As I see it, by the transgression of Adam, this earthly representative head, this creature, or life substance, died a spiritual death and was made alive in Christ, as I have before stated, and was made the recipient of a manifestation in the new birth, Those thus born of the Spirit do not sin, because they are born of God. The sin is all in the Adam man of flesh and blood, who is not of the children of God, while in the transgression of Adam, the ***“formed man,”*** a corporeal or natural death was passed on his whole progeny, therefore two deaths in Adam’s transgression, one a spiritual death to God’s people, the other a corporeal or natural death to the progeny of Adam. I am sure we have not a few good brethren whom I love who think they believe that the whole makeup of the children of God is of the Adam man of flesh and blood and bones, when really they do not believe it, therefore I do not wish to use unkind words and harsh criticism, because if such be the truth, it follows as a fact that the kingdom of God after death will be populated with men and women of flesh and blood, male and female, which the Bible positively denies. Let us see what Job says about what becomes of the flesh and blood man: ***“As the cloud is consumed and vanisheth away; so he that goeth down to the grave shall come up no more.”***-*Job vii. 9.* Here

is the end of all flesh and blood; it comes up no more. To this Paul witnesses, and says, *"Now this I say, brethren, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption."*-1 Cor. xv. 50. Job again says, *"So man lieth down, and riseth not: till the heavens be no more, they shall not awake, nor be raised out of their sleep."*- Job xiv. 12. Here the body goes down in the grave a weak, mortal body, *"it is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption: it is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body."* Not a body of flesh, blood and bone. As I see it, this spiritual body is the body Paul prayed for to be preserved blameless unto the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ, when this spiritual resurrected body will be reunited with both soul and body in the resurrection at the last day.

I feel sure the faith and doctrine I have here written of, though in a very weak way, it the faith of Primitive or Old School Baptists in all ages of the world. The enemy of this faith and doctrine has made many rash dives to drown it out and kill it, but thanks eternal be to God, he never has left himself without a witness that will ever stand on the walls of Zion and proclaim this glorious faith and doctrine as long as God has any purpose in the gospel being preached anywhere in this old world. It is a well known fact that all

the factions that have gone out from the true Primitive Baptist Church have gone out objecting to the doctrine of election and predestination, calling us hard names, such as "eternal children," "two seeders," and "fatalists," the same as their forefathers have always done. But one thing is strange: that those brethren will borrow the Arminians' weapon to use as a battle-axe on their brethren. We should beware of borrowing, for we know what it has cost our people in all ages. Oh how our poor hearts are made to rejoice and glow with love when we think how God has ever loved and preserved his people through the many changes of this old world, from the very earliest dawn of time down to the present day, and will as long as he has any use for this old world, then he will call his people, the object of his love, home, there to ever be with the Lord. So, dear brethren and sisters, comfort each other with these words.

Brother Dodson, when at the throne of grace remember me, a poor sinner; pray that I may ever be found earnestly contending for the faith as it is in Christ, and that I may never be left to my ignorance and the will of the natural man in these sacred things of God. This is the desire of one of the least of God's people, if one at all.

W. L. EDWARDS
Castlewood, Virginia

MATTHEW I. 18-25.

Now the birth of Jesus Christ was on this wise: When as his mother Mary was espoused to Joseph, before they came together, she was found with child of the Holy Ghost. Then Joseph her husband, being a just man, and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privily. But while he thought on these things, behold, the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream, saying, Joseph, thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife; for that which is, conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins.

Now all this was done, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Behold, a virgin shall be with child, and shall bring forth a son, and they shall call his name Emmanuel; which being interpreted is, God with us. Then Joseph, being raised from sleep, did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife: and knew her not till she had brought forth her firstborn son: and he called his name JESUS.

A brother has requested views on the foregoing. At this time we may not be able to go into the subject to the extent we would like, but we will express some of our thoughts for the consideration of those who may read. This Scripture

involves one of the most fundamental phases of eternal truth to be found anywhere in the Bible. If it is untrue then the entire weave and fabric of the Scriptures must fall to the ground as the greatest myth of the ages. The Lord himself, however, promised before even the human race began to multiply upon the earth that the seed of the woman would bruise the serpent's head which was prophetic of the fact that Jesus in the fullness of time would come in the flesh and through his sufferings, death and resurrection destroy him that had the power of death, *"and deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage."* In addition to the record of Matthew as to how the birth of Jesus came about, we also have the record of Luke, whose profession we understand was that of a physician, and who was especially taught and learned in such matters as those pertaining to births, etc. It was no mere accident that he, as one having authority, should *"have taken in hand to set forth in order a declaration of those things which are most surely believed among us."* He continued with the further statement; that *"Even as they delivered them unto us, which from the beginning were eyewitnesses, and ministers of the word, it seemed good to me also, having had perfect understanding of all things from the very first, to write unto thee in*

order, most excellent Theophilus, that thou mightest know the certainty of those things, wherein thou hast been instructed.”- Luke i. 1-4. He then tells us Herod was king of Judea in those days, and gives us the details of the birth of John the Baptist, following which he relates the circumstances surrounding the miraculous conception and birth of our Lord. We will quote his exact words as recorded in verses twenty-six to thirty-five, inclusive: “And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God, unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, to a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David; and the virgin’s name was Mary. And the angel came in unto her, and said, Hail, thou that art highly favored, the Lord is with thee: blessed art thou among women. And when she saw him, she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be. And the angel said unto her, Fear not, Mary: for thou hast found favor with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto him the throne of his father David: and he shall reign over the house of Jacob for ever; and of his kingdom there shall

be no end. Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man? And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee; therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.” If this evidence is not acceptable and conclusive it is useless to attempt to adduce further proof from the Bible. This is not the first time or the only thing that has utterly confounded men, scientific and otherwise. They cannot tell us how God by the power of his word was able, in the beginning, to create the heaven and the earth; they cannot explain why the Red Sea should have divided to let Israel pass over dryshod. and then the same mighty waters closed in upon Pharaoh and his hosts destroying them to a man; they cannot unravel the mystery of the fiery furnace, the heat from which destroyed those who cast in the three Hebrew children and yet all that the fires could do to them was to loose their bands. The world still awaits an explanation from the wise men as to why it was not until the seventh day and the seventh time that Joshua’s men encompassed the city of Jericho, that it came to pass, at the blast of the ram’s horn, when the sound of the trumpet was heard, that the walls of the city should fall down flat, and the people should ascend up every man straight before him. Many

have contended that the narrative of the whale swallowing Jonah is absolutely incredible, but we would rather agree with the old colored brother who said that he not only believed what the Bible said about it, but that if the Bible had said that Jonah had swallowed the whale, he would have believed that, as well. The wise men, magicians, soothsayers, and the like, of Egypt were utterly dumbfounded and bewildered at many things which were made perfectly clear to God's servants by revelation. The same is true to-day. Science has for its foundation literally known FACTS. True religion has for its foundation FAITH. This is the gift of God, and without it no man can please God. *"He that cometh to God must believe that he is [that he is verily God], and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him."* To all such, nothing is impossible with God; their faith staggers not at anything that pertains to him. By the mighty workings of his Holy Spirit in them they are enabled to believe, and they accept without one scintilla of reservation the inspired record as to the manner and purpose of the birth of Jesus as given not only by Matthew and Luke, but which was also prophesied beforehand all down through the ages by God's holy prophets. That a virgin should bring forth a son, and that his name should be called JESUS, which being interpreted is God with us, whose purpose in coming into the world was

to save his people from their sins, and that he finished his work in every sense of the word, is the foundation of the christian's hope. The truth of this is well attested to by all of the holy Scriptures. We are well aware of the fact that the multitudes do not and cannot accept such doctrine, nor can they believe it until it is wrought in them by God's power, but this shall not in any way deter or prevent our proclaiming it from the house-top. Many times we are made to ask, if it be God's will, that he pity the unregenerate and have mercy upon them. At the same time we are made to thank him from the very depth of our poor, sinful heart for revealing unto us a knowledge of his truth, for according to nature we are no better than the vilest of the vile, and would most certainly have never desired to know him whom to know is life eternal had we been left to ourself.

Since our last editorial, which appeared in the May issue of our paper, in which we spoke of the clay and the potter, and tried to set forth God's sovereignty in making one vessel unto honor and another unto dishonor, and his electing love in choosing Jacob and rejecting Esau, even before either were born, or had done good or evil, *"that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth,"* we have received three pages of scriptural references, unidentifiable as to date, address and signature, with re-

marks purporting to refute the doctrine of election. We stated in said editorial that *“Unquestionably, the doctrine of election is the most hated of all of God’s blessed truths,”* so we are not surprised that we drew the blood of one who evidently does not know the truth. One of the first Scriptures to which our unknown friend refers as supporting his theory of God’s inability and the creature’s ability is 1 Timothy ii. 4, as follows: *“Who will have all men to be saved, and to come unto the knowledge of the truth.”* Evidently he construed this to mean that God will have every individual of mankind to be saved, but because the creature is more mighty than his Creator, God will have to content himself with saving only such as will let him. If such doctrine is not blasphemy, we do not know what would be. As the last reference on his third page has to do with *“rightly dividing the word of truth,”* we would recommend that he take the trouble to ponder the first part of this verse, which says, *“Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed,”* and take himself into hiding until he has some true understanding of what the Scriptures really teach. The twenty-first verse of Matthew one, which reads: *“And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins,”* is sufficient answer for us to make

at this time to his three pages of unsigned material, mailed at Winnipeg, Canada. Strange as it may seem, this same person also enclosed a leaflet entitled *“A Religion of Four Letters,”* in which a *“Christian Lady”* said to one, *“There is a wide difference between your religion and mine.”* The one to whom she was addressing said, *“Indeed, how is that?”* *“Your religion,”* she replied, *“has only two letters in it, and mine has four.”* *“What do you mean,”* said he, *“by two letters and four?”* *“Why, your religion,”* said the lady, *“is D-O, DO; whereas mine is D-O-N-E, DONE.”* Our friend apparently is of the former class, while we profess to believe that when Jesus said, *“It is finished,”* and gave up the ghost, he had fully accomplished what our text declares — saved his people from their sins. We would suggest that in the future he at least be consistent, and not send opposing kinds of literature in the same envelope.

Since our Lord and his disciples set up and established the true church on earth, Satan and his legion of hosts have done all within their power to destroy it, but Jesus told Peter that the gates of hell should not prevail against it, so it is safe and secure for all time. It has been attacked in every age, but by God’s grace it has survived. The Lord has not left himself without witnesses, for there has always been some who would defend to the death his precious truth. They have not al-

ways maintained the same name as a body, but they have held unswervingly throughout to the same fundamental principles. During the more recent periods of time, they have been known as Baptists, and more recently still as Primitive or Old School Baptists, to distinguish them from those who were really not of them and went out from them. Four years ago, in 1932, we were at the Black Rock meeting-house in Maryland, and took part in a service commemorating the one hundredth anniversary of the separation in 1832 between the Old School and the New School. At that meeting there was much read and spoken which savored of a historical nature, and well do we remember stating from the pulpit that we hoped there were none present who, because of the historical references, would conclude for one moment that the Old School Baptists, or their doctrine, were only one hundred years old, or that Elder Gilbert Beebe was the founder of the church. If this were true, it would mean that we are still only as old as one living man, since we have a dear brother in Hopewell, N. J., David Blackwell by name, who was born in the year 1832, and will be *one* hundred and four years of age if he lives until the latter part of this month. We would be in a very sad state, indeed, if we could not trace our spiritual lineage back farther than that, for there are many religious orders which antedate that period of time, but the doctrine

which we believe and contend for goes back to the days of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief cornerstone. Some years ago, at a funeral in the State of Maine, a young man asked us who was the head of our church, and where were the headquarters. We replied that evidently he knew nothing at all about Old Baptists, and then we stated to him that the Lord Jesus Christ was the head over all things to the church, and that our headquarters were in heaven. Such, indeed, is the case if we are what we profess to be.

Having already made reference to the meeting at Black Rock, Md., in 1832, when there was a parting of the ways between the Old and New orders, let us emphasize here that the ten Elders and the ten laymen who were present and affixed their signatures to the proceedings which went forth from that place at that time, did not distinguish themselves by advocating and promulgating some NEW doctrine, to be adhered to by their own followers, but their memories are greatly esteemed because they stood immovably for the thing's which had been most surely believed by the followers of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ since the first true gospel church was established. These beloved and faithful brethren, like the apostle Paul, would not have any man follow them beyond what they followed Christ, and if we know our own heart we can truthfully say the

same today. Our earnest prayer is that God will cause us all to ask for the old paths where is the good way, and walk therein. We should stand firmly upon the foundation of which our text is a part, for other foundation can no man lay than that that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.

R.L.D.

EXPERIENCE

Dear Brother Griffin,

You asked me some time ago at the Staunton River Association to write my experience for publication in the *Signs of the Times*, but I seem unable to find the right words to put on paper. I have loved the Old Baptists all of my life from the earliest of my years until the present time. I have faithfully attended the Old Baptist Churches, and I have loved these with a special love for as long as I can remember.

I cannot truthfully say I have always believed the doctrine of the Primitive Baptists, for as a child I did not understand it. When I did start to believing the doctrine of the Bible I cannot pinpoint that either. My parents would carry my brothers and sisters and me to church, and sometimes it seemed as though the preacher would stand all day. We children would begin to twist in our seats and I would say to myself, "I

am not going to church on the next Sunday". But as always, the next Sunday would come and I was back on those hard benches. I could not understand what continued to draw me back to those meetings, but now I hope I do know.

Several years before I was brought to the church I would see other people join the church and wished I could be blessed to join, too. Then I would realize what a foolish thought I was thinking. No one would ever want to see a sinner like me in the church. I could look at the older brethren and sisters in the church and see how good and kind they were, and then think of myself. If I could have felt half as good as they, I would have asked for a home. I did not think that I could ever be as good as I thought one should be to join the church. For a number of years I sat far back on the back row and hoped that one day I would be worthy of uniting with the church. In my laboring mind I came to the conclusion that at seventeen I was far too young to join the church, and finally decided that I probably never would join the church.

Then this particular Sunday morning came and I went to church as usual. I did not have any plans of asking for a home with them that morning, but something inside of me would not let me sit still. I could not understand what was wrong with me, what was happening to me.

Many times in the past I had wanted to join but could not, and now I had said that I was not going to join, and I found myself making my way to the front of the church. Then, as now, words would not come to me to express my feelings. I could only tell the brethren of my love for them and wanting to be a part of the Old Baptist Church. I was received into the church, and I was baptized that afternoon.

It has been nearly ten years since that cold and windy March afternoon. Many, many things have happened, many changes have taken place, and many dear ones have passed on. I only hope the good Lord will continue to bless me to believe in and to stand up for the truth as He has set it forth in Holy Writ. The church is my life and its people my family. I hope we will be blessed to live in peace one with another without so much friction and breaking of fellowship.

I had not planned to be so lengthy, but I had to write what came to my mind. I have only scratched the surface of what I feel in my mind in love and fellowship for the people of God. Should you find that this is not suitable for publication, I will understand.

May the Lord continue to bless us all.

A little sister,
Naomi M. Coker

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PSALM 100

A Psalm of praise.

MAKE a joyful noise unto the Lord, all ye lands.

Serve the Lord with gladness: come before his presence with singing.

Know ye that the Lord he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are his people, and the sheep of his pasture.

Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name.

For the Lord is good; his mercy is everlasting; and his truth endureth to all generations.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 178

HILLSVILLE, VA., FEBRUARY 2010

NO. 2

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

SONG

ISSN - 0199 - 0063

Subscription price \$15.00 per year - \$25.00 two years

Published monthly by
SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

1429 Howlett Street
Hillsville, Va. 24343

*Approach, my soul, the mercy seat,
Where Jesus answers prayer;
There humbly fall before his feet,
For none can perish there.*

*Thy promise is my only plea;
With this I venture nigh:
Thou callest burdened souls to
thee,
And such, O Lord, am I.*

*Bowed down beneath a load of sin;
By Satan sorely pressed;
By wars without and fears within,
I come to thee for rest.*

*Be thou my shield and hiding
place,
That, sheltered near thy side,
I may my fierce accuser face,
And tell him, Jesus died.*

*O wondrous love! to bleed and die,
To bear the cross and shame,
That guilty sinners, such as I,
Might plead thy gracious name.*

*Poor, tempest-tossed soul, be still;
My promised grace receive;
'Tis Jesus speaks! I must, I will,
I can, I do believe.*

Newton

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“Then Jesus beholding him loved him, and said unto him, ‘One thing thou lackest: go thy way, sell whatever thou hast, and give it to the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, take up the cross, and follow me. And he was sad at that saying, and went away grieved: for he had great possessions.” Mark 10:21-22



Elder J.B. Farmer

All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and no prophesy of scripture is of any private interpretation. The meaning of scripture is always

hidden from natural men, who are called the wise and prudent; and it is revealed unto spiritual men, who are called babes. What appears to be one way according to the conclusions of the natural mind is often shown to be otherwise by the Spirit of God. God has made it so. He has fixed things in a way which confounds the wisdom of men, and which brings glory and honor unto Himself. May it please the God of heaven and earth to reveal the things of truth to His little ones, and to me also, if I am one of His, to the praise of His wisdom, power and grace.

For the scripture to be meaningful and heartfelt, I am made to believe that it must strike a chord in our hearts. It must be applied to our life and experience, in order for it to bring any comfort and assurance to us. I am made to believe that this account of the young man who had great possessions, along with the parallel one in Matthew 19, is one of many, which God has given to His people for this very purpose. We, if we are His, are made to take a look at ourselves, and to see many things about ourselves relative to the kingdom of God.

With God’s people, it seems to be a very urgent matter to have assurance concerning their case before Him. They greatly desire to see some evidence that they have a part in His kingdom. They are full of questions, which need answers; and fears, which need to be allevi-

ated. The young man came running to Jesus. I believe that he was typical of the little child of grace. He recognized Jesus as the very Son of God as was evidenced by calling Him *"Good Master,"* and by kneeling to Him. He was fully assured that Jesus could give him the needful answer, so he poured out his innermost question. *"What shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?"* His whole desire seems to be that he may inherit eternal life. The apostle said, *"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, and be found in him, not having my own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith: 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."* Eternal life was his whole heart's desire, even as it is ours.

The young man had need to be taught that there is nothing which man can do to make himself worthy of the kingdom of God. It must have been shown to him that salvation is

by grace alone, and not of works; that it is God who has wrought that great salvation for His own. None could help. If not greatly deceived, there was a time in my life that I thought I could do something to gain my salvation or to help it along. It was necessary for all hope in my flesh to be destroyed. It had to be made manifest to me that an outward keeping of the commandments does not bring salvation. This young man said that he had kept the commandments from his youth. In Matthew's account, the young man further said, *"What lack I yet?"* He knew that something was missing. He was not satisfied that everything was all right. *"Then Jesus beholding him, loved him."* This scripture, concerning him being loved by Jesus, has fully assured my heart and mind, that there before Him was a child of the heavenly Father. God has loved His own with an everlasting love. Man looks upon the outward appearance, but God looks on the heart. Jesus saw into him and loved him. He saw all his need, had pity on him, and was in the process of filling his need.

Jesus said to him, *"One thing thou lackest..."* He told him to go his way, to sell what he had, to give it to the poor, and that he would have treasure in heaven. And Jesus told him to come, and to take up the cross, and to follow Him. I am made to believe that Jesus spoke these things to him in the power of God, and that God, Himself, would perform

in him, the good works that He had commanded. I believe that all of God's little ones are brought along this same way. The children of God are taught, along with the apostle, that they must suffer the loss of all things in this world. They are commanded not to love the world, neither the things that are in the world; for all that is in the world, is the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life. They are taught to forsake father, mother, brother, sister, wife, children, houses and lands, and even their own lives, for His name's sake. By the grace of God, this is what they do. This world is not their home. They are strangers and pilgrims here. They are only passing through. I am fully persuaded that this young man did exactly what he was told by Jesus. He went his way, sold what he had, gave it to the poor, came, took up his cross, and followed Him.

Now we know that it is recorded that, *"he was sad at that saying, and went away grieved: for he had great possessions."* I am made to believe that he was sad and went away grieved because he didn't have knowledge or strength in himself to perform the things that he was instructed to do. The apostle said by revelation, *"How to perform that which is good; I find not."* The apostle didn't have it. The rich young man didn't, and neither do we. But God's strength is made perfect in weakness. If it were left to our strength to obey God, we could

never do it. Aren't you glad that He didn't leave it up to us? *"It is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of His good pleasure."* *"He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ."* Thanks be unto God that salvation is altogether of Him.

When Jesus indicated to His disciples how hard it is for them that have riches to enter into the kingdom of God, they were astonished out of measure, saying among themselves, *"Who then can be saved?"* I am made to believe that His answer is the heart of the whole matter. He explained to His disciples what they could not know of themselves. Jesus said, *"With men it is impossible, but not with God: for with God all things are possible."* Salvation is impossible for men to obtain by themselves. This is what the natural man cannot receive. He thinks that he has to have something to do with salvation. But the truth is that all are lost, world without end except for the love, grace, mercy, and power of God. Salvation is of the Lord. There is only one salvation for time and eternity and God is the author and finisher of it. *"By grace are you saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not of works lest any man should boast, for we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God has before ordained that we should walk in them."*

This rich young man, like all of God's children, must have been saved by the love, grace, mercy and power of almighty God. He must have been stripped of all his self-righteousness and humbled down under the mighty hand of God. Jesus knew exactly how to accomplish this in him by the word of His power, and He did it. Isaiah was given to prophesy by inspiration concerning God's word, *"It shall not return to me void; but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereunto I sent it."* May the God of heaven and earth be praised, world without end.

Written in love and in hope of eternal life.

Elder J.B. Farmer
6.18.03

ROMANS 10:8-11.

But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach;

That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.

For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed.

ARTICLES

NOVEMBER 11, 2009

I would try to pray that the feeling to write this article would be given from Above and that God would give me a spiritual mind for this attempt.

Genesis Chapter I, Verse 3 reads, "And God said, Let there be Light and there was light."

As I hope to give to the reader my desire to write this I will state some of the information found in the World Book Encyclopedia. *"The sun is a glowing ball of hot gases. The diameter is 865,000 miles. The temperature at the center of the sun is about 36,000,000 degrees F. The energy given to the earth is about 54,000 horsepower for every man, woman or child on earth. Yet this amount is only two billionths of the total energy of the sun."* (These words are man's estimates.)

I feel to believe that a power that has no limit has set this giant ball of heat for the benefit of all mankind through out the life of the earth. Can anyone imagine what would be the result if this tremendous, unending source of heat that God created was to vary for even an hour? What God has done will stand forever without variation or chance of change.

Now, if we can, let us try to compare the Son of this Great God to the greatest natural power any creature

can imagine. To begin, the natural sun will cease to shine when the Son of God shall appear in his glory to carry his bride to their eternal home and to forever share eternal bliss with the Son.

We have in the scripture proof that this Son was with the father before the world was created. Also, that he is the light of the world. He will never need any of the natural creation that was put here for man's benefit. The Son of God is as powerful as his Father. What can the creatures that are created by Him do to help this Son? Could all the power of this natural earth change the position or strength of the natural sun?

It is the height of foolishness to even compare the strength of man to the Son of God but there are people that believe that the Son of God needs help to save his people. Did God and his Son need help to create all of the miracles of creation found in Genesis? God accomplished all the work of creation before he made man. Where was man then?

He was still in the purpose of God to be created just as he is before the act of creation. Man was and is putty in God's hand. Man will never be anything except the created.

God says, "*I am God and change not therefore you sons of Jacob are not consumed.*"

Can any combination of men's power overcome the power of God? Again the thought is foolishness. The thoughts are of man and not of the spirit of God.

I do not claim to have any sure knowledge of spiritual things and feel sometimes my hope that I have the revelation of God in these matters is mistaken.

Again, I feel that if my life was to be taken I would not deny my Savior and his mercy to sinners such as I. Praise His holy name! I hope you readers have witnessed the Son's power and his mercy and Grace as I have written. If not, then cast it all aside.

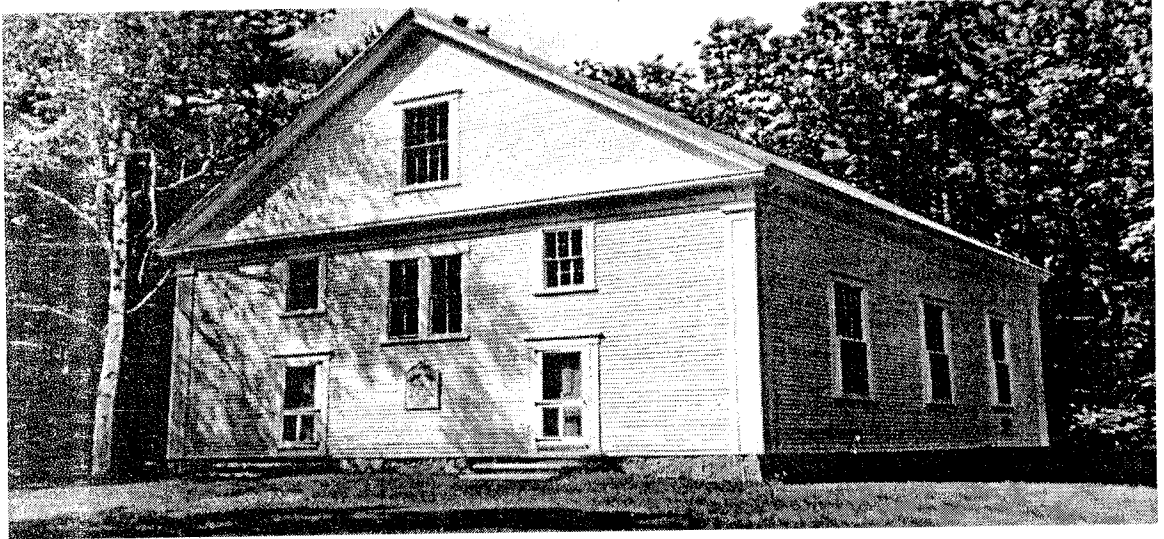
Hoping for that inheritance!
Burnell B. Williams

1 CORINTHIANS 2:7-9.

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

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

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

CHURCHES OF OUR FAITH

1852 - OAKWOODS CHURCH
Meeting House of the Second
Baptist Church of Berwick
Founded - 1803

Jan. 11, 2010

Dear Elder Key,

Christian greetings, I visited North Berwick, Maine a few months ago and took a tour through the old Oak Woods Church.

Elder Frederick W. Keene served as pastor for 25 years, many years ago. Today the old building sits idle. It's used for weddings and not much else. Built in 1852, it's as solid as a rock. The North Berwick Historical Society gave the building all the paint and repairs that it needed.

Perhaps some of the Signs of the Times readers got to hear Elder Keene preach in the 1930's. I'd be happy to hear from anyone who has recollections to share.

Sincerely,
 Jim Cote
 P.O. Box 391
 Westbrook, ME 04098

Thanks to the the North Berwick Historical Society for their help and to Mr. Jim Cote for the picture and other information above.

Editor

VOICES OF THE PAST

IN THE CLEFTS OF THE ROCK

This is where the Lord's people are when the dear Savior makes his love known to them. "*O my dove that art in the clefts of the rock, in the secret places of the stairs, let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice; for sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely.*" This also is their safe hiding place while they remain in this mortal state. But how may we know that we are in the clefts of the rock? What kind of an experience is this? If the gracious and loving words of Jesus to his dove are sweet to our souls, then it is sure that we are of those to whom they are spoken; but it may be far from sure to us at the time, because of our feeling of great unworthiness, and because we cannot see that we are in that secret, safe and sacred place, where the dove is said to be. The clefts of the rock, being the sure dwelling place of the dove, the bride of Christ, must be, as we think, a place most sweet and pleasant, free from trouble, and especially free from trouble on account of sin; and when we feel ourselves full of unrest, hedged in, afflicted, cut off from our desires, unable to do what we would, finding evil present with us when we would do good, how can we think that we are in the clefts of

the rock, and that the dear Savior can find any sweetness in our complaining, supplicating voice, or see any comeliness in our sorrowful countenance?

I have had some precious comfort in some experiences and thoughts upon this subject of late, and have for some time felt a strong pressure upon my mind to express, as I may be enabled, some of these things for the comfort of those who have been tried as I have been.

Moses said unto the Lord, "*If I have found grace in thy sight, shew me now thy way, that I may know thee, that I may find grace in thy sight.*" And again, "*I beseech thee, show me thy glory.*" — *Exodus xxxiii. 13, 18.* Such desires to see the Lord's way, and to behold his glory, are not from presumptuous curiosity, as we some times fear, but are the solemn actings of faith in the soul, preparing us for such revelations of himself as he designs to favor us with. He will hear all such questions, all such longings and pantings of the poor soul after him, and will answer them, but it will be "*by terrible things in righteousness.*" — *Psalms lxv. 5.*

"And he said, I will make all my goodness pass before thee, and I will proclaim the name of the Lord before thee; and will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will shew mercy on whom I will shew mercy. And he said Thou canst not see my face:

for there shall no man see me and live. And the Lord said, There is a place by me, and thou shalt stand upon a rock: and it shall come to pass while my glory passeth by, that I will put thee in a cleft of the rock, and will cover thee with my hand while I pass by: and I will take away my hand, and thou shalt see my back parts: but my face shall not be seen.”- Exodus xxxiii. 19-23.

When all this took place (Exodus xxxiv. 1-7), Moses was alone with the Lord in that desolate mountain. *“And the Lord descended in the cloud, and stood with him there, and proclaimed the name of the Lord. And the Lord passed by before him, and proclaimed, The Lord, the Lord God, merciful and gracious, long suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth. Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin.” “What goodness and blessedness are here in this name, as thus far proclaimed! What a garden of delights, filled with most lovely flowers and richest fruits. What more could be desired by a poor sinner who hates sin, and hungers and thirsts after righteousness? Well might we say, if permitted to enter into this wonderful name, and enjoy its rich blessings, O how great is thy goodness which thou hast wrought for them that fear thee;*

which thou hast laid up for them that trust in thee before the sons of men.”-Psalm xxxi. 19.

But there is another syllable in this mysterious and glorious name, which a sinful man cannot hear and live, unless hidden in the cleft of the Rock, and covered by the hand of the Lord. *“And that will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children’s children, unto the third and to the fourth generation.”* This part of the Lord’s name is full of terror, and is fraught with death to every guilty soul. It as surely bars every sinner from the safety and beauty of that holy name, as the flaming sword prevented the return of Adam and Eve to the Garden of Eden, and kept from them the way of the tree of life.

Whether Moses was literally put into a cleft of a rock or not, we have in this cleft a figure of the absolute safety that was given to him while the awful name of the Lord was proclaimed. The Lord’s hand that covered him while his glory passed by, is not a literal hand, to be discerned by our natural senses, but expresses to us his sure and absolute protection from a danger which is not to the body merely, but to the soul.

As this great experience came upon him, *“Moses made haste and bowed his head toward the earth, and worshiped.”-Exodus xxxiv. 8.* In the proclamation of this

terrible name Moses' prayer was answered. This name is the revelation of the Lord's way, of his goodness and his glory.

This rock represents Jesus. *"There is a place by me,"* the Lord said, *"and thou shalt stand upon a rock."* Here is the only foundation upon which a sinful man can stand before the Lord. That sacred Rock was smitten in order that the Lord's chosen people might be safely hidden while his name is proclaimed before them, and while his glory passes by. When Christ was crucified the guilt of his people was atoned for and removed, justice and judgment were executed for them, and the Lord's name was honored and glorified. That part of his name which declares that he will in no wise clear the guilty still remains, but it does not exclude his people any longer, for they are free from guilt, being crucified with Christ, and thus hidden in the cleft of the Rock.

When *"the name of the Lord cometh from far, burning with his anger"* against sin, and *"his lips are full of indignation"* against the workers of iniquity, *"and his tongue as a devouring fire"* (Isaiah xxx. 27-30), none of all the sinful race of man can stand before him. No man can see his face and live. *"Who may abide the day of his coming?"* None but those whom the Lord has put in a cleft of the Rock, and covered with his hand. These were safe in Jesus while the wrath of that holy and terrible name

was visited upon him. He was able to endure the stroke of the sword of justice, to die and rise again, and thus to *"finish transgression, make an end of sin,"* and by satisfying the law to take the sting from death, and destroy that terrible enemy.

And as the Lord's people were saved when the glory of his name was proclaimed in the crucifixion of his dear Son, by being in him in that death in a wonderful and mystical sense, so that they are dead with him to the law and to sin (Romans vi. 7-11), so ever after, while in this mortal state, his sufferings and death are their only safe hiding place. In their flesh they cannot stand before the Lord, nor endure the glory of his name, for in their flesh *"there dwells no good thing."* Those who have been quickened by divine life, realize that they cannot of themselves do one spiritual thing, any more than a dead man can do a natural thing; as the apostle says, *"If Christ be in you the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness."* - Romans viii. 10. And, as he further says, it is only as the body is quickened, or moved, by the Spirit of him who raised up Christ from the dead, that any man can do anything that is acceptable to God.

The experience of being in a cleft of the Rock must therefore be always crossing to the flesh. It must be an experience full of sore trials and afflictions. We ask the Lord, as

Moses did, to show us his way; we beseech him to show us his glory. We want to see and understand more of his goodness. It seems to us that if he should be pleased to grant our desire, we should be at the height of bliss. How little we know of his wonderful ways. He does answer us, but it is *"in such a way as almost drives us to despair."* *"By terrible things in righteousness wilt thou answer us, O God of our salvation."* We *"are shut up and cannot come forth."* We find ourselves more and more unable to do the good that we would, and we are left to doubt at times even whether we have a desire to do good. We are hedged in by our sinfulness and utter weakness, and by the judgments of God which seem to go out against us. We cannot do what we would in providence. Poverty holds us in its dire embrace. We cannot succeed in our work. We hate and dread to be in debt, but debt comes upon us, or danger of starvation for those dependent upon us. Or we do prosper in worldly affairs, and find wealth, but with it there comes leanness into our souls. There is a famine even in the midst of plenty. What we have will not feed our souls. We cannot enjoy the temporal prosperity that comes to us: if we would help others we fear our motives are base and selfish, and that we are only hypocrites. There seems to be a searching power within and about us, and we fear we are found wanting. A tempest is go-

ing by, and we tremble; yet cannot see what destruction it is working. We are like those whom the Lord had shut in the ark. They could feel the terrible power of the winds and waves, but could not see what it was. They felt the beatings and tossings and shakings of the ark, and afterward the quiet and peace, but could not know the meaning of it all until the cover was taken off the ark. Then it was all made plain, and the beauty and glory of the rainbow showed to those who had passed through the storm, and who now stood on Ararat, holy ground, a blessed purpose of God in the flood.

In the cleft of the rock, covered and held down by the Lord's hand, how terrible must have been the experience of *"Moses, the man of God."* Not another soul in all that desolate mountain. The Lord was there, but not visible to his mortal sight. How long he was in that cleft it is not material to know. The power of fear and pain is not measured by time. In a moment the soul may be overwhelmed with terror. In what way the power of that name came by, we do not know, whether there was a literal quaking of the mountain, with fire and smoke and thunder, as when the law was given, or whether the awful power of the Lord's name was felt only within his soul, we do not know. What we do know is that a cleft of a rock must be a most uncomfortable place to be in. We also know there must have been a terribly destructive power in the passing

of the Lord before Moses, if he must not only be put into that cleft, but must also be covered by the Lord's hand in order to be saved from destruction.

But O, what a blessed time that is when the Lord's hand is taken away, and we are enabled to see his wonderful works which he has done, and to behold the glory of his name which has already been proclaimed. We could not see his way before he had passed by in it. We could not know what he would do before he had done it. We cannot see his face as he comes toward us in his work of salvation. To see him coming in those "*terrible works in righteousness,*" by which he saves his people, would kill us with terror. But after he has passed by in the fulfillment of all that terrible work, by which his glorious name is honored, the law magnified, and his people saved, then it is joy unspeakable to see his back parts, to see the glory that follows him. We cannot see him working, but we see the work when it is done. Even then, while in that experience of fear, of inability to see, like those in the ark, what caused the great commotion; in that experience of sinfulness and condemnation, and utter inability to do any good thing, even then the secret of the Lord was with us, though we did not know it. We were far from the thought that this was God's work in bringing us to himself. We could not then have believed that this affliction, this inability to move in any way of

righteousness, was because we were in a cleft of the Rock, because we were being crucified with Christ in our experience. We could not have believed that this tribulation in our souls was because the Lord had put his fear in our hearts, which "*is to hate evil.*" But all this fearful exercise in our souls was the secret of the Lord, and when he removed his hand from over us, and showed us his covenant, then we understood that this was his wonderful work of salvation which he had begun in us, working in us "*to will and to do of his good pleasure.*" "*The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and he will shew unto them his covenant.*"-*Psalm xxv. 14.*

Job was in that cleft of the Rock when he said, "*O that I knew where I might find him*" "*Behold, I go forward, but he is not there; and backward, but I cannot perceive him: on the left hand where he doth work, but I cannot behold him: he hideth himself on the right that I cannot see him.*" The psalmist was there when he said, "*I am shut up, and I cannot come forth;*" and Jacob when he said, "*All these things are against me.*" Jeremiah was there when he said, "*He hath hedged me about that I cannot get out: he hath made my chain heavy. Also when I cry and shout, he shutteth out my prayer.*"-*Lam. iii. 7, 8.* And Paul was there when he was blinded by the light from

heaven, and could see no man; and also when, long afterward, he said, "*O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death ?*"

Those who are in the clefts of a rock all of the time can do no work upon the earth. They cannot run to and fro in the sight of men; they cannot join in work or worship with those who are not with them in the clefts. They are helpless for themselves, and they cannot extend help to any who are abroad upon the earth. They will often feel their confined, cramped, shut-in position so keenly, that it seems to them that they cannot endure it. They want to get out into the midst of the world and do something, do some good to themselves or others, do something to show that they are not altogether nothing. But if they seem to be able to get such desires gratified for a little, they are so utterly ashamed of their works that they want to shrink away out of sight. They find of themselves what the psalmist said of every man in his best state, they "*are altogether vanity.*" Then, in the Lord's own time, they learn the blessed meaning of this sad experience. They have not really been allowed to go out of that safe dwelling place at all, though they seemed for a time as one in a dream, to be working with the proud and wise of this world. They have been all the time, and yet are, held firmly by the hand of the Lord, notwithstanding all the rebellious lustings of the flesh

against the Spirit. Now and then the gracious hand which covers them, and holds them in that narrow, confined place, is taken away for a little time, and they see the Lord's way, and behold his glory, and gaze with rapture upon the rainbow beauty and brightness of the everlasting covenant. And how they thank the Lord, and praise his glorious name, for his preserving power and mercy. How glad they are that he has overturned their plans, and broken down their strength, and disappointed them in their earthly hopes, and shown them that their works are vain, and that their days are vanity, and are as a hand breadth. Now they are rejoiced to see that the works of Jesus are perfect, and that they are all-sufficient, and cover all the ground of their needs for evermore. O, how beautiful and glorious the Lord's works are! How thankful they are for the sure protection they have had in that secret place of the Lord, from the windy storm and tempest which has been abroad in the earth, while they were so eagerly struggling to get away from the controlling and restraining power of God. Now they rejoice in their afflictions, for they see that salvation was in those afflictions. Now they rejoice in the tribulations that made them murmur and complain at the time, for through them they have been brought to "*stand before the great white throne,*" from whence the river of the water of life proceeds, and have entered more and

more into the experimental knowledge of the kingdom of God. And now they are called by the sweet voice of Jesus. O, these blessed seasons, when faith prevails, when the hand that held and covered them is removed, and they see the back parts of the Lord, and realize the blessed effect of his passing by in his terrible works of righteousness, by which he has answered us. *"The work of righteousness shall be peace, and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance forever."*- *Isaiah xxxii. 17.* And the soothing, comforting, joyful effect of that precious voice of Jesus, not heard by the natural ear, but felt in the heart; how sweet it is: *"O my dove, that art in the clefts of the rock!"* His voice speaks not in vain. *"My sheep hear my voice,"* he says. When he speaks, then we know that we are his, and that we are dwelling in him, and he in us, and this by no work or wisdom of ours, but by his own power and grace. Those are the times when that voice of the Lord, which is powerful and full of majesty, is in our souls, that we can say, while our hearts throb and overflow with love, *"My beloved is mine and I am his."* The power of that voice removes our fears, and causes us to see that our afflictions have been light, and but for a moment, compared with the *"far more exceeding and eternal weight of*

glory," which they have worked for us. We see now that these sufferings, which we sometimes felt sure were evidences of the Lord's wrath, were really the fellowship of Jesus' sufferings, and that to feel them was to be in the clefts of the Rock.

It has been truly wonderful to me, when I have felt adversities of every kind pressing so heavily upon me, and have been sure that they were evidences that God had turned against me, and that I must certainly lose the fellowship of the saints, if ever I had really had it, and must be cast out; when I have seen not only spiritual comforts gone, but all worldly prospects failing, and have felt not only physical strength failing, but have feared that the little mental ability I had was going, and that I was of no account, either in the world or in the church; when blankness was upon my life, and darkness was settling heavily down upon my spirit; at such a time how wonderful it has been to find some words of the dear Lord in my soul with power, and light, like the morning rising upon me, and to be shown in a moment that all this was but an experience of being in the clefts of the Rock, and a sure evidence that I was one of the Lord's hidden ones, crucified with Christ; that this was *"knowing him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, and being made*

conformable unto his death."- Phil. iii. 10. To be assured that this is the way the Lord separates his people from the world and self; that this was *"bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh;"* dying with him, that I might live with him, even here; suffering with him, that I may reign with him, even while yet in the flesh, through the power of faith.

Then a constraining power is felt, making us turn our faces toward Jesus in love and praise, and causing our voices to *"break out in unknown strains, and sing surprising grace."* It is the voice of the Lord, which breaks the cedars of Lebanon, which divides the flames of fire, which maketh the hinds to calve, and discovereth the forests, and causes everyone in his temple to speak of his glory. (Psalm xxix.) It is the voice of Jesus, speaking with the holy, compelling power of his own unspeakable love, which removes the curtains of night, and lets in the morning upon our souls; which turns our thoughts and faces toward him in praise and holy expectancy, and causes us to make melody in our hearts unto him; for he says, *"Let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice; for sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely."*

Silas H. Durand
JANUARY 24, 1899.

ACTS XIII. 23, 26.

"Of this man's seed hath God, according to his promise, raised unto Israel a Savior, Jesus." Men and brethren, children of the stock of Abraham, and whosoever among you feareth God, to you is the word of this salvation sent."

People are continually making promises, one to another. Sometimes promises are renewed, and when the appointed time for fulfillment of them arrives the one who made the promise is not able to fulfill it; things unforeseen have entered to thwart his plans. To be able to fulfill a promise one must have control of all things that would affect this promise. Men have never had this control, hence the Scripture says, If the Lord will, we shall live and do this or that. This is an expression we feel has been used more by those who believe in salvation by grace than by others, and may God give us grace to continue the same in the spirit of the matter. The promises of God are not as the promises of men. In Romans iv. 21, Paul says, *"And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform."* Again, Hebrews x. 23: *"Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering; (for he is faithful that promised)."* And in 2 Peter iii, 9, he declares, *"The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some*

men count slackness." Hence his faithfulness (and ability) to perform his promises at times causes our hearts to rejoice as we are given to hope that we are included among those spoken of in Acts xiii. 26, that feareth God. The promises of God are received by faith, which the apostle says is the gift of God. God renewed his promise that he would send his Son, the Savior of his people, from time to time. We find Abel offering a Lamb as a sacrifice. *"By faith Abel offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts: and by it he, being dead, yet speaketh."* This lamb Abel offered was a type of Christ. The promise of his coming was in his heart. When Abraham was called to offer Isaac, he said, God will provide himself a lamb for a burnt offering. At that time there was no visible offering but Isaac, but he had the spirit of promise. In the shedding of blood, the burnt offerings, the lifting of the brazen serpent, the serving of the high priest, and many other ways too numerous to mention here, the Lord was renewing his promise unto Israel that he would send his Son, who would fulfill all his will, and would save with an everlasting salvation. This thought was kept before true Israel, and their rejoicing was in it. As the true believers received this promise, by faith, they looked beyond the literal sacrifices and saw the day of Jesus, and be-

lieved in his coming as much as if he had already come. When Solomon had completed the temple which the Lord had put in the heart of David to build, and the glory of the Lord had filled it, he could look back and see where the Lord had promised those things by Moses. He could truly say in blessing Israel, *"Blessed be the Lord, that hath given rest unto his people Israel, according to all that he promised: there hath not failed one Lord of all his good promise, which he promised by the hand of Moses his servant."*- 1 Kings viii. 56. The giving of this promise to the prophets caused them to speak of the coming of Christ as if he was already here. Isaiah says, *"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."* Another prophet could say, I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth. When Joseph hesitated to take the virgin Mary as his wife, a renewal of the promise was made: *"She shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name Jesus: for he shall save his people from their sins."* When the angel brought this word his fears were dispelled and he did as he was bidden. The Lord promised Simeon, by the Holy Ghost, he should not see death until he had

seen the Savior. When he saw the promise fulfilled he could say, Now let thy servant depart in peace, mine eyes have seen thy salvation. Peter tells us that the promise is unto you and you children, to them that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call. The gospel proclaims that the promise of his coming has been fulfilled, that salvation has been accomplished, by one offering he has perfected forever them that are sanctified; that he has obtained eternal redemption for his people, and is made of God unto his wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption. Surely this is a finished salvation.

When the angel appeared unto the shepherds with the news, unto you is born in the city of David a Savior, there was no questioning the matter. A star shall guide you (the spirit of promise) Herod could not locate Jesus, because all are not Israel that are of Israel. That is, they which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed.

Now we have the promise of the second coming of the Lord. His second coming is just as sure as his first coming was. We have his promise, I will come again, and receive you unto myself. These are precious promises. The fulfillment of our hope is the coming of the Lord, who shall change our vile body, and fashion it like unto his own glorious body. Then death will be swallowed up in

victory. With the promise of God in his heart Stephen could recount how that God had fulfilled his promise to each generation, even to the sending of his Son. With these things in his heart he could say, I see the heavens opened, and I see the Son of man standing on the right hand of God. He prayed for his enemies, and his face looked like an angel. Paul said, I have finished my course, henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness.

Oh may we have these things in our heart, life, talk, and walk, that we may feel as we pass the door of death, his precious promise in our heart.

*His promise is my only plea,
With this I venture nigh;
Thou callest burdened souls
to thee,*

*And such, O Lord, am I.
If he is mine, I'll boldly pass
Through death's tremendous
vale;*

*He is a solid comfort
When all other comforts fail,
O tell me, Lord, that thou art
mine,*

*What can I want beside?
My soul shall at the fountain
live*

*When all the streams are
dried."*

"God, willing more abundantly to shew: unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath; that by two immutable

things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil." Only those who have fled for refuge, who have toiled all, night, who have felt the sinking beneath the righteous frown of God, are given to lay hold upon the hope set before us, and this after they have tried their own strength and failed. To them the promise of his enduring mercy, his inseparable love and his tender watch-care, is their only hope.

David V. Spangler

The following is taken from the book, "*A Treasure of Hymns*" by Amos R. Wells. Copyright 1945, W. A. Wilde Company.

The book contains brief biographies of one hundred twenty leading hymn writers with their best hymns.

"BLEST BE THE TIE THAT BINDS."
John Fawcett.

The author of this favorite hymn, one of the most commonly used of all our Christian songs, was John Fawcett, who was born on January 17, 1739, at Lidget Green, Yorkshire, England.

When he was thirteen years old he was apprenticed to a London tailor, and remained with him through his period of apprenticeship, which was six years.

At the age of sixteen he was converted by a sermon preached by the famous evangelist, George Whitefield, the text being John 3:14, and in 1765 he was ordained as a Baptist minister, and soon obtained a small church at Wainsgate in Yorkshire. Here he remained for the rest of his life, serving his people with great fidelity.

In 1772 he was called to become the pastor of a famous Baptist church in London.

He accepted the call, preached his farewell sermon, and had already placed his household goods upon wagons when the love and the tears of his people gathered around him prevailed, and he found it impossible to leave them.

It was within a week, while the memory of this affecting scene was fresh upon him, that he wrote this hymn of Christian fellowship, "Blest be the tie that binds."

Though his position gave him a salary of less than \$200 a year, and though he received other invitations to fields that were more attractive from a worldly point of view, he accepted none of them.

In 1811 he received the degree of doctor of divinity from Brown University in the United States.

He died on July 25, 1817, at the age of seventy-eight. His last words

were, *"Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly."*

Dr. Fawcett wrote many prose religious works, and six volumes of poems. In 1780 his address on *"Anger"* was presented to George III., and it found so great favor with the monarch that he offered to give the writer any favor he might ask.

Dr. Fawcett did not accept the kindness at the time, but later, when the son of one of his intimate friends was convicted of forgery, and, in accordance with the laws of the times, was sentenced to be hung, he besought pardon for him from the king, and in memory of his book he obtained it.

In 1782 he issued a volume containing 166 hymns. Most of these hymns he composed at midnight on Saturday to be sung after his sermon on the following day. Among the most famous of his hymns are, *"How precious is the Book Divine," "Thus far my God hath led me on," "Praise to Thee, thou great Creator,"* and *"Thy way, O God, is in the sea."* Many think that he also wrote the hymn, "Lord, dismiss us with Thy blessing," the authorship of which is uncertain.

But of all his hymns by far the most famous is *"Blest be the tie that binds."* Instances of its use on notable occasions are very numerous. A famous example is the story of the missionary, Coffin, who, in 1860, left his station at Aintab, Turkey, to explore a dangerous and distant region of the Taurus Mountains.

His loving Armenian converts, to the number of 1,500, expecting not to see his face again, gathered on the road over which he was to pass, and as their farewell sang, *"Blest be the tie."*

When Moody was a Sunday-school superintendent in Chicago, one of his teachers who had a class of girls learned that he was threatened with a fatal disease and must leave the city.

Conscience-stricken because he had not sought earnestly for the conversion of his class, he got Mr. Moody to accompany him, and in a carriage for ten days they visited the girls, until finally everyone of them had accepted Christ.

The farewell meeting at the house of this faithful teacher was profoundly affecting, and as they tried to sing in parting, *"Blest be the tie that binds,"* they were all so moved that they broke down.

Probably the most notable occasion of the use of this hymn was at the famous gathering in Pittsburg in November, 1869, when the two divisions of the Presbyterian Church, the Old and the New Schools, came together after many years of separation. On the consummation of this union *"Blest be the tie"* was sung by the large assembly.

During recent years this hymn has been constantly used in the international Christian Endeavor Conventions. Almost always at some time during the Convention the American national hymn, *"My coun-*

try, 'tis of thee," and the British national hymn, "God save the King," are sung, and are immediately followed by "Blest be the tie that binds."

This sequence of hymns was most impressively sung at the World's Christian Endeavor Convention in London in 1900, and at the close of the Convention, when a large party of Christian Endeavorers was received by Queen Victoria at Windsor Castle, after singing "God save the Queen," the Endeavorers followed it with "*Blest be the tie that binds.*"

In the church of which the founder of Christian Endeavor, Dr. F. E. Clark, is a member, in Auburn-dale, Mass., every Friday-night church prayer meeting is closed by the singing of the opening stanza of this hymn: —

*Blest be the tie that binds
Our hearts in Christian love;
The fellowship of kindred minds
Is like to that above.*

*Before our Father's throne
We pour our ardent prayers;
Our fears, our hopes, our aims
are one,
Our comforts and our cares.*

*We share our mutual woes,
Our mutual burdens bear;
And often for each other flows
The sympathizing tear.
When we asunder part,
It gives us inward pain;*

*But we shall still be joined in
heart,
And hope to meet again.*

*This glorious hope revives
Our courage by the way;
While each in expectation lives,
And longs to see the day.*

*From sorrow, toil, and pain,
And sin, we shall be free,
And perfect love and friendship
reign
Through all eternity.*

Submitted by,
Brother Jerry Sommers

BOW IN THE CLOUD

I have been reading the *Signs* for several years, and I have had a desire to write some of my thoughts on the Scripture, but I know full well if the Holy Spirit doesn't guide my thoughts and my pen, and it is left to this poor sinner, I will have nothing that will be of any interest to the dear family of God.

I have been going among the Old Baptist for over fifty years. I love and rejoice in the doctrine of God our Saviour.

I love to read God's Word and His promises to His people. He made a covenant with Noah after the flood. "*God spake unto Noah, and to his sons with him saying, And I, behold, I establish my covenant with you, and with your seed*

after you; And with every living creature that is with you, of the fowl, of the cattle, and of every beast of the earth with you; from all that go out of the ark, to every beast of the earth. And I will establish my covenant with you; neither shall all flesh be cut off any more by the waters of a flood; neither shall there any more be a flood to destroy the earth.” (Gen. 9 :8-11)

God gave Noah a token of the covenant which He made. *“And God said, This is the token of the covenant which I make between me and you and every living creature that is with you, for perpetual generations: I do set my bow in the cloud, and it shall be for a token of a covenant between me and the earth. And it SHALL come to pass, when I bring a cloud over the earth, that the bow shall be seen in the cloud: And I will remember my covenant, which is between me and you and every living creature of all flesh; and the waters shall no more become a flood to destroy all flesh. And the bow shall be in the cloud; and I will look upon it, that I may remember the everlasting covenant between God and every living creature of all flesh that is upon the earth.” (Gen. 9:12-16)*

What a wonderful promise that was, and it stands just as firm today as it did when God spake to Noah.

God told the Prophet Jeremiah that He would make a new covenant with the House of Israel and with the House of Judah: The Writer of Hebrews also tells us about this New Covenant. *“...Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah :” (Heb. 8 :8)* This new covenant was not according to the covenant that He made with their Fathers when He took them by the hand to lead them out of the Land of Egypt. The New Covenant was established upon better promises. This New Covenant was made with the House of Israel (Spiritual Israel). *“For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days, saith the Lord; I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts: And I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people:” (Heb. 8:10).* This New Covenant is telling His people today *“They shall not teach every man his neighbour, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for all shall know me, from the least to the greatest.” (Heb. 8 :11)*

This New Covenant is made of Wills and Shalls, and full of Mercy and Grace, for it says, *“For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more.” (Heb. 8:12)*

ROMANS 12:1-3.

I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service.

And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.

Wisdom is good with an inheritance: and by it there is profit to them that see the sun. (Eccl. 7:11)

The wise man of the world, is guided by his conscience to live morally right, and to walk uprightly before his fellow man. The spiritually wise, who are called foolish by the world, are guided by the Holy Spirit to walk uprightly before God. This spiritual walk of those guided by spiritual wisdom, is what we hope to discuss, God being our strength.

The children of Grace once walked as the foolish. Their eyes were blinded and they sought their joys in the decaying things of the world around them. They were very busy choosing whom they would serve among the little gods of the earth. They were wise in their own eyes, fol-

lowing the way that seemeth right to a man, and crooked paths of self-righteousness. The blind led the blind and walked after the counsel of the ungodly. Those who walk after the flesh, mind the things of the flesh and not of the Spirit. This is not a good inheritance, for the simple inherit folly, therefore they cannot inherit the kingdom of God, because they are flesh and blood. The things of the kingdom of God are spiritually discerned. Though they count themselves wise, in the light of spiritual wisdom and truth they are foolish and simple minded.

The question is, how can the blind see, the deaf hear, the lame walk, to find the good wisdom with an inheritance? *“Where shall wisdom be found, and where is the place of understanding?” “The fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil that is understanding.”*

Dear reader, do you ever try to remember when the fear of the Lord entered your heart? When the scary tales of the devil and his cohorts took flight, as the evil spirits entered the swine and were choked in the sea? Do you yearn and long and try to pray, with me, that you actually experience Godly fear, and that you are one of the foolish things of this world, that He chose to confound the wise? Did you turn from your former life of folly and begin to fear God of your own free will? Did you lift your feet from the miry clay and place them upon the rock, the sure foundation? I think not. You were told in your heart to *“Stand still and see the salvation of the Lord.”*

Though we see through a glass darkly, and walk by faith and not by sight, if we are what we hope to be, the foolish things of this world have passed away, for us, and the inheritance that comes with spiritual wisdom is our meat and drink. Christ's sermon on the mount gives in detail the good inheritance; and those who will receive it.

Let us reread the text, "*Wisdom is good with an inheritance: and by it there is profit to them that see the sun.*" By it, there is profit. If we are wise in the fear of the Lord, and receive an inheritance (an unearned legacy) that profits us, the profit is as much a gift as the inheritance. Christ with whom we are heirs and joint heirs we hope, died to satisfy the law in our place, and gave us redemption from the law and salvation to life eternal. He took away our stony heart and gave us a heart of flesh. With this gift, he gave light, truth, and wisdom to understand there is no other way to enter the climes of immortal glory except by himself. He is the only door.

The new heart of flesh is wise to the source of its profit. It knows the roads it followed in folly. It knows the miry clay, the desert land, and howling wilderness from which it was rescued. This heart that now is lowly, meek, humble, poor, and wise to its own short comings, looks to the Giver of its inheritance, for wisdom, strength and comfort. It dwells in the wisdom that, "*Man's goings are of the Lord, how can a man then understand his own way,*" How do those

who are wise in the fear of the Lord profit by this inheritance? They are filled with the needs of the inner man as dictated by the Spirit He knows and supplies our every need, but not the whims and fancies of the flesh. We are held down and made humble, lest we become puffed up, but He promised Paul "*my grace is sufficient for thee.*" No matter what the problem, or thorn in the flesh, the child of God is hemmed in, and hedged about, by his promises, which are yea and amen.

They that mourn shall be comforted, the meek shall inherit the earth, the pure in heart shall see God, the merciful shall obtain mercy, and they shall sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. "*With the lowly there is wisdom,*" says David, "*and the wise shall inherit glory.*"

Every good and every perfect gift is from above. The wise man knows himself to be lost and without hope, unless a power outside himself intervenes. All of his efforts have been fruitless, and judgment seems his doom. When Christ enters his heart and makes a new man within him, then can the little child of God say, "*I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.*" Even though, to himself, he feels sinful, unworthy and unfruitful, his brethren can see his new way, and his good and perfect gifts, shining *through* the old man. Faith, hope and charity are gifts that wisdom bids him use wisely and are profits from his inheritance. How wonderful to watch a Christian on the new road, as he is guided by

wisdom. He walks it by faith, also a part of the inherited gift. Even though it is strait and narrow and hard, and though he falter and fall along the way, he is never lost nor utterly cast down. Why? Because his way is in the light and he is one of them that sees the sun. His feet are planted and kept in the way of life by the wisdom of that sun shining in his heart; by the love and mercy of that one that neither sleeps nor slumbers. To a way worn sinner, who knows his own wickedness and vanity; who has been taught his own foolishness, and has been made to know it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps, then to him, "Truly the light is sweet, and a pleasant thing it is for the eyes to behold the sun."

As all scripture is written for a profit to the man of God, to the children of God instead of the whole world, so is the wording of this text written to a certain people: "*To them that see the sun.*" Broken into segments it means: wisdom is good to them that see the sun, or an inheritance to them that see the sun, or profit to them that see the sun. So in reality, we have wisdom, which is the fear of God; inheritance, which is the promise of God; and profit, which is the comforting faith and hope in the fulfillment of those promises, all pertaining to this certain people that see the sun.

I believe "*Them that see the sun,*" are his people, chosen in Christ Jesus from the foundation of the world, and that the sun in this instance

is God. "*For the Lord God is a sun and a shield.*" (Psalm 84:11) He chose them as heirs of promise and set their hope and faith before them, as the path they must walk, on which they will continue until they come into full possession of the profit of their inheritance, within the veil.

These are thoughts, poorly presented, on a deep and wonderful subject. I hope that I have not been allowed to do violence to its meaning, and would love to hear some gifted, inspired brother proclaim its deeper meaning.

Mrs. Cisco Barron
Spearsville, La.

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FOR DECEMBER 2009

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Eva Wyatt, NC	5.00

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 178

HILLSVILLE, VA., MARCH 2010

NO. 3

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

ISSN - 0199 - 0063

Subscription price \$15.00 per year - \$25.00 two years

Published monthly by
SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

1429 Howlett Street
Hillsville, Va. 24343

POEM

THANK GOD FOR LITTLE THINGS

Thank you, God, for little things

That often come our way,

The things we take
for granted

but don't mention when

we pray,

The unexpected

courtesy,

the thoughtful,

kindly deed,

A hand reached out to help us

in the time of sudden need —

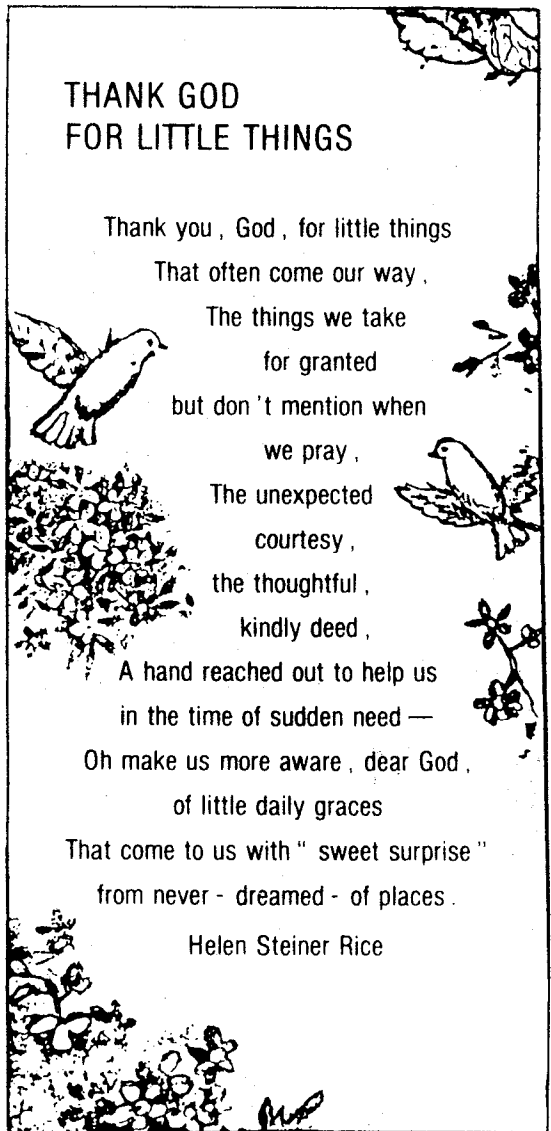
Oh make us more aware, dear God,

of little daily graces

That come to us with "sweet surprise"

from never-dreamed-of places.

Helen Steiner Rice



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EDITORIALS

“Now the Birth of Jesus Christ Was on This Wise” St. Matthew 1:18



Elder Cleo D. Robertson

The birth of Christ has always been controversial and always will be so far as the world is concerned. Many deny the virgin birth of Christ and are constantly seeking to prove that it did not take place. We see programs on television and articles in newspapers, magazines and books devoted to this purpose. There were those in the days that Christ was upon earth who saw Him and heard Him and yet knew Him

not. He had never been revealed to them so they could not know Him. But, there is a remnant called out of nature's darkness into His marvelous light that has an experience of grace that testifies of His virgin birth. Isaiah prophesied that unto us a child is born and unto us a son is given. Every little child of grace experiences the birth of Christ in their heart. As the Holy Ghost came upon Mary and the power of God overshadowed her, she conceived and a holy child was born which was the Son of God. No works of the flesh were involved. Therefore, it was a virgin birth. So it is with each of God's elect. The Holy Ghost came upon you and the power of God overshadowed you and you conceived and Christ was born in your heart. No works of man were involved in this birth. It is a spiritual birth and is all of grace. Therefore, His little ones believe by faith in the virgin birth of Christ because they have experienced it.

We hear it set forth that there were three wise men who were kings from the east that came to worship the Christ child. First of all, we do not know who counted the wise men or ascribed a number to them because Matthew does not. He says only that there were wise men. These wise men set forth God's people and were as many as the Lord God called. They were wise, not with the wisdom of men, but rather the wisdom of God which is spiritual understanding. If this wisdom was of the flesh,

then King Herod and his counselors could have seen the star and understood what it was. By faith, these wise men were following a star they believed was the star of the King of the Jews and they had come to worship Him. God had given them understanding of what the star was and who the child was. Therefore, they are said to be wise men. There is no mention of them being kings. However, Revelation 5:10 says, "*And hast made us unto our God kings and priests: and we shall reign on the earth.*" In that spiritual sense, they were kings and priests unto God and so are each of you who have experienced the birth of Christ in your heart.

The star is setting forth the Holy Spirit which leads and guides the children of the heavenly King. It is from above and is manifested only to the children of God. No one else, with all their human learning, could see this star nor determine where the child was born. Even so today can no man by all the schooling of men know Christ nor where He is born—born in your heart the Hope of glory. The star, so high and so bright, led the wise men to where the child was. When they saw the star over where the child was, they rejoiced with exceeding great joy. When each of you experienced the birth of Christ and felt the comfort and peace for which you had so longed, you too rejoiced with exceeding great joy. Your soul sang out and tears of joy ran down your cheeks. Your very being

praised Him whom your soul loveth.

The wise men fell down and worshipped Christ and opened their treasures and presented unto Him gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh. Christ said, "*For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.*" Their hearts were opened and the gifts manifested. There were three gifts and perhaps this is why the world thinks there were three wise men. The world believes that each one brought a gift. Why would the One who created all things need their gold, frankincense and myrrh? Christ said on one occasion that "*the foxes have holes, and the birds of the air have nests; but the Son of man hath not where to lay his head.*" Though Christ created all things, yet in the world He possessed none of the world's riches. The Apostle Paul writes in *II Corinthians 8:9*, "*For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ that, though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that ye through His poverty might be rich.*" I believe these gifts were spiritual. Each wise man possessed all three gifts that they neither made nor purchased. These were not presents, but gifts and were free with no conditions. They were gifts given to the wise men by God and are manifested when Christ is born in your heart. They were faith, hope and charity. Every child of grace possesses these gifts from God and when one experiences the work of God in them, these gifts are

manifested. The wise men could not go back the same way they came, but went a different way. So every child of God has a different walk and travels a different path after they experience a work of grace. They hate the things they once loved and love the things they once hated. They have no desire to go back to what they once were.

There were shepherds abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock by night. These shepherds set forth the ministers under the law. They were in darkness and only abiding in the field, keeping watch over their flock during the nighttime of the law. They had no food with which to feed the flock. Then an angel appeared unto them and told them that he brings them *“good tidings of great joy which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. And this shall be a sign unto you; Ye shall find the babe wrapped in swaddling clothes, lying in a manger.”* By this sign, the shepherds would know that this was the Christ that was born. He was wrapped in swaddling clothes signifying that He was bound by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God to be delivered into wicked hands to be crucified and die. He was lying in a manger. No one would have expected the Son of God, the King of kings, to be in a manger but there was no more appropriate place for Him to be

as a sign unto the shepherds. This was where the food for the animals was put and where they were fed. He is the food for those who hunger and thirst after His righteousness. Therefore, this was indeed a sign unto the shepherds who this child was. Christ said, *“I am the bread of life”* and *“the bread of God is He which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life unto the world.”*

A multitude of the heavenly host praised God and said, *“Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men.”* This did not mean that Christ had brought peace on earth to all mankind. You and I know that there has never been peace on earth among all peoples and nations for any period of time. For Christ said, *“Think not that I am come to send peace on earth: I came not to send peace, but a sword.”* Rather, the angels were proclaiming that Christ who is our peace had come to earth. Christ also said, *“Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you: not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid.”* Good will toward men speaks of the will of God as it only is good. Christ stated that He had come to do the will of His father that sent Him and the will of His father was that of all which His father had given Him He should lose none, but should raise it up again at the last day. According to the good will of

His father, He had come to earth to redeem those His Father had given Him from their sins and to satisfy the demands of His Father's righteous and holy law. Now, the shepherds had something with which to feed their flock. Day had come and the light of Christ shined forth. Grace had come and the day star had arisen and the Sun of righteousness arose with healing in His wings. The shepherds went preaching the gospel, telling those things which they had seen with their own eyes, handled with their own hands, and heard with their own ears. In other words, they preached that which had been revealed to them and which they had experienced-no man having taught them. God's ministers throughout all ages of time have been called and qualified in the same way. Men taught of man will preach the ways and works of man. Men taught of God will preach Christ.

May the God of all grace continue with each of you is my prayer for Christ's sake.

Elder Cleo D. Robertson

**IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 3/10
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE**

CORRESPONDENCE

Jan. 6, 2010

Tony Horton
1429 Howlett St.
Hillsville, Va. 24343

Sorry I am late; I want to renew the signs of the times for two years. I am sending a check for fifty dollars.

The rest in memory of Dora Ellen Vick who passed December 17, 2009 who is Resting waiting to be gathered with all his people in their eternal home.

We enjoyed reading and discussing the beautiful articles written by our Brothers and Sisters in Christ I hope; for if I be one at all I feel to be the least of All. For I have been made to know that if I am one of his it is by the mercy and grace of God who rules in Heaven and in Earth not by any works that I can do,

For all my works are as filthy rags. I have a precious hope that keeps me pressing on towards the mark and prize of the high calling of our Lord and Savior Jesus. I feel so much of the time to be in a wildness looking for that home not made with hands, eternal in heaven, prepared for his children before the foundation of the World. I have been made to know that if I get what I deserve it will be eternal Damnation for all I have ever done is sin and come short of the glory of God.

In bonds of Love,
Garlon Vick

VOICES OF THE PAST

**THAT WHICH THE LORD HATH
PURPOSED SHALL COME TO PASS**

For some cause my mind has been much exercised for several days upon the purposes of God. I do not know why I should be so constantly meditating upon this to me wonderful, deep and sublime subject yet it is so. A kind of irresistible impression seems to impel me to write notwithstanding my great weakness. I am fully aware of the fact that I am not able of myself to grapple with so deep and sublime a subject. Therefore it is with much fear and trembling that I approach it. I think it is with a heart-felt desire that the lord may direct my mind so that I may write so as to glorify His name and thereby edify His saints believing that when God is honored through our lord Jesus Christ, that the saints rejoice and are edified.

It was the purpose of God to speak the earth into existence. *"In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth."* Gen., 1:1. This proves a purpose to create. In fulfillment of His purpose He made the firmament that his handiwork might be shown. For *"The heavens declare the glory of God: and the firmament sheweth his handiwork."* That the dry land might appear, it is written, And God said, *"Let the waters under the*

heaven be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear: and it was so." Gen.1:9. *"And God called the land earth; and the gathering together of the waters called he seas: and God saw that it was good,"* 10th verse. This his purpose carried out. Take into consideration the fowls, the beast, the fishes, the herbs, etc. Then come to man, in his creation we see the plural used. And God said *"Let us make man in our own image after our likeness, and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the fowl of the air and over the cattle and over all the earth; over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth."* 26th verse. *"So God created man in his own image; in the image of God created he him. Male and female created he them."* 27th verse. In their creation the male and the female. It is said that while they were in this state they were immortal. But God did not say so, and I shall not. It is also said that he was made able to stand but liable to fall. But God did not say so and I shall not, for I don't know. That he did transgress and fell is certain. If he had never transgressed and fell, I own that I cannot trace the purpose of God in the perfect work of salvation. For if the man had fallen, I own that I cannot see for the life of me why God should, from before the world have given any of the fallen race grace in Christ. *"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 in Christ Jesus before the world began.” 2nd Tim., 1:9. This is an affirmation of the apostle, as the preceding verse shows. This grace which was given in Christ Jesus before the world began, consequently was before the creation of man. If this was according to God’s own purpose before the world began, it seems to me there must of necessity have been a purpose in the fall or transgression of the man, without which he never could have been the recipient of this grace; for none but fallen, depraved sinners stand in need of saving grace. I do not think that it is blasphemy to assert that as God purposed grace in Christ Jesus before the world began, that he also purposed that the sinner should stand in need of it.

I am not able to see how the Lord could declare the end from the beginning, and not see and know every event from the beginning. And he by the prophet declares, or commands thus: *“Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else: I am God, and there is none like me. Declaring the end from the beginning and from ancient times the things that are not yet done. Saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure.” Isa., 46:9-10.* I am not able to see how he could declare things that are

not yet done unless he purposed or predestinated that they should be done. To say that he permitted things to take place that he did not purpose, seems to me to contradict itself, and makes the creator no higher than the creature. Man purposes and plans, but his purposes fail, his plans are frustrated. Not so with God. He purposed and it comes to pass. *“To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven.” Eccl., 3:1.* Is this not according to God’s predestination? The Lord’s will cannot be frustrated in the least by any event that takes place under the sun, because every event is according to his purpose and predestination, hence it cometh to pass. *“A time to be born and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted.” Eccl., 1:2.* Who can put off his birth? Not one. If there is a time for man to die, and he by some chance is cut off before his time, who is to die at his time? Can he fill the time if he is cut off before the time? If he passes over time, then what? Who is to take him away after his time has passed? Seeing that he has passed his time, *“Yes,”* says the objector, *“but Hezekiah had fifteen years added to his days.”* Yes, and if you admit that, then you can never kick against God’s predestination, and are compelled to honor his purpose and will be compelled to acknowledge the chance system to be false. *“For,”* saith the preacher, *“I know*

that whatsoever God doeth, it shall be forever; nothing shall be put to it, nor anything taken from it; and God doeth it that men should fear before him." *Eccl., 3:14.*

We have seen that he declares that he will do all his pleasure. Then nothing can be put to it, and nothing taken from it. And it is clearly proven by this that all the idle cant about God being desirous to save all, and some will not let him save them, must be of the devil, and they that preach it must be the devil's tools. For the above is sufficient to show His sovereignty. *"Every purpose of the Lord against Babylon shall be performed."* See Jer. 51:29. If against Babylon, why not in all things? It is certainly taught in the counsel of his own will, and then we clearly see that nothing in the heights or depths comes to pass without his purpose - no, not the falling of a sparrow or the rustling of a leaf.

The saints are saved according to His purpose and grace. The apostle says, *"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."* Rom., 8:28, *"For whom he did foreknow, He also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first born among many brethren,"* 29th verse. *"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." 30th verse. *"But,"* says the objector, *"all good things work together, and not evil things."* I answer, *"He that purposed the good, also purposed the bad, and He controls both alike."* *"But,"* says the objector, *"this predestination, calling, justifying and glorifying, refers to the apostles only, and not to the saints generally."* I answer, If so, then the apostles are all that are saved, because without these callings, justifying and glorifying, it certainly must follow that none could be saved or are saved. Besides, there were only twelve of the apostles, and the number saved, and consequently were predestinated, called, justified and glorified, is a great number or multitude, that no man could number. So the idea that it was only the apostles must be of the wicked one, and not of God. In the purpose of God, we are taught the principles of election very plainly in the following: *("For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand not of works, but of him that calleth;)* *it was said unto her the elder shall serve the younger. As it is written Jacob have I loved but Esau have I hated."* Rom., 9:11-12-13. Are we to believe these verses and yet condemn God's pur-

pose, election and predestination? Surely not. Then we certainly are bound to reverence God's will of saving his people, or contradict his word. Are we to suppose that his purpose of election in the case of Jacob and Esau differs from his purpose with the rest of the children of men? It cannot be without denying his right to govern and dispose of his as seemeth to him good.

Again, read Ephesians 1:11: "*In whom also we have obtained, an inheritance being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will.*" I would ask who worketh things that are not after the counsel of his will? Since God worketh all things from whence cometh other things? I must confess that if there be things either in providence or grace that are outside of God's purpose, then am I a deceived mortal. I do rejoice that the saints have hope, "*According to the eternal purpose which He (God) purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord.*" *Eph. 1:11.* For it does seem to me that if we ignore his eternal purpose, we are without hope.

I think there could be no quarrelling and wrangling among the Baptists if all would be strictly attentive to the scriptures. For they certainly do teach the sovereignty of God clearly. His eternal purposes, election and predestination, are stamped upon every page. Our exalted Creator certainly purposed all events, or else he purposed a part

and left some to chance; and we know that if it is based upon chance, that it may or may not be. Far be this from God. There is no chance work in grace, not in providence. All things have fixed laws, and one law does not annul another, so far as it relates to the works of the eternal God.

"For this purpose the Son of God was manifest that he might destroy the works of the devil." *1st John 3:8.* He did destroy the works of the devil, and thereby proved himself the Son of God. If not, then he has failed to prove his sonship. Then predicate the events of time upon chance, and to my mind we dishonor God, and make his Son out to be an impostor. I know carnal reason revolts at the idea of God's complete sovereignty. But we are to understand that carnality never believes in anything above itself. It is the spirit that reveals Christ as a complete Saviour. And that clearly proves the purpose of God.

Every purpose of God is for some wise end. When he says to Pharaoh, "*Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might show my power in thee.*" *Romans, 9:17.* Evidently, the purpose of God according to what God in his foreknowledge intended or purposed was fulfilled in him. Certainly he would not purpose the cause of Pharaoh, and leave the rest of men to work by chance. No, no. He declared the end from the begin-

ning. Was not this the end of all things, acts or events? To deny it, it seems to me would be blasphemy. Then if man cannot fathom the deep things of God, none should ask why or what doest thou!

The Lord saith of the church, or at least to the Ephesians by Paul, *"The eyes of your understanding being enlightened, that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of this glory of his inheritance in the saints."* Eph., 1:18. Then the saints have the eyes of their understanding enlightened; therefore they alone can see a beauty in the purposes of God, and look for the fulfillment of them all, and God will not disappoint them; if so, then some things will work together for their ill, and not for their good. It is a comforting truth that God purposes, and none can frustrate.

Let us keep silent and hear the Lord speak of his purpose by the prophets: *"The Lord of Hosts hath sworn, saying, Surely as I have thought, so shall it come to pass: and as I have purposed, so shall it stand. That I will break the Assyrian in my land and upon my mountain tread him underfoot: then shall his yoke depart from off them, and his burden depart from off his shoulders. This is the purpose that is purposed upon the whole earth: and this is the hand that is stretched out upon all nations. For the Lord of hosts hath*

purposed, and who shall disannul it? And his hand is stretched out, and who shall turn it back? In the year that King Ahaz died was this burden." Isa., 14:24-28. Looking at this wonderful prophecy, who can doubt the fulfillment of all the wonderful purposes of God, or question his sovereignty, or deny his predestination? To mind, if in the wisdom of God, anything visible to mortals, or invisible of them, were to work contrary to the purpose of God, then all that was purposed in Christ would be likely to turn out to be a failure in what Christ purposed to accomplish. And should his purposes fail in one instance, it follows of course that all might fail, and that Christ hath died in vain.

Oh, how discouraging, how horrible, to think of even a remote possibility of a failure in the complete and perfect salvation wrought out by Christ at such an awful and wonderful cost! What a howl of triumph would rise from the dark dungeon of hell if one purpose of God were to fail! All the demons of that awful abode would rise, and with demonic yells make universal space resound with their shouts of triumph over the conquered Son of God. And we think Christ and all the angels of glory would stand trembling for the safety of the throne of God. If one link in the chain of God's purposes - election, predestination, or of the reign of grace through Christ - could be broken, then farewell to the whole race of man. For all would be

forever gone, eternally gone.

But to my mind all things were purposed by the eternal "*I Am.*" And that his purpose is as sure to accomplish as it is sure that his throne stands. I cannot see, for the life of me, how his honor can be maintained if we teach a probability of the failure of the reign of his grace. And never, to my mind, has one single sinner been quickened to life only by the Spirit of God; and this, it seems to me, is because of the reign of grace. And this grace was given in Christ before the world began. And consequently was bound, in the very nature of things, to have been before there was a man made; and that must of necessity prove that God purposed to make man, and that man would need a Saviour, because of his death in sin. "*Oh, the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgment, and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? Or who hath been his counsellor? Or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory forever. Amen.*" Rom., 33 to 36. Now, if in the wisdom of God all things are for him, it does seem that it is reasonable to conclude that all and every event that taketh place in the heights above or the depths beneath, or in the lengths, or breadths, either in

earth, or hell, are under his control, and that he purposed and foresaw them, and overrules them to his own glory. Or else events are not things. Then, taking this view of the wisdom, power, mercy and love of God, I feel safe in believing and teaching that the God of salvation is a complete Sovereign, and therefore live in hope of His mercy, and that through the efficacy of the blood and righteousness of his adorable Son, that I shall yet praise him who is my "*wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption.*" See 1st Cor., 1:30. Then God forbid that we should glory save in the Lord.

Dear brethren, I have thrown these thoughts together under the most trying circumstances - with much fear and trembling - knowing that I am imperfect, ignorant and short sighted, often wondering can it be that such a creature as I am can be a child of God - saved by grace. I have written my own imperfect views, without consulting any man for his views. I alone am responsible for what is here presented. I desire that if this is published, that none will take offence because of it. I hope that I have had the honor of God in view, and trust that I have the mind of Christ. My race is nearly run. I shall soon go hence, and shall soon know the reality of these things. I am looking forward to the time of my departure. When I go I expect and believe that I shall meet a satisfied Saviour. My hope is to see the King in his

beauty, and the whole of the purchases of Christ's blood, which will be a train that shall fill the temple - not one left out for whom He atoned; if so, it will be because of his eternal purpose, which he purposed in Christ before the world began. Then I shall be as the glorified saints, and me-thinks that all the hosts of heaven will be shouting "*Crown him Lord of all!*" Then I shall be completely happy, as I stand with the sanctified family of God.

And to His name be all the praise now and in a world which shall never end.

J.C. Hall
Gogginsville, Va.

ROMANS:35-39.

Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day the long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.

Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.

For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come,

Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

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 foreknow, 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 veil 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 returned 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

WATER

Water is essential to natural life as well as spiritual. It is one of the greatest covenant or spiritual blessings mentioned in the Bible. It is likewise an essential in the natural realm of existence. It is necessary in both kingdoms. The inhabitants of either commonwealth must have it or they soon perish. It is not something that can be produced by either an inhabitant of the kingdom of heaven, or of the earth. To both earthly and heavenly citizens, it is a gift from a beneficent Benefactor.

It cannot be handled by the inhabitants of either country. Without it those that are spiritual and those that are natural will die of thirst. In connection with that thought, let me say no man can stay the terror of thirst in either kingdom, therefore, there is not such a thing as a conditionalist where there is not water to alleviate that thirst. Ever so often water, both spiritual and natural, is mentioned in the Bible. You can not do without it. Also you can easily drown in too much of it in a natural way. I am well aware that to an extent God gave man the ability to bring water under subjection to him. However, God also gave man dominion over tigers and lions, but do not try to carry that subjection too far.

In nature men have thought that they had control over water, being able, as they thought to make it do what they thought. They were not able to do so. A man does not have water under subjection in the ocean nor on the desert. Dry hole after dry hole has been dug. Many people have drowned in what was thought to be shallow water.

Jacob had a well used well of water. It was the only supply for a lot of people. However, the case that we wish to notice is a peculiar one. The Master met one of His sheep there. She thought to need that water, but her mind was distracted away from what she thought that she needed the water that she did not know existed.

The Saviour knew before hand why He had to go through the country where this well was. He knows the need of His people whether bond or free, Jew or Gentile. It is a joy to think that in His relation to His mother, to His people, that He became tired at the time that He did. He needed the natural rest, but a poor sinner stood in need of living water. His becoming tired when He did was because of His relationship with this woman, and because that He was the son of Mary as well as the Son of God. His arrival at the well before she did was purposed from all eternity, accidental though it may appear to men.

She came, as she thought, for natural water. According to covenant arrangements, she came for living water. She did not understand at the beginning, neither did any of us, but, if not deceived, we, as did she, receive that teaching that stems from heaven. The meeting of the two had been seen and declared before times curtain was let down. Here is conclusive proof that all of God's children are taught of the Lord to know Him whom to know is life eternal.

Happy is that people whose God is the Lord. Ah, how empty and barren we are as we go out, and how joyful we are as we are brought in. How full her time was in rites and legal ceremonies; how absorbed she was in going to Jacob's well when she left her home on that day, and how completely her day and her

mind was changed when she met the Man at places of drawing waters that are so satisfying that she forgot home ties, legal customs, earthly drinking water, forgot her earthen pitcher, and yet was so carried away in the Spirit of Him that she had newly met that she was filled with an overflowing well of living water springing up into everlasting life.

Let us remember that we are writing about water in our life as a follower of the Lamb of God. There are, in our pathway, two kinds of water. There are bitter waters and sweet waters. These two are one over against the other. This is by purpose of He that calleth His children to take their cross and follow Him. These waters will be in the hands of the Shepherd, and they will become as His wisdom dictates.

This poor sinning woman had never been anywhere for water save to Jacob's well. After meeting the Saviour she had no need for this water anymore as a follower of the Man she met, for the water which He gave her, and which He gives all those that meet Him at Jacob's well, is in her, a living stream flowing upward, even springing up out of dry ground a living stream, as living waters, causing the tender plants to revive, the tender herbs to come under the night much of the time, but having the distilling quietness and strength of the dew.

Christ Jesus the Lord was baptized in water. I will never forget the day when I was blessed to follow my

Lord and Master in baptism. I have oftentimes wished for brighter evidence of being an humble follower of Him in that lovely ordinance. To me, water is the only element in which a child of God can follow His Master in the ordinance. There is not any way in which a baptism can be finished except in enough water for the applicant to be carried down into the water, and raised up out of it. Any commandment of the Saviour must be full consummation to be complied with. Down into and up out of is in compliance; anything short of that is not water baptism, be it performed by whosoever takes it upon himself to perform it. The baptism of the Saviour was in keeping with gospel directions, all baptisms since then have been in compliance with the gospel rule, if thus complied with (We are dealing with only the mode). For a baptism to admit one into the church of Jesus Christ, there are other things necessary in order for it to be legal baptism. However, I am only dealing with water baptism, with the mode of legal baptism at this time. The Lord willing, perhaps later other phases of it will be considered). In passing, let it be noted that all of the water in the universe will never cleanse a soul from sin. Only the blood of Christ will do that.

The cleansing foundation of water was opened in eternity in the purpose of God. It was for sin and uncleanness figuratively speaking, and it is a spiritual work, and men do not have anything to do with its flow-

ing. God opened this foundation, and He did not have a single contribution of help in time or money or creature effort. The manifestation of the opening of that fountain shall be at the time that the sword of justice shall be called upon to smite the shepherd. The time of the opening of this fountain ushers in one of the most important links in the history of salvation. First, it does away with prophets, and it does away with legalism. It comes with great wonders and things hard to be understood, and yet it comes as a new and living way, and it comes altogether as a gift of God. It is not the forethought of man; men have nothing at all to do with it coming. It was conceived in the eternal mind of a covenant keeping God, and its coming is to be attributed to Him that made heaven and earth.

Water is intermingled in many, if not all, of the acts of salvation. Sometime the waters are bitter, even mingled with gall; sometimes they are sweet to the soul, making the heart beat with joy and keen anticipation. There is not any question about waters flowing to every inhabitant of Zion. Let us begin with the 16th verse of the 34th chapter of Isaiah, Seek ye out of the book of the Lord, and read, no one of these shall fail, none shall want her mate; for my mouth it hath commanded; and his spirit it hath gathered them, and he hath cast the lot for them, and his hand hath divided it unto them by line; they shall possess it forever;

from generation to generation they shall dwell therein. (now chapter 35), The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall blossom as the rose. It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing, the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellence of Carmel and Sharon, they shall see the glory of the Lord and the excellency of our God. Strengthen the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees, Say unto them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not: behold your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompense he will come and save you. Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as the hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing; for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert (Isa. 34:16, 17 and 35: i, 6). There isn't any likelihood of any of these covenant blessings failing.

These promises are those of a covenant keeping God, and He will do them. As God blesses us with a retrospective review of His promises, let us remember His promise to Jacob. He finds every Jacobite in a waste howling wilderness, and in a desert land. Right in those two needy places the text takes on grandeur and beauty and everlasting hope for the poor and needy. If that is your status before God, do not hesitate, but let us, as blessed with faith to draw near in faith and to say,

He is mine, and I am His.

Do not fear dear reader, this living water will be springing up as you travel heavenward. That is His promise. What does it matter what reformers say; what does it matter what challengers of your faith and of your order say. The Lord is on your side (Psa. 124). It is not a problem for earthly engineers to tanker with bringing in a well in a desert. God has engineered the whole order of business in saving sinners. He does not get angered at them and turn His back upon them, but He ever is at their side, and even though Peter denied Him, and Judas betrayed Him, and the woman at Jacob's well at first challenged Him to draw water when He had nothing to draw with, He still displayed mercy upon those that call upon His name.

The Lord loved Jacob. He loved him. Not with this kind of love that hangs to your coat tail one day, and persecutes you the next. Other people delight in a text (if it is man made), like unto that. But He is not a man as we are. God loved Jacob, not in six troubles, nor not even just in seven, but He loved Him with an everlasting love. But now thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not; for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine. When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be

burned; neither shall the flame be kindled upon thee.

I am not telling you that you will not have deep and threatening waters to wade through. No, no, my soul knows that right well our blessed Saviour measured the depth of those cruel waters of death, even measured the depths for an unbelieving bride, and unfaithful bride, for, as one has well said, No woman ever had as faithful a Husband as did the Church of God, and no Husband ever had as faithless a wife. Yet He measured His waters of sorrow, that had to be waded for you to arrive safe at home, and what a sad lonely walk it was that He had to go it alone, but how good it is to be up and about and physically able and a mind well enough to comfort you that He walked the depth of them for you alone that you might have Him to walk those waters of death with you.

I hope that I write in brotherly love,

Elder W. D. Griffin

ST. MATTHEW 11:28-30.

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.

For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

THE STRANGE WOMAN

"I have peace offerings with me; this day have I paid my vows." (The Strange Woman.)

How different the language of this strange woman from that of the Sister and Spouse of the Lord Jesus Christ, whose motto has ever been, "*The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall not want.*" - *Psa. xxiii. 1.* Zion has ever delighted in telling what her Lord has done for her. "*He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, and miry clay, and established my goings, and he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise to his name.*" "*He brought me to his banquetting house, and his banner over me was love.*" "*He is her refuge in distress, and a very present help in trouble.*"

But not so with the strange woman. Her husband has gone a long journey, and has taken the bag of money with him, (as though he were a modern missionary,) and she is left to provide for herself; hence she is found, devoid of delicacy, in the streets at the twilight. She is loud and stubborn, and at every corner she seeks for lovers, and wishes with them to take her fill of love. She delights to tell of her own doings; for in truth she is a workmonger practically. She has decked her bed with tapestry, with carved works, and with fine linen of Egypt, (not of Zion.) She has paid her vows, and so of

course she has peace offerings with her. Having by her industry, in the absence of the good man, rendered her house so inviting, by her peace offerings, her carved works, perfumed bed, and her fine linen of Egypt, she is now seen in the black and dark night; for her feet abide not in her house; she goeth forth a diligent seeker and a sure finder of her deluded proselyte. Among the young men she espieth one void of understanding; she flattereth him with her words, and with her fair speech she causeth him to yield, yea, she forces him. He goeth after her straightway, as an ox goeth to the slaughter, or as a fool to the correction of the stocks, till a dart strike through his liver, as a bird hasteneth to the snare, and knoweth not that it is for his life. She telleth him that stolen waters are sweet, and bread eaten in secret is pleasant. But he knoweth not that the dead are there, and that her guests are in the depths of hell. She hath cast down many wounded, yea, many strong men have been slain by her. Her house is the way to hell, going down to the chambers of death.

Ye children of wisdom, tell us, is she not a daughter of her who sat upon a scarlet-colored-beast, who made the nations of the earth drunk with the contents of her golden cup, whose name is called Mystery Babylon the Great, the Mother of Harlots, and the Abominations of the Earth?

If Mystery Babylon, is written in

legible characters on the forehead of Papal Rome, are not the features of the strange woman above described equally visible in her mystic daughter, the popular Protestant religionists of the present age? Hark ye! What do they say? We have peace offerings with us, alias, the means of grace, the issues from death, and means whereby to make our peace with God, and of saving our souls from hell, and of saving the souls of as many as we can by our fair speech force to turn in with us. Do they not profess to have peace offerings with them, when they undertake to reconcile the world to God, and when they upon the house-top proclaim that their benevolent institutions are efficient means of saving lost sinners. Do not the engineers of a Protracted Meeting, when they call their deluded dupes to the anxious benches, to participate in the efficacy of their intercession with the Lord, and when to encourage them to come, (or with their fair speech to force them,) they tell them that their compliance will advance them, one step at least, towards heaven. Do they not then declare that they have peace-offerings with them? Or when they declare that all that is necessary to establish their peace with God is to give their hearts to him, and that they have power to do this, do they not then say, We have peace-offerings with us? And when they have gone through the formalities of what is called getting religion, and have passed from the anxious bench to

the submission chair, and into the church, do they not say, "*This day I have paid my vows; I have given up my heart to God; I have received the healing virtues of the consecrated bench; I have joined all the benevolent societies, and what lack I yet?*" True, the popular religionists of the present time do profess to own Christ as their Husband. But it is equally true that they do virtually say that he has gone a long journey, and will return at the time appointed.

And that he has left her to supply herself with pastors, and arrange her house so as to render her accommodations inviting to those among the youths who are void of understanding; and having done all this, to go forth by her missionaries, agents, tract distributors, &c., to diligently seek for lovers, or converts.

Reader, can you discern the analogy? Beware, then, for her house is the way to hell, going down to the chambers of death. The dead are there, and her guests are in the depths of hell.

Elder G. Beebe

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

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR JANUARY 2010

Elder Alan Terry, VA.....	15.00
Garlon Vick, NC.....	25.00
Raymond Adams, VA	5.00
Nellie Dalton, VA	5.00
Estelle Thompson, VA.....	5.00
Tilman Pullig, TX.....	5.00
George Hyslip, TN	15.00
Tommy Middleton, NC.....	5.00
Elder W.T. Conner, VA	5.00
Charles Alders, TX.....	25.00
Myrtle Thompson, VA.....	10.00
John Schulz, AR	15.00

MEETINGS

SOUTH QUACHITA UNION

The union meeting of the South Quachita Association will be held, the Lord willing, at Union Church near Marion, LA on April 24th and 25th, 2010.

The 2009 South Quachita Minutes stated that the union meeting would be held at Rehobeth Church in Eldorado, AR, but a change has been made and Union Church will host the meeting.

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

Ned Barron, Association Clerk
(318) 778-4217

OBITUARIES

RESOLUTION OF RESPECT

At His appointed time, God providentially answered our prayers to ease the suffering of our dear husband, Daddy, and Pastor, Elder Ronald Crouch, separating him into the blessed sleep of Jesus Christ on December 11, 2009; making his pilgrimage here 74 years, 6 months, 24 days. Dad was steadfast to the end that regardless of the tremendous suffering he was afflicted with during his stay on earth, none could compare with the suffering that his blessed Saviour had endured for him.

Brother Ronald was born in Spring Hill, Kanawha County, West Virginia May 17, 1935 the eldest of eight sons of Preston and Mildred Smith Crouch. His parents, four brothers, one grandson: Alan D. Stanley, and one great-grandson: Ivan Lannin precede him in death. He was united in marriage to Mamie E. Johnson August 30, 1956 after a three year tour in the U.S. Army. To this union was born five children: Ronald, Jr., Donald, Bonnie McCord, Lewis and Malinda Stanley. Besides his three brothers, wife and children, he also leaves to mourn his passing, ten grandchildren, eleven great-grandchildren, and a host of family, friends and church.

After many years of infliction of

spirit, Brother Ronald was blessed with the sweet hope of rest in Jesus Christ and was received into fellowship by baptism with Fairview Primitive Baptist Church on May 17, 1981 by the late Elder Allen Smith. He was then called to serve the church and was ordained an Elder on August 4, 1984. He was appointed to the station of Moderator and Pastor of Fairview Primitive Baptist Church at the passing of Elder Allen Smith in 1989. He faithfully discharged his duties according to the dictates of Holy Scriptures, attending to the feeding of the flock as a firm believer that salvation by grace is an unmerited free gift and not of the works of man's hands. Although we mourn this dear man's passing, it is not without the glorious hope of eternal reunion in the resurrection if we belong to God.

At the recommendation of his doctors to engage in light exercise, when weather and his failing health would allow, Dad spent many mornings on a local golf course with his grandsons. The time was also utilized to offer guidance to the young men to carry themselves with patience, truth and honor in all things. Services were conducted December 14, 2009 at 11a.m. at Allen Funeral Home, Hurricane, WV by Elder Harold Johnson and assisted by Elders William and Lewis Johnson. Songs were sung from the Gobel Hymnal: #233 (We shall Sleep, But Not Forever), #222 (Sweet Rivers of Redeeming Love), #175 (Amazing

Grace), and #281 (O, Beautiful Hills of Galilee.) Graveside prayer was offered by Elder Harold Johnson, Amazing Grace was played on harmonica by Elder Lewis Johnson and Brother Willard Johnson. Grandsons then lined up and paid tribute to their mentor of manhood and teed off one last round of golf before he was laid to rest in Carpenter Cemetery, Putnam County, WV beside his beloved grandmother, Sarah J. Johnson Smith.

Therefore be it resolved: one copy for the church records, one copy retained by the family and one copy forwarded to the Signs of the Times for publication.

Written by request of the church by daughters and Sisters in Hope, Malinda Stanley and Bonnie McCord.

Elder Harold Johnson, Moderator
Sister Mary Edwards, Clerk

PSALM 33:1-4.

Rejoice in the Lord, O ye righteous: for praise is comely for the upright.

Praise the Lord with harp: sing unto him with the psaltery and an instrument of ten strings.

Sing unto him a new song; play skilfully with a loud noise.

For the word of the Lord is right; and all his works are done in truth.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 178

HILLSVILLE, VA., APRIL 2010

NO. 4

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

SONG

ISSN - 0199 - 0063

Subscription price \$15.00 per year - \$25.00 two years

Published monthly by
SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

1429 Howlett Street
Hillsville, Va. 24343

*Dear Shepherd of thy people,
here
Thy presence now display;
As thou hast given a place for
prayer,
So give us hearts to pray.*

*Within these walls let holy
peace,
And love and concord dwell;
Here give the troubled con-
science ease.*

The wounded spirit heal.

*Show us some token of thy love,
Our fainting hope to raise;
And pour thy blessings from
above,
That we may render praise.*

*And may the gospel's joyful
sound,
Enforced by mighty grace,
Awaken many sinners round
To come and fill the place.*

Newton.

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 EDITORIALS

Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgression, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was ordained by angels in the hand of a mediator. (Gal. 3:19)



Elder R. H. Campbell

This is a subject that has been a mystery to the world because, many of them think of the law as being a blessing unto Israel and an integral part of their salvation, and this is not true, in fact it was a curse unto them. Paul said, (Gal. 1-11) *“But that no man is justified by the law in the*

sight of God, it is evident: for the just shall live by faith and the law is not of faith:” (Gal. 3:11) “But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God, it is evident. For the just shall live by faith and the law is not of faith, but man that doeth them shall live in them.” “Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us by his sacrifice of himself, and hath freed Israel from the curse of the law, by his being made a curse for us, for it is written, cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree. The blessing of the promise made unto Abraham came on Israel through Jesus Christ; that they might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.” Therefore the law was in fact a blessing to no one, the salvation of God’s children was not because of the law, but rather in spite of it. The promise was four hundred years before the law, and yet even as Abraham’s belief in God’s promise was accounted righteousness to him. In like manner, Israel’s belief of the heirs of promise in that same law was accounted to them for righteousness, and it is fulfilled unto them when the seed came to whom the promise was made. The entering of the law did not void the promise, and therefore the heirs claimed their heritage according to God’s original promise.

Another way of stating what Israel experienced, under the law, is

that it is even as a plane that is on a journey, and when he reaches his destination it cannot land because of the weather or some other hindrance. The plane is then held in a holding pattern until it is cleared to land the way that is cleared for it to land. The plane has reached its destination, but is made to circle the airport until everything is cleared that it might land according to the rules made for situations like this. All of this had nothing to do with its reaching its destination, even as the fact that the law did nothing regarding the salvation of the children of God, it is but a likely delay until all of the conditions are met, or as in the case of the Salvation of God's children it is when the seed should come to whom the promise was made. It is even as the apostle Paul said, (Gal. 3:19) *"Wherefore then serveth the law? It was added because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made,"* (the holding pattern awaiting the arrival of the promised seed). Israel was held under the law, until the promised seed should come to whom the promise was made, (Christ) and then was ushered in the gospel day, even as the plane is cleared to land, when the way has been cleared. Jesus Christ, came into the world fulfilling the law, to a jot and tittle, but it was according to the original plans and could not complete its mission until all conditions were met, which was the arrival of the promised seed.

Israel was held there, under the law, until the law was abolished, in the death of the mediator, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain, one new man, so making peace. There were many objects to be involved in completing the plan, Christ must reconcile both (Jews and Gentiles) unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby; and came and preached peace to you, which were afar off, and to them that were nigh. For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father. This was all accomplished by the promise made to Abraham, and it is being fulfilled daily because of Christ's death on the cross. This bypassed the law, as far as it's having any efficacy in the salvation of the saints of God, for this was accomplished only as the results of the death of Christ, (Eph 2:16-18) *"And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: and came and preached peace to you which were far off, and to them that were nigh; for through him they both must have access by one Spirit unto the Father."* (Eph 2:8)

In fact, in Paul's epistle to Timothy, (1 Tim. 1:8-11) *"But we know that the law is good, if a man use it lawfully: knowing this that the law is not made for a righteous man, but for the lawless and disobedient, for the un-*

godly and for sinners, for unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for whoremongers, for them that defile themselves with mankind, for men stealers, for liars, for perjured persons, and if there be any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine; according to the glorious gospel of the blessed God, which was committed to my trust." It gave no rewards unto the righteous, only condemnation unto the ungodly, for their sins and was to make manifest the nature of man in the flesh, as stated above, (the law is not made for the righteous man, but rather for the lawless and the disobedient.) In other words, the mission was to make manifest which category the individual was in, even as the commandment given unto the disciples to, (Mark 16:15-16) "*Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved: but he that believeth not shall be damned.*"

The preaching of the gospel does not save anyone, (Rom 8:3) "*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;*" it but makes manifest the work of grace in the hearts of the saints of God or the condemnation in the flesh. It makes manifest the difference in the heart of the indi-

viduals, by their response to it.

Jesus, was discussing the fact of the opinion of the Pharisees regarding Jesus, and Jesus asked them, (Math. 22:42-46) "*What think ye of Christ? Whose son is he? They say unto him, he is the son of David. He saith unto them. How then doth David in spirit call him Lord, saying, The Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou on my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy footstool? If David then call him Lord, how is he his son? And no man was able to answer him a word, neither durst any man from that day forth ask him any more questions.*"

The apostle Paul preceded, the above subject text, with the paragraph stating how the promise and the law were given to Israel, and then, he gives the reasons why they were so given. According to the text, the law was given because of transgressions, till the seed should come to whom the promise was made, which was Christ. Brethren, I speak after the order of men; although it is but a man's covenant, yet if it be confirmed, no man disannulleth, or addeth thereto. Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, and to seeds as of many; but as of one, and to thy seed, which is Christ. And this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred years after, cannot disannul, that it make the promise of none effect, for if the

inheritance be of the law, it is no more of promise; but God gave it to Abraham by promise, and the promise of God is sure and certain, and nothing can be added to it, nor taken from it, but, by God. He could annul or change it, but he is the one that made the statement, (Mal. 3:6) "*For I am the Lord, I change not, therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed.*" So that settles that the fact that the promise is sure and certain to every heir of grace, it will not be changed because God is of one mind, and he changes not.

In the Apostle Paul's epistle to the church at Ephesus he reminded the Ephesians that they were Gentiles, who had been born of the flesh, were without Christ, aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, strangers from the covenant of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world. But now, because they had been quickened, they are new creatures in Christ Jesus who is their peace by his breaking down the middle wall of partition, abolishing in his flesh the law of commandments contained in ordinances, that he might reconcile us both to God in one body by the cross, and came and preached peace to you that were afar off, and to them that were nigh. Christ abolished the law, and therefore made void the condemnation that his children had been subject to all of their lives, under the law, for where no law is, there is no transgression; therefore the law was of no benefit as far as the salvation of

the saints were concerned. As we stated in the beginning the law was not a blessing to Israel but rather it condemned them as long as they were subject to it.

The eleventh chapter of Hebrews was devoted entirely to the trials and afflictions suffered by the Jews under the law and then Paul said, after all of the trials of faith that they endured they received not the promise. (Heb. 11:39-40.) "*And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect. The work of God is a perfect work and will produce the effect.*"

A perfect illustration of the perfection of the works of God coming together to accomplish the desired results, (Eccl. 3:1-8) "*To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven: A time to be born, and a time to die, a time to plant, and time to pluck up that which is planted: a time to kill, and a time to heal, a time to break down, and a time to build up, a time to weep, and a time to laugh and a time to mourn and, a time to dance and a time to cast away stones and a time to gather stones together, a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing; a time to get, and a time to lose; a time to keep, and a time to cast away,*

a time to rend, and a time to sew, a time to keep silence, and a time to speak; a time to love, and a time to hate; a time of war, and a time of peace. What profit hath he that worketh in that wherein he laboureth? I have seen the travail, which God hath given to the sons of men to be exercised in it." The writer then says, *"he hath made everything beautiful in his time, this applies to the major event in men's lives as well as the trivial, each piece is just as needful as any other, to make the perfect work, and God will have no less."* This is the reason that man's salvation is so sweet and precious to him; he has seen a little here and a little there, and they believed only the saints of God will ever see or understand any of the beauties of these things, as Jesus told a group on one occasion. As one of the men said to Jesus, (John 10:24-27) *"If thou be the Christ tell us plainly. Jesus answered him, I told you plainly and ye believed not: the works that I do in my Father's name, they bear witness of me. But ye believe me not, because ye are not my sheep, as I 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 Father's 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." The children of God believe that only the chosen vessels will see and understand the beauties of their salvation, and they cannot lose it because Jesus said no one can pluck them out of my Father's hand.

Solomon, a man of great wisdom, and understanding of the workings of God among the sons of men declares that there is a time for every season, every time, and purpose of all of the acts of God. Each act is a designed part of the whole, and as we said above all of the works of God are perfect and are according to God's design. Man would read this list of activities for which God has said that there is a time and purpose. We may not see the need for some particular but God says that there is. You can only see the wisdom and beauty in the work when you see the complete design. There is a poem, (The Weaver), in which the author understood this mystery. He is describing a needle point that he is weaving. The last verse says: The dark threads are as needful in the weaver's skillful hands, as the threads of gold and silver, in the pattern he has planned. This is true of all art, it takes the blending and colors properly applied to make a beautiful work of art; anything else is as the so called religions of the world, they cannot see, hear, talk, walk or perform any miracle or benefit whatsoever. In the first place, they are man made, and can only do those things that man

can do in nature.

The true and living God created the world and all things therein. He created a people for his own good pleasure and keeps them in his loving care. His promise unto them is, (Deut. 6:7-9) *"For thou art an holy people unto the Lord thy God. The Lord thy God hath chosen thee to be a special people unto himself, above all people that are upon the face of the earth. The Lord did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye are more in number than any people; for ye are the fewest of all people: But because the Lord loved you, and because he would keep the oath which he hath sworn unto your fathers, hath the Lord brought you out with a mighty hand, and redeemed you out of house of bondmen, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt."*

The scriptures are referred to by many as a love story, a story of God's love for his chosen vessels, throughout the old and the new, testament, such as, (Eph, 1:1-6.) *"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: Blessed by God and Father of our 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 be-*

fore 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. To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved. For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves is the gift of God."

The above statement that the scriptures are a love story is a very good description of them. They certainly are to a specific people. (Eph 1:1) Paul an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, to the saints which are at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ, as well as many of the other epistles indicate that they are to his elect people, as Paul says here, the church at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus which indicates that this is to the faithful in Christ Jesus, wherever they may attend church. The world will read the epistles and believe that they apply to all who read them. They overlook the fact that they are indicated to a specific people. We read them and say that we believe as we do because the bible says so, but that is not so. Actually we believe them because we feel that the truth contained in them has been revealed unto us. This is the only way that anyone can believe them is by the revelation of the Holy Spirit, and we each have many points of evidence

that we are included; but it is because of these evidences that we cannot deny the hope which by all of his children are saved. May all who read these words have that precious hope in their bosom.

The apostle Paul, speaking of Israel's life under the law said, (Heb 11:37-40) *"They were stoned, they were sawn asunder, were tempted, were slain with the sword: they wandered about in sheepskins and goatskins, being destitute, afflicted, tormented; (of whom the world was not worthy;) they wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth. And these all, having obtained a good report through faith, received not the promise: God having provided some better thing for us, that they without us should not be made perfect."* Having suffered all of these afflictions, they could not be made perfect without us. What blessed things must await us and may we all be blessed to experience them, and we will, if we are one of the children of God. By grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourself; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast, and may we worship God in Spirit and in truth realizing that it is by the precious grace of God, and because of his love for us, and in spite of our sinful; and undone condition.

Without controversy great is the mystery of godliness: God was

manifest in the flesh, God was justified in the Spirit, seen of angels, preached unto the Gentiles, believed on in the world, received up into glory.

In bonds of love;
Richard H. Campbell

CORRESPONDENCE

Lebanon, TN
Feb. 8, 2010

Dear Bro. Tony,

I enjoy this paper so very much. May God continue to bless this work. Please renew my subscription for 2 more years.

Gray R. Goodman
1127 Cedar Grove Rd.
Lebanon, TN 37087

2-6-2010

Bro. Horton,

I just noticed it is time to renew my subscription to the "Sign!" Enclosed is a check for \$30.00. This is for 2 years renewal and the other to use as you see fit.

May the Lord continue to bless each of us.

Thanks,
M.L. Richardson
6907 Jolee Rd.
Panama City, FL 32404

2-9-2010

Dear Brother Tony,

I am enclosing a check for two years subscription to the Times plus a twenty-five dollar donation.

I have enjoyed the articles about the authors of the beautiful old hymns we sing. I hope we can have more of them.

Hope to see you soon.

Sincerely,
Banks Conner

VOICES OF THE PAST

EXCERPTS FROM A SERMON

(Excerpts from a sermon preached by Elder W. C. King at Bush Arbor Church, N.C., on December 13, 1959.)



Elder W.C. King

Recorded in the gospel according to St. Luke, 1st chapter, 37th verse, are these words: *“For with God nothing shall be impossible.”*

We find in the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. There was no man to help or to hinder: there was no man upon the Earth. The earth was without form and void, and darkness was upon

the face of the deep and God said, *“Let there be light, and there was light.”* God divided the light from the darkness, and called the light day, and the darkness He called night. The things that would be impossible with man, are possible with God.

The Lord said unto Abram, *“Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred and from thy father’s house, unto a land that I will show thee.”* God told him that He would make of him a great nation, and that his seed should be as the sand of the sea. Abram was one hundred years old and his wife Sarah was ninety years old, when the Lord appeared unto him saying, *“Sarah thy wife shall have a son.”* Sarah laughed, realizing she was old and stricken in age. But, according to God’s promise, Isaac was born. The things that are impossible with men are possible with God. If I could, I would like this morning to point out to you some of the things that seem impossible with men but are possible with God: Knowing that He has all power in heaven and in earth, does all things after the counsel of His own will, having seen the end from the beginning.

Men by wisdom cannot understand how that Daniel could be cast into a den of lions and not be destroyed. Yet God had sent his angels and shut the lions’ mouths that no harm should be done to Daniel; He having all power even over the beasts of the forest, the birds of the

air, and the fish of the sea. He could cause the raven to feed Elijah — to find him in his desolation and sadness, and feed him meat and bread twice a day. We know by nature the raven would prefer to feed upon his body, but God commanded the raven to feed Elijah. How impossible these things seem to man. God makes a way where there is no way.

When the Hebrew children refused to worship the false gods, King Nebuchadnezzar ordered that the furnace be heated seven times more than it was wont to be heated. He commanded the most mighty men of his army to cast them into the burning fiery furnace. The king arose early, and in haste said to his counsellors, *“Did we not cast three men bound into the midst of the fire? Lo, I see four men walking in the midst of the fire, and they have no hurt. The form of the fourth is like unto the Son of God.”*

We cannot understand with the carnal mind how these things can be: without even the smell of smoke upon their garments. No condition or circumstance is such that our God doesn't have complete power to save from every destruction. Many of the trials and experiences of God's little ones here in this world seem a miracle, yet in God's holy providence all provisions are made for their security and protection.

The angel from heaven appeared unto Zachariah when he was in the temple of the Lord about the

duties and customs of the priest's office. When Zachariah saw the angel, fear fell upon him, and he was sore afraid, fear fell upon him, but the angel said unto him, *“Fear not, Zachariah: for thy prayer is heard; and thy wife Elizabeth shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name John... For he shall be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall neither drink wine nor strong drink; and he shall be filled with the Holy Ghost, even from his mother's womb... And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just: to make ready a people prepared for the Lord.”* How impossible this must have seemed to Zachariah, knowing that his wife Elizabeth was old, and barren. He asked the angel, *“Whereby shall I know this?”* The angel answering, said, *“I am Gabriel that stand in the presence of God; and am sent to speak unto thee, and to shew thee these glad tidings.”*

And, behold, thou shalt be dumb, and not able to speak, until the day that these things shall be performed.” When Elizabeth's full time came that she should be delivered, she brought forth a son. When the cousins and neighbors heard how the Lord had showed great mercy upon her, they began to talk about a name for the

child. Some, of course, wanted to name him after his father, but his mother said, *“Not so; but he shall be called John.”* They reasoned that none of their kindred was called by that name; and they made signs to his father how he would have him called, and he asked for a writing table, and he wrote, *“His name is John.”* Immediately his mouth was opened, and his tongue loosed, and he spake and praised God.

Do you not sometimes challenge God, dear believer, by asking him to give you some greater evidence of his love and mercy to you, that you might have a greater assurance of his promises? Sometimes in our meditations and prayers we ask God to grant us certain things. I remember so well in my early experience, when I asked God just to spare my life until a certain time, and if He would do that, I would be submissive to what I felt to be my duty. But found that I was not able to keep my promise even to God when He had spared my life to see the time requested. My heart was as cold as ice. I was made to weep and cry unto Him for mercy, learning that I was not my own keeper: That without Him I could do nothing.

God sent an angel unto a city of Galilee to a virgin espoused to a man named Joseph. This virgin was Mary. The angel said, *“Hail, thou that art highly favored, the Lord is with thee; blessed art thou among women. And when she saw him she was troubled and the angel*

said unto her, Fear not, Mary, for thou hast found favor with God. And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus... He shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of his kingdom there shall be no end.” *“Then said Mary unto the angel, How shall this be, seeing I know not a man? And the angel answered and said unto her, The Holy Ghost shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God.”* *“For with God nothing shall be impossible.”*

Then Joseph her husband being a just man and not willing to make her a public example, was minded to put her away privately. But while he thought on these things, behold the angel of the Lord appeared unto him in a dream saying, *“Joseph thou son of David, fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife, for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost and she shall bring forth a son and they shall call his name Jesus, for He shall save His people from their sins.”* *“Then Joseph being raised from sleep did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him and took unto him, his wife. Knowing her not until she had brought forth her firstborn son and he called His name Jesus.”* How impossible

this seems to men; how preposterous for human reasoning to believe that a virgin should conceive of the Holy Ghost and bring forth a son; even Mary pondered these things in her own heart. *“For with God nothing shall be impossible.”*

Joseph and Mary went up from Galilee to Bethlehem to be taxed. While they were there the days were accomplished that she should be delivered, and she brought forth her first born son, and wrapped him in swaddling clothes and laid him in a manger, because there was no room for them in the inn.

The angels of God made the announcement of the birth of the blessed Savior of sinners, to those humble shepherds who were abiding in the field keeping watch over their flock by night; saying, *“Fear not for behold I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall be to all people, for unto you is born this day in the City of David a Savior, which is Christ Jesus the Lord.”* I feel this morning that when the Gospel is preached it is good tidings of great joy, coming from a far country; so far that mortal arms can't reach it, yet so near that it can be felt in every heart that God has touched by the finger of his love.

There was no room in the city of Philippi, although God showed Paul by vision to, *“Come over to Macedonia to help us.”* As great as this Roman city might have been there was no place for the gospel of the

Lord Jesus Christ. We find Paul on the Sabbath going out of the city by the river bank, a place where prayer was wont to be made. The Lord opened the heart of Lydia, not only did she hear but she attended to the things she heard, and was baptized; and said to Paul, *“If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house and abide there.”*

I want to say to you beloved that there is a love, a power that binds the hearts of believers together that the world by wisdom can never know. They are hid from the wise and prudent and revealed unto babes. Just as these shepherds were made willing to leave their flocks and every session; they had to go to where their Savior was. No man will desire to go where their Lord and Master is until they have had his love in their heart. These wise men had the Star of Bethlehem to guide them. I believe that star is still shining. Every poor sin benighted soul has their eyes set on that star and the Lord Jesus Christ to lead and guide them to that City of habitation.

We don't know how many days it took them to travel the distance they covered. I don't know how many valleys they had to cross and how many mountains they had to climb. I don't think they turned either to the right or left. They had their eyes set on the Star of Bethlehem. It is Jesus Christ your Lord and Master that you have your eyes focused

on. Every poor helpless sinner has learned there is no where else to go. You can witness with Paul when he said it was better for him to depart. I am so glad he told us why it was better,— to be with my Lord Jesus Christ.

So these wisemen were so divinely sent; nothing could prevent them from where his child Jesus lay. They found Him in a manger wrapped in swaddling clothes. They presented to Him these treasures, gold, myrrh and frankincense. Herod had told them, "When you have found Him, come and tell me that I might go and worship Him." Herod no doubt thought he would dethrone him as king. Oh, how wonderful and past finding out is the great work of our God. He had the wise men to go back another way. You or I can never go over this road but once. How much you would like to have some of your experiences of God's precious presence with you over again! The things that are impossible with men are possible with God. It was never the desire of Jesus to be honored and praised by men for what He did. When men sought to praise Him and to make Him king, we find Him absenting Himself from the crowd, going to the mountains in prayer. The poor, needy souls He never turned away empty. The poor leper that came to Him (who knew he was doomed to be cast into isolation, and there to spend his last and expiring days) had faith to believe that Jesus could heal him. We hear

him saying to Jesus, "*If thou wilt, thou canst make me clean.*" Jesus had the power to cleanse the leprous. This morning do you not believe that He still has the same power to cleanse you from all sin; that your soul can be set free, that the Christ Child would be destroyed. How impossible that decree was, just as God had warned the wise men that they shouldn't return back to Herod, but go back another way. The Lord appeared to Joseph and told him to take the child and its mother and flee into Egypt. The Scripture tells us that they departed in the night! Oh, how much of our traveling seems so dark as in the night! The Lord appeared again to Joseph when Herod was dead saying, "*Arise, take the young child and His mother and go into the land of Israel.*" The unseen power of the everlasting God was controlling every move to take care of this blessed child.

Joseph and Mary went to Jerusalem at the Feast of the Passover every year, and they carried this child Jesus with them, who was twelve years old at that time. When they had fulfilled the days and started on their journey back, Jesus tarried in Jerusalem. After a day's travel they sought Him among some kinsfolk and acquaintances, but they found Him not. So they went back to Jerusalem seeking Him some three days. Later they found Him in the temple sitting in the midst of Doctors, both hearing them and asking them questions. When they

saw Him they were amazed. His mother said unto him, *“Why hast thou dealt with us? Thy father and I have sought thee sorrowing.”* And He said unto them, *“How is it that you sought me? wist ye not that I must be about my Father’s business?”* How strong and amazing it must have been to see this lad of a boy, the son of a poor carpenter, there in the Temple among the most learned and intelligent people of the land, asking and answering questions. Yes, He must be about his Father’s business. God’s business is a business so important that He can call men from the various occupations of life and cause them to leave all and follow Him.

The Scriptures have but little to say about Jesus from about the age of twelve until about thirty. *“He went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them, and Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and man.”* John says, *“And there are also many other things which Jesus did, which, if they should be written every one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that should be written.”* We know the half will never be told. No power that could be formed could take His life until the appointed time of the Father. Every demand of the law must be fulfilled. The church of the living God must be cleansed from all sin by the one

offering of our Heavenly Father, His only Son Jesus Christ.

How impossible it seemed to His own disciples when He began to tell them that He must go away, must leave them that the Holy Comforter may come. When He had eaten the last supper with them, He tells them that I am now betrayed and shall be crucified and put to death, and I shall rise again on the third day.

I want to say to you that every single soul that has ever come into this blessed fellowship with the Lord Jesus Christ is brought there by His own glorious power and love. It is an impossibility that men in nature, or natural minds, can know this glorious truth as it is in Christ our Lord. No greater miracle can be performed than to see a poor sinful lost man or woman, that seemingly have had no love for heaven or immortal glory be touched by the finger of God’s love and turned about by his Holy Spirit, made to come down in sackcloth and in ashes to beg God for mercy on their poor, sinful souls. What is more impossible than that to human reasoning? Confessing that by the grace of God I am what I am, having no confidence in the flesh. No man can resist successfully this blessed power. It subdues and brings you under subjection and wakes you willing in the day of His power; ascribing all power to His Holy name. You and I can’t understand the great mystery of godliness unless they are revealed to us.

How impossible it must have

been for those who would comfort Mary and Martha, to believe that Jesus could raise Lazarus from the grave after he had been dead four days, Mary and Martha didn't believe that he would be raised until the resurrection of the last day, Jesus said unto, them, *"I am the resurrection and the life, he that believeth on me though he were dead, yet shall he live,"* Jesus asked, *"Where have ye laid him? They said, come and see."* Jesus had only to say, *"Lazarus, come forth,"* and he that was dead came forth.

Oh! what grief and sorrow it brings to us when our loved ones are taken from us. It is impossible for us to call them back. Their spirits return to God, while their bodies rest in the grave to return to dust from whence they come, awaiting our blessed Savior to come again and call them to come forth. I can't tell you, my beloved, this morning how these things shall be, but I can assure you they will come at His command, without blemish, spot, or wrinkle or any such thing, to be made like unto His own glorious body.

His promise to His dear ones cannot fail. I believe with all my soul that He will come again. He told His disciples, before He was crucified: *"I go to prepare a place for you and if I go and prepare a place for you I will come again and receive you unto myself, that where I am you may be there also."*

If I never address you any more on this side of eternity, I want to tell you that Jesus reigns. This child Jesus which was born in Judea in the City of Bethlehem is still alive. He is seated at the right hand of God making intercession for his saints upon the earth and that he will at His own time call the jewels of His mercy unto himself. There will not be one of the objects of His mercy that shall not hear His blessed voice to arise and come forth to be like unto His own glorious body.

As we approach this Christmas season we would if we could share our natural resources with those less fortunate, but we know there is a limit. We know we can do but so much, yet I can point you to the one whose eternal power and love is without limitation or bounds. He is able to reach the most remote parts of the earth and give a gift that far surpasses all the gifts that man can give. So I say to you this morning that the greatest gift that you have ever received or that you will receive as these days come, is the gift of His Holy Spirit in your heart as your Savior; who is the anchor to your soul both sure and steadfast. Anchored to that within the veil that shall never be severed. This gift will never be obsolete or out of date. I am persuaded that as the years go by and we grow older, these precious promises become brighter. We know our shoulders become stooped, our heads silver for the tomb, the time for our departure is near. His prom-

ise becomes more precious, that He will not leave nor forsake us, but will be with us always even to the end.

I want to assure you that all things are possible with God. Not one single blessing that God sees you stand in need of will be withheld from you; though He has left you here in a land of trials and afflictions, the eternal God is at the helm. He will do all His will in the army of heaven and among the inhabitants of earth, and His church shall be brought out from the world by His mighty hand and at last be presented to the Father a glorious Church perfect as Himself.

John saw the Holy City New Jerusalem coming down from God out of Heaven prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. *“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 shall be their God. 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.”*

What a glorious hope we have. What a blessed promise that some day we are going to move into this new house made not by hands, from this old house of clay. One day we are going to leave the cares and burdens of this sinful world to go home

to God to appear in His likeness, to see Him as He is, to be like Him; where we can ascribe all honor and praise to His Holy Name forever. Momentarily here in this life we feel that our souls are lifted to the mountain top, soon to find we are again in the valley of despair. We are told that in this glory land there will be no shedding of tears. No sorrow can come, no death to separate us from loved ones. What a glorious Savior we have. One who has power to call us from the ways of this world, into the blessed fellowship of our God and with His saints upon the earth kept by the power of God ready to be revealed at the last day.

In conclusion let me say, May God bless you, keep and guide you in wisdom's ways, and at last deliver you securely and safely into the fold of God, where sickness, sorrow, and death and separation shall be no more.

“For with God nothing shall be impossible.”

(— Signs of the Times, July, 1960)

Elder William C. King

*Yesterday is History
Tomorrow is a mystery
Today is a gift
That is why we call it the
“Present”*

"Rock of Ages."

Augustus M. Toplady.

ROCK OF AGES and "Jesus, Lover of my soul," are the two favorite hymns of most Christians.

The author of "Rock of Ages," Augustus Montague Toplady, was an Englishman, and was born November 4, 1740. His father, Major Toplady, died in the siege of Cartagena in Colombia, South America, while his boy was only a few months old. Young Toplady was converted when on a visit to Ireland by an ignorant Methodist preacher, a layman, who was preaching in a barn.

His mind was vigorous, but his body was weak, and soon consumption seized upon him. He fought it for two years before it conquered, and it was during this period that he wrote his immortal hymn. It appeared first in the *Gospel Magazine* for March, 1776 – a magazine of which he was the editor. It was in the midst of an article in which he tried to figure out the number of a man's sins, and then broke into this hymn, which sets forth our only remedy for sin:—

*Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in Thee
Let the water and the blood
From Thy riven side which
flowed,
Be of sin the double cure,
Cleanse me from its guilt and
power*

*Not the labor of my hands
Can fulfil Thy law's demands;
Could my zeal no respite
know,
Could my tears forever flow,
All for sin could not atone;
Thou must save, and Thou
alone.*

*Nothing in my hand I bring;
Simply to Thy cross I cling;
Naked, come to Thee for
dress;
Helpless, look to Thee for
grace;
Foul, I to the Fountain fly;
Wash me, Saviour, or I die.*

*While I draw this fleeting
breath,
When my eyestrings break in
death,
When I soar through tracts
unknown,
See Thee on Thy judgment
throne, –
Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in Thee!*

Toplady's title for the hymn was "A living and dying prayer for the holiest believer in the world." The title fitly expressed the triumphant faith in which he himself passed away on August 11, 1778, saying, "My prayers are all converted into praise." He was only thirty-eight years old. The hymn was actually used as a dying prayer by Prince Albert, the beloved husband of Queen Victoria. It was sung in

Constantinople by the Armenians during the fearful massacre. When the steamship London went down in the Bay of Biscay in 1866, the last man to escape from the ill-fated vessel heard the remaining passengers singing this hymn; –

*Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in Thee.*

The hymn was an especial favorite with Gladstone, who was often heard humming it in the House of Commons, and who translated it into Latin, Greek, and Italian. His Latin translation is one of great beauty. Major-General Stuart, the famous Confederate cavalry officer, sung this hymn as he lay dying after the Battle of the Wilderness. Of many other death-beds this hymn has been the solace and the crown.

The story is told of a Chinese woman who, for the purpose of "making merit" for herself with her heathen gods, had dug a well twenty-five feet deep and fifteen in diameter. She was converted, and a traveler speaks of meeting her when she had reached the age of eighty. She was bent with age, but she stretched out her crippled hands toward her visitor, and began to sing; –

*Nothing in my hand I bring,
Simply to Thy cross I cling.*

The noblest incident connected with this hymn is related of the celebration of the fiftieth year of the

reign of Queen Victoria. On this occasion there came an embassy from Queen Ranavalona III., of Madagascar, and in the company was a venerable Hova, who expressed the desires of his people for the prosperity of the Queen, and then asked permission to sing. It was expected that he would render some heathen song, but to everyone's amazement he burst forth with

*Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in Thee.*

It was a striking proof of the power of Christian missions.

"Rock of Ages" was often sung by the Armenians at Constantinople during the terrible massacres.

The hymn is given as Toplady wrote it, and it will be seen that it is often mutilated in our hymn-books. The second line of the last stanza is generally written: –

*When my eyelids close in
death.*

Toplady's line refers to an old belief that, when a person dies, the "eyestrings" snap.

As to the thought of "Rock of Ages" it probably sprung from the marginal translation of Isa. 26: 4: "*In the Lord Jehovah is the rock of ages*" but Toplady doubtless combined that with such passages as "*I will put thee in a cleft of the rock*" (Exod. 33:22), "*Enter into the rock*" (Isa. 2:10), and "*They drank*

of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ" (1 Cor. 10:4).

Toplady wrote 133 poems and hymns, but nearly all are forgotten except this. One other, however, is – a hymn of great beauty, and is – cherished by many Christians:

*Inspirer and Hearer of prayer,
Thou Shepherd and Guardian
of Thine,
My all to Thy covenant care
I sleeping and waking resign;
If Thou art my shield and my
sun,
The night is no darkness to
me;
And fast as my moments roll
on
They bring me but nearer to
Thee.*

Augustus M. Toplady.

PSALM 51:1-3

*Have mercy upon me, O God,
according to thy lovingkind-
ness: according unto the multi-
tude of thy tender mercies blot
out my transgressions.*

*Wash me thoroughly from
mine iniquity, and cleanse me
from my sin.*

*For I acknowledge my trans-
gressions: and my sin is ever be-
fore me.*

HEBREWS X. 23-25.

*"LET us hold fast the profes-
sion of our faith without waver-
ing (for he is faithful that prom-
ised;) and let us consider one
another, to provoke unto love
and to good works; not forsak-
ing 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."*

A member asked us about six months ago to write using as our subject the words: "Not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is." This member having observed some whose attitude towards attending their meetings seemed of more or less secondary consideration was rightfully deeply concerned. It is a matter which calls for self-examination on the part of each and every member of every true Old School Baptist Church throughout our entire country. The life of each member of the visible church should be as a lighted candle placed on the candlestick; it should not be put under a bushel, or submerged beneath the things of this world, all of which do but perish with the using. The kernel, or substance of the teaching of our Lord and Savior, both by word of mouth and the life that he lived while here in the flesh, was "Seek ye first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness;

and all these things shall be added unto you." In that great and wonderful address, his sermon on the Mount, the place where he had gone apart from the multitudes, when he was set, his disciples came unto him: and he opened his month, and taught them, saying, "*Be not ye therefore like unto them [the heathen]: for your Father knoweth what things ye have need of before ye ask him.*" How prone we are to forget that the hand of Providence supplies our temporal needs. We have to be reminded from time to time that the gold and the silver are his; that the cattle which graze upon a thousand hills are the Lord's; yea, the world and all that in it is, and that it is he who clothes the lilies of the field, whose hand feeds the lone sparrow upon the housetop; and, if not a sparrow can fall without him, will he not give his children bread? The great apostle declares in our text that he is faithful that promised. Do we really believe and act out the belief that the Lord is our shepherd? The good Shepherd will surely provide for his sheep; he will cause them to lie down in green pastures and lead them beside the still waters. But, those of us who profess to love the Lord in sincerity and in truth, are we holding fast the profession of our faith without wavering? Do we show by a well ordered walk and godly conversation that we are the Lord's, or is our service only of the lip? Is it consistent to say, Lord, Lord, in the meetinghouse and then engage in

worldly conversation and jesting until meeting time again? Do we live daily so as to prove that we have been with and learned of Jesus and that our treasure is in heaven? How searching and solemn should these questions be. And do we consider one another to prove unto love and to good works? The apostle says we should do these things. Jesus said, "*Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me.*" What was under consideration was, "*I was an hungered, and ye gave me meat: I was thirsty, and ye gave me drink: I was a stranger, and ye took me in: naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me: I was in prison, and ye came unto me.*" These things are accomplished among the saints when they are assembled together and communicating one with another, as those who receive can well testify, even though those who give or minister are unaware of it. The servant which Abraham sent to take a wife unto his son, Isaac, went questioning and praying, but when he was convinced that the Lord had prospered his journey, "*he bowed down his head, and worshipped the Lord,*" saying, "*Blessed be the Lord God of my master Abraham, who hath not left destitute my master of his mercy and his truth: I being in the way, the Lord led me to the house of my master's brethren.*" "*I being in the way,*

the Lord led me to the house of my master's brethren." This deserves to be repeated again and again. Only those who have been in the way and have experienced it know of a truth the joy which is inexpressible and full of glory that is witnessed by those who are raised up together and made to sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus our Lord. Such characters were said to have been quickened, made alive; their affection was set on things above, not on things on the earth, and they were seeking, yea, as for hidden treasure, those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. The psalmist said, "*Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity.*" Where such scenes are beheld there is no lack of the brethren assembling themselves together; meeting time does not come too often, but rather it seems Sundays are too far apart, even when they are privileged to have meeting every Sunday. Is not the true test of the fruit and provoking unto love and to good works? Let us pause for a moment and analyze the definition of the word "consider." Does it not mean that we are constantly, yea, every waking moment, as it were, thinking good concerning those we love and endeavoring in every way to show them kindness and manifest our affection? Such provokes unto love and to good works, for love begets love, and the brethren

would do well to remember this and bridle their tongues lest they poison the mind of one another against a brother, at the same time walking so as not to offend a weak brother.

Paul says, "*Let us [the household of faith] consider one another, to provoke unto love and to good works: not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is.*" So we are not only told what to do, but what not to do, thus showing that the holy Scriptures, which were given by inspiration of God, thoroughly and thoroughly furnish unto all good works. While the manner of some is indifference, coldness, walking in the course of this world, the riches whereof choke out the good seed, the exhortation is not to be as they are, but rather to live righteously, soberly, to visit the fatherless and the widows and to keep ourself unspotted from the world. This, James says, is pure religion and undefiled before God and the Father. Old Baptists of all people, need to study to show themselves approved unto God, workmen that needeth not be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth. They should search the Scriptures, to know what they teach, both as to doctrine and order, which go hand in hand. David said, "*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." It is truly good to think and talk upon the things of the upper kingdom. One said, *"My heart was hot within me; while I was musing the fire burned: then spake I with my tongue, Lord, make me to know mine end, and the measure of my days, what it is; that I may know how frail I am."* We often think of a band of brethren, three churches composing an association, where they have no regular pastor or minister, only a visitor usually once a year, and yet these brethren are very much alive; they assemble themselves together and talk and sing of the things of Jesus; the theme of their conversation is truly heavenly, and the Lord is wonderfully blessing them with an outpouring of his Holy Spirit, which has been evidenced by an ingathering of twelve during the past three years. This is referred to by way of encouraging churches that may be without under shepherds or supplies. By way of contrast, we would also call attention to another band of most lovely brethren, among them being (we think) a gifted brother, and yet they seldom meet. Is it not a mistake? Are they not forsaking the assembling of themselves together as the manner of some is? This the apostle says they should not do. These things are referred to for the earnest consideration of the brethren. We like to see the brethren holding fast the profession of their faith without wavering. We can never tell

what time or by whom the Lord will send a message. It is not always necessary for one ordained of men to be present. At best man is but an earthen vessel and the Lord must fill the mouth before it can speak forth his praise, and *"God moves in a mysterious way his wonders to perform."* Therefore let us be found in the way; who can tell but what the Lord will lead us to the house of our Master's brethren? Let us be found assembling ourselves together, exhorting one another, and so much the more as we see the day approaching. If we rightly discern *"the Signs of the Times,"* there is no mistaking that these are the days prophesied of *"when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; and they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables."* It is the time when God's called and qualified ministers should *"Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all long-suffering and doctrine."* The true soldier must stand his ground and meet the enemies of truth; he must put on the whole armor of God that he may be able to stand the wiles of the devil. The warfare in which he is engaged calls for the helmet of salvation, the breastplate of righteousness, the girdle of truth, the shield of faith, and his feet to be shod with the preparation of the gos-

pel of peace, for the race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong; it is not by might, nor by power, *“but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts.”* Let us, therefore take “the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God,” and go forth to victory. If we are ever brought forth more than conquerors it will be through him that loved us and gave himself for us. This is that *“new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh,”* that the apostle is writing to the Hebrews about in the chapter wherein is found our text. He begins his epistle by saying, *“God, who at sundry times and in divers manners spake in time past unto the fathers by the prophets, hath in these last days spoken to us by his Son.”* He was the true substance of all the law had shadowed forth. It was not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sin, so the Lamb of God was slain from the foundation of the world, in the purpose of God, as a propitiation for the sins of his people and by this *“one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.”* This is all our hope and we are determined not to know anything *“among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified.”* Jesus said, *“I am the way, and the truth, and the life.”* Again, *“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.” God forbid that we should be as Ananias and Sapphira, who *“kept back part of the price.”* There are those in the world to-day who are professing to love the Lord with all their heart, &c., who declare boldly they have forsaken the world for the *“pearl of great price,”* and almost with the same breath contend that only eternal salvation is of God, and that salvation in time is of men. In the apostle Peter’s day those who were guilty of such had to give up the ghost and were carried out and buried. These are perilous times and there are many who are departing from the way of the Lord, but the faithful in Christ Jesus will not be found among the number, they are to hold fast the profession of their faith without wavering. Therefore let the pastors be ensamples to the flock over which God hath made them... the overseers; let them be faithful in doctrine, in order, in practice, and shun not to declare unto them all the counsel of God. Likewise, members, be faithful in holding up the hands of your servant; support him in the manner set forth in the Scriptures and encourage him by your presence at meeting; let it be seen that you do delight in the law of God after the inward man. We can speak feelingly from experience and say that we thank God continually for having surrounded us with faithful brethren, who have not forsaken the assembling of themselves together.

Many, many times have we wondered that they should continue to come out, but therein their faithfulness has been manifested. We do not know how we could have gotten along thus far without them. Surely God has been better to us than all our fears. May he give us all to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith we are called, with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

Finally, brethren, Forsake not the assembling of yourselves together, as the manner of some is, but exhort one another, and so much the more as ye see the day approaching.

Elder R. Lester Dodson

MEETINGS

**NEW DAN RIVER
PRIMITIVE BAPTIST CHURCH**

New Dan River Primitive Baptist Church, located in Patrick County, Vesta, Virginia, purposes to hold a fifth Saturday meeting, the Lord willing, on May 29, 2010. The meeting will start with singing at 9:30am and preaching at 10:00am. The church is located on State Road 636 (State Shed Road) off US 58, approximately 3 miles east of the Blue Ridge Parkway and 12 miles west of Stuart, Virginia. We extend a wel-

come to all lovers of the truth and especially we would invite all ministers of our faith and order.

Elder J. L. Cassell, Pastor
James L. Shelor, Clerk

STAUNTON RIVER UNION MEETING

The Lord willing, the Staunton River Union meeting will be held at Canaan Primitive Baptist Church located on Mt. Cross Road (Route 844) in Pittsylvania County, VA on the Saturday before the 5th Sunday in May. Singing will begin at 10:00 a.m. and preaching at 10:30.

We invite our correspondents and visitors to the meeting.

Elder Mark Terry, Moderator
Fred Murphy, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR FEBRUARY 2010

Jean Moran, NC	5.00
Phil Pittman, TX	10.00
JoAnne Self, NC.....	5.00
Banks Conner, VA	25.00
M.L. Richardson, FL	5.00
B. Smith, VA	15.00
C.B. Richardson, VA	5.00
Anne Pearson, MI	10.00
Marie Vest, VA	5.00

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 178

HILLSVILLE, VA., MAY 2010

NO. 5

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

SONG

ISSN - 0199 - 0063

Subscription price \$15.00 per year - \$25.00 two years

Published monthly by
SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

1429 Howlett Street
Hillsville, Va. 24343

*My soul lies cleaving to the dust;
Lord, give me life divine;
From vain desires and every
lust
Turn off these eyes of mine.*

*I need the influence of thy grace
To speed me in thy way,
Lest I should loiter in my race,
Or turn my feet astray.*

*Does not my heart thy precepts
love, And long to see thy face ?
And yet how slow my spirits
move*

Without enlivening grace!

*Then shall I love thy gospel
more,
And ne'er forget thy word,
When I have felt its quickening
power
To draw me near the Lord.*

Watts.

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 EDITORIALS

“For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob: For this is my covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins.” Romans 11:25-27.



Elder J.B. Farmer

As with all Spiritual things, the truth in the above quoted scripture is in a mystery. To be in a mystery means to me that no one is able to understand it because it is hidden from all men, even the elect, until it pleases God to lift the veil and reveal His things to His own as it pleases Him. This puts everyone in a weak place, and there we all must remain. But we are taught that, *“His strength is made perfect in weakness.”* How wonderful it is that God has fixed things so that no flesh can glory in His presence, even though the flesh tries so hard to do just that. If we begin to think we know something of ourselves, we become puffed up and begin to boast in the flesh. And we show just what kind of mind we are in, to our own shame and confusion of face. May God humble us and cause us to look to Him for all things to the praise of the glory of His grace. May God give us the understanding we need for edification and comfort, and may all things work together for the good of His little ones and for His honor and praise. May He cause us to *“earnestly contend for the faith once delivered to the saints.”*

The beloved apostle Paul, by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, wrote to the saints at Rome concerning the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. The

Romans in large part were Gentiles, although some Jews were there. Paul was given to explain many things to them that had been kept hidden for ages concerning the relationship of the Jews to the Gentiles in Jesus Christ and also their relationship to one another. It is evident throughout the scriptures that the Jews were God's chosen people. Most of the prominent people of the Old Testament were Jews. But most of the people with whom we have fellowship these days are Gentiles. Considering these things, several questions come to mind, which no doubt came to the mind of the Romans also. Since God primarily revealed Himself to His chosen people, the Jews, for thousands of years, how and where do the Gentiles fit in? Are the Jews still separate from the Gentiles, and have they a separate leading of God? Or have the Jews and Gentiles been brought together into one fold with one Shepherd?

We know that the worldly religions are agreeing together and are separating the Jews and the Gentiles in their teachings, which appear to me to be based upon carnal reasoning. They teach that God will deal one way with the Jews and another with the Gentiles. They are, I am made to believe, falsely teaching that the present believers (primarily Gentiles) will be soon secretly caught away from the earth, and then they say there will come a great tribulation to those remaining upon the

earth, which they say will be followed by all of national Israel believing, which they say will be followed by a thousand year reign upon earth of Christ with the believing Jews and Gentiles. This false teaching, as it appears to me, has become increasingly popular with the worldly religions since it was first introduced. Now it seems to be almost universally believed among them. And from time to time it has even appeared among the Old Baptists.

But God's servants are not allowed to rely upon men's reasoning, or upon men's teaching for an understanding of Spiritual things. They are made to wait upon the Lord, and to individually beg to Him for wisdom and understanding, even if others hold them in low esteem for not consenting to or agreeing with man's scholarship. They are considered to be ignorant and are evil spoken of falsely for the truth's sake. The prophets and the apostles, and even those we have known who have gone before us had to regularly suffer such abuses that God might glorify Himself in them. It is necessary for God's people to suffer with Him if they are to reign with Him. There must be a fiery trial of their faith in order that God should be glorified through His miraculous keeping of them against all the forces of the devil. And they shall be kept by the grace of God. The apostle Peter was blessed to assure God's little ones that they *"are kept by the power of God through faith unto*

salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.” 1 Peter 1:5.

The blessed apostle Paul explained to the Gentiles the true relationship between the Jews and the Gentiles so they would not be puffed up against the Jews. It is plain from the scriptures that some of the Jews were the first people that were given faith in Christ. It is also plain that many of the Jews were not given that same faith. So, it was only a remnant of the Jews according to election that believed. It is also plain that as some of the apostles were sent to the Gentiles, many of the Gentiles believed in Christ. It is also plain that the majority of the Gentiles did not believe. So the same was true of the Gentiles as was true of the Jews – those that believed were only a remnant according to the election of grace. So it has always been. It has always been a little flock, a little city, a few, or a remnant that has been saved by the grace of God through faith, which is the gift of God.

This scripture seems to be central to the subject at hand. The apostle said, ***“blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved.”*** It seems that this scripture commonly has been misinterpreted to say that in the end of time the whole nation of natural Israel shall be saved. But I have been made to believe that the true spiritual understanding is this: blindness in part is happened to [natural] Israel, until the

fullness of the [Spiritual] Gentiles be come in. And so [in this way] all [Spiritual] Israel [composed of both believing Jews and Gentiles] shall be saved. I am made to believe that *all Israel* mentioned here is the whole household of faith including Jew and Gentile, which is Spiritual Israel. It seems apparent that the truth of this is also shown in many other places in the scriptures. In one place the Lord Jesus Christ said, ***“And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; then there shall be one fold, and one shepherd.”*** *John 10:16.* There were some of God’s little ones, who were Gentiles, outside the Jewish fold when Christ said this. It seems plain, according to His own words, that He would bring both Jew and Gentile together into one fold of believers having one Good Shepherd.

Paul agreeably said to the Gentiles by the Spirit, ***“Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands; That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of***

Christ. For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: And came and preached peace unto you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh. For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father. Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God.” *Ephesians 2:11-19.* Jesus brought the believing Gentiles into the covenants of promise with the believing Jews. He broke down all barriers between Jew and Gentile. He made both Jew and Gentile one new man and made peace with both and reconciled both unto God and gave both access unto the Father by one Spirit, and made them fellow-citizens with the saints and of the household of God.

The same apostle said by the same Spirit to the Gentile Galatians, **“For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all**

one in Christ Jesus. And if ye be Christ’s, then are ye Abraham’s seed, and heirs according to the promise.” *Galatians 3:27-29.* According to the inspired apostle, the believing Jews now are not separated from the believing Gentiles. Not only is there no consideration for national heritage, there is no distinction made for earthly status, and not even for gender. They are all one in Christ. In Christ, both Jew and Gentile are considered together to be the seed of Abraham and heirs according to the promise. It is no wonder that it is written, **“In Isaac shall thy seed be called,”** since Isaac was the child of the promise. There is one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of us all, one fold and one Shepherd.

I am aware that the world hates the doctrine of the **“one fold and one Shepherd.”** I have heard them throw off on the doctrine of the one fold as if it were something new. They called this teaching a **“devilish doctrine.”** And they called it a **“replacement theology.”** They said those who believe that the Old Testament promises spiritually apply to the church of Christ have wrongfully replaced the Jews with the church as the recipient of the promises. They take the promises of God to Israel literally, and that is why I believe they will not allow the Old Testament scriptures to be spiritualized. I am made to believe that they reject the true doctrine because it contradicts their false positions and their

carnal thinking. It opposes their false teachings concerning all the Jews being saved in the last days, and their false ideas about the so-called "rapture" of the saints. It also kills their false ideas of Christ's supposed earthly rule for a thousand years. It seems apparent that their doctrine prepares them to follow the man of sin, who is the antichrist, when he is revealed on the earth, claiming to be Christ, at the last time. May all God's children be delivered from darkness to light, for none of us know anything of ourselves.

It seems sure that the scriptures, both Old Testament and New Testament, were written to Spiritual Israel, which to me means all those that are in Christ – both Jew and Gentile – which are Spiritually Abraham's seed. Jesus said concerning the scriptures, "*They are they which testify of me.*" I am fully assured that all the Old Testament is not only a history of the Jews, but also a veiled testimony of Christ and His kingdom and His people. Those to whom God has revealed His truth from time to time are given to see behind the veil and rejoice in the wonderful works of God and His precious promises to them – His one fold, which is composed of both Jews and Gentiles. How wonderfully rich and full are the Old Testament scriptures as they spiritually, in types and shadows, point to the coming of Christ and manifest the details of what He has done for His people, spiritual Israel. But the carnal mind

seems to take many of the promises of God literally and apply them to natural Israel instead of the church. The answer of the whole matter to me is that one may only believe what he is given to believe, whether it is the spiritual truth or only a natural interpretation of the scriptures. In the Spirit, one believes the truth, and in the carnal mind one sees only natural things. May God keep His own by the Holy Spirit in the way of truth.

It is necessary for false teachings to be brought to the attention of the church periodically. Paul said, "*For there must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be manifest among you.*" *1 Corinthians 11:19.* And he also said, "*Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them.*" *Acts 20:28-30.* Carnally minded men have through the years brought in false doctrine in order to draw away disciples after themselves. They desired a following and desired to be lifted up above others, no matter what injury was caused to the flock

of God in the process. And Jesus said, *"It must needs be that offences come, but woe be to that man by whom the offence cometh."* *Matthew 18:7*. It truly is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God. The ones kept of God are made to look to Him for all their needs. Those whom God has called into the ministry are tried every moment and made to examine themselves to see whether they are truly in the faith once delivered to the saints. They are given the food with which to feed the flock of God. It is much the same as when the disciples were given the loaves and fishes, which Christ blessed and broke and multiplied and gave to them to deliver to the multitudes that sat by. The disciples could only pass on what they were given. They had nothing of themselves. On the other hand, those of the contrary part through the ages have presented perverse things not given by Him, and have caused confusion and division. But there is a cause, which is *"that they which are approved may be manifest among you."* May God be praised in all things.

These are deep and wonderful things to me. May the Lord God lead and guide and teach His people the truth and may He reveal Himself to them and cause them to grow in grace and knowledge of Jesus Christ the Lord. May we be enabled to acknowledge Him in all our ways and may He direct our paths. May

He deliver us from error and cause us to speak the truth in love. I fully believe what is set forth here is true, but I hope that any of God's little ones who may read this will be given understanding to examine whether this is the true doctrine of Christ or not, and that they will be given to cleave to that which is true and reject anything which might be false. Our God knows all things, even our hearts. If enabled, please remember me before the throne of God.

I trust that this was written in love and in hope of eternal life.

J.B. Farmer.

PSALM 9:12-15.

When he maketh inquisition for blood, he remembereth them: he forgetteth not the cry of the humble.

Have mercy upon me, O Lord; consider my trouble which I suffer of them that hate me, thou that liftest me up for the gates of death:

That I may shew forth all thy praise in the gates of the daughter of Zion: I will rejoice in thy salvation.

The heathen are sunk down in the pit that they made: in the net which they hid is their own foot taken.

CORRESPONDENCE

Sorry I'm a little late. Enclosed is my payment for the Signs of the Times.

We don't have a church close by to go to church. The Signs of the Times have been enjoyed for several years to us.

Sincerely,
Jerry Morgan

I really did enjoy this month's Signs of the Times seems they get better all the time. I especially enjoyed the one Elder Cleo D. Robertson wrote on "*The Birth of Christ.*"

It brought back some special good things that came to me many years ago. So special I felt it was too good to be told yet I couldn't keep from talking to some and then I felt like I shouldn't because it sounded so much like bragging yet the Lord has been so good to me all the days of my life I have been through some rough times also because of the sins that so easily beset me, but I feel that whatever came my way was God's route for me to take. I believe that God has a travail for each one and it happens when and where he meant it to be but this one was told so well and I thank God for giving Elder Robertson the mind to put it into so many words of comfort.

I did not mean to get into this but I did, so I was supposed to, I need to

let you know that I will be moving with my daughter in Danbury, Ct. in April - and as she also takes the Signs of the Times, you could just send one to us and send the other one to someone else who loves the Signs. Thank you for keeping this good book coming. Especially when they have no church to attend which as far as I can tell will be our case. She doesn't know about a Primitive Baptist Church there. So many of our ministers have gone to meet the Lord, very few Old Baptists are with us these days.

Keep the good book coming and may God Bless all of you and when you are at your throne of Grace. Pray for a sinner like me.

Thank you,
Katherine Mathews

February 19, 2010

Dear Elder Key,

Enclosed is a donation to the "Signs of the Times" in memory of my beloved Aunt, Ruby McGuire who was a member of Dan River Primitive Baptist Church before her passing in January.

She loved the "Signs of the Times" and being confined to a wheel chair and Nursing Home, this was the only means she had to enjoy her church doctrine. Thank you so much for providing her with this enjoyment.

I also enjoyed reading the "Signs" to Ruby each month, and I am enclosing a separate check as I would like to subscribe to the "Signs."

Thank you,
Esther Griffin
209 Buchanan St.
Eden, N.C. 27288

Feb. 27, 2010

Mr. Tony R. Horton
1429 Howlett Street
Hillsville, VA 24343

Dear Brother Horton,

I love receiving Signs each month. To open it is like having a cool clear drink of water. May the dear Lord bless each one who helps to get Signs out. And may He bless Elders, brethren and friends who write.

With love I hope to you and your family.

Reidy Pickral

IS IT TIME TO RENEW

YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?

IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE

IS 5/10

IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

VOICES OF THE PAST

GENESIS IX. 20-23.

"And Noah began to be an husbandman, and he planted a vineyard: and he drank of the wine, and was drunken; and he was uncovered within his tent. And Ham, the father of Canaan, saw the nakedness of his father, and told his two brethren without. And Shem and Japheth took a garment, and laid it upon their shoulders, and went backward, and covered the nakedness of their father; and their faces were backward, and they saw not their father's nakedness."

DEAR KINDRED IN THE LORD: — My mind for some cause has been arrested by this portion of holy writ, and I humbly hope I have been given of the graciousness of my God to glimpse some of the sublime spiritual import, or essence, that it contains.

From scriptural authority I wish to say that this Scripture, nor any other portion, is spoken or used just merely to fill up space, neither does it cease to have its vital essence of meaning. For it is not declared that no Scripture is of any private interpretation, hence this Scripture did not have its meaning once, and then lose its essence, but what was true

anciently is just as true today. What is once truth never ceases to be truth. All Scripture is given by the inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, reproof and correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God (not the man of the world) might be perfect, thoroughly furnished unto every good work. Therefore I feel that the Scripture I have called your attention to yet holds its weight of meaning to the household of faith, to such as have had the eyes of their understanding enlightened.

If it be the will of the Lord to guide my pen and to create within me a clean heart and renew within me a right mind, I desire to notice a few things with reference to my subject, or text.

“And Noah began to be an husbandman, and he planted a vineyard.” We gather from this that Noah had not always been an husbandman. In Genesis vi. 8, we find this language: *“But Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord.”* Notwithstanding that the earth was corrupt and filled with violence. Yet God in his mercy was pleased to elect, choose and give grace unto, and miraculously preserve in the ark, which was builded according to the pattern which the Lord did give, Noah and his wife, his three sons and their wives, and every beast, fowl and creeping thing after their kind, the clean and the unclean, in definite number, from the deluge which the Lord, in his righteous

wrath, was pleased to bring upon every living thing wherein was the breath of life, with the exception of this choice, and the Lord shut him in. Did he not as freely, as righteously, shut all else out? Was it not surely destruction to all that were shut out, as it was salvation to such as were shut in? Is there ground here for the doctrine of free will? Nay, nay, a thousand times nay. Did not the Lord command and bring it all to pass? And was he not glorified, or honored, in both the destruction and the salvation? Of the union that prevailed in the ark, of the holding in check, or restraint, of the various natures of the creatures that were housed in the ark, the clean and the unclean, do not feel that I have the time or space to take up this phase, or portion, at this time, further than to say that God was there. While I do most earnestly believe the ark to be a type, or figure, of the church, I feel also that a careful examination of the types and figures as recorded here in Genesis proves positively the effects that discriminating grace has in the taming of the wild, yea, even the fierce and ferocious, to the extent that the lion did not prey upon the lamb, the elephant did not, tramp out the lesser beasts or creeping things. This is what their nature would suggest. I refer you to the sheet that was let down to Peter. Also, the pen of inspiration did record that in a great house are vessels of honor and vessels of dishonor; vessels of wood and vessels

of stone, etc. The unclean were just as surely preserved in the ark as were the clean, and while I have just briefly hinted along this line, I would love to come more directly to the subject matter to which I have called your attention. During all the time while the deluge of waters was on, while Noah was safely housed and shut in the ark by the hand of the Lord, I fail to observe the slightest reference that Noah began to be a husbandman there, or that he planted any vineyard at that time. But rather we find proof abundant that the Lord alone was husbandman, and that his vineyard (the inmates of the ark) he did well keep, preserved them, shut them in. Not until the waters had abated, and Noah and all that were with him in the ark had gone forth from the ark, had got back on the ground once more, the very element from which he was formed, do we find that he began to be a husbandman, and since it is said that he planted a vineyard we must of necessity conclude that he was in a place, or position, exactly suited to the planting he made. And as it is declared that Noah planted this vineyard I am of the opinion that this is a clear representation of the effort and works of the creature, and no doubt there were plantings of various kinds, such as creature efforts, duty religion, acting faith, trusting in the arm of flesh, and such like, all such as man can plant and such as thrive in such ideal ground, and such as yield and bear heavy crops

of fruit in the eyes and estimation of men. But, dearly beloved, note the dire effects to Noah (the preacher of righteousness). After a harvest of the fruit of this vineyard had ripened, and been pressed and undergone the necessary stages of fermentation he became drunken from this very wine. A very similar likeness to that poor man who went down from Jerusalem to Jericho who fell among thieves, etc. 'A man's enemies are they of his own house' (bosom). But thanks be unto God, Noah was uncovered within his tent, which implies that he, like Jacob like Abraham, had no lasting abiding place of habitation. A tent, naturally, literally being only a temporary place of habitation, bespeaking that he, like Abraham, was a pilgrim and a stranger in the earth, and here he had no continuing city. Oh, dear tried pilgrims, how many times have we, like Noah, planted our vineyard and become drunken from the vine of our planting. But oh how different the effects of the wine of His vineyard, God's vineyard, the wine of the kingdom. This wine never makes one drunken, but revives the weak, renews the faint, rescues him that is ready to perish, quenches the thirst of him who is delivered from the pit wherein is no water. But here we come to a different phase of the subject, and oh for grace to rightly divide the word. I wish to state right here that Ham was as much the son of Noah, was as much a vessel of mercy as Shem and Japheth were,

but most certainly was actuated by a different spirit. Ham, as I feel, being imbued with that holier than thou spirit, which is fleshly and degrading, was just in a right condition to not only see his father's nakedness, but also to tell it to his two brethren without, no doubt so blinded by this vain fleshly zeal until he felt quite certain that this was the right and proper procedure. At least this is what the flesh suggests, to tell it to the brethren without, without gospel procedure in an earnest endeavor to cover up the nakedness of the offending one with that mantle of love or that covering of esteeming others better than self. But Shem and Japheth took a garment, and laid it upon both their shoulders, and went backward and covered the nakedness of their father, and their faces were backward, and they saw not their father's nakedness. Those two brethren were; actuated by the law of love, brotherly kindness, bound together in it, thus producing unison of action, moving them backward with that garment of love (charity) which forgiveth all, went backward in their experience to the time and place where they were weighed in the balance and found wanting, made to see the beam in their own eye, made to review where grace divine revealed to them that they were helpless, undone sinners in the most holy sight of God, therefore their faces were backward and they saw not their father's nakedness.

In conclusion, let me say that the curse was placed on Ham's son, Canaan, which represents that fleshly begetting, or offspring of the flesh.

H. J. BIRD.

Elder Griffin's first article
published in the "Signs" 1928.

"AMAZING GRACE"

*"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."*

I have many doubts and fears that I have ever had grace made known to this vile and sinful heart of mine, and often fear I have been deceived and am deceiving the precious saints, and that my trust in the saving grace of Jesus is only a vain imagination of a vile and sinful heart. It is true that at one time I was as profane and wicked as it seems I could be, and that something did burden me, but a great deal of the time I fear that it was only my own imagination. A very few times in my poor life it seemed when under the sweet preaching of God's humble servants that I have been lifted up, as I hope, from the valley and my mind taken away from the perishable things and placed on Jesus. Just a

glimpse of his lovely presence when darkness comes again and I am made to doubt more than ever. But, dear ones, as fleeting as my little star of hope is, it is my all in all. It is my prop and stay while struggling here below, and as much as I am made to doubt I would not give the little hope that dwells in my poor aching bosom for all this world and its riches. Precious readers, I know that if Jesus ever did manifest himself to me that it was amazing to my poor burdened soul, and oh how sweet it seemed. If the Lord ever has found me, it was wonderful indeed, because I was the most sinful wretch that ever lived (and am yet) and it could not have been justice to display to me *“Christ and him crucified,”* but only his mercy. Surely, surely I was lost, and oh so blind. I believe I felt as secure as anyone; not a single trouble ever rolled across my breast. I loved to boast that I was as good as anyone, and I firmly believed that after I had had all the good times that go with youth I would turn to God and live a christian life. I held to that belief and I practiced it as fully as anyone ever could. I cursed much and it did not bother me at all, until in the spring of 1924. I am as unable to tell why it left me as I am to tell why, if not deceived, that God should manifest his everlasting love toward the chiefest of sinners. If, as I hope, the Lord did remember me on Calvary’s cross, I was blind for some time (and still doubt whether I see or not) about the

Bible. I was in a conditional country and they taught me that if I would join *“the church”* the Lord would bless me bounteously. They taught me that God was not limited in power and that he was a complete Sovereign, but they told me he did not work all things after the counsel of his own will, or, in other words, that the predestination of all things was not taught in the Bible, and that it was God dishonoring. I believed all this until I hope the Lord opened my eyes. I said the hardest things imaginable about the *“old absoluters,”* and it made me angry to tell me I believed what was to be would be. Even after I came back home and found they believed in predestination here, I was, as I thought, sorry I did not join while away. As time went on my burden got heavier and I began to read after some of the precious brethren who advocated predestination. The more I read the more I wanted to read and the more it all seemed to fit the little hope I possessed.

*“Through many dangers,
toils and snares*

I have already come;

*Tis grace has brought me
safe thus far,*

*And grace will lead me
home.”*

How consoling, dear reader, to know that you do not have your own way to make. It is not only grace that lifts your feet out of the miry clay and

places them upon firm ground, but it is grace that keeps them there. If poor weak mortals could keep themselves Christ's keeping would be useless, but if I were left to keep my own rambling feet I would not go wrong because I would already be wrong.

I started out to try and write upon predestination, but my thoughts are something I have never been able to control. For some time I have had the following words of Jesus on my mind, and try as I may I can't shake them off: "*Father, the hour is now come.*" - *John xvii.*

1. If there was not another sentence within the lids of the Bible that sounded of predestination this one would be sufficient to prove there was a certain hour in which the crucifixion of the blessed Jesus was to take place. I am so ignorant and foolish (and as some people accuse us, unreasonable) as to believe he was put to death at an appointed and a fixed time. (Read Matthew ii. 45, and John xiii. 1.) If it was not a fixed time I am sure that it would have taken place much earlier. If it had been left to chance or "*happen so*" I verily believe that Herod's decree to slay infants would have left us without a Savior. It is useless to say that "*good*" men could have crucified the Lord. Since it was brutal and heinous to do this, what kind of characters did it take to do the work? Is it possible for men to say that the crucifixion of Christ was left to chance? If so, then the salvation of

the elect is left to chance, and if the salvation of the elect is left to chance then the coming of them into the world is left to chance and it is perfectly possible for not an elect to be saved. Away with such a thought! Inasmuch as God foreknew that Adam would fall he prepared before the world a ransom for sin. Since God foreknew that Adam would fall, it was a fixed thing for him to fall. (If, as some claim, he could have kept the law we could have been righteous until now.) Since it was a fixed thing for him to fall, it was a fixed ransom to redeem him from under the fall, and Christ proved that the sacrifice was to take place at a certain hour. Now let us go back to our question above: What kind of characters did it take to crucify Christ? We are all agreed that it was a brutal crime. If so, then they were brutal characters who crucified him. If it was predestination for the Savior to be crucified was it not predestination for these wicked men to do it? If one single act of it all was left to chance then that one act could make all of God's plans go wrong. But I believe that predestination was behind the whole plan from beginning of creation until time shall be no more. Nor do I like the word "*permission*." If you say that God permitted Adam to fall and Christ to be crucified, and all other events to take place because it is his will to do so, then that is all right, but if you just say that God permits, then add nothing, you leave us to think that he

permits just to be permitting. I do believe God permits things to come to pass, but because it is his divine will for them to do so.

When you have prayed for all others will you remember this poor burdened boy?

A poor beggar,
W. D. Griffin
KENNEDY, Alabama

"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.

J.C. Philpot

ISAIAH 58: 9-11.

Then shalt thou call, and the Lord shall answer; thou shalt cry, and he shall say, Here I am. If thou take away from the midst of thee the yoke, the putting forth of the finger, and speaking vanity;

And if thou draw out thy soul to the hungry, and satisfy the afflicted soul; then shall thy light rise in obscurity, and thy darkness be as the noonday:

And the Lord shall guide thee continually, and satisfy thy soul in drought, and make fat thy bones: and thou shalt be like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters fail not.

MEETINGS

ORDINATION MEETING

Have you ever been lifted up from this world, together with a host of your brethren and friends, and blessed to soar on the wings of God's wondrous Love into the heavenlies? Have you ever witnessed the Power and Love of God permeating the atmosphere and filling each heart to overflowing with unspeakable joy and love? Have you ever been amazed with the sacredness and solemnity of each and every word spoken and act performed? Have you ever been in a meeting when it seemed that each and everyone who spoke was blessed to fitly speak the right words at the proper time throughout?

If not deceived, this was witnessed by the writer and those present at the Ordination Meeting held with Pleasant Hope Church near Atlanta, Texas, October 29th and 30th, 1955. This meeting was called for the purpose of ordaining Lic. Lloyd Wall, of Bivins, Texas to the officeship of elder.

This was truly an ordination meeting. It pleased the Lord to manifest His mercy and grace and make His power known throughout this meeting. The central theme throughout was the duties, qualifications, responsibilities, and importance of a

god-called minister. No one sitting through this series of sermons could lightly consider the high and grave vocation of preaching the unsearchable riches of Christ and pastoring churches. This so impressed me that my constant prayer since has been, "*Lord, qualify me for this exalted position and enable me to walk worthy of the vocation!*"

The appropriate climax was Sunday. Bro. Lloyd Wall was assigned to occupy the pulpit. He called upon Elder J. T. Everett to word the Introductory Prayer. Fitly spoken words stimulated by the powerful love of God flowed fluently from Elder Everett's mouth as he expressed thanksgiving to God for such manifestation of His loving kindness and earnestly beseeched the Lord for a continuation of His loving favors upon each and everyone especially to bless Bro. Lloyd Wall in his endeavor to speak in that trying hour. Bro. Lloyd Wall then arose and began giving an interesting account of his experience and call to the ministry. The Holy Spirit seemed to envelope him so that his countenance shined and his voice mellowed as he gave a detailed account of this wonderful experience. At the proper time he told how and when that his mother informed him that God had revealed to her before he was born that he would be a man-child and would preach the unsearchable riches of Christ.

When sufficient time had been

devoted to his experience and call to the ministry God blessed him to gracefully express his conscientious convictions and belief in the power and wisdom of God relative to the complete salvation of His people. He proclaimed that the wisdom of God was complete in eternity before time began, ordaining all things to fall out in their proper time and place so as to work together for good to them who are the called according to His purpose. Bro. Wall was blessed to treat upon the fundamental principles of the doctrine beginning with predestination and closing with a full explanation of his belief and hope in the resurrection of these bodies into life immortal. When he finished speaking several minutes were used in making manifest the love, fellowship, and endorsement by the elders, deacons, brethren and friends present in clasping hands with Brother Wall.

When Brother Wall had taken his seat, we sang a hymn, and opportunity for membership was announced. Whereupon his wife, Ruby Wall, came forward asking for a home with the church. Amidst great rejoicing she was received as a worthy candidate for baptism.

I deem it proper here to insert some instances to prove that God was reigning in this affair and making manifest His providence. It pleased the Lord to make it known to a young son of a deacon that Sister Ruby would become a member of the church that day, before He re-

vealed it to her. I quote two different conversations in order to prove this.

A little boy startled his parents at the breakfast table Sunday morning by saying convincingly, "*Miss Ruby is going to join the church today.*" His parents inquired, "*How do you know?*" The little boy answered, "*I dreamed it last night.*" Another conversation took place during the lunch hour at church. The baptism being scheduled so early in the afternoon my wife felt that Sister Ruby possibly came prepared for the baptism. She asked, "*Ruby, did you bring your clothes, or will you have to go home for them?*" Ruby answered, "*I will have to go get them as I did not know I was going to do this.*" How mysterious is the working of God to prove that He is at the helm!

The elders and deacons present organized themselves into a presbytery to ordain Lic. Lloyd Wall to the office of elder immediately after Sister Ruby had been given the right hand of Christian fellowship. The ordination proceeded in an orderly manner including laying on hands and prayer, thus ordaining him to the full work of a gospel minister His father in the flesh as well as in the ministry, Elder T. A. Wall, calmly gave his son the grave charge including good advice and proper counsel relative to the walk and conversation becoming to a young minister, Elder T. A. Wall also warned his son of certain evils to be shunned and unpleasant experiences to be endured

March 12, 2010

as a good soldier.

At two o'clock the same afternoon Elder Lloyd Wall performed his first official act as an ordained minister when he led his wife, Ruby, down into the water and baptized her in the liquid grave. This was performed in such calm and graceful manner that it is agreed by all who witnessed that he performed as though he had baptized many.

I have assisted in the ordination of eight elders but this was the most inspiring and solemn occasion I have ever witnessed. Other young men are being brought into the ministry in this section by our God. He will not leave Himself without a witness. We shall not die. God has ordained that the true doctrine of salvation by grace through the merits of Christ will continue to be preached. Our enemies continue to say, *"It will not be long until there will be none left."* They wish it could be true but we CANNOT believe it.

E. J. Lambert

PSALM 57:1.

Be merciful unto me, O God, be merciful unto me: for my soul trusteth in thee: yea, in the shadow of thy wings will I make my refuge, until these calamities be overpast.

Good Morning Elder Key,

Hope this finds you well and in good spirits. Once again I want to say "Thank You" for your service and dedication to Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior. We enjoy the Signs of the Times and look forward to our copy each month.

I have enclosed two ordinations, one being my husband, the other a very gifted young man from North Alabama.

Also a copy of a song that my Dad, Elder Milton J. Allen, wrote August 7th, 1979. Feel free to print any of this material.

A Little Sister in Christ, I Hope,
Wynette Allen Smith

Minutes of the Presbytery
of the Ordination of
Bro. John M. Smith
Saturday, October 18, 2008

At the request of Mount Pleasant Primitive Baptist Church of Dothan, Alabama, a presbytery met at Ramah Primitive Baptist Church in Cottonwood, Alabama, for the examination and ordination of Brother John M. (Micky)Smith.

All elders and Deacons present of our faith and order were formed into the presbytery:

Elders: Bro. Lloyd Simmons,
Bro. R.H. Hale, Bro. Scott Sexton,

Bro. John Howard, Jr., Bro. Louie Hornsby, Bro. Ernest Brooks, Bro. Ben Roberts and Bro. Herb Hatfield

Deacons: Bro. Floyd Snell, Bro. John I. Smith, Bro. Robert Newsome, Bro. John Howard, Sr., Bro. Stacy Halverson, Bro. J.D. Jones, Bro. Donald Bass, Bro. R.Q. Carter and Bro. Roger A. Gregory

The presbytery organized itself by electing Elder Herbert Hatfield as moderator and Brother Roger Gregory clerk.

The moderator asked the members present from Mount Pleasant Church if they were still of a mind to proceed with the ordination of Brother Smith. The church answered in the affirmative and Deacon John I. Smith presented the candidate to the presbytery.

Elder Louie Hornsby was asked to open the presbytery with prayer. The moderator asked Deacon John Smith several questions concerning the character of the candidate and received satisfactory answers.

The moderator then began a question and answer session using the Articles of Faith from the Western Primitive Baptist Association as a guideline for questions. Many questions were asked of the candidate by the moderator and several members of the presbytery and satisfactory answers were given.

At the approval of the presbytery, the laying on of hands was performed and prayer was offered up by moderator, Elder Herb Hatfield. Elder Scott Sexton was appointed to

deliver a charge to the candidate and did so with his text taken from I Timothy 3:1-7.

The right hand of fellowship was given to Elder John M. Smith by the members of the presbytery and a Certificate of Credentials was signed by all members of the presbytery.

All being satisfied Elder John M. (Micky) Smith was presented back to the church and the presbytery was dissolved. Elder Smith was then invited to speak, and he brought an encouraging message on the subject of "Love."

MINUTES OF THE PRESBYTERY

Pursuant to the request of Mountain Fork Primitive Baptist Church, Madison County, Alabama, a Presbytery met at Mountain Fork on Saturday, September 27, 2008, for examination of Brother John Howard, Jr., and if found qualified, to ordain him for the full work of the gospel ministry.

All Elders and Deacons present of our faith and order were formed into the Presbytery: Elders: R. H. Hale, Loyd Simmons, Herb Hatfield, David Mattingly, John Wingfield, Scott Sexton, Mike Stewart, Mike Rogers. Deacons: John Howard, Sr., Roger Gregory, Stacy Halverson, John I. Smith, Robert Newsom, John M. Smith.

The Presbytery organized itself by electing Elder R. H. Hale Moderator and Brother John M. Smith Clerk.

Elder David Mattingly was asked to open the Presbytery with prayer.

The Moderator asked if the church was still of a mind to proceed with the ordination of Brother John Howard, Jr. The church members answered in the affirmative and Brother John Howard, Sr. presented the candidate to the Presbytery.

The Moderator asked the candidate several questions concerning our faith and then asked the spokesman for the church several questions about the character of the candidate. Having received satisfactory answers to all questions, the Moderator then opened the floor to the members of the Presbytery. Elders Mike Stewart, Mike Rogers, John Wingfield, Herb Hatfield, R. H. Hale, and Scott Sexton asked questions and received satisfactory answers.

The Presbytery being satisfied, the laying on of hands was performed during the ordination prayer by Elder John Wingfield.

Elder Loyd Simmons was appointed to charge the candidate and did so with text from 1 Timothy 3: 1-16.

The right hand of fellowship was given to Elder John Howard, Jr. by the members of the Presbytery and a Certificate of Credentials was signed by all members of the Presbytery.

All being satisfied, Elder John Howard, Jr. was presented back to

the church and the Presbytery was dismissed.

R. H. Hale, Moderator
John M. Smith, Clerk

**"THAT LAND OF
PURE DELIGHT"**

We shall sleep, but not forever, there will come, a glorious dawn.

When our tombs, shall burst wide open, on the resurrection morn.

Then we'll all, go up to heaven, where the Son of God's the light;

We will sing, the song of Moses, in that land of pure delight.

In that great, celestial city, in that land, where comes no night,

We will sing, His songs forever, in that land of pure delight.

Yes we'll sing, the song of Moses, in our robes of spotless white,

Yes we'll sing, this song of Moses, in that land of pure delight.

On that great, and wondrous morning, when the saints, of God arise,

We'll be carried, to our man-

sions, far beyond, the cloudless skies.

There we'll walk, the streets of glory, which are all, of gold so bright,

Then we'll sing this song of Moses, in that land, of pure delight.

When we stand, before the judgment, and we see, God face to face,

We will hear the proclamation, you have won, the Christians race.

And now you'll sing, this forever, yes this song, that is so right,

Yes you'll sing, this song forever, in this land, of pure delight.

I hope to meet, you up in heaven, where the saints of God will dwell,

Where we'll sing, this song of Moses, and we'll never say farewell.

Yes, I hope to meet, you up in Heaven, where the happy, angels dwell,

Where we'll sing, this song forever, and we'll never say farewell.

Written by:

Elder Milton J. Allen

Opp, Alabama August 7, 1979

Submitted by:

Wynette Allen Smith

CONTRIBUTIONS

For March 2010

Donald Arrington, NC	5.00
John Smith, FL	10.00
J.D. Neely, AR	5.00
Graham Lovitte, NC	5.00
Frank & Polly Sizemore, WV ...	50.00
Lois Ferguson, VA	5.00
Billie Speir, LA	35.00
Livie Thompson, VA	5.00
Esther Griffin, NC	100.00
Elder Mark Terry, VA	5.00
Roland Allen, GA	5.00
J.M. Jones, NC	5.00
John Collie, NC	5.00
Jotty Newman, TN	35.00
Ruby Dyer, VA	5.00
Carmen Abernathy, NC	5.00

OBITUARIES

3/28/2010

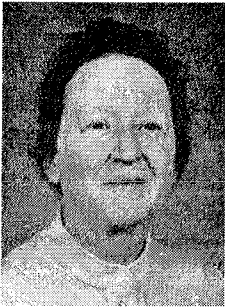
Dearest Brother Kenneth,

Enclosed is Sister Rachel Wray's obituary for publication in the Signs. It was read at Pleasantville last first Sunday. I'm also enclosing a copy of the hymn, "His Mercy" which Sister Rachel was blessed to pen in 1951. I thought you might want to publish it in the Signs also.

May the Lord bless and keep you.

With much love and fellowship,
Mary

RACHEL PYRTLE WRAY



Sister Rachel Wray

Sister Rachel, our precious sister and mother in Israel, was taken from our midst on October 15, 2009. Her funeral at Pleasantville Primitive Baptist Church was conducted by Elder Cleo Robertson followed by prayer at the cemetery by Elder Thomas Solomon. Left to mourn her are her husband of 68 years, Elder Haywood Wray; her son, Brother Philip Wray and wife, Vicki; two daughters, Linda Jordan and Marjorie Martin; one brother, Sam Pyrtle; three sisters, Dorothy Linden, Dixie Eaton, and Anne Pyrtle; five grandchildren, six great-grandchildren; and a host of dearly beloved brothers and sisters in Christ. Sister Rachel was born November 14, 1923 to Elder Dillard Pyrtle and Sister Grace Shepherd Pyrtle. We've often heard her humbly relate, *"We didn't have much of this world's goods, but Papa worked hard, and the Lord provided all that we needed."*

On April 12, 1941 Sister Rachel was united in marriage to Brother Haywood Wray in a marriage that was truly made in heaven. As young people, they both attended meetings, and the Lord blessed them to meet each other at church.

We believe that it was written in the will of God that they should be

joined together spiritually as well as naturally. On Saturday before the second Sunday of November 1951, Sister Rachel asked for a home with Pleasantville Primitive Baptist Church. At the water, on the following morning, Brother Haywood also asked for a home with the church. They were both baptized that day. That same month on November 7 in their home that Brother Haywood had built during the War, Sister Rachel was blessed with the words and the tune of a hymn entitled "His Mercy", which she hurriedly penned on paper bags, as she could not find paper on which to write. The first verse of that hymn:

*"Oh the love that cannot die;
Does not weaken as time
flies,
But is ever as a guide.
This is by His mercy,"*

sums up the theme of her journey here on earth as each day brought her closer to that long sought joy of being with her Lord.

In May 1953, Brother Haywood was liberated to speak. Sister Rachel faithfully and lovingly, by the grace of God, filled the station of a minister's wife. We believe that she felt in her heart as the hymn writer penned, *"The steps that I tread and the station I fill, My father determined and wrote in His will."* She and Brother Haywood have been blessed for many years to travel and meet among the Lord's people. They've often been called on

to sing at funerals, which he conducted, two of her favorite hymns, *"Amazing Grace"* and *"Rock of Ages"*. Her lovely alto voice will be greatly missed in our meetings.

We thank our God that He blessed Brother Haywood to so tenderly care for Sister Rachel's every need in the last eight or nine years of her life as the disease of Alzheimer's took its debilitating toll on her natural mind and body. One, who wasn't intimately acquainted with Sister Rachel's demeanor and personality, would not have been able to discern the effects of this disease. Despite the fact that her natural mind was in the clutches of this disease to the point that she sometimes did not know Brother Haywood, her spiritual mind never wavered, and her love for her Saviour never diminished. She would often ask Brother Haywood to talk about the Good Shepherd, and he would as often as he was blessed to do so. Though she was unable to care for herself, she could often quote the remainder of a scripture that Brother Haywood was addressing and even comment and expound on it as well as sing the hymns of Zion. She never needed a hymnbook as the words and tune were etched in her spiritual mind and heart.

We believe, with all our hearts, that this was the work of God, and that she, even as her natural mind failed her, rendered praise unto her Lord. What comfort this is to us.

Just two hours before the Lord called Sister Rachel home, one of the writers was blessed to be with her and Brother Haywood and to witness the amazing grace of God in the life of our dear Sister. As she lay there unable to speak, upon hearing the first lines of *"Amazing Grace"* being softly sung, she softly sang those first two lines and perfectly carried the tune in the lovely alto voice, with which the Lord had blessed her to praise Him throughout her life. In sickness and in health, the Good Shepherd answered the prayer in the fifth verse of the hymn, she was blessed to pen:

*"Hoping as I go along
In my heart to hear His song,
Sing His praises all day long
Telling of His mercy."*

Our hearts go out to our beloved Brother Haywood and her family. May the Lord bless them to feel His everlasting arms beneath them, and may He bless them with the comfort that only He can give. For those of us, who have been so bountifully blessed with spiritual love and fellowship for Sister Rachel, may we be blessed to hold fast to the faith once delivered unto the saints, as she was so beautifully blessed to do. In all things may Christ "have the preeminence" for "holy and reverend is His name."

Humbly submitted by two who loved her dearly,

Mary Hawkins
Bob Collie

HIS MERCY*A hymn by:*

Rachel Pyrtle Wray (Mrs. H.W.)
(7776) November, 1951 R. P. W.

*1. Oh, the love that cannot die;
Does not weaken as time flies, But
is ever as a guide. This is by His
mercy.*

*2. By the streams and hills and
dales, Where our shepherd tilled
so well, Showing love that's not
for sale; Shown in loving mercy.*

*3. Oh, these sheep still wandring
home, Sometimes far away they
roam. Sure He knows which are
His own. That is by His mercy.*

*4. Oft I know that I have strayed,
In my stumbling, wandering way,
Knowing now it was His will. All
is by His mercy.*

*5. Hoping as I go along, In my
heart to hear His song,
Sing His praises all day long: Tell-
ing of His mercy.*

*6. Sweet it is, that song of grace,
When He shows His smiling face;
Thus the Spirit takes Its place.
We are blessed with mercy.*

*7. There's the mercy seat I see,
Where it was prepared for me.
Tried by Thy ordained decree, I
have found Thy mercy.*

*8. Help me do Thy will today.
Keep me in this willing way,*

*Giving me a heart to pray, Ask-
ing for Thy mercy.*

*9. There upon the mercy seat,
Soul of mine heard music sweet.
Precious was the Truth they
preached, Knowing this by mercy.*

*10. Cast my lot, there at your feet;
Love-filled tears you shared with
me, Handshakes warm and smiles
so sweet, Let us share His mercy.*

God bless the singing of this hymn. Printed by a brother in Christ, Robert Lee, Turner - a Teaching Elder in the Smyrna and Wentworth Presbyterian Churches - P.O. Box. 25 Wentworth, N.C., For more free copies write the printer at above address 27375 or the author, Mrs. Haywood W. Wray whose husband is Elder Wray of the Pleasantville Primitive Baptist Church near Reidsville - her address is: Mrs. H.W. Wray, Route 3, Box 387, Reidsville, North Carolina 37320.

The printer of the hymn gives these copies to the public in honor of the author and her husband, who have served so faithfully in the Pleasantville Primitive Baptist Church, seven miles east of Madison, N.C. on highway 704; and in memory of the printer's mother, who was a member of Matrimony Primitive Baptist Church near Eden, N.C.

The poem on back to this folder is in honor of all Primitive Baptists, who depict in their kindly ways the feelings, the author of the poem believes, that are characteristic of Christians.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 178

HILLSVILLE, VA., JUNE 2010

NO. 6

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

SONG

ISSN - 0199 - 0063

Subscription price \$15.00 per year - \$25.00 two years

Published monthly by
SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

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

*My business lies at wisdom's gate
Where needy sinners come;
And here I sue, and here I wait
For mercy's falling crumb.*

*My rags and wounds my wants proclaim,
And help from him implore;
The wounds do witness I am lame,
The rags, that I am poor.*

*My Lord, I hear, the hungry feeds,
And cheereth souls distrest;
He loves to bind up broken reeds,
And heal a bleeding breast.*

*His name is Jesus, full of grace,
Which draws me to his door;
And will not Jesus shew his face,
And bring his gospel-store?*

*Supplies of every grace I want,
And each day want supply;
And if no grace the Lord will grant,
I must lie down and die.*

But, oh! my Lord, such news shall ne'er

*Be told in Zion's street,
That some poor soul fell in despair,
And died at Jesus' feet.*

Erskine and Berridge.

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 EDITORIALS

THE SONG OF SONGS



Elder Cleo D. Robertson

The song of songs, which is Solomon's, Chapter 1, verse 1. Solomon was blessed to write a beautiful song describing the love between Christ and his bride, the church. This is a song sung not audibly from the words of a hymnal, but experienced in the hearts of his elect. To experience the love and mercy of the Lord causes your soul to sing forth his praises. The tears flow down your cheeks and you feel lifted out of this world of sin and sorrow as your very

being is centered upon him. The words that we sing from our hymnals mean nothing unless the song of songs has been sung in our heart and soul. *Psalm 107:1-2*, "O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good: for his mercy endureth for ever. Let the redeemed of the Lord say so, whom he hath redeemed from the hand of the enemy." Only the redeemed of the Lord have experienced his love and mercy and therefore, can say so. This is the song of songs, the song of grace.

John Newton experienced the song of songs in his own heart and was blessed to describe it in the following words:

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 forbear to shine;
But God, who called me here
below,
Will be forever mine.*

Toplady also experienced the song of songs and wrote:

*Nothing in my hand I bring!
Simply to thy cross I cling;
Naked, come to thee for
dress;
Helpless, look to thee for
grace;
Black, I to the fountain fly;
Wash me, Saviour, or I die!*

Solomon wrote in verse 5, "*I am black, but comely,*" and again in verse 6, "Look not upon me, because I am black, because the sun hath looked upon me." The Lord, who is the light, looks upon a little child of grace and the light shines into every recess of the darkness of

his or her soul. Nothing is hid from him who knows all things. All that we thought were covered are brought to light and we are shown what we are by nature and by practice. As recorded in the 22nd chapter of Luke, Peter, in the ignorance and arrogance and weakness of the flesh, told Christ, "*Lord, I am ready to go with thee, both into prison, and to death.*" Christ responded, "*I tell thee, Peter, the cock shall not crow this day, before that thou shalt thrice deny that thou knowest me.*" Peter indeed denied vehemently three times knowing Christ. But when the cock crowed, "*the Lord turned and looked upon Peter. And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said unto him, Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. And Peter went out, and wept bitterly.*" The Lord did not just look at Peter, but rather looked upon him. That look penetrated to the very depth of Peter's soul. It showed Peter just how weak and black that he was. He experienced a godly sorrow as he went out and wept bitterly.

The law being spiritual, holy, just and righteous is a condemnation of death to us. For by the law is the knowledge of sin. By the law our sins abound to us so that all we see is our blackness of sin and our lost condition. O how could the Lord love one such as me and how unfit I am even to be among his people! We can only see the blackness of the

dust from which these earthen vessels are formed. We cry "*O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?*" But, there is a comeliness in the little child of grace that is not of the flesh nor the carnal nature of man. It is the spiritual life or the new creature in Christ which is Christ in one, the hope of glory. This new man after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.

Then in verse 10 Christ speaks to his love, his bride, and says "*Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away.*" O my dear people, what manner of love is this! He addresses her in such a loving, precious manner. He acknowledges her as his love and describes her as his fair one, meaning that she possesses a beauty, the beauty of holiness. His beauty is manifested in her. "*Rise up and come away.*" She was commanded to rise up from the cold state of condemnation and the darkness of unbelief and come away in the warm, comforting manifestation of his love and mercy. The song of songs was sung in her heart. She had asked her husband, Christ, where he feedest and where he maketh his flock to rest at noon. Her beloved told her to "*go thy way forth by the footsteps of the flock, and feed thy kids beside the shepherds' tents.*" This is a little child of grace that the Lord directed to his flock where his ministers feed them with the gospel of

Christ and there they find rest. Now the love of Christ is manifested as he tells her "*For lo, the winter is past, the rain is over and gone.*" The cold, dead, dark time under the law is over and gone. "*The flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land.*" It seems to one brought out of nature's darkness into his marvelous light that all of God's creation is praising him. This sets forth the resurrection from the dead state that every child of grace experiences under the law to a newness of life in Christ. A new day has come – the day of grace. II Corinthians 5:17, "*Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.*" The flowers, singing birds and voice of the turtle are manifestations of a newness of life. During the winter, leaves on the trees die and fall off. Grasses die and turn brown. No flowers are blooming. The singing of birds cannot be heard. Only death can be seen. Now it is springtime and life appears as green leaves on the trees, green grass springing forth, flowers blooming and birds singing. Green is a sign of life. David wrote, "*The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures.*" The Good Shepherd makes his sheep to lie down in the pastures of his grace and feed upon the green grass of the

gospel. There are no works of the flesh there, only rest.

As a type of the Lord's people, the flowers blooming show forth his little ones manifesting the fruit of the spirit. There is indeed a beauty unmatched by anything of man in the flesh. When we behold one of God's elect who has experienced the song of songs, we see the beauty of Christ shining forth. His bride is as a lily among thorns in the world. The birds singing are as God's people singing his praises as the song of songs is sung in their hearts. They do not need song lessons because God tunes their hearts to sing his praises. As Isaiah wrote, *"This people have I formed for myself; they shall shew forth my praise."* The voice of the turtle was heard in our land. I believe the turtle spoken of is the turtledove. The voice of the turtledove is never heard in winter, only in spring. It sets forth the children of God as they experience the newness of life and mourn over their sins, but praise God for his goodness and mercy. Their voices are only heard in our land, the land of the Lord's people who have experienced the song of songs.

He brings his bride to the banqueting house and the banner over her is love. There she feasts upon the bountiful table of his gospel. There are his wonderful, comforting promises such as *"I will never leave you nor forsake you"* and *"These things I have spoken unto you, that in me ye might have*

peace. In the world ye shall have tribulation: but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world" as well as *"Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid."* You are nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine as the Apostle Paul told Timothy. The banner over you is love signifying that you belong to Christ who is love. *John 13:34-35, "A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another."* You are under the banner of love and thus protected and provided for. None can destroy you. The banner is that of Christ signifying that he is your defender when you encounter the battles of tribulations, afflictions and oppressions. The victory is his.

O, what a beautiful love song! This is an eternal love that had no beginning because God is love and he is eternal. God first loved his people before the world was created and nothing can separate one of his little ones from that love. That love is manifested to his children in time and that is when they experience love for him. Christ so loved his bride that he suffered and willingly laid down his life for her. He calls her his love and she calls him her beloved. There is no divorce in this

marriage. The world has no song that can compare with the song of songs.

*Rejoice, the Lord is King;
Your God and King adore;
Mortals, give thanks and
sing,
And triumph ever more!
Lift up the heart, lift up the
voice,
Rejoice aloud, ye saints, re-
joice.*

*Rejoice, the Saviour reigns,
The God of truth and love;
When he had purged our
stains,
He took his seat above:
Lift up the heart, lift up the
voice,
Rejoice aloud, ye saints, re-
joice.*

*His kingdom cannot fail;
He rules o'er earth and
heaven;
The keys of death and hell
Are to our Jesus given:
Lift up the heart, lift up the
voice,
Rejoice aloud, ye saints, re-
joice.*

*He all his foes shall quell;
Shall all our sins destroy;
And every bosom swell
With pure seraphic joy:
Lift up the heart, lift up the
voice,*

*Rejoice aloud, ye saints, re-
joice.*

*Rejoice in glorious hope,
Jesus the Judge shall come,
And take his servants up
To their eternal home:
We soon shall hear the
Archangel's voice;
The trump of God shall
sound, Rejoice.*

In bonds of love,
Elder Cleo Robertson

ROMANS 1:15-19.

So, as much as in me is, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are at Rome also.

For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first. and also to the Greek.

For "therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, the just shall live by faith.

For the wrath of God is revealed from heaven against all ungodliness and unrighteousness of men, who hold the truth in unrighteousness;

Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath shewed it unto them.

VOICES OF THE PAST

THE HOUSE OF WORSHIP

“I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the House of the Lord.” Psalms 122:1.

My soul leaped with joy from its fainted condition the other day when an Elder softly said to me, “Let us go into the house.” I was within the city limits of one of the largest cities in our nation. Everyone on the streets and highways seemed to be in such a hurry. I was meditating upon the fact that things are so swiftly coming to pass that it is very difficult to believe such drastic changes are taking place I began to realize that I was so heavily involved in this great turmoil of swift and rapid events to such extent that my mind was in a whirl, my heart was troubled, and my soul was fainted; all because I could not keep up. What great relief of mind to enter upon the grounds of this house of worship and to be warmly invited into the house for the purpose of pausing in our hurrying to worship God. How good it is when you feel so cast down, unworthy, and unfit to be noticed by anyone, to hear them say, *“Let us go into the House of the Lord.”* Aren’t you glad that they even remember to invite you into such sacred place as the Place of Praises. Aren’t you glad, also, that

others have a desire to go into the House of Prayer and Praise.

Get your Bible and turn to the 122nd Psalm and read with us as we meditate upon some of the glorious expressions of the Psalmist. The second verse reads: *“Our feet shall stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem.”* We recall that in Psalms 100 :4 it says, *“Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise.”* Jesus said, *“ENTER ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be that go in thereat: because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it.”*

When I entered the door of this building and beheld such smiling peaceful expressions on the faces of those who so joyfully greeted me, I felt to be standing within the gates of the City of God with a number of its citizens. No one there needed to say to any other, *“I love you.”* The love of God was so manifest in each and every face, word, handshake, and embrace that we all had a foretaste of Heaven. When we had settled down to singing hymns of thanksgiving to God even for the tribulations that had been ours to endure, I gazed at the open door through which we had entered. Then, I thought of the gates through which we had come to this place of joy and peace. I thought of the first gate that leadeth unto life, to wit:

tribulations. Peace, joy, and happiness cannot be experienced while in confusion, sadness and misery; but after being exercised by these tribulations, we experience the peaceable fruits of righteousness which are patience, faith, hope, love, and joy of life. *“Go through, go through the gates.”* is an expression found in Isaiah 62:10. It must be through the gate of tribulations and persecutions that we learn to be submissive and to rely upon God for all things pertaining to God and godliness. This painful gate could be termed the gate of regeneration. You cannot climb over the wall to avoid this gate. If one gets into the position of indulging in special favors peculiar to the afflicted and poor people of God, this one would be classed as a thief and a robber. The walls are too thick to be penetrated; too high to be climbed over; and too strong to be overthrown. You must enter through the gate of tribulations which is the gate of regeneration. This is the evidence that brethren look for in listening to the experience of candidates for church membership. This being *“born again”* is manifest when their testimony proves that they have suffered to the extent of being brought into the knowledge of being unable to do anything of themselves to merit any blessing from God.

I went back into my experience and was given to relive for a moment the period in my life when it seemed the mountains of my many sins were

crushing me to death. The gates of hell seemed to be opened unto me and that I was being swallowed into its clutches. Every straw to which I so greedily clung could not so much as slow down my descent into the depths of such horrible pit. I relived for a moment my cries out of the depth of hell. I remembered the groans, the fastings, and the awful miseries of hell itself with all the doors closed and locked fast. I could not open any door of faith or hope. How I did knock and seek and ask but I had no faith. I wept bitterly with no hope for mercy because my sins demanded that I should forever be in misery. While in this awful condition and after I had exhausted all of my strength and energy it pleased God in His gracious providence toward me to put it into the mind of one of my friends to invite me into a house of worship. He kept insisting against my wishes that I should accompany him to a place of worship to hear a certain minister preach. I had read the Bible: it had condemned. I had listened at preachers: they had condemned me. I talked to my close associates: they all thought I was crazy when I would tell them of my hopeless condition. I learned in the pit that God was sovereign and holy and that no man could come unto Him. I felt that I had blasphemed against God under the cloak of a gospel minister in declaring the power of man unto salvation to such extent that I could never have forgiveness here nor in the

world to come. This man who said unto me, *"Let us go to meeting,"* saw something in me that I could not see. This is why he kept insisting that I go. His care concerning my spiritual welfare astonished me. I shall forever be thankful to God for that man who kept insisting, *"Let us go to meeting."* I had thought that I knew how to read and interpret the Holy Scriptures.

God opened the second gate unto me when He opened the *"door of faith"* thru the preaching of the gospel of this minister that night. *"And when they were come, and had gathered the church together, they rehearsed all that God had done with them, and how he had opened the door of faith to the Gentiles."* (Acts 14:27) *"It pleased God by the foolishness of preaching"* to set before me an open door. God opened this minister's mouth to preach this precious faith. God opened my heart to understand it. As soon as it was opened unto me I gladly went through it to such extent as to receive and embrace it with all my heart. I did not have to go to Heaven after it. I did not have to go across the seas and oceans to get it. You cannot open the door of faith yourself. It must be opened to you. Paul says, *"A great door and effectual is opened unto me."* (1 Cor. 16:9) When the door of faith is opened how devotedly we cling to the Lord Jesus Christ. The gate of faith being opened I saw the

maneuverings of my Saviour. I saw Him come through the gate of Heaven. I saw Him descend toward the pit. I saw Him descend low enough to reach me who was the vilest of the vile. I saw Him wash me whiter than snow with His blood. I saw Him pay my penalty by His dying in my stead. I saw Him merit a home in Heaven for me with His life. I heard Him plead in my behalf before the Father. All of this led me to the door of Hope. In Hosea 2:15 we read of *"A door of hope."* On that memorable night for a fleeting time this gate of Hope was swung wide open and I was blessed to experience the entrance to that within the veil: *"Wherein God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of His counsel, confirmed it by an oath: that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us: which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil."* (Heb. 6:17-20)

The opening of the gate of hope gave me to see that within the veil. The opening of the gate of faith gave me to believe in Jesus, the perfect and powerful Saviour of His people. The opening of the gate of hope gave me to trust that I was one of His people and that all of the ben-

efits He merited would be mine to experience in the future. These gates lead into the inner palace of the King. The most innergate, or door, must be the gate of Love. In the Song of Songs we read, *"My Beloved put in His hand by the hole of the door."* (Solomon 5:4) We read in Revelations. *"After this I looked, and, behold, a door was opened in heaven."* (Rev. 4:1) When this gate of love is opened in Heaven to us our hearts overflow with this Love of God. Perfect love casteth out fear. O what joy, peace, and happiness we do experience as result of the foretaste of Heaven itself. It is too wonderful to tell. It is too much for poor earthly creatures to experience but for short seasons. I am made to believe that God has ordained these wonderful banquets of the King to be participated in most gloriously here in His banqueting houses of worship. God's children will travel thousands of miles to one of these banquets. God meets His people with the gifts of His love within these Houses of praises. Sometimes we hear the voices of angels coming from the mouths of men as we worship God together. While meditating in this meeting-house on the gates of tribulations, (or regeneration), faith, hope, and love, my question was, Are there any other gates? John gave me the answer in 1st John 4:16: *"God is love, and he that dwelleth in love dwelleth in God and God in him."* There is no gate beyond the gate of

love.

When I came to the reality of my surroundings I felt that God had cemented everyone present in that congregation together so firmly with a heavenly mixture of grace and love that nothing could break fellowship. I felt that everyone there including the many young people were lively stones, made to be lively by the love of God and washed clean in the blood of the Lamb. I saw the manifestation of their labor of love as I gazed upon the newly finished walls, furniture, and fixtures of this House of Worship. I knew that it had taken many hours and dollars to bring this into reality. I said in my heart, *"Thank God for such evidences of a God-loving people who will gladly sacrifice their bodies and earthly treasures in providing a meeting place for the members and friends to worship God together."* Recall that the 3rd and 4th verses of the 122nd Psalms says: *"Jerusalem is builded as a city that is compact together: Whither the tribes go up, the tribes of the Lord unto the testimony of Israel, to give thanks unto the name of the Lord."* A company of believers blessed to worship God in unison in prayer, praise, and preaching is a wonderful experience of being compacted together both in body and Spirit.

I saw the Heavens open unto me a book of remembrances of the testimony of God's love and mercy. I remembered the 1st Heaven which

was a paradise when the Lord first remembered me as related in this treatise. I called to remembrance the 2nd Heaven when a door was opened to me to be baptized and to be married to the particular church in covenant-relationship which holds to the Gospel Faith and Practice. I had been given the wonderful relationship to trust that God would providentially care for me and finally save me in that eternal abode because of His love and through the merits of Jesus Christ. Yet, I thought that I had so blasphemed His power to such degree that none would receive me into their fellowship here on earth. How glad I was when they received me and welcomed me into their fellowship. My joys in participating in the special privileges and ordinances allowed only to members of the church are considered as precious and sacred. Being caught up in the third Heaven for moments is enough foretaste to make me yearn to live there eternally with the redeemed of the Lord.

It is wonderful in this church relationship to be compacted together to mourn with those who mourn; to rejoice with those who rejoice: to be so united in affections one for the other that each one will be willing to make great sacrifices for the other ones' good. It is wonderful to be united in agreement upon religious beliefs. Being "*Compact together*" in love, belief, experience, and hope: all this causes a yearning to meet often together in

worship of God for His benefits to us. All this causes the lovers of the truth to be glad when someone suggests, "*Let us go into the House of the Lord.*"

We go to the House of God in unison to give thanks for His wonderful works. We listen prayerfully as the minister of the Gospel gives testimony of the will of God, the word of God, and the simple commandments of our Lord Jesus Christ. The minister comforts us as he is blessed to speak of the sovereign God who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will. We experience a feeling of security as the minister brings testimony after testimony from the Holy Scriptures to prove that God's will of purpose is solely, wholly, perfectly, and completely worked by Him, to the praise of His own glory and to the completion of salvation of each and everyone of His children, without a hint of any jot or tittle of His will of purpose being disobeyed because He works it Himself; and, it embraces all times, events, words, thoughts, actions, and all creatures and things both visible and invisible. We are edified as the minister preaches the Word of God bringing a multiplicity of testimonies from the Book of books, proving that the will of God relative to the salvation of God's elect is because of God's great love for us through the merits of Jesus Christ, Who is the Way, the Truth, and the Life. We eagerly listen as the minister preaches to us

God's will of precept as he rightly divides the word of truth in warning the Lord's people of dangers and exhorting them to keep the commandments of Jesus, and to be fervent in charity.

"I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord."

I wanted to praise Him publicly for His divine providence, amazing grace, gifts of the Spirit, His great love, and gospel of Jesus Christ. I wanted to participate in the ordinances of Jesus Christ and His Church. There are two kinds of extremists relative to public praise. One is the child of God who is fearful of man to the extent that he will not participate in public praise. The hypocrite will engage in public praise to be commended by men. The proper Christian is not fearful of the frowns of the world, nor is he a public worshiper in order to be commended by those who profess to be Christians.

David said, ***"Give unto the Lord glory due unto his name: bring an offering and come into his courts."*** You may ask, What shall we bring? Our strength will not help Him for He is all-powerful. Our wisdom will not direct Him for He is all-wise. Our God is so great that He does not require our wisdom to direct Him nor our power to assist Him. He owns all things; therefore, He does not require our wealth to enrich Him. He is so effectual in His works and so convincing relative to

His greatness that He does not need our reputation to advance Him. What does He require of us? He requires us to fear Him because of His greatness, He requires us to love Him because of His goodness. ***"What shall I render to the Lord for all his benefits towards me?"*** (Psalms 116:12) What offering shall I bring? The sacrifice that the Lord loves is a broken heart and contrite spirit. The word contrite means, bruised. Paul says, ***"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies as living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service."*** (Romans 12:1) God does not need our help in any way but we certainly need His strength and guidance in all of our affairs. It pleases Him that we are to help one another in word, deed, and prayer. Bring an offering of your material possessions for the support of the ministry, maintenance of house of worship, and the poor of the flock. The Scriptural rule for this is called an order to the churches which is plainly and simply stated in 1st Corinthians 16:1-3. (Read, if interested in giving according to rule.)

"I will offer to thee the sacrifice of thanksgiving." (Psalms 116:17) I will thank Him for His deliverance from death; for His deliverance of me from the clutches of law and death; for His setting before me the open doors of faith and hope; and, for His love that flooded my

soul through the open door of Heaven. I will thank Him for Jesus Christ, my King, Saviour, Friend, Priest, Way, Truth, and Life.

When I come to the courts of the Lord and in the midst of His people, I pray that I will be given to remember my vows. May I be given to say as David when I am inside the place of worship: *"I will pay my vows unto the Lord now in the presence of all His people."* David said, *"God is the Lord which hath shewed us light: Bind the sacrifice with cords even unto the horns of the altar."* (Psalm 118:27) Unless these instructions can be experienced, none of our sacrifices will be acceptable to God. All acceptable sacrifice is fervent constant confident devotion. That which binds is faith. Streams of God's love are the cords. The altar is Christ. Christ's merit and power are the horns of the altar. I find it to be more blessed to try and fail than not to try. I find that my conscience is more at ease when I go to the House of God and fail in my attempts at worship than when I fail to present my body. O that our people would more often say to their children, relatives, and friends, *"Let us go into the House of the Lord."* It is very encouraging to see parents bring their children to church meetings. A greater percent of our church meeting congregations are young people now than when I first united with the Primitive Baptist Church. Let us bring up our children in the

nurture and admonition of the Lord. Let us teach them to obey their parents, speak, the truth, read good literature, to behave themselves conformable to high morals, and to respect the elderly. We know that it is God's work to regenerate and save eternally each and everyone of His people; yet, it is our obligation as Christian parents to discourage our children from becoming involved in religious organizations whose object is to work zealously to influence young minds to embrace their doctrines and practices: which you know to be false and erroneous. It is your duty to encourage them to consider the Bible as the Book of books worthy of their reading. It is your duty to encourage their attendance at the place where you go to worship. You consider your particular church of your membership as being more right in its doctrine and practices than any of the organizations whose main purposes are to convince the young and to convert them to their ideas and doings.

The minds of children are very easily impressed and they are prone to follow anyone who takes a great interest in them. Take care that your children be not as those referred to by David in his prayer: *"Rid me, and deliver me from the hand of strange children, whose mouth speaketh vanity, and their right hand is a right hand of falsehood."* May we do our duty and pray God: *"That our sons may be as plants grown up in their youth;*

that our daughters may be as cornerstones, polished after the similitude of a palace: that our garners may be full, affording all manner of store: that our sheep may bring forth thousands and ten thousands in our streets: that our oxen may be strong to labour: that there be no breaking in, nor going out: that there be no complaining in our streets. HAPPY IS THAT PEOPLE THAT IS IN SUCH A CASE; yea, HAPPY IS THAT PEOPLE, WHOSE GOD IS THE LORD.” (Psalm 144:11-15) May we assemble ourselves together more often, and often say, “LET US GO INTO THE HOUSE OF THE LORD.” MAY GOD BLESS YOU. AMEN.

Elder E. J. Lambert

A TREASURE OF HYMNS

Amos R. Wells

“GLORIOUS THINGS OF
THEE ARE SPOKEN.”

John Newton.

None of our hymn-writers had a history so remarkable as that of John Newton, who wrote this noble hymn. He was born in London, July 24, 1725. His mother was a pious woman, who taught him the Catechism and many other good things; but she died when the lad was only six years old.

His father was a sea-captain, and could not supply the place of a

mother. He took the boy to sea when he was eleven years old, and the young fellow learned to curse and blaspheme, and became very wild. After his father retired from the sea, the son made several voyages by himself. At one time he was forced into the navy, a war being expected, and he became a midshipman. But he was very restless and he deserted, was caught, stripped, whipped severely, and degraded to the ranks.

By this time he had become a thorough infidel, and was steeped in all kinds of sin. He fell into the hands of a slave-trader in Africa, and suffered all manner of hardships there, being continually insulted and almost starved. Delivered providentially from that terrible situation, after many strange and hazardous adventures he became a slave-trader himself, and made several voyages to Africa in that shameful occupation.

The reading of Thomas a Kempis, the fearful experiences of a storm at sea in which his ship was almost lost, his deliverance from a severe fever in Africa, these, and other experiences, at last awoke in the sinful man the memories of the religion his mother had taught him, and he turned from his sins with true repentance.

His conversion was so complete that he became a minister of the gospel. This was in 1764, when he was thirty-nine years old. He settled in Olney, England, and there it was

that he formed the beautiful friendship with William Cowper which has given to the world so many splendid hymns. Some think that it was with the desire to draw Cowper's mind away from his deep melancholy that Newton proposed that the two should compose a series of hymns together. Of the *famous collection that resulted*, "*The Olney Hymns*," Cowper is said to have written sixty-six, while Newton wrote the rest of the three hundred and forty-nine. But more of Cowper's hymns than of Newton's have become famous. "*Safely through another week*" is one of Newton's hymns that is most often sung. Others are: "*How sweet the name of Jesus sounds*," "*Approach, my soul, the mercy seat*," "*Come, my soul, thy suit prepare*," "*For a season called to part*," "*Great Shepherd of Thy ransomed flock*," "*In evil long I took delight*" (which surely paints his own experiences), "*Jesus I who knows full well*," "*Lord! I cannot let Thee go*," "*One there is above all others*," "*Quiet, Lord! my froward heart*," "*Saviour, visit Thy plantation*," "*Sometimes a light surprises*," "*'Tis a point I long to know*," "*While with ceaseless course the sun*," and still others that are found in most of our hymn-books.

But the greatest of all the hymns of John Newton is "*Glorious things of thee are spoken*." It is a noble description of the people of God, under the protection of their su-

preme leader. Newton wrote five stanzas, and you will like to see all of them. The last two, however, are inferior to the first three, and are seldom printed in our hymn-books.

Glorious things of thee are spoken,

Zion, city of our God!

He, whose word cannot be broken,

Form'd thee for His own abode:

*On the Rock of ages founded,
What can shake thy sure repose?*

With salvation's walls surrounded,

Thou may'st smile at all thy foes.

See! the streams of living waters,

*Springing from eternal love,
Well supply thy sons and daughters,*

*And all fear of want remove.
Who can faint when such a river*

Ever flows their thirst to assuage?

*Grace, which, like the Lord,
the giver,*

Never fails from age to age.

*Round each habitation
hov'ring,*

See the cloud and fire appear!

*For a glory and a cov'ring,
Showing that the Lord is*

near!

Thus deriving, from their banner,

Light by night, and shade by day:

Safe they feed upon the manna

Which He gives them when they pray.

*Bless'd inhabitants of Zion,
Wash'd in the Redeemer's blood!*

Jesus, whom their souls rely on,

Makes them kings and priests to God.

*'Tis His love His people raises
Over self to reign as kings,
And as priests, His solemn praises*

Each for a thank-off'ring brings.

*Saviour, if of Zion's city
I through grace a member am,
Let the world deride or pity,
I will glory in Thy name:
Fading is the worldling's pleasure,*

All his boasted pomp and show:

Solid joys and lasting treasure,

None but Zion's children know.

"Olney Hymns" was published in 1779. In that year Newton became rector of a church in London, and died there December 21, 1807. Thus

he had a long life after his conversion. It was a very useful life. Wesley and Whitefield were his friends. Among his converts were Claudius Buchanan, the great missionary to the East Indies, and Thomas Scott, the eminent Bible commentator. He preached almost to the time of his death, asking, "*Shall the old African blasphemer stop while he can speak?*" And he still preaches through his strong and spirited hymns.

MATTHEW XVI. 19.

"AND I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth, shall be loosed in heaven."

The above was addressed to Peter by the Savior. "*And Jesus said unto them [the apostles], Verily I say unto you, That ye which have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit in the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.*"- Matt. xix. 28. "*Then said Jesus to them again [the apostles], Peace be unto you; as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you. And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith*

unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost: whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained."- *John xx. 21-23.* It seems necessary to have all of the Scripture referred to in order to present what is upon my mind. Jesus said to Peter, "*I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven,*" &c. It would seem that Peter was placed in authority above the other apostles, but not so, for the apostles were to sit upon thrones judging Israeli that is, spiritual Israel, the new Jerusalem, the church. Each apostle has equal authority, or, as we speak of it, apostolic authority, this having been given them of the Savior. They have no successors to their thrones; because Jesus lives they live, and because Jesus reigns King of kings and Lord of lords they reign with him. It is an everlasting kingdom. The words, "*I will give unto thee the keys,*" &c., were fulfilled in part when Jesus had risen from the dead and breathed on them (the apostles) and saith unto them, "*Receive ye the Holy Ghost.*" The Holy Ghost is the keys to the kingdom of heaven. "*Flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven.*" "*Upon this rock (revelation) I will build my church,*" &c.

A key is used to lock and unlock. Heaven is known by those having

the keys to unlock the things kept secret from the foundation of the world, things hidden from the wise and prudent and revealed unto babes. The keys are the revelation of God through Christ Jesus the Lord, and are without number. Peter and the apostles received keys when the Savior said unto them, "*Receive ye the Holy Ghost.*" Also on the day of pentecost, when the apostles preached; also when Peter preached at the house of Cornelius. Every manifestation of the Spirit taking of the things of Jesus and showing them unto them was a key given unto them of the kingdom of heaven, and unlocked the mysteries hid from the wisdom of this world. The epistles written by the apostles are for the church, the redeemed of the Lord, the called of God, and when their declarations as judges in Israel remit your sins, they are remitted, and when the apostles' declarations retain your sins, they are retained. There is no higher tribunal than the Savior, who is judge of the whole earth, and the apostles, who are judges of spiritual Israel. When the apostle Paul says, "*Forsake not the assembling of yourselves together, as the manner of some is,*" it is by apostolic authority. When James says, To him that knoweth to do good, and doeth it not, to him it is sin, it is binding upon the household of faith. When Peter says to the elders, "*Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by*

constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as being lords over God's heritage," &c., every declaration is binding upon every elder who has or will be set apart to the work of the ministry, and what the apostles have bound on earth is bound in heaven. When Paul said, *"By grace are ye saved through faith,"* it was by authority he declared it, for Paul was a chosen vessel unto the Lord. How often we have heard some sayings of the apostles as well as the words of Jesus having delivered some heavily burdened souls, the Spirit having taken of the things of Jesus and showed them unto them. So we believe it is the Spirit accompanying the words of Jesus, for the words of the apostles, that remits our sins or retains our sins; and if our heart condemns us, God is greater than our heart, and knoweth all things. Beloved, if our heart condemns us not, then have we confidence toward God. To sum up briefly, I would say that every one born of God, born in Zion, is given keys to the kingdom of heaven; they enter in and behold the King in his beauty, their eyes see and ears hear, their hearts understand; they can behold if they cannot tell it. Many things they behold are unlocked and opened up to them by the preached word, and every member, no matter how small, occupies a place in the kingdom and is under law to Christ. The apostles in their declarations have given every Deeded instruction to the church,

and what they have bound on earth is bound in heaven. What they have loosed on earth is loosed in heaven. Whosoever sins they have remitted, they are remitted, and whosoever sins they have retained, they are retained.

J. M. FENTON.

CORINTHIANS XIII. 13.1

"And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity."

DEAR BRETHREN EDITORS:- I have felt impressed for some time to write on the above subject, but feeling my weakness and inability to write to the comfort of the saints, I have failed to do so until the present time.

This text is comprehensive, and embraces the whole system of salvation by grace. Faith, hope and charity are inseparably connected and abide alone with the heirs of grace and are the gifts of God. If so, how can the poor, helpless sinner obtain them by his own efforts? Men are now urged to believe in order to obtain eternal life. We believe a thing according to the testimony adduced. How can the poor, blind sinner believe without evidence? The sinner does not believe in order to obtain life, but because he has life. The apostle says, He that believe on the

Son hath life, so we must have life first, which is given us by the Holy Spirit, independent of means or the instrumentalities of man. Again, He that believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God; not will be born. If we believe the evidence that the children of grace have is the Spirit of God bearing witness with our spirit, we are the children of God, and if children, then heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ. We are now killed to the love of sin, and would shun it as a deadly poison. Dear child of grace, is this your experience? If so, you can rest assured that God has given you eternal life. He said, I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish. A precious thought contained in the text is the word "*hope*." This is closely connected with faith, and follows after regeneration. The apostle speaks of it as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, which enters into that within the veil. How precious the word "*hope*" to the child of grace when he feels cast down, with not a ray of light from the presence of the Lord to comfort him; he then feels as did the psalmist when he asked himself the question, "*Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted in me - Hope thou in God; for I shall yet praise him.*" The apostle says, "*Hope that is seen, is not hope; for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience*

wait for it." These precious truths are written in the Bible for the comfort of all God's dear children, and O how thankful we should be for such a precious gift.

I will now call your attention to the word "*charity*," which I think is the brightest jewel contained in the text, which is love. This love is pure, because God is its author. There is nothing, we can do to produce it, for it is the gift of God. All our efforts to do good, in giving to the poor and afflicted, will not be charity, unless we are impressed to do so by the Spirit of God. Some are giving largely to help the poor, and for the support of what they call charitable institutions, when perhaps there is no Bible charity in it. The apostle says, Though I give all my goods to feed the poor, and my body to be burned, and have not charity, it profiteth me nothing. The apostle tells us in few words the true principles of charity; he says, Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil. My dear brethren, have you this pure charity? I fear that I have not. Though I professed a hope when but a boy, and am now in my eighty-fourth year, and have been trying to serve God all that time, I must say with the apostle, that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing.

The text says the greatest of these is charity. This love existed with Christ in God before the world began. He says, I have loved thee

with an everlasting love, therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee. This love embraces all of his elect people, chosen in him before the foundation of the world, and for whom he died. We need faith and hope in this life, but if we are permitted to enter that bouse not made with hands, and be like him, we shall not need faith and hope, but charity will abide forever, and we will all sing one song, and it will be to Him who loved us and washed us in his own blood; to him we will give all the glory forever. What a glorious thought this is! When I think of it I feel like the apostle did when he said, *"I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better: nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you."*

Dear editors, dispose of this as you think best, and all will be well with me.

SILAS WILLIAMS.
ALBANY, Oregon, Feb. 4, 1918.

PSALM 103:19-20

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

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

ISAIAH XL. II.

"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."

This chapter of Isaiah is looking beyond the time of the Babylonian captivity to the restoration, to the time when Israel shall again realize the tender care of their God for them. Also, secondarily, this portion of Isaiah looks not only beyond the Babylonian captivity, but beyond that captivity which the whole people of God were under to the law of sin and death, which captivity was destroyed in the resurrection of Christ from the dead. The resurrection of Christ set the church free from captivity to the reigning power of sin and from its penalty, death. Looking beyond this great captivity of the whole church, our text has to do with the gospel life of the church of Jesus as it is now in this present dispensation. The Lord here likens himself to a shepherd and his people to sheep. This is a frequent figure found throughout the Scriptures, and is a favorite illustration employed by the Spirit of inspiration to set forth the attitude of Christ toward his people. It is not necessary for us to go much into an explanation of this figure of the shepherd and his sheep, for it is familiar to all our readers and a sub-

ject that has been frequently written upon through the columns of the SIGNS. *"He shall gather the lambs with his arm,"* signifies that his almighty power and omnipotent strength shall gather the little, tender ones of the flock. All must be lambs before they can be sheep. There is an infancy in grace as well as in nature; that is, a time when one does not see as clearly and understand the Scriptures and the doctrine as clearly as when one becomes older in grace and in experience. There is surely such a thing as growing in grace and in knowledge of the truth. When one has not attained to this growth in grace to the extent that older ones have, one is in the *"lamb"* state. Our text does not mean to imply that the lambs are the only ones of the flock that need the sheltering arm of omnipotence, nor does it convey the idea that the older ones, the sheep, can get along without this same care and this same almighty power; but the thought is that the lambs need not the care of the older sheep to make them become, in turn, sheep. The watch care and tenderness of the shepherd is what all the sheep and all the lambs need; none can dispense with it. Unless the lambs are properly cared for by the shepherd there will be no sheep. The strong arm of Jesus, the fullness of God's power embodied in him, is the salvation of every one of the lambs. The lamb aptly represents the helplessness of the child

of God. Nothing but the omnipotence of God is sufficient to protect and shelter the helpless lambs in grace. *"Carry them In his bosom,"* means that they rest in his love. The new-born child of grace is brought from under the law into the sweet liberty and comfort of the gospel of Jesus.

Here he finds the true sabbath and rests in the perfect love of God. This is comprehended in the expression: *"Carry them in his bosom."* *"I Shall gently lead those that are with young,"* applies to the child of God who has been quickened by the Spirit but has not yet been brought to the birth; that is, has not been brought to the end of the law and delivered out into the liberty of the gospel. These have not yet brought forth Christ, Christ has not yet been manifested out of them. God's good work has begun in them by the operation of his Holy Spirit, but it has not yet been brought to a manifested end in the day of Jesus Christ. These are *"with young,"* and need to be handled gently. The Lord's dealings with these quickened sinners whose consciences have been made very tender and keenly conscious of every defect in themselves, are very tender dealings indeed. He is full of compassionate tenderness toward them, and he will lead them gently on until Christ be fully formed in them the hope of glory, until they are brought to the end of the law and

give birth to full faith and confidence in Jesus as their one and only Savior.

Elder H.H. Lefferts

“We must through much tribulation enter into the kingdom of God.” - Acts xiv. 22.

What are the promises? Are not all the promises suited to the Lord's poor and needy family? What are the promises of pardon, except to the guilty? What are promises of salvation, except to the lost? What are promises of consolation, except to the afflicted? What are promises of grace, except to those who feel themselves altogether undone? Thus it is *“through much tribulation”* we enter into the sweetness of the promises. Then they come with power into the heart; they are manifested with life and feeling to the soul; and we begin, like Jeremiah of old, to *“find God's word and eat it;”* and feel it to be the very joy and rejoicing of our heart. This is the effect of passing through tribulation in providence and in grace,— of cutting trials; of severe, harassing temptations; of frowns from the world; of blows from sinners and saints; of learning the workings of a heart deceitful above all things and desperately wicked; to lead us *“into the kingdom of God;”* and into those sweet manifestations of lovingkindness

and tender mercy which alone can satisfy us whose consciences God's finger has touched. And I believe you that are honest, you that are sincere, you that fear to be deceived, you that know there is a secret in vital godliness, and long to know it more deeply, and feel it more powerfully; I am sure there is an inward witness in your soul that you never entered into any one mystery of the kingdom of God set up in your heart except through tribulation. Was it not through tribulation you understood the word, and felt it applied to your conscience by the power of God? And was it not by and through tribulation, through the medium of suffering, that you were made to value more and more the manifestation of God to your soul? and feel that nothing could satisfy you, nothing content you, but a blessed discovery of dying love?

Elder J.C. Philpot

PSALM 103:16-18.

For the wind passeth over it, and it is gone; and the place thereof shall know it no more.

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

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

MEETINGS

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION

The West Country Line Union will convene with Pleasantville Primitive Baptist Church the 5th Sunday in May 2010. From 220 take 704 East to Pleasantville Church Rd. and turn left to church on left. From Reidsville take West Harrison Street / NC 65 toward Wentworth. 9.3 miles to NC 704 West. Go 2.7 miles and turn right on to Pleasantville Church Rd. - Church is on the left.

Ministers of our faith and order and all other lovers of the truth are invited to meet with us.

Elder H.W. Wray
Elder Thomas Solomon

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR APRIL 2010

Elder Gene Lupton, NC	5.00
Flora Vest, VA	5.00
E. H. Chandler, LA	5.00
James Knight, NC	25.00

PSALM 77:12.

I will meditate also of all thy work, and talk of thy doings.

OBITUARIES

ANDREW C. AGEE

It is with much sadness that I attempt to comply with Salem Church's request to write the obituary of our beloved deacon, whom we feel is at rest, waiting for the coming day of our savior, Jesus Christ. Brother Andrew believed in salvation by grace and grace alone.

Brother Andrew was born November 26, 1921 and passed away February 16, 2010. He was a member of Salem Primitive Baptist Church for 34 years and was ordained as a deacon on May 10, 1986. Brother Andrew was appointed a church trustee January 15, 2005, and he served our church humbly and walked softly among the brethren, taking his afflictions with much patience and manifesting that great love for his church and brethren. His work on earth is finished.

Brother Andrew was the son of Floyd and Katherine Agee and husband of Gladys Walters Agee. He had four daughters, Linda Agee Dickerson, Dianne Agee Kelly, and Carolyn Agee Perdue, with Bonnie Agee Kitts who is deceased. Five sisters, Ruby Dyer, Doris Hawley, Ora Guthrie, Frances Lewis and Madeline Bonham.

Brother Andrew's funeral was held at Salem Church on February 19, 2010 and he was laid to rest in the Restvale Cemetery. Elder Carl Terry and Elder Larry Hollandsworth officiated.

May we all be reconciled to His Holy will and comforted to feel that our loss is his eternal gain.

Written in loving memory of our dear deacon.

Carl Terry , Moderator
Mary Poff, Clerk

MARTHA LOUISE ALLEN

Sister Louise, 92, of Alamance Health Care in Burlington, N.C. left this world and sorrow on March 4, 2010. Graveside services were conducted by Elder Kenneth Key on March 7 at Dan River Primitive Baptist Church Cemetery.

Sister Louise joined Dan River Church on March 8, 1959 and was baptized by her pastor, the late Elder David Spangler. She came to church as long as she was able and had someone to bring her.

A native of Person County, she lived most of her life in Rockingham County. She was the daughter of the late William and Martha Blackwell Allen. She was preceded in death by six brothers and six sisters. Surviving her are her loving niece and

caregiver, Peggy Bradshaw of Graham, N.C. and several nieces and nephews.

She stayed in assisted living and nursing homes for over ten years, much over the last few years, but Romans chapter 8 verse 18 says, "*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.*" In Romans chapter 8 verse 36, it is written: "*For thy sake we are killed all the day long, we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.*"

Written by a Sister in Christ,
Gradie Strader

GALATIANS 2:15-16.

We who are Jews by nature, and not sinners of the Gentiles, 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.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 178

HILLSVILLE, VA., JULY 2010

NO. 7

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

POEM

ISSN - 0199 - 0063

Subscription price \$15.00 per year - \$25.00 two years

Published monthly by
SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

1429 Howlett Street
Hillsville, Va. 24343

*How weary and how worthless
this life at times appears.
What days of heavy sadness,
what hours of bitter tears.
How dark the storm cloud gath-
ers along the wintry skies.
How desolate and cheerless the
path before me lies.*

*And yet those days of sadness
are sent us from above.
They do not come in anger, but
in faithfulness and love.
They come to teach us lessons
which bright ones could not
yield,
And leave us blest and thankful
when their purpose is fulfilled.*

*They come to draw us nearer
our Father and our Lord.
More earnestly to seek His face
and lean upon His word.
And to feel if now around us a
desert land we see;
Without the star of promise,
what would the darkness be.*

*They come to lay us lowly and
humbly in the dust.
All self-deception swept away,
all creature hope and trust.*

*Our helplessness; our vileness,
 our guiltiness to own,
 And flee for help and refuge to
 Christ, and Christ alone.*

*They come to break the fetters
 that here detain us fast,
 And force our long reluctant
 hearts to rise to heaven at last.
 And brighten every prospect of
 that eternal home,
 Where grief and disappointment
 and fear can never come.*

*Then turn not in despondence,
 poor weary heart away,
 But meekly journey on through
 the dark and cloudy day.
 Even now the bow of promise is
 above thee, painted bright;
 And soon a glorious morning
 shall dissipate the night.*

*Thy God hath not forgot thee,
 but when He sees it best
 Will lead thee into sunshine and
 give thee longed for rest.
 And all thy pain and sorrow
 shall be forever o'er;
 Shall end in heavenly blessed-
 ness and life forevermore.*

*(This poem was sent to me by
 dear Sister Mary Ellison a num-
 ber of years ago. Lillie Fridel)*

**From Zion's Landmark
 Oct. 1973**

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EDITORIALS

A GLORIOUS ONENESS

*“There is one body and one
 spirit, even as you are called in
 one hope of your calling: One
 Lord, one faith, one baptism,
 one God and Father of all,
 through all and in you all.”
 (Ephesians 4:4-6)*

In the above scripture the
 Apostle Paul sets forth the glo-
 rious truth of the oneness and unity
 that is taught in the Holy Scripture.
 There is one God and Father of all
 the elect family that has lived, and
 will yet live, in this world. He is their
 All in All, and the fulfillment of all their

hope, faith and desire since they have been made to behold His glory by the Spirit of Life, which has been placed within their very being.

The *One Body* is the whole household of faith from righteous Abel to the last heir of promise that will be born into this time world. The body is one, but there are many members; and God has placed each member in the body, and it fulfills that which is pleasing unto Him; and to the edifying of the body in Christ. As a natural body has many members, and each is needful to the well-being of the whole body, so is each of the members needful to the well-being of this whole body. The members are placed in the body so *“that there should be no schism in the body: but that the members should have the same care one for another.”* As a man would not choose his right hand over his left hand, or his arm over his leg, but has the same desire for the one member as the other, even so God has the same love for all members of the one body. Each member is just as secure as any other, and each is just as necessary to have a complete body; and God will have no less.

As the members of the natural body are dependent upon the functions of the other members of the body, it is also true with this body. And Paul goes on to say, *“And whether one member suffers all the members suffer with it; or one member be honored all the members rejoice with it.”* This is

something that all God’s children believe and have seen and experienced many times. They weep with a brother when he weeps and rejoice with him when he rejoices.

There is *One Hope*, and it is common among all the children of God that He is their Father. They do not feel to be worthy of being his children, but they cannot help but hope that by his grace and mercy they have been placed among those to whom all the precious promises are made, and that they are of those for whom Christ came into the world to save. They can surely see that they are sinners, and the scriptures say that He came to save sinners. They have been made to believe that there is one God, and that He has a people in every nation, kindred, tongue and people; that there was one sacrifice for the redemption of that people unto himself. Therefore they think of that people as a unit that cannot be divided from that unity of redemption. This seems to be what Paul was saying when he says, *“There is one body.”* Their hope is that each member is just as secure as every other member: because, since God would only accept a sacrifice that was without spot or blemish, surely that which is redeemed by that perfect sacrifice will be perfect, whole and complete in every sense of the word.

There is *One Spirit*, and that spirit is the life of the one body. This spirit of life is that which is sent down from heaven and gives life to each

and every member of the body. It causes each member to function and perform that which is needful for the good of the whole body. As Paul says, *"From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love."* Every member is therefore needful, and the Spirit of Life enables them to fulfill that need according to the measure of the gift of Christ. Their sufficiency is of Him; and regardless of how wretched and undone they feel to be, this spirit that has been placed within their very being, will cause them to stand and fill their place.

Jesus told Nicodemus, *"Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God."* This then is the way that the members receive the Spirit, and are made partakers of the inheritance and blessings of the body. This manner indicates the sovereign and holy work of God in bestowing this grace upon the heirs of promise. Even natural birth is above the power of man, and this birth is of an infinitely higher order than that. It is this birth of the Spirit which imparts the spiritual life to his elect and makes them members of the One Body.

Jesus Christ is the *One Lord* who is head over all things to the church, which is his body. He is the

Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending. He is the one who stood as a lamb slain from the foundation of the world, and was offered without spot and without blemish for the redemption of the Church, which is his body. He is the only Potentate, the King of Kings and Lord of Lords. He is the one who of God is made unto the body, wisdom, righteousness, sanctification and redemption. He was made all things that were needful unto this body of the elect family of God. He is the foundation that was laid, and upon which all the building stands. Isaiah says, *"Therefore thus saith the Lord, behold I lay in Zion for a foundation, a stone, a tried stone, a precious corner stone, a sure foundation: that he that believeth shall not make haste."*

With this foundation, a sure foundation, and the power and wisdom that insures its eternal existence, the children have a blessed refuge and a strong consolation when they lay hold upon the hope that is set before them. This hope that is the anchor of the soul, is anchored in Jesus Christ the one Lord, who is the Shepherd and Bishop of their soul.

There is *One Faith*, which is the gift of God. This is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. This is given unto men whereby they behold the glory of the heavenly kingdom while in this time world. They cannot behold the fullness of the glory while in the

flesh, but they see as through a glass darkly by this eye of faith, and behold and experience things which the world knows nothing. Though at times it may seem weak, it continues to lead them, and will last through all their earthly pilgrimage. At other times they feel bold enough to say with David, *"But I will hope continually and will yet praise thee more and more."* Or with Job, *"Though He slay me, yet will I trust in him."*

It is the same faith that moved Noah, that moves God's people today. This is the sense in which there is one faith. It is faith in the same power, and it is sent from the same source. These common experiences, and common faith in the same giver of the gift, cause God's children to have an abiding love and fellowship for one another.

There is *One Baptism*, and that is the baptism of the Holy Ghost; and this is referred to at times as being born of the Spirit. It is One since it is to all the members of the body. It occurs in time to the different members when the Spirit is made manifest unto them; but the body stands as a unit in the mind and purpose of God, and was complete in his eyes before the foundation of the world.

There is *One God and Father of All*, who is above all, and through all, and in you all. Job said, speaking of God, *"But He is of one mind and who can turn him? and what his soul desireth, even that he*

doeth." This is a grand and glorious truth to those who have been given a reason to hope in His promises. This is the reason that all the other things are spoken of as being One. They are things that were determined by the One God who is of one mind, and changes not. Before the beginning of time the counsel was held, and all these things were determined as surely as though they had already happened. The One Lord was determined as the One Sacrifice for the One Body, (which included all the members), which is given the One Faith by the indwelling of the One Spirit, and baptized with the One Baptism. Since God is of one mind, and what his soul desireth even that He doeth, what can ever change or alter any of these decrees in any fashion, seeing that in Him is All Power. Paul said, *"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."*

This is the heritage of all the redeemed family of God, and it is sure and certain to all those that were chosen in Christ Jesus, the Lord before the foundation of the world. There is nothing that can separate them from this love, and the loving kindness that has drawn them to Him. Moses said when telling the

Children of Israel of their blessings, *"The eternal God is thy refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms."* These everlasting arms are underneath upholding all His elect in all ages, and is sweet comfort to them when they see that but for His mercy, they would be lost world without end. These characteristics of God: eternal, everlasting Father, omnipotent, omnipresent and omniscience, are the towers and bulwarks that God's people observe and trust in as they walk about Zion beholding the beauties and glories of His kingdom.

The promises of God unto his children are so grand and glorious to the heirs of promise, that they are fearful to claim to have a hope in them. They see themselves as they are in nature, and, being made to see what they must be by grace, causes them to go mourning and bemoaning their wretched and undone condition most of the time. They go weeping and begging God, in spite of their sinful condition, to have mercy on them, and to show them more evidence that they are His. David spoke of this condition of God's people when he said, *"They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again rejoicing, bringing his sheaves*

with him."

Surely the precious seed is that spirit that has been planted in their breast, and the sheaves represent the harvest that they shall reap, which is the salvation of their soul. They go weeping now, but in hope; and they shall assuredly receive the fruits of the harvest, which is life everlasting. The planting, cultivating, and harvesting is all the work of God in their lives. It is to His glory and to their good, because, *"It is the Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom."*

God will bless each and every heir of grace with the hope of his calling sometime during his earthly pilgrimage. May it be His good pleasure for them to walk together in peace, love and fellowship one for the other. As Paul says, *"Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and in the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ."* When this is done, He will send his angels to gather his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other. He will then receive them unto himself and present them unto God as his bride; and they will dwell in perfect bliss eternally as one.

In bonds of love,
Richard H. Campbell

CORRESPONDENCE

May 12, 2010

Dear Tony,

I would like to renew my subscription to the Signs for another year. Enclosed is a check for \$20.00.

I do enjoy every issue and thank you.

God Bless,
Grace Manly

May 2, 2010

My dear Brother Horton,

I see I'm late renewing Signs and I'm sorry. Please renew Signs another year for me. Other day I picked up a few old Signs and began reading from the back. The obituaries were so sweet and kind. To me love was bright. Isn't it wonderful that God Himself reveals his work to poor creatures as it pleases him.

With love I hope,
Reidy Pickral

VOICES OF THE PAST

PEACE ON EARTH

"Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." (Luke 2:14)

Luke gives the words used by a multitude of the heavenly host in making a supernatural announcement of a supernatural birth. There are only fourteen of these words. Some of the ten thousand times ten thousand and thousands of thousands of Angels said these words to the lowly shepherds almost two thousand years ago. What an impact they have had upon the earth! Millions and millions have quoted them since then. Volumes have been written about them, yet the meaning of these few simple words has not been fully and completely understood. They very beautifully express the simple principles of the new creation, the new covenant, and the new religion.

The first note of this very brief but sublime hymn is, *"Glory to God in the highest."* Christ's obedience to His Father's laws; His consecration to His Father's will; His prayers, teachings, and death: -Yea, His entire life focuses the spotlight upon God, the Father. He did it when He declared that none was good save the Father. He did it in the statement that none could come to Him except

the Father draw him. When He declared that He could do nothing of Himself, He glorified the Father. He did it when He made for Himself no reputation in order to reverence His Father. Yes, Jesus Christ fulfilled the announcement of the multitude of heavenly host by glorifying God in the highest.

The second phrase of the angelic anthem is, "*On earth Peace.*" Here was the announcement of the appearance of the Prince of Peace. Jesus Christ is the Prince of Peace as announced by prophecy in Isaiah 9:6. The Son of the King of creation, providence, and disposer of all things is rightly termed, *Prince*. Jesus being the author of peace as well as the *Son* of God fully manifested His name, "*Prince of Peace.*" Jesus being born on earth verified the announcement, "*On earth peace.*" Jesus made peace with God in behalf of His brethren by suffering in their stead the punishment due them for their sins, and fulfilling the law for them. Jesus made peace between the Jews and Gentiles by breaking down the bars, the ceremonial laws, which separated His people among them. He made peace between the men of high degree and the men of low degree by bringing down the exalted ones and lifting up the lowly. He unified the rich and the poor by proving the vanity of earthly riches to the wealthy as well as the importance of heavenly treasures to the beggar. He proclaimed the gospel of peace.

The angels of Heaven concluded this memorable song by saying, "*Good will toward men.*" Four hundred years had passed since the prophet, Malachi, wrote: "*But unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings...*" (Mal. 4:2) Such a long time of silence from Heaven!! It is no wonder that gross ignorance of God's laws was the state of the people of the earth. It must have been the time of ignorance that God winked at. See Acts 17:30. Spiritual darkness had covered the face of the earth for so long. God's people had transgressed His laws to such great degree that justice demanded a curse from God instead of good will toward them. This curse was stayed until His only begotten Son could bear the just vengeance and wrath of God. *Good will toward men* was brought to light in every thought, word, and act of Jesus Christ while here on earth. God's good will toward men is briefed by Jesus when He said, "*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. And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day.*" Read

John 6:35-40. This good will begets good will toward God in the hearts of everyone who realize its goodness. God grant that we further meditate on the subject peace on earth in this article. Unity and concord are the closest synonym in the English language to the root word which was translated, *peace*. The simple definition: "PEACE", that state of mind in which persons are exposed to no open violence; "is" quoted from Buck's Theological Dictionary. Since peace concerns the state of mind of persons, we shall emphasize the importance, joy, and happiness of social, ecclesiastical, and spiritual peace. Social peace is mutual agreement one with another, whereby we forbear injuring one another. David said, "*Depart from evil, and do good; seek peace and pursue it.*" (*Psalms 34:14*) What are we to pursue and seek? Unity plus concord equals peace. The Holy Spirit teaches us that we are in unity with evil. This is our first lesson. Secondly, it makes known to us that we were in concord or agreement with it, but the Spirit has changed our feeling so that we hate that principle we loved. This causes us to desire to depart from that with which we are connected. We possessed a false peace of mind while we were joined to evil and had pleasure in it. The result of regeneration is that we do not have a quiet peaceful mind. We find ourselves involved with something we hate. Having been regenerated, we need conversion. We find

that we must depart from evil before we have peace of mind. Wisdom from above causes our minds to be in a terrible state of uneasiness which makes us fear God. This is regeneration. We then realize our great need for understanding. We pray for it. God answers our prayer by empowering us to depart from evil. This is conversion. Job quoted God as saying: "*Behold, the fear of the Lord, that is wisdom; and to depart from evil is understanding.*" (*Job 28:28*) Wisdom plus understanding equals peace of mind.

Jesus made peace with God for all the elect by offering Himself. He is our only peacemaker with God, the Father. Jesus united all of the chosen of God with the Father. None can ever sever this union that Jesus perfected. All our righteousness is as filthy rags in God's sight. The imputed righteousness of *Jesus* only constitutes *peace toward God*. We must be born again AND BE GIVEN THIS FAITH IN JESUS CHRIST, before we can realize God's good will of *peace toward men*. When we are in realization of this we have peace of mind. This peace shall fully be realized in eternity. This is the good news to a sensible sinner. This is the Gospel of Peace! "*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.*" (*Heb. 10:22*) When this peace with God is

realized in the conscience, all stumbling blocks are removed, and forbearance is easy. *“Great peace have they which love thy law: and nothing shall offend them.” (Psalms 119:165)*

Where is Peace? The United Nations is a unit composed of representatives from the different nations of the world whose proposed purpose is to achieve peace for the world. Even though they be together in body, their minds are far apart. Instead of concord there is contempt in all their maneuverings. Pride, envy, hatred, wrath, and strife are some of the stumbling blocks that prevent peaceful solutions of problems. These are all so manifest in the meetings of the United Nations that we must look elsewhere for peace. The same stumbling blocks prevent the Senate and House of the Congress of the United States from passing laws conformable to the Constitution. Our higher institutions of learning have been so scarred and battered with riots and confusion that we cannot find peace reigning there. We find states, communities, and homes in abundance where peace does not reign. We ask again, Where is peace?

Paul exhorts: *“Be careful for nothing, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through*

Christ Jesus.” (Phil. 4:6-7) To taste the peace of God is to realize that none but God through Christ Jesus, the Prince of Peace, can be the Author of Peace in our hearts and minds. We must admit that none but God can effect peace anywhere at anytime.

Peace on earth? Yes, but where? It is in the minds and hearts of all while they are blessed with faith in God, *“Who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will.”* (See Eph. 1:11) Those who in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving make their requests known unto God, experience the peace of God. Peace is reigning in the individuals who do not offend others by their thoughts, words, or actions. Peace is the state of the minds of the people who think upon the things which are true, honest, just, pure, lovely, and of good report; seeking praise-worthiness and virtue in all things of which we think. (See Phil. 4:6) Wherever we find virtue, wherever we find praise: we find the peace of God which is of the God of peace. When our minds are so disciplined to think upon these things, our minds do not have time nor space to think upon anything else. I cannot so discipline my mind, but I KNOW WHO CAN!

When our minds are disciplined by God we are continually separating the precious from the vile. When our minds are disciplined by carnality we are prone to consider the vile

things as precious, and the precious as vile. The Holy Scriptures are able to make the child of God wise as to whether we are being disciplined by the old man or the new man in our dealings with our fellowman. Our wills change according to the spirit that prevails. We are in possession of a good will when the Holy Spirit is reigning. When lust reigns our will is evil. We find a warfare even in our minds. Do we find peace in our minds? Are our minds so quiet, calm, and undisturbed? My mind is not, because I find the flesh lusting against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh. I find a warfare within my own mind. There is a mixture of good and evil thoughts that require the judgment of my heart, or will. I am constantly making decisions by approving and disapproving. My will is forever judging the thoughts of my mind. If the judgment of the will were always the same, I would find peace in my mind. I find my judgments so unstable that I cry out as the Apostle Paul: *"For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin."* (Romans 7:14) This state of mind is relieved only while in diligent prayer to God to discipline me. I am made to plead for His grace and mercy. I cannot understand myself. How can I expect to understand others? When I realize my carnality, I hate it. I love it when I am unaware of its presence and damaging effects. There is such a clash of wills that I am unable to do the things I

would. When there is such need of forgiveness even for our own thoughts, it is so easy to forgive others. While we condemn ourselves, it is easy to forbear others. While we question our own understanding, we do not condemn the understanding of others. Where can we find peace? We find it in the grace and power of Jesus *for us, in us, and to us.*

Where is Peace? Peace is whenever Jesus appears to us. Peace is wherever Jesus reigns. Peace is the appetizing flavor of the fruit of the Spirit. We read the last part of a sermon by Zacharias: *"To give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet in the way of peace."* (Luke 1:79) This was spoken by John's father of Jesus. Peter said, *"For he that will love life, and see good days, let him refrain his tongue from evil, and his lips that they speak no guile: Let him eschew evil, and do good; let him seek peace, and ensue it."* (I Peter 3:10-11) I have found in my search for peace that I can only find it in the Church. Jesus is Governor of His church. He is the Head, the church is His body. It is no wonder that David was glad when they said unto him, *"Let us go into the house of the Lord."* It is no marvel that he realized the necessity of his feet standing within the gates of Jerusalem which was builded as a city compact together. It was where the tribes of the Lord went up unto

the testimony of Israel to give thanks unto the name of the Lord. Peace be to that City of Peace. *"Peace be within thy walls, and prosperity be within thy palaces."* The City of Jerusalem, The House of the Lord our God, the house of prayer: yea, the Church of our Lord is where peace is found, enjoyed, and greatly appreciated. (Read the 123rd Psalm.) Peace is in the church and God is the author of it. It pleased God to set Zion upon a hill as the perfection of beauty. He would shine through the Church. Jesus lighteth every man that cometh into the church. Jesus bids them: *"Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven."* (Matt. 5:16)

Peace is the first word that Jesus commanded the seventy to say as they entered each house: *"Peace be to this house."* (Matt. 10:15) Paul prefaced every letter he wrote to both individuals and churches by imploring grace and peace upon them. (Of course there is no peace unless there is grace.) The first on the agenda of every conference of the Church is to inquire relative to the peace of the church. Among the first words of Christ's sermon on the mountain were, *"Blessed are the peacemakers for they shall be called the children of God."*

Unity plus concord is peace. Jesus said, *"Again I say unto you, That if two of you shall agree*

on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven." *"For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them."* (Matt. 18:19-20) The two together equals unity: to agree upon anything equals concord: thus, there is peace. The agreement is to be upon anything. I am pleased that the two do not have to agree on everything. Where two or three are gathered together, shows unity. When it is *in His name*, proves concord. Both unity and concord mean peace. This discourse of Jesus was in answer to the question: Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven? Jesus Christ is teaching His disciples a very important lesson in this treatise: Forgiveness of offences. He teaches us the value of humility and the evil of pride. Pride is the great stumbling block and cause of contention among brethren. *"ONLY by pride cometh contention: but with the well advised is wisdom."* (Prov. 13:10) Christ advises Peter in answer to his question relative to the number of times to forgive a brother of his sins against him: *"...I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven."* (Matt. 18:22)

I have sinned against the Lord more than seventy times seven. I trust for Christ's sake, He has forgiven me. Should I not forgive a brother that trespasses against me

many, many, many times? If I be "Well-advised" I will continue to forgive him. I am not to forgive him for his trespasses against the *Lord*, for this is the Lord's business. He chastises, corrects, and takes vengeance upon whom He will in His way. It pleases the Lord to use the wicked as His sword, to render judgment even to His own. (See Habakuk 1:6, 12; Prov. 16:4; Psalms 17:13.) I have more tolerance for those who depend upon themselves to merit salvation, than I have for those who take upon themselves the responsibility to chastise, punish, or take vengeance against any whom they think offend the Lord. If we could be so well advised to know that He will take vengeance, chastise, correct; or have mercy upon His own offenders. Yes, He goes further than that: He takes vengeance in behalf of His people upon their persecutors. God has so ordained, and that right well, that He is the God of battles. He does our fighting for us. It would be foolish, and out of my jurisdiction, to say, I forgive this one of his offence to God. I am wise, I trust in my right mind, to forgive, have mercy upon, and forbear those who wrong *ME*.

I may differ with you on some theological point of doctrine, but if we have the same *faith*, we are agreed on the vital thing. Sometimes in pridish discussions we charge consequences. We say, if you believe *this*, you believe *that*. The other party answers, I believe *this*, but I do not believe *that*. If I want to prove to

him that I am wiser than he, I further contend until it becomes contentious : If you believe *this* you are bound to believe *that*. We wrangle. I try to force the issue. I fail to get him to admit to my reasoning. My pride is so hurt that I tell him, You do not know what you believe. What have I done? I have charged consequences which is a violation of honorable controversy among men! I have offended him and ought to beg his forgiveness.

When I was a boy I got the idea that it was my job to discipline my younger brothers and sister in the absence of my father and mother. I was threatening to whip one of them one day when my father appeared on the scene. I well remember the scolding and lecture my father gave me. He made me to know that that was *his* business. I did not forget it. Sometimes we act as little children not only by trying to attend to the Lord's business, but also to delve into the secrets of God. We argue by using our vain imaginations about all that God did before the foundation of the world; why He did it; and how He did it. When we go beyond Scriptural revelation, we are trying to pry out the secrets of God. Since the Scriptures contain that which it pleased God to reveal to us and our children, Why should we quarrel over these things that are not simply expressed in the written word? "*Secret things belong unto the Lord our God: but those things which are revealed belong unto*

us and to our children forever, that we may do all the words of the law.” (Deut. 29:29) This should be sufficient for us to understand that there are no words of the law of the Lord to be considered unnecessary. The one who consoles himself with the idea: *“I shall have peace though I walk in the imagination of mine heart,”* puts himself liable to God’s great curse: *“...And the Lord shall blot out his name from under heaven.” (Deut. 29:19-20)* *“Yes, it is under heaven that some have their part taken away out of the book of life, and out of the holy city.” (Rev. 22:19)* This holy city must be the church on earth which is *under* heaven. The part that is taken out of the book of life must be that part which is to be experienced here. I do not want to be separated from the church here on earth. I want to live in peace with my brethren. I want to enjoy the happiness of salvation here. I want to be united with brethren of same faith here, and to strive for concord. I want to rely upon the precious promise quoted by Paul: *“Finally, brethren, farewell, Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you.” (2 Cor. 13:11)*

Elder E. J. Lambert

“For these things were done, that the scripture should be fulfilled, A bone of him shall not be broken.” (John 19:36)

How greatly favored we are that God has seen fit to preserve His word down through the ages, that His dear children might see clearly that not a word was spoken by him in vain. We are told by inspiration, *“Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away.” (Matthew 24:35)*

In looking through the scriptures to find the words, *“A bone of him shall not be broken,”* we turned to Exodus 12, where Israel was brought to the time when they were to depart from Egypt, when they were to take a lamb without blemish, a male of the first year, to eat for the passover; and Exodus 12:46 says, *“In one house shall it be eaten; thou shalt not carry forth ought of the flesh abroad out of the house; neither shall ye break a bone thereof.”* Again in Numbers 9:12, *“They shall leave none of it unto the morning, nor break any bone of it.”* And in the lovely *Psalms 34:20*, *“He keepeth all his bones; not one of them is broken.”* Paul tells us in *2 Corinthians 13:1*, *“In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established.”*

Amongst the various types we see in the Old Testament, Joseph seems one of the most beautiful.

Loved of his father, hated by his brethren, and sold into Egypt when he was seventeen years old for twenty pieces of silver. Our Lord was sold a full grown man for thirty pieces of silver. The wonderful ways of God in Joseph's life were seen in his control of all things. His father had made Joseph a coat of many colours; his brothers slew a kid of the goats and dipped the coat in blood. Jacob saw the coat and thought an evil beast had devoured him. The coat, a type of the coat that Jesus wore, was not torn; and we read in John 19:24, the soldiers said amongst themselves, "*Let us not rend it, but cast lots for it, to see whose it shall be:*" that the scripture might be fulfilled which saith, "*They parted my raiment among them and for my vesture they did cast lots.*" Oh how can ignorant men read the scriptures and yet deny him who by his appearing as our Saviour Jesus Christ, by his own self, "*Hath abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel?*"

Christ was to be born in Bethlehem, yet Mary and Joseph were in Nazareth over sixty miles away from that city; and to fetch them down there, a wicked emperor, Augustus, commanded the world to be taxed. And Joseph had to take Mary, his espoused wife, great with child, over hills and valleys to the place where Christ should be born. Angels heralded his coming, - man

lodged him with the beasts. We mention these truths to show that God's word had to come to pass, for Jesus is the Word made flesh, and every word that was spoken by the mouth of his prophets concerning him since the world began, must come to pass as surely as He said, "*Let there be light: and there was light.*" "*And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us {and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,} full of grace and truth.*" (John 1:14)

When Israel kept the first Passover, the blood of the lamb had to be taken and put upon the two side posts and on the upper door post of the houses wherein they should eat it. Leaven, a type of sin, was not to be allowed in their houses. Unleavened bread was to be used, which was a type of the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth. As we read in Exodus, it is wonderful that Moses took Joseph's bones and carried them with them. The loveliness of Joseph seemed never to have been marred by blacksliding as we see in other favored ones in God's word. He stands out as a beautiful type of Jesus our Lord: his bones, which set forth the strength of his body, were not broken. His coat of many colours that his *father* made him, sets forth the varied scenes through which Jesus passed as he travelled the path laid out for him by his Heavenly Father.

We have said that man lodged

Him with the beasts, but wise men, led by a heavenly light, came to Jerusalem, saying, *"Where is he that is born King of the Jews? for we have seen his star in the east, and are come to worship him."* Herod and all Jerusalem were troubled; and Herod gathered the chief priests and scribes and demanded of them where Christ should be born. They told him part of what Micah the prophet said, but like so many today, they did not tell it all. They said, *"And thou Bethlehem, in the land of Judah, art not the least among the princes of Judah: for out of thee shall come a Governor, that shall rule my people Israel,"* but they left out, *"Whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting."* They are the ones who would break his bones; they are the same kind that cried *"crucify him."*

That brings me to my subject, *"A bone of him shall not be broken."* The bones are the strength of the body which enables one to bear burdens; to run and not be weary, and to walk and not faint. Our Lord Jesus Christ, *"Is the head of the body, the church: who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead; that in all things he might have the preeminence."* Our Lord, being the Word of God, sustained his body under every load. We are told in *1 Peter 2:24*, *"Who his own self bare our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead in sins, should live unto*

righteousness: by whose stripes ye are healed."

To the church of the Living God, the Word is food: it is also that which gives strength to the body, it is that which, like the bones, enables one to walk in the heavenly way. All our help must come from Him, and without Him we can do nothing. The word of God, like the bones of the body, cannot be added to or anything taken from it. Could such a thing be, the body could not function correctly. Our Lord Jesus as a man was perfect. In Psalm 37:37, David saith, *"Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright; for the end of that man is peace."* The end implies that for which he came into the world to do. He came to seek and to save all that the Father gave him before the world began; yet we are told in Hebrews 2:10 that, *"It became him, for whom are all things, and by whom are all things, in bringing many sons unto glory, to make the captain of their salvation perfect through sufferings."*

Man by nature *"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 Word of God created all things, and when the Word was made flesh, He, by his almighty strength, overcame everything that stood against those he loved; and when the Holy Spirit, by his Word, quickens a subject of grace, that

Word is effectual in convincing him of sin; and it also enables him in approaching God by cries and prayers, to come in the right and only way. We are told that *“Faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the word of God.”* (Romans 10:17) Faith in Christ are the bones that cannot be broken, and it is by faith that the church of God has in all ages walked in him. Hebrews 11 describes how his people overcame; and in chapter 12:1, 2, those gone before are spoken of as a great cloud of witnesses; and we are told to *“lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us... looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith.”*

Let us not think for a moment that when the Lord speaks to a poor sinner it will puff such an one up, so that he will think himself somebody. Look at Gideon who threshed wheat by the winepress to hide it from the Midianites. (Judges 6:11) *“The angel of the Lord appeared unto him, and said unto him, The Lord is with thee, thou mighty man of valour. And Gideon said unto him, Oh my Lord, if the Lord be with us, why then is all this befallen us? and where be all his miracles which our fathers told us of, saying, Did not the Lord bring us from Egypt? but now the Lord hath forsaken us, and delivered us into the hands of the Midianites. And the Lord looked upon him and said, Go in this thy might, and thou*

shalt save Israel from the hand of the Midianites: have not I sent thee?”

The account of dear Gideon and the Lord’s dealings with him have been, and still will be, an encouragement and help to God’s humble poor and afflicted people in this day. The Word was made flesh, and the Word is still made flesh in those who belong to the body of Christ; and they learn that God’s strength is made perfect in their weakness, and that it is out of weakness they are made strong. They who walk the heavenly road will need the word of His grace every step of the way. Gideon learned a lesson every step that he took, that all the glory should be unto his sovereign God.

While Israel journeyed in the wilderness carrying Joseph’s bones, how often their thoughts would go over the past: fed with bread from heaven and water from the rock, in a pillar of a cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night. Surely they would think of God’s constant protection and care; they had also the wonderful deliverance at the Red Sea, and saw Pharaoh and his army overwhelmed while they were spared. The path that we travel today is not of our own making, nor can we, if we are His, walk in our own strength. Let us remember, *“My help cometh from the Lord, which made heaven and earth.”*

Elder George Ruston

FELLOWSHIP

Elder H. H. Lefferts

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

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

This matter of fellowship does not come and go according to our will; it is a fruit of the Holy Spirit, and not to be controlled by the human

will. When one has ever had real fellowship for another it cannot be forfeited.

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

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

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

If spiritual things transcend the natural (and we all believe they do), then how patiently and prayerfully should the fellowship of the church go out after that one who, pursuing wrong, seems blinded to his course. The fellowship of the brethren will

long and gently labor with that one to endeavor to show him his wrong; they will pray the Lord to grant him repentance, that thus he may be saved to the church, and not be cast off from it.

Exclusion is an ugly word. The church should not have much use for it. It is never to be employed except as a very last resort to keep the house clean after all efforts at reclamation have availed nothing. The whole purpose of Christ and his gospel is to save, not to destroy.

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

The gospel which Jesus sent his apostles to preach is filled with love and mercy and patience, and long-suffering to poor, erring creatures. By no means did the disciples have the patience with men which Jesus himself had. The disciples rebuked mothers for bringing children to Jesus that he might lay his hands on them. But Jesus quickly showed them their shortness of sight when

he said to them, "*Of such is the kingdom of heaven.*" Again when the disciples came across a man who was healing in Christ's name they asked Jesus to command the man to stop it. Jesus, however, told them to let the man alone, that he who is not against us is for us.

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

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

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

By all we have said we do not

mean to imply that the church should be slack in keeping its house clean, that it should cease to administer the discipline of the church to its members as laid down by inspiration. Of course all this must be done, but very many times churches are too quick to condemn a brother for a fault, without due examination into the matter; too quick to exclude without first laboring with the sinner and seeking to reclaim him or to save him to the church.

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

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

lowship.

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

The more we reflect upon what fellowship means the more should we exercise great care and long suffering in dealing with transgressions against the order of the church. Too much patience there cannot possibly be, but too much haste there certainly often is.

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

Part of a church might not see any given matter in its right light, but the whole church, if left to act with

perfect freedom, and without any coercion whatever, will seldom decide any matter wrongly. The Catholics have unbounded confidence in the infallibility of the Pope. We have no confidence in any man, but we do have confidence in the infallibility of the whole church, for the mind of the whole church is Christ himself. He never errs.

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

HERNDON, VA., Nov. 14, 1907.

DEAR EDITORS:- Enclosed find check for two dollars in payment of my subscription to the SIGNS another year. I would hardly know how to get along in this unfriendly world without the coming of the dear old SIGNS to my home. It seems to me that it gets better and better, while I seem to get worse and worse, yet I seem to cling to the doctrine of free grace, that grace which bringeth salvation to poor, lost sinners. I sometimes feel like writing for publication, and feel if I could write like many of the writers of your paper I would often be found writing to the saints of God; but O my leanness. Dear brethren, I can say this, that I cannot write a letter unless I can see Jesus and have an eye single to the glory of God; ex-

cept I can see him by faith when I write, it will be nothing but "*a mess of trash.*" I have no light of my own; I am in nature's darkness without him to direct and guide me by the way. I pass through many dark seasons of sadness and affliction a journey by the way, still when looking back over my past life, and remembering the hand of the Lord through it all, I am sometimes made to say, in the language of David, "*What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits toward me I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord.*" I am not sure that I know just what "the cup" denotes, but it seems to me that it is suffering, for Jesus said, "*O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me ! nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt.*" It was at the time of great suffering when our Savior uttered those words, but he was made willing to take the cup for the sake of his bride, the Lamb's wife, the church, chosen in him before the foundation of the world. It seems to me, too, that David was personating; Christ in the expression, "*I will take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord.*" I may be wrong in this, but set me right if I am. Dear editors, I did not expect to get into such deep water as this when I commenced to write; you could, no doubt, help me out by telling what the cup denotes, recorded in Psalms cxvi. 12, 13. I know that the Bible says we must suffer with Jesus that we

might also reign with him. But the cup that Jesus spoke of meant to be crucified, going into death. Paul meant suffering when he 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."* O to say, *"Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him."* It is when viewing him by faith that we can enter in and be willing to suffer with him in partaking of that bitter cup which brings us to death and makes us say, *"Not as I will, but as thou wilt;"* but he comes down to our weakness, and it is for our good that he cried out, *"O my Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me;"* and again, *"My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me"*, Thus we see that the cup Jesus took brought salvation to all the elect of God, and in that sense we can call it *"the cup of salvation."* In David's suffering it refers to Christ's suffering; Jesus was made willing to take the cup, and David also was made willing to *"take the cup of salvation, and call upon the name of the Lord."* It seems to me that David meant by taking the cup that he was made willing to enter into great suffering again for the Lord's sake, for he said, The Lord is good, and his mercy endureth forever.

But I must close, I did not intend to write in this way when I began. I

am ignorant and unlearned in spiritual things, and trust you will measure me just as I am, for I am very small. Please cast the mantle of charity over all that I have said out of place.

Your brother, I hope,
J. F. OLIVER.

"For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory."- 2 CORINTHIANS iv. 17.

O Ye suffering saints of God! ye tried and afflicted children of the most High; raise up your thoughts as God may enable you - lift up your eyes, and see what awaits you. Are you tried, tempted, exercised, afflicted? It is your mercy. God does not deal so with everyone. It is because you are his children, that he lays on you his chastening hand. He means to conform you to the image of his Son in glory, and therefore he now conforms you to the image of his Son in suffering. O but, you say, I cannot believe it is so! No if you could, it would not be much of a trial. This is the trial of faith-to go groaning on, struggling on, sorrowing on, sighing on; believing against unbelief, hoping against hope; and still looking to the Lord, though there is everything in nature

to damp the hopes and expectations of your waiting souls. Yet all will end well with the people of God. Their life here is a life of temptation, of suffering and trial; but heaven will make amends for all. And if our faith is now tried as "*with fire,*" it will one day "*be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ.*" In that day when the secrets of all hearts will be brought to light, the faith of thousands will be found to be little else than presumption; but the faith of God's dear family will then be crowned with "*praise and honour and glory,*" and they shall see the Lamb as he is face to face, when all tears are wiped away from all faces.

Elder J.C. Philpot

JOHN 12:24-26.

Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.

He that loveth his life shall lose it; and he that hateth his life in this world shall keep it unto life eternal.

If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be: if any man serve me, him will my Father honour.

MEETINGS

**JULY 4TH MEETING
"TO BE HELD ON
MONDAY JULY 5TH"**

The annual July 4th meeting will be held, the Lord willing this Year at Old Center Church on Monday July 5th. Directions to Old Center Church in Henry County, Va are as follows. Those going west on rt. 57 A in Bassett, turn left at stop-light on Rt. 698 (Blackberry Rd.) Go about 3 miles to stop and take a right on Rt. 687. (Stone's Dairy Rd.). Go about one and a half miles to church On right. Those going east on Rt. 57 from Patrick Co. after crossing The Henry County line, go about one mile and take a right on Rt 687 (Stone's Dairy Rd) Go about 3 miles to church on left. The church is beside Howell's Garage.

The meeting time is Monday July 5th at 10:00 a.m. We invite our Brothers, Sisters and Elders to be with us.

Tony R. Horton

**IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?
IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 7/10
IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE**

STAUNTON RIVER ASSOCIATION

We invite our correspondents and friends to our one hundredth sixty-ninth sitting of the Staunton River Association.

The 2010 session will convene the Lord willing at Weatherford Church, the usual meeting place July 10th and 11th with Canaan Church as host. Services begin 9:30 AM on Saturday. The song service will start at 9:00 AM.

We hope the Lord will bless all to attend and we pray for a blessed meeting.

Burnell B. Williams
Association Clerk

**PIGG RIVER PRIMITIVE
BAPTIST MEETING**

Pigg River Primitive Baptist meeting will convene according to previous arrangements on Friday before the 1st Sunday in August 2010 and 2 days following and Republican Church is the host.

The meeting will be held on the grounds of Chestnut Church in Franklin County.

Those coming from North 220, turn left on 724 (Goose Dam Rd.) go 2 1/2 miles to the church.

We welcome and invite all ministers of our faith and order; our brethren and friends to be with us.

Elder Thomas Solomon, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR MAY 2010

Bernard Cox, VA	30.00
Maxey Delp, VA	5.00
Francine Fortner, TX	10.00
Angie Cox, NC	2.00
Rasalie Walker, VA	5.00
Albert Davidson, LA	25.00
Edna Graves, AL	5.00
Reidy Pickral, VA	25.00
J.C. Carroll, NC	100.00
Armedra Taylor, LA	10.00
Grace Manly, AL	5.00
Walter Griffith, NC	10.00
Julian Rutrough, VA	5.00
Mamie Ferguson, VA	5.00

MATTHEW 22:1-4.

And Jesus answered and spake unto them again by parables, and said,

The kingdom of heaven is like unto a certain king, which made a marriage for his son,

And sent forth his servants to call them that were bidden to the wedding: and they would not come.

Again, he sent for other servants, saying, Tell them which are bidden, Behold, I have prepared my dinner; my oxen and my fatlings are killed, and all things are ready: come unto the marriage.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 178

HILLSVILLE, VA., AUGUST 2010

NO. 8

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

POEM

ISSN - 0199 - 0063

Subscription price \$15.00 per year - \$25.00 two years

Published monthly by
SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

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1429 Howlett Street, Hillsville, Va. 24343

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

1429 Howlett Street
Hillsville, Va. 24343

*My God, in whom are all the
springs
Of boundless love, and grace un-
known,
Hide me beneath thy speading
wings
Till the dark cloud is overblown.*

*Up to the heavens I send my cry,
The Lord will my desire perform,
He sends his angel from the sky,
And saves me from the threaten-
ing storm.*

*My heart is fixed; my song shall
raise
Immortal honors to thy name;
Awake, my tongue, to sound his
praise,
My tongue, the glory of his fame.*

*High o'er the earth his mercy
reigns,
And reaches to the utmost sky;
His truth to endless years remains,
When lower worlds dissolve and
die.*

*Be thou exalted, O my God,
Above the heavens where angels
dwell;
Thy power on earth be known
abroad,
And land to land thy wonders tell.*

Watts.

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 EDITORIALS

“By the word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth. He gathereth the waters of the sea together as an heap: he layeth up the depth in storehouses. Let all the earth fear the Lord: let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him. For he spake, and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast. The Lord bringeth the counsel of the heathen to nought: he maketh the devices of the people of none effect. The counsel of the lord standeth for ever, the thoughts of his heart

to all generations. Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord; and the people whom he hath chosen for his own inheritance.”
Psalm 33: 6-12.

How small we are made to feel before God and in face of scriptures such as these that speak of the wisdom and power and the counsel of almighty God. What poor worms of the dust we are before Him in our own sight. But God has shown a heart of love for His people, and has manifested that they are exalted in His sight. How can it be that He considers them to be kings and royal priests unto Himself? How is it possible that He views them as the righteousness of God in Christ, considering their vile nature? Why would He condescend to show any of His things unto such unworthy creatures as we feel to be? It appears that the answer to each question is God's love to His people. He set His love upon the poor earthly vessels which He formed and created for Himself. He loves and pities them better than a loving natural father loves and pities his own children. *“For he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust.”* He knows your frame first hand. He took upon Himself a body of flesh that He should know by experience all your trials and sufferings. *“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. Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need." God sent His Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, but being God manifest in the flesh, He never sinned. He is a faithful high priest, who knows all about your troubles and who is willing and able to comfort and console you. Therefore, you are taught to come to Him when you need help. And then you shall be blessed to enter into His presence to find mercy when in need of forgiveness, and to find grace to sustain you in all your trials and tribulations, and to find proper answers for the questions that concern you. *"If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally and upbraideth not, and it shall be given him."*

It appears that the whole world, for a great long while, has been pondering and debating the question, *"How were the galaxies of the universe and the sun with all its planets, including the earth with its lively inhabitants, brought into existence?"* The people's answers show that they have been divided into two groups. One group says that the things that appear came into existence in a mysterious natural way by themselves. They cannot explain the mystery other than to say they do not believe in a Creator, therefore they think all things were not created. The other

group says that it is a mystery to them also, but they cannot understand the beauty, precision and grandeur of the heavens and the earth apart from a Creator. The first group manifests that they have not the gift of faith. Their world is without God and without hope. The second group manifests that it has at least been given a head knowledge that everything was created. But how many who say they believe things were created are actually given to believe in God and to lovingly trust Him with the true heart of faith? And how many can only believe with the intellect without loving or trusting God, having not the gift of faith? *"Through faith we understand that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that the things which are seen were not made of the things which do appear."* On the other hand, *"The devils believe and tremble."*

There are multitudes of people that say they believe God made the world. But God said His people were the fewest of all people. His people are the remnant according to the election of grace. What then about the many that say they believe? Do they really have faith or do they just say they believe without producing any evidence of that belief? The apostle James said, by the Holy Spirit, *"Faith without works is dead."* Lively faith in God results in lively good works, or the good fruit of the Spirit, which God has wrought

in His people. Dead false faith is accompanied by dead works of the flesh, or the evil fruit of the devil. Jesus said, *“Every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. And He said, “Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them.”* And he also said, *“If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: and whosoever will lose his life for my sake shall find it.”* We are not judges of others, but we must judge ourselves that we be not judged. We are made to examine ourselves, whether we are in the faith. We are commanded to make our own calling and election sure. By grace we must take a real look at ourselves to see what kind of fruit we are bearing. If you are like me, you very readily see the good fruit of the Spirit in those you love in the household of faith. But you are made many times to wonder if you are a hypocrite and have been altogether deceived in the whole matter. If you are anything like me, you are made to confess that you love the brethren, and have a great desire to please God, but seem to always fall far short of your desire to do good. What wretched creatures we are in the bodies of this death. How totally dependent we are upon God for any righteousness, for we have none of our own.

God, by way of His holy scriptures, specified how He made His

great creation. He said through the Psalmist, *“By the word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth.”* It then seems no strange thing for the apostle John to agreeably say by inspiration, *“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.”* How easy it is for one to believe this who has been given faith. And how impossible it is for one to believe it without the gift of faith. When you are made to consider the works of God in nature - their beauty and complexity, and the way all things of nature interact perfectly - how easy it is to believe that only God in His wisdom, perfection and power could have done such an amazing work. And even more - God gave His creatures breath to live and move and to come forth after their own kind continuously since they were created upon the earth. He has done all this, and it all seems so plain to one who has been given a heart to understand. But none can perceive or acknowledge any of it in truth without faith. Even though the multitudes say they believe that God made all things, most begin to deny Him when His doctrine is proclaimed. When it is manifest from the scriptures in truth that God made from one lump, vessels of honor and vessels of dis-

honor, and that the vessels of honor were prepared for glory and the vessels of dishonor were vessels of wrath fitted to destruction, they strongly deny that God made all things. Therefore, many who say they believe in God judge themselves showing that they really do not believe in Him since they do not honor and keep His commandments and his doctrine, which are parts of that which God has made. If one is truly blessed to love God and to trust and believe in Him, that one will stand in awe of Him and will fear before Him and by grace will obey His word. Jesus said, *"If you love me, keep my commandments."*

Even though the inhabitants of the earth at large do not truly acknowledge God as the Creator of all things and do not fear Him at this time, a day is coming when the Son of God shall appear, and then all shall fear before Him and all stand in awe of Him. The beloved apostle was blessed to say concerning Jesus, the Word of God, *"Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth: and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."* At the coming of Jesus Christ in the clouds in that day, all the inhabitants of the earth shall acknowledge that He is

Lord. The wicked shall be terrified at His presence and shall desire the rocks and mountains to fall upon them to hide them from the wrath of the Lamb. But those that have been made to love and trust Him shall stand before Him in great exultation and joy as God brings all things into submission to Himself, and destroys the wicked with the brightness of His coming. The wicked, who hate God, His word and His people shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power, according to the scriptures.

God has spoken the worlds into existence, and all things in them, and so they exist. He has declared the end from the beginning concerning all things - even concerning the righteous and the wicked. And the world began and will end just as He spoke it. He has commanded His people to obey Him, and the commandment stands fast. It shall surely stand for God has given them grace for obedience. And it is God who performs all His will in and for them. The wicked, with all their worldly wisdom and all their cunning deceptions, shall be brought to nothing. All their proud speeches, all their worldly wealth and respect of persons, all their wrath and hatred for God and His people and His word shall be consumed in an instant. *"The Lord bringeth the counsel of the heathen to nought: he maketh the devices of the people of none effect."* And what the Lord

has said and done shall stand forever. No man can add anything to it or take away anything from it. God is the Lord. *"The counsel of the lord standeth for ever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations."* What a blessed gift God has given to His people to make known to them the thoughts of His heart. The world cannot receive it, but God has spoken and His word is true. He said, *"Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated."* It seems plain that Jacob stands for the family of God and Esau stands for the wicked. God shall surely preserve the vessels He loved and made up for honor and glory. And He shall surely destroy the vessels He hated and made for the very purpose of destruction. This is a hard saying. Who can hear it? Only those blessed of God have been given ears to hear and a heart to understand. *"Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord; and the people whom he hath chosen for his own inheritance."* Surely the blessed nation is that people whom God loved with an everlasting love, and the one He chose in Christ before the foundation of the world. All the poor and needy, who are cast down but not destroyed, and who look to Him for all their needs shall not be disappointed. He shall come and save you world without end. That blessedness from God is with you and shall remain with you forever - now and in all eternity, for that is your inheritance. *"For he spake,*

and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast."

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

Elder Jerry B. Farmer
4-16-2007

CORRESPONDENCE

June 7, 2010

Please renew my subscription to the "Signs of the Times" for two years. Enclosed is a check for more than enough. Use it as you see fit. It has been such a blessing to receive my copies for many years now. Sorry I am late renewing.

My prayer is one of thanksgiving, because the Lord continues to bless each of his Elect each day that we are here in this low ground, and I have a hope that I am one of the Elect.

Several years ago I became interested in the question of who, or what, was Melchisedec. I came to the conclusion that he was God the Father. There are two reasons for my conclusion. One of his names is King of Salem, meaning King of Peace. In Isaiah, we read that one of Christ's names is Prince of Peace. So now we see who is the King and who is the Prince. Also, Christ was made a priest forever, after the order of Melchisedec.

I submit that Christ would never be "after the order of" anything or anyone other than his Father. Just something to think about.

Humbly submitted,
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VOICES OF THE PAST

"LIKE A GRAIN OF MUSTARD SEED"

"The kingdom of heaven is like to a grain of mustard seed, which a man took, and sowed in his field; Which indeed is the least of all seeds: but when it is grown, it is the greatest among herbs, and becometh a tree, so that the birds of the air come and lodge in the branches thereof." (Matthew 13:31-32)

Jesus spake many things in parables to great multitudes who came to Him on that day as He sat by the seaside. The multitudes gathered were so great in number that He went into a ship to speak. Matthew records the parable of the sower. Jesus closed with the words, "Who hath ears to hear, let him hear." Jesus did not explain the parables to the multitudes. The dis-

ciples did not understand the heavenly meaning of these earthly things related by Jesus until He explained them. These sayings were shrouded in mystery. He explained them to those to whom, *"It is given you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given."* (V. 11) If you have been given to know the mysteries of the kingdom, you yearn for explanation. If you have wisdom, you shall become wiser. If you have spiritual life, you shall have it more abundantly: *"For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath."* (Mat. 13:12)

This could be called the time of the height of the popularity of Jesus' "Favor with man." I am convinced that all other men would have used such occasion to glorify themselves by enticing as many as they could to join them. It is natural with men to think that in numbers there is more power. All who follow this inclination will boast of the numbers they have persuaded to adhere to their pleadings. Power of God must be displayed, not the power of men. God's mighty work must be displayed in such manner that no group of men could take the glory. God's crowning work of His kingdom must be done secretly being hidden from men.

What contrast between the sight of the throngs of people on the sea-

side, and a *grain of mustard seed*. Should Jesus have told them that these great multitudes of people which you have just seen is very small compared to the number which now is the kingdom of heaven, it would have sounded more reasonable. What He did tell them in comparing the kingdom to the smallest of seeds must have been different than they expected.

Mark quotes Jesus: *"And he said, Whereunto shall we liken the kingdom of God? or with what comparison shall we compare it? It is like a grain of mustard seed, which, when it is sown in the earth, is less than all the seeds that be in the earth: But when it is sown, it groweth up, and becometh greater than all herbs, and shooteth out great branches; so that the fowls of the air may lodge under the shadow of it."* (Mark 4:30-32) It is remarkable that just one grain of mustard seed was sown. One commentator describes the mustard tree berries as much smaller than a grain of black pepper, having strong aromatic smell, and a taste much like that of a garden cresses. If one berry is much smaller than a grain of black pepper, how small would one grain of that berry be? It is so insignificant in size. God sowed the kingdoms of the earth, and one grain of the smallest seed sown is *His kingdom*. The Son of man sows children in His kingdom. (See Matthew 13:37-38) The kingdoms of the earth grow rap-

idly and dwindle away but God's own kingdom grows slowly and shall ever increase. We read in *Daniel 2:44* *"And in the days of these kings shall the God of heaven set up a kingdom, which shall never be destroyed: and the kingdom shall not be left to other people, but it shall break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms, and it shall stand forever."* We hear much of the decline of the Church. We cannot believe it in the face of so much scriptural proof otherwise. There shall be no end to the *increase* of Christ's government and peace in His kingdom because it shall not be left to other men. The *zeal* of the Lord of hosts shall perform this. Read Isaiah 9:6-7. Our zeal to help the Lord in this matter would result to a zeal of ignorance. Our unbelief in the Lord's perfect and complete performance in His secret way, sometimes inspires us to act foolishly by trying to speed up God's will. Abram tried to hurry God's promise which resulted in the birth of Ishmael. God's secret and extraordinary procedure resulted in the birth of Isaac at the set time of God.

A grain of the seed of the Holy Ghost through due process brought into being a little baby. Eternal life was in this seed. All of God's chosen people were wrapped securely in this seed. This seed became the only begotten Son of God which was born in Bethlehem. God blended Himself for the first time with any of

His creation when Mary was conceived with the Holy Ghost. All of His creation can call him *God*, yet none of His creation can call him, *Father*, but through Christ Jesus, the Son of God and the Son of man. Mary was highly blessed among women to give birth to this Son. Eternal Life was in the seed. It grew after it was planted. Mary's flesh did not produce any of this eternal life. She did not design the characteristics of this Son. God curiously and wonderfully wrought this work, as in all other births, that Jesus should come forth as a little babe. It was determined of God that men should see this baby wrapped in swaddling clothes lying in a manger. This was *the sign*. It is yet *the sign* "*Unto us a child is born.*" (See Isaiah 9:6)

There is no proof that Jesus experienced any extraordinary growth from His conception to His crucifixion in the *natural* sense. There was no difference in His natural appearance from ordinary men, because Judas had to point Him out by kissing in order to show which one of the group was He. If Jesus had begun His extraordinary ministry while yet a babe in nature, surely the Scriptures would have pointed it out. We have no record of his talking while a baby. We have no authentic record of His supernatural power being displayed in childhood. (We do have some very interesting stories under the title, *Infancy I* and *Infancy II*, recorded in the apocryphal books of the New Testament. These seem to

be imaginative.) It was normal for him to grow in stature as other men. Luke records: "*And Jesus increased in wisdom and stature, and in favour with God and man.*" Was Jesus as wise when He was born as He was when He was crucified? Mark says He *increased* in these four things noted. There must be a gradual growth in Jesus to typify this Kingdom. It was normal that He should begin His remarkable career after becoming thirty years of age. The record does give us one incident when He was twelve years old proving His divine wisdom and knowledge of the fact that He was then launching upon the divine career: "*...Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?*"

Eighteen years passed from the time that He astonished the doctors with His wise questions and answers before His baptism and public ministry. Why? He was under the law. Eighteen years intervened that must have been well used in fulfillment of the law. He must serve His time under the dominion of the law. When this service was fulfilled, Jesus was ready for baptism. This act of baptism was at the proper moment. This baptism meant something to Jesus. His status was changed. This was the crowning act of the fulfillment of righteousness: "*And Jesus answering said unto Him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness. Then He suffered Him.*" There had been silence from

Heaven concerning Him for thirty years. This silence was broken upon completion of Jesus' baptism. This Voice said, *"This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."* (See Matt. 3:16-17) Some may think that Jesus began immediately to preach but He must first be led into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. This temptation must not come immediately but after forty days and forty nights of fasting. After the temptations: *"Jesus began to preach, and to say; Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."* (Matt. 4:17) He then began choosing His apostles. His command to the two fishermen were: *"Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men."* Jesus had served God through these thirty years for His people. Now, He could be of great service to His people. Jesus chose only twelve apostles to whom was given extraordinary powers. He sent them forth preparing a people for the kingdom. Jesus later sent forth the seventy assuring them that: *"The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few: pray ye therefore the Lord of the harvest, that He would send forth the labourers into his harvest."* (Luke 10:2) Surely there were those whose growth in the faith were ripe for the labourers. These seventy were not to prepare the people but to preach Peace to a prepared people. These seventy were not to gather in the young and unregenerated but to preach the Gospel to

those whom the Lord had made ready to receive it.

Peter was the first to be chosen as an Apostle of Jesus during the natural life of Jesus. Peter was the first to be chosen to feed His sheep and lambs after the resurrection of Jesus during His sojourn before His ascension. Peter was the spokesman for the brethren during the time of their *"Wait for the promise of the Father which ye have heard of me."* Peter spoke to about one hundred twenty disciples relative to one who should take the bishopric of Judas. Peter spoke to the thousands gathered at Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost after such wonderful demonstration of the fulfillment of the Father's promise. Yes, Peter was the first to preach to the Gentiles in the house of Cornelius and to witness the pouring out of the Holy Ghost upon them.

The church at Jerusalem must have been composed of about one hundred and twenty names because that was the record given of those congregated when Peter spoke to them relative to choosing a replacement for Judas. About three thousand souls were added to the church at Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost. This was the gathering of the harvest of the ripe ones into the fold. During this period the Gentiles began to be received.

Paul of Tarsus, which was over three hundred miles from Jerusalem, was Christ's chosen one to bear the Gospel to the Gentiles especially. We

find the first church of note composed chiefly of Gentile converts to be Antioch Church. Paul was a member of this church. The Holy Ghost separated Paul and Barnabas to the work of the ministry which was sanctioned by proper ordination. God knew how to control things so that Paul and Barnabas would *"turn to the Gentiles."* (Read Acts 13.) Differences in customs and traditions between the Jews and the Gentiles caused a rift between Jerusalem and Antioch Church. They did not isolate themselves from one another because of these differences but met together and agreed on a negotiated peace. Read 15th chapter of Acts. The same Holy Ghost, the same Father, and the same Jesus Christ were believed upon by both Jew and Gentile in both Antioch and Jerusalem congregations, or churches. Even though disputations and dissension abounded there was hope for negotiated peace for they desired fellowship, unity, and understanding. This is true of all children of God who have experienced necessary growth of the faith that was planted in their hearts; - though it was, *"As a grain of mustard seed,"* when first planted.

We wonder why local churches increase in growth, decrease, and finally fade away. God teaches us a lesson. The place of the church is only a candlestick, or candle holder. There is no light in the holder. A holder may contain several candles, but there is no light in the candle,

unless Jesus has lighted it. He lighteth every man that cometh into the world. The world spoken of, of course, is His kingdom. Jesus is the life and light of His kingdom. When Jesus appears the light shines. When He absents Himself, How gross is that darkness! Is the candle always lighted? I have seen candlesticks with many candles but no light. The candle cannot light itself. I have seen natural candle holders with many candles, yet just a few lighted. The owner can light them, snuff the light out, and relight them at his will. A church, or church member, is no different from any other organization, or man, unless Jesus, the Life and Light is present. The candlestick may be removed, but not destroyed.

Anytime, or anywhere, that members of a local church become proud of themselves, and feel that they are above other people, it is evident that Jesus is not in the midst. The proud Jews stumbled. They fell. Did their fall disprove the promise of God that His kingdom should grow? Did their stumbling and falling result in the kingdom becoming smaller? NO. God's purpose and will in this matter was to enlarge His kingdom, and to make the Jews aware of the fact that His manifest favor was turned to another people. Let us hear Paul on this question: *"I say then, Have they stumbled that they should fall? God forbid: but rather through their fall salvation is come to the Gen-*

tiles, for to provoke them to jealousy .” (Rom. 11:11)

Should we bother the soil in which the seed of Eternal Life is sown? Should we probe a person to see whether or not the faith, “*as a grain of mustard seed,*” is evident? that is, before it is made manifest. Should we hear that a certain seed is planted at a certain spot, we would not stir up that soil to see how the seed was progressing. We would let it alone and let nature take its course. We would not be forever probing the spot. The Spirit works secretly in the growth of the faith as a grain of mustard seed. It is secretly hidden in the soil of the person to be manifest in God’s appointed time and way. Its growth until the time of harvest depends upon God, Who worketh all things after the counsel of His own will. All things work together for good to them who love God, to them who are the called according to His purpose. Tribulation, distress, persecution, famine, nakedness, peril, sword, death, life, angels, principalities, powers, things past, things present, things to come, and all other creatures: - *all* are ordained for the good of His people, and for the increase of His kingdom.

This kingdom shall shoot out its branches into all parts of the world. Many saints shall come as heavenly birds being drawn by the sweet odor of prayers, humility, love, and unity. They shall lodge there, eating the manna from Heaven, under the shadow of the ordinances, minis-

ters, and blessings of the church. Saints shall sing praises together as birds chirp and sing. One church may be far distant from another church as the ends of branches are far apart. One group of saints in one church may not even be aware of saints in other churches, but all should be consoled with the fact that all of their feastings are from the same source. When a group is busy with feasting, fellowship one with another, and praising God together, saints do not have time to be concerned with saints in faraway places. Saints may go from church to church as birds flit from branch to branch, yet they are in the same tree and borne by the same roots. As all sap must come from the root, so the enlivening spirit flows to each and every branch from and through the root, Christ Jesus. Some branches may be cut off by the Husbandman. Some branches may be grafted into the tree. This is the work of God and we should realize that a good tree is known by the fruit it bears. A good tree brings forth good fruits. A good live tree may seem dead in the wintertime but when the sap rises in the spring there is manifestation of life. Some churches may seem dead for awhile when Christ turns His back but will enliven when Christ favors it.

Take courage, brethren, for the kingdom of heaven is increasing by the mighty power of God. Isaiah prophesied this growth as God spoke thru him: “*They shall not*

hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain: for the earth shall be full of the knowledge of the Lord, the waters cover the sea.” (Isaiah 11:9) It is no accident that the Bible is the best seller of any other book in the world. We venture to say that the Bible is in more homes now than it has ever been. It is written in more languages and dialects than any other book. There have been more books written about Jesus Christ by composers than any other person. Christianity has experienced a slow but sure growth. Commentators will tell you of the rapid growth of modern Communism. They compare its growth with Christianity. They would have you believe that there is danger of Communism swallowing all who embrace Christianity. Believe them not. Many Ideologies have sprung up and experienced rapid growth through the centuries, but have just as rapidly declined and died out.

Sometimes we become heart-sick because hope is deferred. We feel as the prophet of old: ***“Lord, they have killed thy prophets, and digged down thine altars; and I am left alone, and they seek my life.”*** God’s answer to him was: ***“I have reserved to myself seven thousand men, who have not bowed the knee to the image of Baal.”*** (See Rom. 11:3-4) Sometimes we become faint-hearted as Jeremiah: ***“The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are***

not saved.” (Jer. 8:20) Instead of doing us harm, this sickness of heart is used by God to cause us to pray to Him for mercy and deliverance. Was the harvest passed? No. We are gathered into folds here after becoming ripe for the churches. We trust that when we shall be perfectly conformed to the Image of Christ, we shall be gathered into Eternity to enjoy endless life with God and the complete family of God.

May God bless us to be content with our lot, and reconciled to His will.

Elder E. J. Lambert.

HAVILAND, Kansas.
SANTA CRUZ, Cal.,
Jan. 21, 1918.

DEAR EDITORS: -This is to you, to the churches at Los Angeles and Riverside, and to the brethren everywhere. In the first place, I will say that I know I cannot write that which will instruct you in the things of the kingdom, but have promised to let so many hear from me that I take this method of doing so. I just want to have a little conversation with you, and if we cannot sit around a real fireside, I hope that we may be warmed by His love, and feel that we are brethren indeed in spirit and in truth. The editors give us their labor of love so abundantly and so unselfishly that I desire to thank them for what their writings have

meant to me, and to encourage them to continue, believing that God has placed them upon the watchtower to tell us of the night, for the comfort and uplifting of his scattered children. I well realize that they have obstacles to overcome, that they have hardships to endure, that they have trials of which we know nothing, that the Spirit does not influence them at all times even as with us, yet they have to preach, and it is not an easy thing to do; but they remember that the sheep must be fed, that they have put their hands to the plow and must not look back, so they can only trust in God to give them a message. May they persevere in the things which they have learned and been assured of, knowing of whom they were taught. I believe all of us appreciate their faithfulness, but that does not compare with the *"Well done, thou good and faithful servant,"* which they will hear when they stand in the presence of their Lord and Savior. I pray every day that he may bless their efforts, that he may attend them throughout this year, and all the years to come, granting them all that is best and good. Recently my thoughts have been wandering more than ever to the dear ones at Bethlehem; it was there that I was led into the watery grave by Elder Badger, after traveling about three thousand miles, that I might have that privilege if they consented to receive me. I told so little, and with such a stammering tongue, that I wonder to this day

why they added me to their number. How beautiful everything looked that morning; how lovingly they greeted me. Surely I looked into angel faces; if not real ones, the disguise was perfect. I know their ministrations were tender and sweet, giving me a foretaste of the glory of heaven. May God minister to them as they did to me; may he comfort them as they comforted me, and may their faith always be as firm and their trust as unwavering as mine was on that occasion. Since that time, seventeen years ago, I have visited them but once, yet the remembrance of it repays me for being deprived of hearing preaching during the intervening years. God had prepared a feast for me, and I ate and drank of the bread and water of life until I was lifted above the things of time and sense; I saw new beauties in all his works and sayings, and I thanked him that he had thus directed my steps. For the time being he was my all in all, and I was satisfied. Until the foregoing specified occasions I had been living in a barren country for twenty-five years; had met only one person who believed as I do, and had not heard a sermon. Later, Elder Hess, of Oregon, came this way, stayed two nights and preached each evening, once at my home to an audience of two, and again at the house of the brother just mentioned. He was a brother, though not a member of the visible church. He passed to the beyond more than a year ago, and died triumphant. Brother Hess

was gladly welcomed at both places, and we thanked God for leading him to this far away country; also that there were as many as three in company, for the promise is that where two or three are gathered in his name that he will be in their midst, and we realized the fulfillment of it. Again, during the year of the exposition, I answered the doorbell, and a gentlemen asked, "Is this Mrs. Mary E. Wright?" Something told me that he was a brother in the Lord, and it proved to be so. I think he was from Ohio, and that his name was Hudson. He was on his way home, and said that he could not pass without stopping to see me. Though he only stayed a few hours, I rejoiced that he thought me worthy to enter my gates, and I praised the Giver of all good gifts that he had been mindful of me. In the meantime I have been the recipient of many letters which I greatly prize; I believe I answered all of them, but could not keep up the correspondence owing to my many duties. It may be that I could have laid aside some of them, but I knew my replies would have been so inferior that I hesitated. Some who scan these times may wonder why I have so specifically mentioned the coming of those brethren, and the letters. Well, if any one of you have been compelled to live in the wilderness for forty years without hearing a familiar voice, you will know something about it. Their visits were like springs of water in a dry land, and I drank to the depths; more like the

fragrance of sweet flowers, and it lingers with me yet. They talked of the things which had been taught me more than fifty years ago, and though it was the old, old story, it was so new to me, by reason of my isolation, that my heart was melted to tenderness and my eyes were suffused with tears. I realized how I had been watched over and cared for, when for months at a time I had been so indifferent and careless. I looked back over the path which I had traveled, and saw one as crooked as ever was made by a professed follower of the meek and lowly Jesus, but I remember that he can make crooked things straight, that his promises are yea and amen, and my mistakes were put behind me; I only saw his goodness and glory. Now I will take you to the churches in southern California. For several years I had read the notice of the meetings of Little Flock Church at Riverside, but it was nearly five hundred miles distant, and though my mind was continually on them, could not see the way clear to visit them. In July, 1916, my dear companion was taken from me, and the first of the following April I was on the way to visit a daughter in Los Angeles; I was getting nearer and nearer to the dear brethren, and it greatly lessened my grief. The thought of meeting with them, of hearing the certain sound once more, of the comfort of their fellowship, and of my need of their reproof and correction, gave me new life,

and I looked forward to the time with eagerness. I didn't know then that there was a Primitive Baptist Church in Los Angeles, but after arriving, there wrote to the church clerk of Little Flock and asked concerning a sister Dawson, whose name I had also seen in the SIGNS. He informed me that she was living near where I was stopping and the next day (Saturday) I went over to see her. To my surprise and delight found that there was a church (Liberty) within a few blocks of her home. The next morning I met with them. The outside of the house looked good to me as I approached, but when I was inside I was filled with love and praise, and I walked softly, for I felt that I was in a holy place. I wish I could tell you in an entertaining manner what a trusting, faithful, humble, well-grounded people I found there. Some of them remembered my letters in the SIGNS, which gave me recognition, and they opened their hearts and their doors to me. I was no longer a stranger to them, but a poor, unworthy sinner, such as they; a sinner trusting alone to Jesus for salvation, as they were; a poorly taught sinner, but one who believed in predestination without any conditions attached, and I found a response from their hearts, genuine and true. From then on we were fellow-travelers, and every other Sunday I was numbered among them, spending there some of the happiest days of my life, and to each one I extend love and gratitude for

their hearty handclasps, for their hospitality, and for the confidence they reposed in me. Their manifestations of love for each other, and their zeal for the cause, were to me evidences of their heirship to an undefiled inheritance; and furthermore, I had my great desire granted: that of going to Riverside, where I met the same kind of people, giving me, and all others who came in His name, a warm welcome. They told the same story of Jesus and his love; they worshipped in spirit and in truth the same God, counting it no shame to own his cause and to confess their sins. To them all I send greetings and ask that they remember me in bonds, as bound with them. Business brought me back here the last of June, but in October the call to return was so strong that I heeded it; received the same warm welcome and remained there until the last of December. Both churches were without a pastor, and I pray that God, knowing their need, will send them one who preaches the gospel in its purity; one who believes that God can and does save sinners without let or hindrance; that by and through the atoning blood of Jesus, and that alone, can they hope for salvation. Elder Mayfield, of Oregon, visited and preached at both places during my stay, and he spoke as one having authority. I had the opportunity of partaking of the bread and wine, which were blessed and offered in remembrance of Him whose body was bruised and whose blood

was shed, that those for whom he died might live forever. Several members at both places spoke to those assembled with great liberty and much feeling. It seems to me that God is preparing them for his use. I tried in my feeble way to arrange it for brother Lefferts to visit there, but as an Elder of Missouri had signified his willingness to do so for a few months, and they had agreed to it, I thought best, as did the few to whom I spoke, to wait awhile, but some day I hope to be one of the number who will welcome him to our midst. I am not one bit selfish in it, either; I want them to hear even as I have. When I was leaving, one of the brothers said, "*Write me something that will help and cheer me.*" It had seemed to me that he was one whom God had greatly blessed, and I was astonished. He appeared to be sorrowful of heart but it is wholesome to be of a contrite spirit, and God loves just such; he will hearken unto them and be a present help in all their troubles. He believes with all his heart, and has been promised eternal life; he loves the brethren, an infallible test of his kinship; he has confessed his sins and his Savior before men, and will be confessed before his Father in heaven; he has ministered to the saints and walked orderly in his profession, and God will remember him in love and mercy. If he is working out his salvation with fear and trembling he is the better adorning his high calling, and it is that for which I pray daily. God made

a covenant that he would put his laws into the hearts and minds of his people, and that he would remember their sins and iniquities no more forever. Then let us hold fast to our profession without wavering. Even down to old age his people shall prove his sovereign, eternal, unchangable love. Glorious things have been spoken to us. His greatness and goodness have been manifested in a satisfying, convincing, comforting way; then let us be still and know that he is God. I expect some of you will think I am too confident, or, How does she know that she is one for whom Christ died? I have told you all I know about it; the good book says so. All of us admit that God has a people, a peculiar people, that he loved them before the foundation of the world, and that Christ suffered and died that they might live with him in eternity. Moreover, they have been described so minutely, have been promised so much, being told of the glory that awaits them, and that in his own good time he would reveal himself to them. The Bible testifies of him. Does it not testify of us? We feel and know that it does. For whom are the promises? To them that put their trust in the arm of the flesh, or to those who are taught in colleges and in Sunday-schools, whose god is their belly, and who are wedded to the world and the lust thereof? I do not think so. He draws the people of his choice by cords of kindness, and we have felt the drawing. He caused

us to see ourselves as he sees us, and we were led to call on him for mercy; moreover, he taught us to call a right. He caused us to hunger and thirst, then gave us the bread and water of life freely. He caused us to humble ourselves in his sight, then raised us to see him, to know and to commune with him. He told us of the glory that awaits us, until the veil intervenes but dimly between us. He has taken our stony hearts away and given us new ones, has put a new song in our mouths, even praise unto him. He found us too, when strangers to his commonwealth and led us in paths we had not known. He caused us to rejoice in a finished salvation, and to ascribe to him all honor, glory and power. We believe that no weapon formed against us shall prosper, and that he shall condemn every tongue that shall rise against us. If we believe these things, and the hundreds of others confirming the same, and constraining, us, let us conclude that we are on our way to the city of the everlasting God; that we are his predestinated children, and when compassed about with such a cloud of witnesses, let us hold fast to the truth which made us free, laying aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, seeing that we have been born again not of incorruptible seed, but by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth forever. If I believe I am one of his children, it is not of my willing of running, it is of the will of God.

Does it make me boastful, or make me feel better than others who see through a glass darkly. No, a thousand times no. It makes me feel more humble, more prayerful, more desirous of following in his footsteps, more sorrowful when I err, more differential to my brethren whom I love so well. In fact the more of his light and glory I see, the more defect I see in myself, and if we humble ourselves he will exalt us in due time. I feel that I am the least of his children, and when we gather at the pearly gates, if there were such a thing as literal ones, I shall hesitate to enter until all those for whom he died have passed through; God, who knoweth the secret thoughts and intents of the hearts of men, being my judge.

I have written a great deal, but am afraid to no profit; know, though, that those I have met will be glad to hear that I am as well as usual and abounding in his love. And now may the God of all grace, who hath calleth you unto his eternal glory by Jesus Christ, after ye have suffered awhile, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen and settle you.

From an unworthy sister, who asks your indulgence.

MARY E. WRIGHT.

PSALM 95:1.

O Come, let us sing unto the Lord: let us may a joyful noise to the rock of our salvation.

ISAIAH XXVI. 17.

“LIKE as a woman with child, that draweth near the time of her delivery, is in pain, and crieth out in her pangs; so have we been in thy sight, O Lord.”

This presents the attitude of the church under the law looking forward by faith unto and eagerly hoping for the coming of the day of the Lord, which would bring salvation to Israel. All the patriarchs and prophets and all the holy ones of the old covenant period were like a woman travailing in pain, in birth to be delivered, because they were all longing for and earnestly desiring the coming of the Messiah, in whom the spiritual ones truly hoped for salvation from sin and from death. The people of God from ancient times have been as one body hungering and thirsting for the coming of Jesus. Therefore the church under the law was a woman great with child. This child was Jesus, and was the man-child brought forth by the woman. In all the types of the old testament, in all the sayings of the prophets, in all the experiences of the patriarchs, Jesus was presented or was the One brought forth or given birth to in all their testimony. The people of God were in this shape in the sight of the Lord. All their own efforts could bring forth nothing but wind or emptiness, but the Spirit of the Lord working might-

ily in them could and did bring forth Jesus out of them. The pangs of this spiritual travail grew more and more intense the nearer the day of Jesus approached, until at last he was brought forth upon the earth: the fruitions of all the hopes and longings of his people. If our readers will turn to the twelfth chapter of Revelation they will there see how the word of inspiration presents the church in the figure of a woman clothed with the sun (the glory of God), with the moon (the law) under her feet, upon her head a crown of twelve stars (the apostles).

“And she being with child cried, travailing in birth, and pained to be delivered.” Down in the fifth verse it is recorded that the church gave birth to a man-child. This child is Jesus. This text in Revelation shows the gospel church raised above the law and clothed with the beauty of God’s holiness bringing forth Christ. Christ is brought forth in all the teachings, in all the experiences, in all the ordinances, in all the order, of the gospel church. The text previously quoted from the twenty-sixth chapter of Isaiah shows how this was true of the people of God under the law: that they too were in pain, owing to the fact that they were wrought upon by the Spirit to look forward unto the coming of Christ, seeing themselves as poor, needy sinners but greatly in need of him to save them.

Thus all the testimony of the people of God, whether under the

law or under the gospel, is likened unto the condition of a woman in travail. The object that God had in all the fears and tremblings of his people, his purpose in all their trials and afflictions, was that Jesus should be brought forth out of all that pain.

We have written these two brief articles at the request of a sister who lives near Macon, Georgia.

Elder H.H. Lefferts

ROMANS 5: 1-2.

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.

MEETINGS

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION

The West Country Line Union meeting will be held, the Lord willing, on the 5th Sunday in August at Big Meadows Church.

Big Meadows is located about 20 miles below Graham, NC. Those traveling 1-85 take the Pittsboro Graham exit and go 17 miles toward Pittsboro. After crossing Cane Creek

bridge take first road to right at top of hill - go 4 miles to a cross road and turn left - go 1 mile to church on right.

We invite all lovers of the Truth and especially the Elders of our faith and order to come and be with us.

Elder Kenneth R. Key, Mod.

NEW RIVER ASSOCIATION (2010)

The two hundred and sixteenth annual 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 Flower Gap Primitive Baptist Church located in Carroll County, Va.

It will begin on Saturday before the Fourth Sunday. It will continue through Sunday, dates being September 25th and 26th, the Lord willing.

Indian Creek Church is located on Highway 787 in Indian Valley, Va. Those coming by way of Rt. 221, Rt. 52 or Rt. 8 come to Willis, Va. and turn on Hwy 787 go approximately 7 miles to church on left.

We invite the ministers of our Faith and Order, also Brothers, Sisters and Friends to be with us, Lord willing.

Kenneth D. Hopkins, Moderator
J.B. Mitchell, Jr., Clerk

SMITH RIVER ASSOCIATION

The 154th Annual Session of the Smith River Association will convene with Salem Church on September 3, 4, 5, 2010.

Located in Floyd County, Virginia on Rt. 221 about 20 miles south of Rt. 419 in Roanoke, Va. past Copper Hill on the right for those coming from Floyd go North on 221 about 15 miles to church on the left past the Community of Check.

We invite the ministers of our Faith and Order, our Brethren and Friends to be with us.

Tony R. Horton,
Association Clerk

**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 28th, 2010 before the 5th Sunday in August.

Singing will begin at 10:00 a.m. and preaching at 10:30 a.m.

We invite all ministers of our faith and order, our brethren and friends to be with us.

Elder Marvin Brumfield, Moderator
Oscar Pickral, Clerk

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR JUNE 2010

Miles T. Bird, LA	10.00
Charlie Fox, AR	5.00
James Shelor, VA.....	5.00
Fred W. Murphy, VA	5.00
Coy Holley, VA.....	5.00
Alvis Beachem, NC	25.00
Charles Matthews, LA	25.00

PSALM 92:5.

O Lord, how great are thy works! and thy thoughts are very deep.

OBITUARIES

HELEN BURGIN PITTMAN

My precious mother, Helen Louise Burgin Pittman, fell asleep into the arms of her dear Savior on January 1, 2010 at the Highland Pines Nursing Home in Longview, Texas. Mom was born October 23, 1922 in Big Sandy, Texas to Grover Cleveland and Opal Harris Burgin and lived to be 87 years old. She was a member of Paron Primitive Baptist Church in Hawkins, Texas for almost 50 years. Mom was a strong believer in salvation by grace through the blood and righ-

teousness of Jesus Christ alone. Our dear Lord blessed her with a servant's heart as she spent most of her life helping those in need, especially those of the household of faith. Mom was loved both far and near and by young and old alike. She was one of the best mothers anyone could ever have.

Mom is survived by her son and daughter-in-law, Phil and Joyce Pittman, and three grandchildren, David, Karen, and Brian Pittman. She is also survived by her beloved sisters, Flora Stutts and Patsy Mitchell, her brother-in-law, Wesley Stutts, as well as a host of nieces and nephews. Funeral services were held at Beaty Funeral Home in Hawkins, Texas on January 3, 2010 with Elders Jimmy Hamrick and C.C. Morris officiating. Their kind and sweet remarks regarding Mom were very comforting to the family. Mom's body was laid to rest in Smith Cemetery to peacefully wait for the return of her blessed Savior to awaken it to immortal life through His merits and grace. May our dear Lord receive all the praise, honor, and glory both now and forever. Amen!

An unworthy son,
Phil Pittman

SISTER RUBY STRATTON
MCGUIRE

On January 21, 2010, the Lord called our Sister McGuire

from this world of sin and sorrow, we believe to a better place. To a place where there will be no sorrow, no pain and no dying. All will be peace and joy, in a place called Heaven where God Himself will be the light of that city. Sister McGuire was well thought of in the community. She had many that loved her, her family, her church family and friends.

She leaves to mourn, her daughter Sandra Poindexter and husband Tommie, and Ester Griffin of Eden, son Jerry McGuire and wife Nikki of Ruffin, four grandchildren, and five great grandchildren. Sister, Myrtle Nelson of Eden, and brothers Tony Stratton [who has now passed away] of Ruffin and Gordon Stratton of Eden.

Sister Ruby joined Dan River Primitive Baptist Church June 28, 1959. She was a member of this church for over 50 years. I remember years ago when she would come in church on Sunday. She, Brother Hopkins and Brother Hopkins wife would be together. This was back when the church would fill up. I believe God did something for her that man could not do, that was touched her heart with the finger of His love. *Romans 8: verse 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."*

Also I believe she believed in a God of all grace. God sent his son into this world to save his people. In St. John chapter 17 verse 12 Jesus

said, speaking of his people, *“while I was with them in the world I kept them in thy name. 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.”*

We at Dan River will miss her for we will see her face no more. We feel our loss will be her eternal gain.

Her funeral was conducted January 25, 2010 by Elder Kenneth

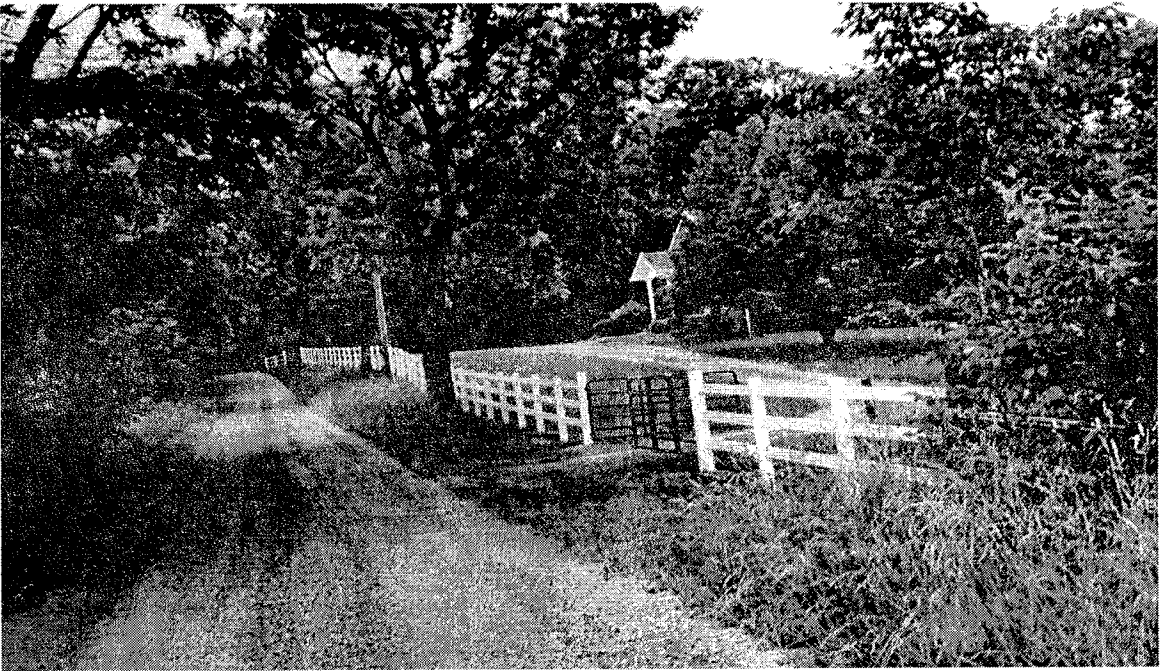
Key at Dan River Primitive Baptist Church. Burial was in the church cemetery to await the coming of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

I would like to thank Sandra, her daughter, for helping me with this information.

Written by one who is also looking for that day when we shall see Him, be like Him and be satisfied.

R. Allen Carroll

Valley View Primitive Baptist Church



Picture of fence in front “Valley View Church” that Brother Thompson liked so well.

KENNETH GRAY THOMPSON

Valley View Church has lost a precious Brother who loved

the church and was always willing and ready to do everything to see that the Brethren and visitors were comfortable. Also, he was interested

in and helped with the upkeep of the church. He was so pleased when the white fence was put up.

He loved to go with Brethren to visit other churches and fellowship with Brethren from other places. He was pleased when other brethren visited with us. He always stood by the doors greeting everyone as they came in the church.

He was a beloved son, husband, Daddy, Pawpaw and brother. He was peacefully called home on Monday, November 16, 2009 with his family by his side. He was born December 28, 1933. He joined Valley View, Sunday, October 16, 1994 and was baptized November 20, 1994 in Little River by his Pastor, Elder Raymond Goad. He was preceded in death by his father, Gold Thompson, and a brother, Johnny Thompson. He is survived by his wife of 31 years, Faye Thompson, son, Monty Thompson and wife Lou Ann of Christiansburg, daughter, Tami Koury and husband Ernie, Jr, of Burlington NC; sons, Tony Hylton of Radford, VA and Greg Hylton of Christiansburg, VA. Grandchildren, Ellie Thompson, Erin, Elizabeth and Lauren Koury, his mother, Sister Irene Thompson, whom he had a special and wonderful relationship, and always took her to church most every Sunday and looked after her. Sisters, Corrine Vaughn, Betty Linkous and husband, CB; Winki Akers and husband Bud, and Mary Jones. His mother-in-law, Eavie Phillips and numerous

nieces and nephews.

He was owner of Holiday Datsun, now New River Nissan. He sold the business in 1988 to enjoy his true passion of raising cattle on his grandparents' farm.

Funeral service was held with a very large crowd at 2 p.m. on Friday, November 20, 2009 at Valley View Church. Conducted by Elder Raymond Goad and Elder Larry Hollandsworth with interment in the Thompson Cemetery, asleep in Jesus awaiting his second coming. May the Lord reconcile us to his will and realize our loss is his eternal gain.

Written by Lena Duncan at the request of Valley View Primitive Baptist Church.

Elder Raymond Goad, Moderator
Lena Duncan, Clerk
Naomi Agee, Assistant Clerk

Family information contributed
by the Thompson Family

1 John 4: 4-5.

Ye are of God, little children, and have overcome them: because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world.

They are the of the world: therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them.

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 178

HILLSVILLE, VA., SEPTEMBER 2010

NO. 9

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

ISSN - 0199 - 0063

Subscription price \$15.00 per year - \$25.00 two years

Published monthly by
SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

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1429 Howlett Street, Hillsville, Va. 24343

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

*Dear Refuge of my weary soul,
On Thee, when sorrow rise,
On Thee, when waves of trouble
roll,
My fainting hope relies.*

*To Thee I tell each rising grief,
For Thou alone canst heal;
Thy word can bring a sweet relief
For every pain I feel.*

*But O! when gloomy doubts prevail,
I fear to call Thee mine,
The springs of comfort seem to fail,
And all my hopes decline.*

*Yet, gracious God, where shall I
flee?
Thou art my only trust;
And still my soul would cleave to
Thee,
Though prostrate in the dust.*

*Hast Thou not bid me seek Thy
face;
And shall I seek in vain?
And can the ear of sovereign grace
Be deaf when I complain?*

*No, still the ear of sovereign grace
Attends the mourner's prayer:
O may I ever find access
To breathe my sorrows there!*

*Thy mercy seat is open still,
Here let my soul retreat;
With humble hope attend Thy will
And wait beneath Thy feet.*

Ann Steele

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 EDITORIALS

“And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all of one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.”
Acts 2:1-4.

Jesus had led the perfect life without sin. He had spoken the words of life that no other man had ever spoken, and yet had been hated, mocked, and scourged. He then was cruelly nailed to a tree and left there to die the death of a base criminal, yet he had done nothing amiss. Nevertheless, no man took His life from Him, but He laid it down of Himself to redeem those He loved. He took His life up again on the third day according to the scriptures, and appeared to His apostles and disciples for forty days. He commanded them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait there for the promise of the Father. About one hundred twenty of them were gathered together in an upper room in Jerusalem and continued with one accord in prayer and supplication. They, by grace, were patiently waiting for the promise of God that they should receive power after the Holy Ghost should come upon them, and that they would be witnesses unto Jesus in Jerusalem, Judea, Samaria and unto the uttermost part of the earth.

This was to be a special time in the history of the church when the prophecies of God should be fulfilled. It was to be the particular manifestation of God showing His power in and upon his people as the church was about to be established visibly. When this manifestation came, Peter said, *“But this is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel; And it shall come to pass in the last days, saith*

God, I will pour out of my Spirit upon all flesh: and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your young men shall see visions and your old men shall see dreams..." The true believers had been gathered from all parts of the world to experience this outpouring of the Spirit and to be sent back to their native places where the churches were to be established. These things they saw and heard, and they were empowered for the purposes of God to be accomplished in and through them.

We are given a true account of the things that transpired there. The question in my mind is this: does this account only give a report of the history of that day, or are there things hidden in it that are relevant and meaningful in our experience today? Only God is able to give us the true answer, which would be to His glory and to our comfort and edification. No man can do anything of himself. Everything about the heavenly kingdom is in a mystery that is too high and wide and broad and deep for us to know apart from the Holy Spirit. *"Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning."* May the Lord open to us the hidden treasures of knowledge and understanding according to His will and purpose?

On the day of Pentecost, it was manifest that there were true believ-

ers gathered together in one place and in one accord in obedience to the Lord's commands. I am made to believe that this was an example given for the church to follow today. By the grace of God, His people gladly obey the Lord's command to forsake not the assembling of yourselves together, as the manner of some is. By grace, they also seek peace and ensue it. They are blessed to endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. Their minds and hearts are knit together in love and truth. The Spirit of God in them causes them to bear the fruit of the Spirit, which is: love, joy, peace, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance against which there is no law. We see, in all the true churches that we have been blessed to know, that the children of God are given to walk in the light and to be in one accord. And they are given to speak the truth in love by the Holy Spirit that is in them.

It is a grief to mention, but there are many people who gather together in many places who are not doing so in obedience to the Lord's commands. They take hold of His name but deny His word. Jesus said, *"Why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?"* The prophet of old said, *"And in that day seven women shall take hold on one man, saying, We will eat our own bread, and wear our own apparel: only let us be called by thy name, to take away our reproach."* So it appears today.

Many take His name to hide their wickedness, but eat their own bread (have their own doctrine) and wear their own apparel (have their own righteousness). There are many today who hate the doctrine of Christ. My family and I experienced it firsthand. Many years ago, when I was given to teach the doctrine election among them, they rose up against my family and me and hatefully cast us out from their midst. They vigorously deny election, true order, and the sovereignty of God. There are many who say that all men have faith, contrary to the scripture. There are many who say that God wants to save everyone, and that salvation is according to the choice of individuals, and that salvation is not altogether by grace. But these things must be in the world.

All in the upper room in Jerusalem were waiting upon Him to fulfill His promise. They were all powerless in themselves to cause anything to come about. Likewise, when we are brought together in meeting, it is mutually agreed, in the inward man, that we are weak and can do nothing of ourselves, and that we must wait upon the Lord. God's people have been taught to know that the preacher cannot preach without that power which comes down from above. All that are taught of God know that there are no 'able preachers' but rather 'enabled preachers', and that is only by the grace of God. They know that none can see, hear or understand any-

thing unless their eyes are opened, their ears are unstopped, and their hearts made soft and tender to the things of the Spirit. They know that they must sit and wait upon the Lord for all things. I am made to believe it is much like the day when the Lord gave the loaves and the fishes to the disciples to distribute to the multitudes. The people who had nothing to eat were made to sit in groups and wait. The disciples had nothing to give to them except what the Lord blessed and broke and gave unto them to hand out. And they were commanded to take up the fragments after the people had eaten, and they took up twelve baskets. I am made to believe this was for the apostles' nourishment. It appears that the same is true of the preaching of the gospel. All must wait upon the Lord, for it all comes from Him. And the preachers are also nourished by the gospel that they are given to preach.

"And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all of one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance. And there were dwelling at

Jerusalem Jews, devout men, out of every nation under heaven. Now when this was noised abroad, the multitude came together, and were confounded, because that every man heard them speak in his own language." As they were waiting, a great miracle occurred in their midst. They heard and saw and experienced things they had never known before. They heard the sound from heaven as of a rushing mighty wind. They saw cloven tongues like as of fire that sat upon each of them. They were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance. And every man heard them speak in his own language.

I cannot help believing that we have experienced a measure of this same grace of God from time to time. Can you not remember sitting and waiting upon the Lord in your meetings, longing and yearning for the blessed experience of feeling and knowing the Lord's presence and power? Can you not remember feeling such a great love for your brethren and friends in the faith that you felt to be altogether in one accord with them, having nothing against any one of them? Can you not remember times when your ministers were brought before you in such weakness and humility that you knew the Lord was near? Can you not remember times when you felt that your ministers were made to be a flaming fire in their preaching, and

you believed surely the power of God in the Spirit was upon them? Can you not remember when your heart burned with the glowing fire of love for Jesus who gave His life for you and suffered for you in sorrow and grief unspeakable according to the gospel? Can you not remember times when you were made to believe and feel that He was wounded for our transgressions, bruised for our iniquities, and that the chastisement of our peace was upon Him, and that every stripe He received was for our healing? Can you remember times when you felt that the preaching was just for you, in the very language that you understood and that fit your experience and condition?

Was it not at times such as these that you were made to know the fear of the Lord, which is the beginning of wisdom? Was it not at such times that you rejoiced to believe that Jesus is the Word of God and that the Word was with God and the Word was God, and in Him dwells the fullness of the Godhead bodily? Was it not then when you looked upon the great creation seeing that all was the handiwork of God made for His glory and our good? Was it not at these times that you joyfully acknowledged that God loved His people with an everlasting love, that He saved them and called them with a 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

was? Was it not then that you were made glad to rejoice in the gospel of grace, which says that He foreknew His people in love, predestinated them to be conformed to the image of His Son, called them out of darkness into His marvelous light, justified them from all sin, and glorified them?

I cannot help believing that when we are made to acknowledge the truth of the doctrine of God, it is because that fire is upon us and we are speaking in other tongues. A tongue is a language – not the gibberish of the false religions of the world. The Lord's people speak a pure language that the world cannot learn. They sing a new song in that language that only the redeemed of the Lord may sing. It is the language of grace without works. It is the language of a powerless people and an all-powerful God, whose strength is made perfect in weakness. The world hates it and tries to destroy it. This language shines the light on all the false doctrine, pride, hypocrisy, and the works of the flesh, and exposes those things for what they are. They hated Jesus for His words, and it is no surprise that they should hate you for yours. No matter what their circumstances, when the Spirit of God rests upon any of His people, much as the Holy Spirit did back there in the day of Pentecost, they cannot help but hear, love, rejoice, believe, trust, obey, hope, give thanks, and sing that new song of grace in other tongues as the Spirit

gives them utterance. This is our portion here in this world of sin, persecution, and sorrow - and it is enough.

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

J.B. Farmer.
4-19-2010

CORRESPONDENCE

KENNETH G. THOMPSON

An experience of Kenneth G. Thompson of an accident while he was cutting down a tree. His wife, Faye Thompson, said it was written about 3 months before his death. She feels that since so many loved Brother Kenneth, the brethren would love to read of his experience. If you feel to print it in "The Sign of the Times" would be greatly appreciated. Sent by Brothers and Sisters at Valley View Primitive Baptist Church.

One beautiful Fall morning in late September I went about 2 miles from the house to cut and haul in firewood, while falling a tree it sprang to the side knocking me down and landing on my left leg. I was helplessly pinned to the ground with broken bones. Many thoughts came to mind. Never doubting that there was a purpose not an accident in this. With a prayer in my heart that it's working for my good.

After a while I heard a vehicle coming for I was located near a dead end dirt road along Little River. When the truck got near I cried out for help. This certain young man heard, stopped, and came asking what can I do to help you? After explaining the location where to lift the tree, this man, whose name is Marcus, climbed in the tractor and performed the task flawlessly.

After pulling me from under the tree, Marcus left to find a phone to call the rescue squad. When he returned he began telling how he was traveling from Floyd on his way to Christiansburg. While on Route 8 bridge had a sudden desire to drive up this road along the river, then he expressed these words - God moves in mysterious ways. Precisely my thoughts at the time.

I'm made to believe this young man, Marcus, was sent and enabled by our merciful God to perform all that was needed for my beginning the road to recovery.

The following day before going to the operating room, the surgeon warned that I might lose my leg, I was not excited, nor afraid but made reconciled that my God knows best and His will be done.

For several days while in the hospital and after returning to our house, I was overwhelmed by the kind deeds, the many visitors, phone calls and cards.

The Lord blessed me with the best of care from family, doctors, nurses, and my dear wife that knew

what to do, how to do, and did do more for my comfort and well being than I could have even expected.

It seems I would be depressed having pain and being confined to a bed and was in this condition for a few short periods of time. Most of the time I was high on the mountain because of the fellowship, encouragement, and love I felt for those of like precious faith combined with comforting passages of scripture such as *"we know we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren."*

Oftentimes at night with no one around I was given such a thankful heart for the blessings my Lord bestowed on me that I would tearfully rejoice in a savior's love for the events He blessed me with that day.

When it pleases God we glory in tribulation knowing tribulation worketh patience, patience experience, experience hope and hope maketh not ashamed. For the love of God that is shed abroad in our hearts is given to us.

6-15-2010

Please print my mom's name in your monthly booklet. She is 86 years old and recently suffered from a stroke.

This will bring a smile to her face.

Thank you,
Garry L. Cox

Ollie Carl May
3272 Pineapple Hwy.
Greenville, Ala. 36037

Signs of the Times, Inc.

Dear Sir,

I enjoy the Signs very much.
Thanks for publishing the
Signs.

Enclosed find \$30.00 for 2 years
of Signs. The other do as you need.

Thank you,
Ollie Carl May

VOICES OF THE PAST

1908 - THE TRAVEL OF ISRAEL AN EXAMPLE OF GOSPEL TRAVEL TODAY

Written by
William M. Smoot, March, 1908.

"And they came to Elim, where were twelve wells of water, and threescore and ten palm trees and they encamped there by the waters." - Exodus xv, 27.

In the December SECTARIAN, last volume, we received a request from brother G. W. Barr of Dayton, Ohio, for our views upon this Scripture.

We are told in Romans xv. 4, that: *"for whatsoever things were*

written were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope." Hence we have multiplied evidence of Gospel travel in the Old Testament of that peculiar travel through which the Church passes today.

The connection of the quoted text gives account of the travel of Israel after their deliverance at the Red Sea. The deliverance was a wonderful display of Divine power, that it would seem Israel could not readily forget, and yet they had gone but a few days and *"came to Marah, they could not drink of the waters of Marah; for they were bitter. ...And the people murmured against Moses, saying, What shall we drink?"*

In our early years before we had an adequate conception of Gospel Truth, we often thought in reading of the travel of these Israelites, how different our course would have been from theirs; but in later years we concluded that our Adamic, natural heart is as prone to wander as was theirs - we see in our earthly nature a reproduction of what was in these carnal Israelites: *"the people sat down to eat and to drink and rose up to play,"* - Exodus xxxii, 6. Their travel illustrates the travel of Israel today; through storm, and in calm, like Joseph's *"coat of many colors,"* - Genesis xxxvii. 3,) for it was just after their experience with the bitter waters of Marah and they came to the wells of water and palm

trees of Elim.

It was but a few days after their departure from Elim that they came *"unto the wilderness of Sin,"* and here it is written *"the whole congregation murmured against Moses and Aaron:and said unto them, would to God that we had died by the hand of the Lord in the land of Egypt, when we sat by the flesh pots, and when we did eat bread to the full."* These words certainly sound familiar! We have heard them in different forms, but in identical substance again and again from professed children of grace at the very first appearance of a condition which required a walk *"by faith, and not of sight."* *"The fleshpots of Egypt"* (the money, ease, lusts and glamour of this present world,) is a fearful, and all-prevailing temptation to the carnal mind. There are Bethel and Elim spots scatted along the mortal pilgrimage of saints where they can rest: *"a covert from the tempest:"* a haven from storm, and from rain.

The word Elim signifies strength and security; and in this surely represents the secure hiding and resting place of the saints. Here is *"the shadow of the Almighty"*- (Psalm xci, 1) under which saints abide; and their place of defense the munitions of rock, (Isaiah xxxiii, 16;) the green grass of the desert upon which they sit down and into which they are led, and where they find rest unto their souls. - Matthew xi, 28-30.

The wells of water represent the

Gospel, of which Jesus says, *"who-soever 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."*- John iv, 14. In numbers xxxiii, 9 these wells are called *"fountains of water."* The Gospel itself is the inexhaustible well or fountain; but here are found twelve wells, which probably more especially represent the *twelve apostolic gifts*, revealed in the proclamation of that Gospel.

Beloved saints of God, have we not often found such heavenly resting places, as we have come together upon some *"Elim spot,"* and the never-failing well has supplied our every need, *"spring up"* to our comfort, without work or effort on our part, for indeed *"the well is deep,"* said the Samaritan woman, and we *"have nothing to draw with."*- John iv, 11. The preached word has come to us, not in form nor yet in *"uncertain sound,"* but *"in demonstration of the Spirit, and of power."*

The *"threescore and ten palm trees,"* can represent the election and flourishing condition of Israel under the Gospel Covenant. It is noticeable that the number *"threescore and ten,"* is the number that came *"out of the loins of Jacob,"*- Exodus i, 5, typifying *"the purpose of God, according to election"*- Romans ix, 11-13; and pointing to the particular and peculiar people who

alone were to rest; and become refreshed in these holy, consecrated, and sanctified places, as the anointed of the Lord: set apart for the blessing, and the blessing specially prepared and reserved for them.

The Palm-tree like the Cedar tree (Psalm xxix, 5,) is used in the Scriptures to typify the children of grace; as well as to show forth the enduring and sheltering nature of the Gospel Covenant, (Judges iv, 5; Song vii, 7,8.) In Psalm xcii, 12; it is written *"The righteous shall flourish like the palm tree: he shall grow like a cedar in Lebanon."* The Church of the living God sheltered under the overshadowing wings of the Gospel is indeed a city of Palm-trees, revealed in holy symmetry in the work of the temple, where are carved *"cherubim and palm-trees"* (Ezekiel xli, 18- 20) in Gospel unison upon the wall, and in the work of that building which stands as a type of the Gospel Church.

We have then in our subject a beautiful figure of Gospel grace, of the refuge in which the dear tempest-tossed spiritual Israelites enter, assailed by foes without and within, and their own evil hearts as well. Elim is *"favorably located"* for such refuge with the *"bitter waters of Marah"* on one hand, and the wilderness of Sin on the other, while just beyond is located roaring, flaming Sinai with its terrific thunderings, its fiery darts, that disturb the peace, and pierce the soul of the trembling,

awe-stricken tribes, who have fled for refuge from the destructive plagues of Egypt.

Beautiful indeed is the language! More expressive still the substance of the testimony of our text. Think, dear reader, of the force of the figure presented for our consideration: *"the twelve wells of water, threescore and ten palm trees"* of Elim. Think of the surroundings of the restful spot; and then think of the world with its bitterness, its envy and strife against the Truth, of its wilderness of woe, barren of a single green blade, or anything else calculated to afford *the slightest* enjoyment to the children of grace: you will see something of what our text presents for the comfort of the Israel of today.

In Proverbs xxv, 25, we are told that: *"As cold waters to a thirsty soul, so is good news from a far country."*

"Waters from Salvation's wells,

Thirsty sinner come and draw;

Love's the fountain when it rose,

Who its heights or depth can tell?

Christ the channel whence it flows,

O'er the banks of sin to swell."

Some of our older members in this country (near Alexandria, Virginia) will remember an aged colored brother, Jacob Cooper, formerly a

member of the Hepzibah Church in Alexandria, but now long since gone, we humbly believe, to his immortal home. "*Uncle Jake*," as he was familiarly called in those days, used to make the fire and clean up the office of certain lawyers in Alexandria. On one occasion as the winter had broken or was breaking, in order to have a little fun with the elderly man, one of the lawyers asked him. "*Uncle Jake, do you expect to go to the Springs, this year?*" "Yes," solemnly answered Jake, "*I go to the Springs, sir, twice a year.*" Somewhat struck by the sober earnestness of the reply the lawyer inquired, "*What Springs do you go to Uncle Jake?*" "*The Old School Baptist Association, sir,*" promptly replied the old brother, "*and it is the sweetest water that a poor sinner ever drank.*"

As we write our memory turns to the reply of this old brother. We live over again the many precious seasons spent in the sanctuary of eternal Truth; the oases in life's trials, where we are permitted to greet our dear brethren and the friends of Truth eternal; to hear the Gospel preached in its purity, to realize the preciousness of Gospel fellowship, to lay aside for the moment the burdens of mortality; and to rest under the shadow of the palm - trees of our Elim and drink of its wells of living water.

When a boy in our native village during the Civil War, there came through the village one day a com-

pany of troops. It was a hot, sultry day, and the company reached the town about noon; foot-sore and weary they halted, broke ranks, and scattered under the trees for refreshments and rest. We have not forgotten how these tired soldiers appeared to enjoy the cooling shade of the trees and temporary rest. So with the children of the Regeneration in their travel through the wilderness of this world, as they reached an Elim spot where they can for the moment lay aside their travel-stained garments, and rest "*in the shade of the trees.*"

But our subject in the fullness of its meaning implies something more than a moments' rest. It points us to the eternal character, and the abiding nature of rest in that Man, who "*shall be a hiding-place from the wind, and a covert from the tempest; as rivers of water in a dry place, as the shadow of a great rock in a weary land.*" - Isaiah xxxii, 2. "*And in that day there shall be a root of Jesse, which shall stand for an ensign of the people; to it shall the Gentiles seek: and His rest shall be glorious.*" - Isaiah xi, 10.

The Scriptures abound with figures of the character under consideration, which point to, and center in Christ as the sure Refuge of saints. A striking one is found in Matthew xiv, 15, where the *green grass* of the desert is a beautiful figure of the Church in the desert of this corrupt world. The last clause of our

subject reads: "*and they encamped there by the waters.*" This then for the time being was something more than a *temporary* rest. It was truly this, but it was also something more. It was an encampment of Israel. It was an epoch in their journey. It was as when the *visible Church* has passed through some fiery trials, and she encamps for a time to rest and to meet similar conflicts. "*For she goes from strength to strength.*" - Psalm lxxxiv, 7.

Did she not thus *encamp* after the Context of 1832; of 1852; of 1886-89, and these of later years? New developments are continually arising. New conditions developing, new issues, new perversions, new trials, new conflicts, greater apostasies which must be met in the onward travel of the Church, manifest new needful resting spots. And yet after all it is the same old and oft repeated story of some Israelite murmuring because of the hardness and stringency of the journey, the severity of the statutes of the Gospel; from a natural standpoint hankering after "*the flesh-pots of Egypt.*"

*"Seeking some easy path
To an inland shore."*

But the Church moves onward, "*looks forth as the morning, fair as the moon, clear as the sun, and terrible as an army with banners.*" "*He couched, he lay down as a lion, and as a great lion: who shall stir him up?*

Blessed is he that blesseth thee, and cursed is he that curseth thee."- Numbers xxiv, 9.

The Scriptures are one vast volume of Christian experience, dealing more especially with the living scenes of today in the travel of saints. We live the Truth of God. "*Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path,*" (Psalm cxix, 105,) as we pass through the turmoil of time to the peaceful scenes of rest unending.

"And here as travelers we meet,

Before we reach the fields above, To suit around our Master's feet, And tell the wonders of His love."

The cooling shade under which we rest here is but a foretaste of that which is eternal. The waters by which we camp in our mortal pilgrimage, flow from the throne of God, bearing us onward and upward in more joyous, more glorious revelations, as the streams are lost in the never-failing fountain, and become an impassible river (Ezekiel xlvii, 5,) "*and everything that liveth, which moveth, whithersoever the rivers shall come, shall live. Truly spring up into everlasting life.*"

Many of us have come to the brink of the river. "*By faith we look out upon the vast glories which blaze forth from the immortal throne. Our only and real enjoyment lies in the interest of the heavenly kingdom; the real plea-*

sure of our mortal pilgrimage is in its restful pursuits. It brightens our pathway through time, "as the shining light, that shineth more and more unto the perfect day." Through a rift in the cloud we catch a glimpse of the sublime splendors of the world to come, and hear *"the voice of harpers harping with their harps;"* rejoicing *"in hope of the glory of God;"* *"receiving the end of your (our) faith, even the salvation of (our) souls."*

"He hath not dealt with us after our sins; nor rewarded us according to our iniquities. For as the heaven is high above the earth, so great is His mercy toward them that fear Him. ... The mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear Him, and His righteousness unto children's children." - Psalm ciii.

DOCTRINE VS. EXPERIENCE

"Give, ear, O ye heavens, and I will speak: and hear O earth, the words of my mouth. My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew; as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass."

Deut. 32:1,2. "Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth, the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness and

hath no light? let him trust in the name of the Lord, and stay upon his God." Isa. 50:10.

Have you been among a number of the people of God-as they were discussing the preaching of various ministers? If so, you have heard them extolling the gift of one that was good at doctrinal preaching, saying that they did not come for experimental preaching. Then no doubt you have heard someone extol the gift of some other that was good at experimental preaching, saying that they did not know much, about doctrine, but that they loved experience.

I have titled this writing in a peculiar manner. I have intended just as I have titled it, so as to draw attention to our state. It seems just like that to me. Not in the inspiration of God but we have, drawn a line of difference between doctrine and experience, saying that one of them is good preaching, but that the other is not; saying that one of them is permissible, but that the other is not. We have placed doctrine in opposition to, or against experience, or vice versa. In our estimation, God gives us only doctrine to preach; that we have set up experience in opposition to God and that it is thus God sanctioned to preach doctrine, but that it is man made to preach experience.

Too much of the time those that like to hear doctrine preached (as they call it) have heard something

that was called experience, but that was foreign to the experience of a saint of God.

If we always had a correct perspective of what experience really is about we would be in a better condition to pass judgment on what is called doctrinal preaching or experimental preaching. For instance, much has been said about preaching the sincere milk of the word, meaning, as I take it, that little ones can digest milk better than strong meat. I agree with that. But I do not think about it as I have heard it explained. Preaching experience does not mean that the minister is preaching to nor about the natural man. He does not have any right whatever, nor any time whatever, to preach to nor about that. Nor does it mean that when a minister is preaching experience that he is preaching soft or conditional. Moreover, when a man is preaching doctrine, it definitely does not mean that he is doing good preaching, for I assure you that there are many doctrines of men being preached.

Personally, I believe all preaching is doctrinal. It is as much doctrine to preach that God leads the blind by a way that they knew not, as it is to preach that God loves His people with an everlasting love; it is as much doctrine to preach to the laboring and heavy laden to come to Christ, as it is to declare that God declared the end from the beginning. Furthermore, doctrinal preaching will never be profitable to the chil-

dren of God unless it is experienced. Faith is the gift of God, but unless that faith exercises the child of God it is dead faith. Preaching that faith is a gift of God, and that having that faith means that the child of God is not active under the administration of that faith, is not true doctrinal preaching. The child of God is not active to get faith but when faith comes, when faith is given, he is then active, not in order to have faith, but he is active because that he is acted upon.

What people generally call doctrinal preaching is telling what God did in covenant before the world began. All of the purposes that originate in the eternal mind of God will never be worth anything to a sinner until such time as it is revealed to us, and that revelation is an experimental work in our heart and mind and soul. This is as much doctrinal truth as the purpose to do so. They cannot be divided; they cannot be separated one from the other. They both are received in an experience. Paul tells us that we glory in tribulation. Tribulations were appointed to us by our Savior just before He entered into His glory. In the world ye shall have tribulation, but in me peace. Both the tribulation and the peace are parts of the doctrinal dealings of God with His people. When we attempt to say that this is doctrine, but that this is experience, and attempt to allot each one as being good and better, we are subverting the written word as well as the gospel of our sal-

vation, I do not know of a harder, more austere doctrine than to say that God does not have anything to do with our tribulations, sorrows, sufferings, but how destitute our lives would be if we did not have His effectual workings in us in showing (John 16) us these sublime things. It is Jacob; if it is the best thought of minister; whoever it is, or whenever they say it, that tribulations are against us, or that they are not good for us, then Paul (and the Romans, and thus you and I) are in something that ought not to be. We glory (boast) in tribulation. This is experimental, that is, it is presently in this life, but surely no one would attempt to separate the allotment of tribulations as not being a segment of the doctrine. And let it be noted in passing, that this glorying or boasting (for that is the meaning of this glorying) is not found in him or her that says, If a tree is falling toward you there is not any need to run, or that if a train is coming down upon you there is not any need to step out of the way, or if false teaching is creeping in upon the people of God there is not any need for a voice to be raised in protest by the spirit of him or her that is glorying in tribulations. That is an experience alright, but it is an experience of the deluding power of Satan, and it is just as false as my Arminian neighbors that tell me that God does not have anything to do with a storm destroying my home or of God having nothing to do with a car wreck in which some one is

killed.

The children of God glory in tribulations, why? Because that they are now working for our benefit. I have been dealt with in derision because I have been ready to maintain that the only salvation I know anything about is time salvation. I would never have had a taste of living water; I would never have had a crumb of living bread, had it not been for the revelation of these things to me in time.

Tribulation, to men without God and without hope in the world, is the work of the devil; it is because that we are not acquainted with God (Job 22:21); it is because that either we or our parents have sinned (John 9:2). Job's miserable would-be comforters were condemned for their position that Job's sins had separated him from his Maker, and, even though they were disciples that suggested that either the blind man had sinned or his parents had sinned, they were put in their place by the Savior. All things work together for good. They are now doing that. They do that from the beginning of our experience to the end of it. But try to tell Jacob that and he replies, No, some things are not for my good; some things are against me. But search for Jacob after the deliverances of the Israelite family and listen carefully if that is his refrain.

Try to tell Jacob that before he knows God, and you will always get that answer, to-wit: bad things are against me; tell Jacob, or any dis-

ciple, then at home in the body that God's blessings come to us because of our obedience, and he and we will acquiesce to that, but let the same man, Jacob or you and I, be brought where John Newton travelled, and one and all will sing,

*Through many dangers, toils
and snares,
I have already come;
'Tis grace has brought me
safe thus far,
And grace will lead me home.*

Or, if lifted to the third heaven, one and all will declare boldly but humbly that it is by the grace of God (1 Cor. 15:10), or if anyone of us has been brought into the presence of God in the face of Jesus Christ, he or she, one and all, will declare to ancient Israel, or to spiritual Israel, that *"He is all my salvation, that He is all of my desire."* (2 Sam. 23:5)

How gracious are the dealings of the Lord with His afflicted people. Moses, being inspired of God, and looking forward with joy to a better kingdom, founded on better promises, and thus bringing better things, is moved to say, *"My doctrine shall drop as the rain."* God does not accidentally drop it, but He turns it loose for a predetermined place or person. He turns it loose, it drops to its designated place. In His determination of the inheritance of the people of God. He set the bounds of their habitation, (v. 8, also see Acts

17:26) and thus they were at the precise place in the most minute detail for the dropping of the doctrine on them. No other power inherited; no wind of doctrine (or even of nature) caused the least variation as to when and where and how it fell on the designated people. That much is what you would call doctrine, is it not? That is what many of us want to hear (so we say), but there is more to it than that. It does not fall without purpose either to a designated person or people, it does not fall without purpose in their life, in their experience. It falls as the rain, that is it asks no let, it permits no hindrance. It is never void; it never fails to get to the designated end. But getting to the mark is not all, it accomplishes the will of Him that drops it upon the heirs of promise. It distils as the dew. That is as much the purpose of God as is the getting of it to the designated end. It distils as the dew; Have you ever walked out at night and heard the dew distilling? Have you? I am on forbidden ground, let him that is wise, come tell us what our souls are longing to hear. Have you ever heard the dew distilling? If you have not, and it drops sovereignly, please be cautious in running around the country telling our bankrupt sinners that they can command or countermand the coming down or the dropping down of doctrine. If you can even hear the distillation of the dew, certainly it would be distilled before you could prevent it reaching the designated

person or people or place. There is not any noise when a son of Adam is being translated out of darkness into light. (Isa. 33:20; Lam. 3:26; 1 Kgs. 6:7; 1 Tim. 2:2; 1 Pet. 3:4) *"If you do not hear any sound of a thing being done, certainly you cannot help nor hinder. Please remember that this soundless condition is, experience."*

Another thing. The dew distils in the night time. Do you know the difference between the experience of God's people and that of the world? It is good, it is extensive, it is strange. From the standpoint of the children of God, they are walking in darkness. From the standing of an ungodly man or woman they are walking in the light, or in the day time. (Isa. 50:11,12) What an experience is this: One outside Christ, outside the kingdom and walking in the light. What need has she or he that is so much their own keeper? They kindled the fire that makes all of their sparks; all of their light, but what is to follow? What of them? What is to be their end? They shall have at the hand of the Lord a lying down in sorrow. But he or she feels to be walking in darkness, that poor tried soul has a wonderful experience. He that lets the doctrine drop as the rain; that lets it distil as the dew; that sends it forth as the drouth-breaking word on tender herbs, (little unwashed, unswaddled babes in Christ.) (Ezek. 16) It causes them to give off the sweet smelling fragrance of a newly washed, newly anointed

little member in the midst of the church with Jesus as King and His subjects gathered around Him, will dwell by experience among men, that is, quickened men. In the same manner, from the same source, He that causes His "let" to bring light also causes His "let" to, be in the midst of the storm to hear no stroke of lightening, nor shift of clouds, no unknown power, no unseen enemy will hinder that dropping doctrine to get to the earth, causing it to give bread to the eater and seed to the sower.

When earthly pride is crucified in you, when you have seen and felt all light gone, when you have felt to be in gross darkness, when the treasures that you thought to have been stored up, lose all vitality and appeasing power, and thirst quenching waters are all dried up, will you remember a poor helpless sinner and beg the Lord to send forth His quickening Spirit in my life that I might be kept and blessed to rightly declare the word of truth, both as regarding what is called doctrine, as well as what is called experience, and to have no fear (of man) in doing it.

Elder W. D. Griffin

PSALM 32:10.

Many sorrows shall be to the wicked: but he that trusteth in the Lord, mercy shall compass him about.

“Blessed is the man whom thou chastenest, O Lord, and teachest him out of thy law.”—Psalm xciv. 12.

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

“And teachest him out of thy law.” “The law” in the Scriptures has a very wide signification; it means, in the original, instruction. The word is *Torah*, which signifies *“teaching,”* or *“direction.”* Thus the word *“law”* is not confined to the law of Moses given in thunder and lightning upon Mount Sinai; but it includes also the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ—*“the perfect law of liberty;”* *“the law of the spirit of*

life in Christ Jesus;” *“that law which was in the heart of the Redeemer, when he said, “I come to do thy will, O God; yea, thy law is within my heart.”*

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

Christ, and revealing them to the soul. And thus, the man whom the Lord takes in hand, he teaches "out of" the gospel by making Christ experimentally known, and revealing his dying love. And thus he teaches each and all "out of his law" - both the law from Sinai, and the law from Zion.

Elder J.C. Philpot

1 CORINTHIANS 2:5-9.

That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.

Howbeit we speak wisdom among them that are perfect: yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world, that come to nought:

But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, of this world, that come to nought:

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

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

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

MEETINGS

**EASTERN KEHUKEE PRIMITIVE
BAPTIST ASSOCIATION**

The 2010 session of the Eastern Kehukee Association will convene, the Lord willing, with Skewarkey Church located in Williamston, North Carolina. The meeting will be held on Saturday, October 2 and Sunday, October 3. Preaching services will begin each day at 10:30 a.m.

The church is located just off US 64E. Take Exit 514, turning left toward Williamston. Go about 1 1/2 miles and the church is on the left. It is a big white board building.

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

Naomi Coker
Association Clerk
252-823-0786

**IS IT TIME TO RENEW
YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?**

**IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE
IS 9/10**

IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR JULY 2010

Pearl Pendleton, VA	5.00
Clinton Barron, LA.....	5.00
Phyllis Hollandsworth, VA.....	5.00
Alvis Shelton, VA	15.00
Elder Junior Conner, VA	5.00
Ollie May, AL	5.00
Lessie Smith, LA.....	35.00
Steve Everett, VA	25.00
Elder Carl Terry, VA	5.00
Elder James Howard, AL	50.00
Melvin Cruise, VA.....	5.00
Vivian Underwood, VA	5.00
Larry Bird, NC	5.00
Angie Cox, NC.....	25.00

ISAIAH 5:1-2.

Now will I sing to my well-beloved a song of my beloved touching his vineyard. My well beloved hath a vineyard in a very fruitful hill:

And he fenced it, and gathered out the stones thereof, and planted it with the choicest vine, and built a tower in the midst of it, and also made a winepress therein: and he looked that it should bring forth grapes, and it brought forth wild grapes.

OBITUARIES

RUBY MAE HEDGE DUNCAN

It is with heavy hearts and much sadness that we attempt to write the obituary of our dear friend and beloved sister in the church, Sister Ruby Mae Hedge Duncan.

Sister Ruby was born September 23, 1921 and passed away May 21, 2010 making her stay on earth 88 years. She was preceded in death by her husband Joseph Jackson Duncan; and her parents, Anderson Bentley and Ina Mazzie Meredith Hedge. Survivors include two sons and daughter-in-law, Jackson Bentley and Lynn Duncan, and David Phillips and Anne Duncan, all of Christiansburg; a granddaughter and her husband, Kim Duncan and Steve Wade, of Radford; a stepgrandson, Derek Oliver, of Christiansburg; two great-grandchildren, Jackson Lewis and Shannon Kathleen Wade; and brother-in-law and wife, Vance and Lena Duncan of Christiansburg.

Sister Ruby was a faithful member of Indian Creek Primitive Baptist Church for over 57 years. Sister Ruby, along with her husband Joe, asked for a home in the church at

Valley View Primitive Baptist Church on the third weekend in September, 1952 and were baptized the first Sunday in October, 1952 in Snowville "Little River" by their pastor, Elder Golden P. Harris. On October 25, 1952, they asked for their membership to be with Indian Creek Primitive Baptist Church and were received into fellowship. Her husband, brother Joe, served the church as deacon for 18 years - 1957 to 1975.

Sister Ruby had a great desire to go to church and did attend as long as she was able. She had a beautiful alto voice that blended, so well, with our hymns.

Sister Ruby was a firm believer in "Salvation by the Grace of God". She was made submissive to her sickness and would often say "God's Will be Done". We had lots of good visits with her and the mention of her two great -grandchildren would bring a smile to her face. Her family meant so much to her.

Funeral services were held at Indian Creek Primitive Baptist Church, Floyd County at 3:00 P.M. on Sunday, May 23, 2010 by Elder Kenneth Hopkins and dismissed, at the cemetery, by Elder Tommy Pegram. She was laid to rest, beside her husband Joe, in the Indian Creek

Cemetery . We feel unworthy to write this and will miss this dear one, but find comfort that our loss is her Eternal Gain.

Done by order of Indian Creek Primitive Church in conference on June 26, 2010. Resolved, therefore,

That one copy be given to her family, one copy to the Signs of the Times, one copy to the church.

Elder Kenneth D. Hopkins,
Moderator
Harold J. Hollandsworth,
Committee
Phyllis S. Hollandsworth,
Committee

IRVIN RAMSEY HOLLEY

At the request of his daughters, I will attempt to write a memoriam for Irvin Ramsey Holley. Brother Holley was born April 25, 1908 in Pittsylvania County, Virginia, and was the son of Charlie Lester Holley and Susan Panana Brumfield Holley.

Brother Irvin and his lovely wife were married 74 years. Annie Davis Holley predeceased her husband Irvin on May 9, 2007. Brother Irvin is survived by three daughters, Boots Elliot, Shelby Shelton and Nancy King.

In Psalms Chapter 116, verse 15, you find: - *“Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints.”* Brother Holley was a member of Danville Primitive Baptist Church for 49 years and was a deacon there for a number of years. His walk and life were lived in true example of a saint of God. At his 100th birthday celebration, the facility overflowed with brethren and friends, bearing a visual testimony of the love and esteem in which they held this dear brother.

A few days before his natural death, he told me that he desired to leave this natural life and his hope was to be carried to his heavenly home. I believe he is now resting in a peaceful sleep in the Paradise of God, awaiting the glorious resurrection of the body when the soul and body will be raised in the likeness of Christ and dwell with him in eternity.

His funeral was conducted by Elder Mark Terry and Elder Jimmy Gray March 8, 2010.

We shall miss his presence with us but he has been carried from his natural home to the eternal home reserved for the saints of God.

In loving memory of a
dear brother in the Lord,
Burnell Williams

Obituary of
**SISTER IMOGENE A.
QUESENBERRY**

The Indian Creek Primitive Baptist Church located in Indian Valley, Virginia bows in humble submission to our Heavenly Father, in the calling of our dear sister, Imogene A. Quesenberry.

Sister Imogene Quesenberry, age 93, of Willis, Virginia departed this life for her eternal home on Monday, June 14th, 2010. She was born on September 28th, 1916 making her stay here some 94 years.

Sister Imogene was preceded in death by her parents, Kyle and Nora A. Phillips Akers, her husband Bro. Norman Quesenberry, and other family members.

Sister Imogene was married to her late husband some 66 years. To this union was born 4 children. Janice Quesenberry, of the home; Lorene Quesenberry and her husband, Kyle Bowman; Bennie & Margie Quesenberry Danny & Gail Quesenberry. Also, four grandchildren, two stepchildren, five great-grandchildren.

Sister Imogene Quesenberry joined Indian Creek Primitive Baptist church in June 27th, 1954 and was baptized by her Pastor Elder G. P. Harris on July 25th, 1954, She was a faithful member for 5 years. She firmly believed in Salvation by the grace of God. She loved her church family, and her door was always

open to her loved ones, church members, friends and neighbors. She loved to make beautiful quilts and share with others.

In the scripture we find, we are known for the fruits, well this sister showed her fruits by the love she had for her fellow man and love of her church.

Funeral services for Sister Imogene Quesenberry was held at her home church on June 16th, 2010 by her Pastor, Elder Kenneth Hopkins, and Elder Thomas Pegram. She was laid to rest in the church cemetery by her late husband to wait the coming of our Blessed Lord.

Elder Kenneth D. Hopkins,
Moderator
Bro. J. B. Mitchell
Sis. Jean Mitchell, *Committee*

ELDER CLARENCE D. STONE

God in His infinite wisdom and tender mercy has called to rest His faithful servant and dear brother in Christ, Elder Clarence D. Stone, age 75. He passed away March 31, 2010 while taking therapy at Memorial Hospital of Martinsville and Henry County.

Elder Stone was born in Henry Co., Virginia on November 9, 1934 to Perry Lee Stone and Majie O'Dell

Stone who are both deceased.

He was a great-grandson of Elder P. A. "Xander" Cahill. Brother Stone is survived by his loving wife of 54 years, Sister Gloria Walker Stone; daughter and son in-law Sharon Stone Reynolds and Roger Reynolds and son and daughter in law Steven D. Stone and Tina Gillette Stone. His grandchildren Britney Reynolds, Courtney Reynolds, Luke Reynolds, Brett Stone and step grand-children Zach Gillette and Kaitlyn Pugh. Also a sister in law Barbara Stone; a brother and sister in law Ralph and Mary Lou Stone and a brother and sister in law Lewis and Ruby Stone. In addition to his parents Bother Stone was preceded in death by a sister and brother in law, Thelma and Norman Dodson, a brother, Perry H. "Hamp" Stone, and a grandson, Benjamin Reynolds.

Elder Stone served in the United States Army and worked at Fieldcrest Mills until becoming disabled. He suffered a heart attack in 1983 and again in 1993, and had a very delicate and complex heart valve surgery in June 2009. He had suffered so much in his mortal body, but we believe that he is now sweetly resting, awaiting the resurrection.

Brother Clarence Stone asked for a home and was received at Union Primitive Baptist Church, Nov. 22, 1986, and was baptized May 24,

1987 by Elder Leonard J. Brammer. Being burdened to preach the gospel of his blessed Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, he was soon liberated by his home church. He was ordained to the full work of the gospel ministry, Nov. 26, 1988. During his service he pastored Sandy Level, Camp Branch, Knob and Chapel Churches and at the time of his death he was serving Rocky Mount Church and his home church, Union.

Elder Stone was wonderfully blessed; with the extraordinary gift that God bestowed upon him. We believe he bore the marks of the "*Lord Jesus*" and the fruit of the spirit: love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance: against such there is no law. We believe he proved this in his daily walk and godly conversation. He was blessed to preach the salvation of God's children is by the Sovereign Grace of Almighty God. He had a great knowledge of the scriptures, and I have remarked that "*Brother Clarence is a walking concordance, if you have a question about where to find a certain scripture just ask Brother Stone.*" He was given of God to "*Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of*

truth." (II Tim. 2:15) Also as we heard him often quote, "*For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek.*" (Rom. 1:16)

He visited the sick and shut-in and preached many funerals.

He was known near and far and loved to be with those of like precious faith. He loved and was loved and is sorely missed by his wife and family, brethren, neighbors and friends. But we believe our loss is his eternal gain. May it be our prayer to our Lord God that we all be reconciled to His holy and righteous will.

Funeral services were held at Union Primitive Baptist Church, Patrick Co., Va. with Elder Larry Hollandsworth and Elder Mark Terry officiating before a large and sympathetic congregation. His earthly body was laid to rest in the church cemetery beneath a beautiful mound of flowers, to await the coming of the Lord Jesus, when Brother Clarence and all the ransomed Church of God will be raised to be fashioned like unto the glorious body of Jesus. Amen.

Written by one who loved him for Christ's sake,

Mark I. Terry

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 178

HILLSVILLE, VA., OCTOBER 2010

NO. 10

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

FRUIT OF ETERNAL UNION

ISSN - 0199 - 0063

Subscription price \$15.00 per year - \$25.00 two years

Published monthly by
SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

1429 Howlett Street
Hillsville, Va. 24343

*Betroth'd in love ere time began
His blood-bought bride with Jesus see;
Made by Eternal Union ONE,
Who was, and is, and is to be.*

*Thus He became our Covenant Head,
Charg'd with her sin the Savior stands,
To do, and suffer in her stead
All that the righteous law demands.*

*Here justice and the highest grace
Met in the sinner's only Friend;
He freely took our lowest place;
Oh! Love that does all thought transcend.*

*When sunk in sin He'll not disown
Those sacred ties that made her His,
But claim this partner of His throne,
Thro' floods of wrath and deep distress.*

*Nor flood, nor flame, nor hell combin'd;
Shall from His heart the Church divide;
His blood the Eternal covenant sign'd
When for her sins in love He died.*

*Thus in His eyes she ever stood
From wrinkle and from blemish free;
Lov'd with the dateless Love of God,
And blest by the great Sacred Three.*

LM THOMAS BRADBURY

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EDITORIALS

**MERCY IS FROM
EVERLASTING TO EVERLASTING**

“O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good: for his mercy endureth forever.” (I Chronicles 16:34)

The mercy of the Lord is from everlasting to everlasting upon them that fear him, to them that have been called from nature’s darkness into his marvelous light. This mercy is as old as God is, and is just as sure and certain to endure forever toward those who were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the

world, as the fact that there is a heaven prepared for those who love God. All the power of the Godhead is supporting each of these promises and they are sure and steadfast. The comfort of this mercy that endures forever is the most precious treasure that the children of God experience in this life. It will never forsake them, because without it they could not stand, and the evidence is that they shall all stand without the loss of one.

This is the same mercy that was extended to Adam and Eve in the garden of Eden when they partook of the fruit of the forbidden tree. They had no legal right or just claim to the mercy that was shown to them in their hour of need, or the promise that was made unto their seed which would come after them. It was solely the mercy of God, and had it not been extended to them at that time there would have been no heirs to inherit that heavenly kingdom that was prepared for the saints of God. Then, as it has ever been, this mercy is the eternal refuge of the children of God, and then, as Moses said, *“Underneath are the everlasting arms.”* What security the heirs of promise are blessed with. Heaven will not be populated because there are some who are worthy, but only because mercy endured when man could not. The first man could not endure the temptations which confronted him, and all of those following are the same flesh, vain, weak, and as Peter said, *“All*

flesh is as grass."

Mercy was extended to Abram when he dwelt in the Ur of the Chaldees, and the Lord told him to get out of that country away from his kindred according to the flesh, unto a land that the Lord would show him. He promised Abram at the same time that in Abram all the nations of the earth would be blessed. At the same time that the mercy of God was extended to Abram, the promise was given also, as it is with each of his children. They realize that they have not received because of any worthiness within themselves, but at the same time cannot deny that they do have a hope in things eternal, and a kinship toward those who have been called out in like manner. This mercy followed Abraham all of his life, and we hope to see the fulfilling of that promise on down through history, even to the present day. By promise an heir was given unto Abraham through Sarah, and according to nature that was impossible, yet it happened according to God's promise. Abraham rejoiced exceedingly and yet at the time appointed was made willing to offer his own son as a sacrifice unto his God. Mercy intervened and spared the son, but the trial was experienced in all its anguish by Abraham. *"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."* This most assuredly must have been the feelings of Abraham

as he experienced this trial of faith which all of God's people must pass through in some measure. As Peter wrote, *"That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perisheth, though it be tried by fire, might be found unto praise and honor and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ:"* It is all to the glory of God and sent in that mercy that endureth forever.

It was this same mercy that sustained Job in all of his afflictions and brought him through them praising his Creator. The same mercy that called David from following after his father's sheep and placed him upon the throne of Israel. The way in which this was accomplished was not in what would normally be considered a natural sequence of events. Saul was king of Israel and as such, according to nature, had the power to raise up whom he would and to kill whom he would, but on several occasions he would have killed David but something (mercy) delivered David out of the hands of Saul. On at least two occasions Saul was delivered into the hands of David, but the same thing that intervened and spared David's life, intervened so that David would not stretch forth his hand against the Lord's anointed. This same mercy followed David all of the days of his life. Mercy prevailed on behalf of David when Absalom, his own son, sought to take his life, and the most precious time in the life of David when this

mercy prevailed, was when in the lust of the flesh temptation overcame him and he sinned. This is true of each in their own travels, they are made to realize the weakness and sinfulness of the flesh and to know that unless mercy endures toward them they are eternally lost and without hope. This is why David was made to declare over and over, "*the mercy of the Lord endureth forever.*" What comfort it is to the trembling heirs of promise to see David brought through all of his trials and then come down to the end of his natural life and be blessed, in spite of all this, to declare, "*Although my house be not so with God, yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant ordered in all things and sure, for this is all my salvation and all my desire, although he maketh it not to grow.*" This is the testimony of all who have been brought this way. They acknowledge that although their standing before God does not warrant it, God hath extended mercy to them and all of their salvation and their desire rests alone in the mercy and in the promises made to those that possess it. They realize that it comes down to them sovereignly and majestically as the rain and snow from heaven and revives their trembling and fainting heart when it seems that they shall surely perish.

Daniel's life was an example of the mercy of God leading and directing the footsteps of His children in this life. By mercy Daniel was

granted favor in the eyes of the keeper of the Hebrew children who were to stand before the king. By mercy he was given the interpretation of the dreams which was to raise him to positions of great authority in the kingdom of that day. Just as Joseph was in his day. These were times in which a great work was to be done for the Lord's people, and at such times one is always raised up to perform the work. Joseph was to save many people alive, and Daniel was to witness to the Lord's people in his day. They were what they were by the mercy of God.

The comforting thought is that this mercy is not bestowed upon the children of God because of what they are by nature, but rather in spite of what they are by nature. The Gadarene was a recipient of this mercy in the same way David or Saul of Tarsus was, and that was by the grace of Almighty God. The Gadarene and Saul of Tarsus are typical of all of God's children before they have been quickened by the Holy Spirit and called with a holy calling into the manifest family of God. They were creatures of wrath, even as others, whether they dwelt among the tombs, as outcasts from the societies of this world or were profiting in the religions of the world above many. When it pleases God who separated them from their mother's womb to separate them from their state in nature and call them by his grace, it is this same

mercy that is bestowed upon them. For the first time they are clothed and in their right mind and they are shown what they are by nature and what they must be by grace. They are given to see that all flesh is as grass and the goodness thereof is as the flower of the field, and is profitable for nothing in spiritual matters. They all go home to their friends and begin to tell them what great things the Lord has done for them, and are surprised to find that their experience is not new to them. They had felt that surely their's was an unique case, and others did not require the same miracle of grace that they feel to have experienced. As they travel this new way unto them, they begin to see the sufferings that are also common to all in a greater or lesser degree, and are made to see their dependence on this mercy to sustain them on their journey. This is when scriptures such as the one above have such a special significance to each one.

This mercy extend's to all the Ruth's, Cornelius' Syrophenician women, deaf, blind, halt, lame, poor and hungry for whom it was treasured in Christ before the foundation of the world, and every event will come to pass that is necessary for it to be manifested in their lives. According to nature, there are many times when it seems by chance but I believe that they are all the same as the Samaritan woman at the well states, "*and he must needs,*" speaking of Jesus as he left Judea

and departed again into Galilee He must needs go that way because that is where this woman was, and the time had come when it must needs be made manifest unto her and others as they were chosen vessels, even though they were not of the Jews. This is true of the blind man to whom Jesus gave sight. He told his disciples this man was born blind, "*That the works of God should be made manifest in him.*" No accident or chance there, just this mercy manifest that it does indeed endure forever to those who are predestinated unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of His will.

As Paul recorded in Romans, "*Who shall separate us from the love of God?*" He then lists several things that comfort the children of God in this life, things which without this mercy would indeed cause them to fall by the wayside, but this does not happen to any because the one that has begun a good work in them will not, yea cannot fail. They not only do not fall by the wayside but Paul says, "*Nay in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.*" He sets forth the extent to which this mercy endures on behalf of those to whom it is extended, and then says he was fully persuaded that nothing was able to separate them from the love of God which was in Christ the Lord. Paul was led along the pathway of life in such a

way that he also was blessed to see that the mercy of God covers all of these situations that God's children face in this life. It is comforting to read the writings of those who, we hope, have traveled the same way that we have been brought along, and find them ending their pilgrimage declaring that this mercy endures even unto death. Paul was blessed as he neared the end of his journey, to declare, *"I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand."* No fear of dying, no desire to remain in this wilderness of sin, no sorrow of leaving those he loved: just confident that the same mercy, which had been his constant companion since his experience on the road to Damascus, would sustain those who remained and bring them down to the end of their allotted time just as it had him. *"I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith, henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord the righteous Judge shall give me at that day, and not to me only, but unto all them that love his appearing."* What a rich blessing of God's abounding grace upon this aging Apostle to be given at this stage in his life such a comfort in the blessed assurance that this mercy endureth forever, and included the assurance of his having a part in the glorious resurrection of the saints. O blessed thought!

Down through the ages of time the vessels afore prepared unto

glory have all received evidence of this mercy in their lives, as each is born into the kingdom of God. As Jesus told Nicodemus, *"Ye must be born again."* which makes them realize their great need of this mercy and grace of God in their life. They are made to see what they are by nature and what they must be by grace, and realize that there is such a great gulf fixed between these two extremes, and they fear what their end will be. They realize that they cannot attain to what they must be, and therefore plead for mercy, not justice, because mercy is the only thing that can span that great gulf. As they travel in this mercy and are made accepted in the beloved, they are given to say with David, Paul, Peter, James and John, *"O give thanks unto the Lord, for he is good: for his mercy endureth forever."*

This mercy is precious in the thoughts of all who have been saved and called with a holy calling. It has been their staff and their dependable friend, and is tailored to their individual need as they face the trials of life. It conquered all the Goliaths, quenches all the fires that would consume them, parts the waters that would overflow them, stops the mouths of the lions that would devour them, and overcomes the weaknesses and sins of the flesh which would cause them to fail to reach their heavenly abode. Isaiah recorded, *"No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper, and every tongue that shall*

rise against thee in judgement thou shalt condemn. This is the heritage of the saints of the Lord, and their righteousness is of me saith the Lord." What a precious and glorious heritage belongs to those whom God loves; and this mercy is the constant reminder that comforts and strengthens them along the way.

Our hope and our prayer is that we have experienced some of these things along our life's way, and that they are evidences of this mercy in God's dealings with us. May they continue to be ours to experience and to meditate upon as we sojourn in this wilderness awaiting the time when, *"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."* O glorious thought! O precious hope! and this mercy endures through it all. It is just as sure and certain to endure to all of the saints of God in all ages to come, as it has in ages past. It does not weaken or diminish with the passage of time, but is always sufficient unto the needs of the day for those to whom it is sent.

In bonds of love,
Elder Richard H. Campbell

VOICES OF THE PAST

WHAT WONDROUS LOVE

"Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God, and everyone that loveth is born of God. He that loveth not knoweth not God; for GOD IS LOVE." (1st John 4:7-8)

I cannot refrain from calling upon all those who fear the Lord to give attention while I tell what God has done for my soul. I must tell of the power of His wondrous love. I must tell of the changes it has wrought in my heart and mind. I must hint at the joy, peace, and happiness experienced, even amidst tribulations. I must tell you that LOVE does not do away with the Ten Commandments and the many other tributary commandments quoted in the Scriptures. The whole duty of man is to fear God and keep His commandments. Perfect love casteth out fear and causes one to LOVE God and his fellowman, and all these commandments become a right principle in his heart. I must tell you that this wondrous love changes duty into a privilege, and burden into desire. This love is the only thing that can change one's character, will, or life. It is the only thing that will cause one to love his enemies, do good to them who despise you and pray for those who persecute. I must

emphasize that LOVE is the Virtue of virtues as well as the Gift of gifts. It is GOD for God is LOVE!

“What wondrous love is this, O, my soul? What wondrous love is this that caused the Lord of bliss to bear the dreadful curse for my soul? When I was sinking down beneath God’s righteous frown, Christ laid aside His crown for my soul.” These words of the good old hymn have been flooding my mind and heart for several days. I want to bear this news and sing His praise to the children of men for the wonderful work of LOVE. It is the love of God, “Shed abroad in our hearts which is given us by the Holy Ghost,” which causes us to *“glory in tribulations also.”* The commandment of love was that which gave Paul the knowledge of his sins. This commandment killed the proud, mighty, and self-righteous Saul, the great. The commandment of love caused the new person, Paul, the little, to manifest opposite characteristics. This new man, Paul, confessed his sins and ignorance. He trusted no longer in himself but in Christ Jesus. He manifested humility, dependence, and trust. What Wondrous Love is this that changes a persecutor into a worshiper, a self-righteous man into begging for the mercies of God, and supplants the spirit of gentleness which subdues the arrogance already in us! Life void of love is a living death. Though rich in this world’s material goods, a man with-

out love is very poor. Though a man may be as a pauper naturally, if he be possessed with Godly love, he is very rich. Augustine said, *“Charity is patient in adversities, temperate in prosperity, strong in grievous sufferings, cheerful in good works; most secure in temptation, most expansive in hospitality; most joyous among true brethren, most patient among false ones.”* What wondrous love is this which is the power of prophecy, the basis of knowledge, the fruit of faith, the riches of the poor, and the life of the dying.

How tender, soft, melodious, and meek must have been the tones of the voice of Jesus as He talked to the arrogant Saul while Saul was on the way to Damascus with warrants of arrest. It is true that a soft answer turneth away wrath, and that grievous words stir up anger. Jesus did not approach Saul in the dignity of the Creator giving authoritative commands. He approached him with a simple question, *“Saul, why persecutest thou me?”* Jesus gave an humble answer to Saul’s question: *“Who art thou, Lord?”* He answered, *“I am Jesus whom thou persecutest. It is hard for thee to kick against the pricks.”* These words caused Paul to fear and tremble. These words caused Paul to ask, *“What wilt thou have me to do.”* The Lord said, *“Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do.”* Paul experienced a drastic change

of characteristics. Paul was made willing to do anything that Jesus would have him do. The love of God inspires one to love God and his fellowman. One who possesses this love by gift of the Holy Ghost will not be trying to find excuses for not obeying the commandments of God, but will be diligently trying, and praying for power to do them. While love is on the throne of the soul, one will be so conscious of the depraved condition of his carnal mind that his best falls far short of the requirements of love. While love reigns in the soul, one is patient, kind, generous, humble, courteous, unselfish, sincere, and of good temper.

Many schools of training have been established for the purpose of transforming the will, renewing the mind, teaching morality, and making many rules for proper conduct. NONE of these institutions have succeeded. The wicked will do wickedly. The wicked cannot so polish their wills to reach beyond the realm of wickedness. It requires the baptism of the Holy Ghost, which is regeneration, to make a new person. It requires the "*Love of God*" shed abroad in the heart which is given us by the Holy Ghost, to transform the will, renew the mind, effectually teach Christianity, and inspire proper conduct in each and every circumstance.

God's School of Love is successful in its operation and objectives. A child of God cannot reach these supernatural objectives in this

life but he will forever be doing his best and praying to be empowered to reach the goal.

There have been many ideas suggested relative to the "*tribulations*" Paul had under consideration in Romans 5:3-5: "*...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 to us.*" We understand that *tribulation* is derived from the Latin *tribulum*, which was the threshing instrument, or roller, whereby the Roman husbandmen separated the corn from the husks; and "*tribulation*" in its primary significance, was the act of this separation. The love which is of God is the eternal good, or fluid, infused in the soul by the Holy Ghost. This love is the precious substance which shows up the impurities of the best in the minds of natural men. All the "*goodness*" of carnality appears to be the crust of vanity that needs to be separated from this love which is precious. It is not a pleasant experience to be on the threshing floor.

The purpose of God threshing His people is to separate the precious from the vile in each and every person. Sorrows, adversities, severe afflictions, heartaches, and sundry troubles are all used as "*threshing instruments*" in the hands of a loving God, to "*refine*" His people.

The greatest of these tribulations that I have experienced is a guilty conscience for having violated the law of Love. I undergo continuous threshings which make me to cry out, O wretched man that I am! I have never complained to God of any cruelty to me. I have felt that I deserved far more punishment, or chastisement, than has ever been administered. What wondrous love is this that causes one to even thank God for these tribulations; yes, even to thank Him for making us to know how stubborn, unruly and rebellious we are by nature. It is necessary that we be baffled, smitten, and scourged before we can realize how vain we are. The flail in the hands of the Thresher is used to bruise the sheaves and break out the wheat from the straw. Blows of pain, aches, misfortunes, and daily dying are used to divide the flesh and spirit. The breaking off the worldly crust is unpleasant while being experienced but afterward yieldeth the peaceful fruit of righteousness to those who are exercised thereby. We do not have any idea how much chaff there is in our hearts before the threshing. I have more confidence in the person who feels to fail in all of his efforts in meeting the requirements of God's law of love than I do for those who feel they are the loveliest. The love of God causes the boaster to be aware of his boasting, the disobedient to be aware of his disobedience, and the ungrateful to be aware of his ingratitude. Our na-

ture is to boast, disobey God's law, and to be blind to His goodness toward us. This love is the purest of the pure which show up our impurities.

Paul discussed the varied gifts of the Spirit in 1st Corinthians 12. He ended this chapter with, "*But covet earnestly the best gifts: and yet show I unto you a more excellent way .*" He ended the 13th chapter by saying: "*And now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three ; but the greatest of these is charity .*" Paul proves by contrasting the grace of charity, the great love, with all other gifts, or talents, that void of charity, all is vain. He proves that the way of love is much more to be desired than the way of great accomplishments and display of many talents. We are to "*Follow after charity, and desire spiritual gifts...*" (1 Cor. 14:1) These gifts are good enough to be desired and coveted; yet, love is that which is to be followed. What wondrous love is this which causes one to prefer being rich in love and weak in faith, rather than being strong in faith, yet void of love. I had much rather hear a short simple loving sermon than to hear a long eloquent discourse on theology. I had rather hear one urge the necessity of following after love which make peace and unity, than to hear a lecture of one trying to prove that he is strong in the faith. I had rather see the disposition of love in a person that is weak in the faith, than to hear

words of great faith from a loveless individual. I admit my weakness in the faith as well as my disobedience to the law of Love. God help me! !

Paul's analysis of *charity* is brief yet reveals so much. Let us quote: "*Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth in the truth; beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. Charity never faileth ...*" (1 Cor. 13:4-8) This wondrous love works patience and long suffering to the injuries which come from man as well as the afflictions suffered from God. This wondrous love works reconciliation to suffering and submission to God's will. It weans us from our own will and works contentment in our hearts to be content with our lot. The first ingredient of love is patience. The second ingredient spoken by Paul is kindness. Kindness is anxious not to give offense to any creature. Kindness watches for opportunity to assist anyone to be more comfortable. Christ's life was spent in doing kind things for the poor, halt, maimed, blind, diseased, and sinful. Someone said, "*The greatest thing a man can do for his Heavenly Father is to be kind to some of His other children.*" Persons deserving love most, least

need it; persons deserving love least, need it most. Try being kind to your enemies and you will be surprised and pleased with the results. Try a soft answer to the wrathful.

The third ingredient of charity is, "*Envieth not.*" I can think of no word in the English language to use properly as an antonym to envy. Gladness, happiness, and rejoicing in heart when we see the good fortunes of others, certainly must be the positive way to put it. I suppose that envy is the basest of passions that make men most miserable. It is something that nothing but the love of God can abate. Envy causes us to feel uneasiness in the sight of another's possessions, or happiness. Envy causes us to dislike one because of his fortunes or happiness. It is the most difficult vice to hide. Am I irritated when another is praised? Am I hurt because another can write and preach better than I? God rid us of envy.

The fourth ingredient of charity is humility. "*Charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up.*" Love certainly crushes pride, makes it detestable, and dethrones it. Pride is the begetter of all wranglings, jars, and discords. We read in Proverbs 13:10, "*Only by pride cometh contention.*" One has to learn through hurt pride that you can't push yourself ahead by patting yourself on the back. Love is the only thing that can teach us this truth. One in possession of this wondrous love learns that he can never get the right

“pitch” to sing his own praise. Deeds done and work accomplished thru love need not to be told by the doer. If love prompts an action you will not want to take time to tell about it. You will be interested in the next act. This wondrous love makes you use the time in praying that those without it use in boasting. God grace us to be HUMBLES.

The fifth ingredient of love is courtesy. Charity, *“Doth not behave itself unseemly.”* Love begets politeness, good behavior, proper etiquette, cheerfulness, and good manners. This is a banner of love that draws attention from everyone with whom you come in contact. One with Love in his heart can act properly in strange places without special training. Courtesy prompted by love is the simple passport which enables one to mingle with any society, and enter even palaces from his own humble cottage. Behavior is a mirror in which everyone shows his true image. If one be filled with love his behavior will be proper in every circumstance. One without love may go through all kinds of training, yet his behavior will be irritable to others. My mother constantly reminded me to behave myself. May the wondrous love of God teach me good behavior.

The sixth ingredient of love is unselfishness: *“Seeketh not her own.”* Love will make one willing to give up his own rights. A true lover will regard the rights of others and disregard his own rights. True love

puts self in the background. The man void of love, loves himself supremely. Love does not cause one to demand his rights to the extent that it hurts or wounds his brethren or fellowman. Even though one feels that someone is due him an apology, charity will not seek it. If one be wounded without cause, love demands that he take it without a murmur. God grant that we sacrifice contending for our own rights and peculiar convictions which would tend to cause trouble.

The seventh statement concerning love is: *“Is not easily provoked.”* This means Good Temper is one of the sterling characteristics of the possessor of this charity. Good temper is evident when a person cannot lead, he refuses to drive. One does not become fretful and impatient when accomplishments of his efforts are delayed, because delays are inevitable. The best of people have been often provoked to such extent that bad temper was manifest. It is common to hear the expression, *“He would be very good if he could control his temper.”* Ill temper with high moral character means that the possessor is weak in love. Ill temper is the sin of the disposition of a person which is very common and hurtful to his influence. God grant that we be, *“Not easily provoked.”*

We can not do more than hint at some of the characteristics of love in this article. We shall speak of one thing this love does which is neces-

sary to bring into our experience all these characteristics. This is relative to all things: *"Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things."* (1 Cor. 13:7) We bear all things because we are convinced that, *"All things work together for good to them who love God."* We know that the wrath of man can do no more against us than we deserve because: *"Surely the wrath of man shall praise thee: the remainder of wrath shalt thou restrain."* (Psalm 76:10). We believe, bear, hope, and endure all things because: *"The Lord hath made all things for Himself: yea, even the wicked for the day of evil."* We have strong consolation that God's purpose for the wicked referred to in Proverbs 16:4, is to use as His sword to render judgment and correction to His people for their good; as well as, to deliver their soul from the wicked. David prayed, *"Arise, O Lord, disappoint him, cast him down: deliver my soul from the wicked, which is thy sword."* What wondrous love is this that makes us confident in the statement: *"For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things: to whom be glory forever. Amen."* (Romans 11:36) Lovers are aware of the fact that they cannot love too much. Sometimes we are disappointed because our love to our fellowman seems to be without success. However, we believe that God surely will restrain love that is not

God-honoring and helpful to our fellowman, just as surely as He restrains wrath and hatred which will not work for our good and His praise. Brethren, there is no danger of too much true love being lavished upon our fellowman and God! Let us rejoice in the Truth. We sorrow when iniquity abounds, - even in our own hearts. May love so flood our souls that we think no evil. When evil thinking comes into our minds, may LOVE arise and say, No, no, not that!

We close with the first expression of the text which heads this treatise: *"Beloved, Let us love one another, for love is of God."* What wondrous love is this, O my soul? which causes us to see how short we come in meeting these requirements. God has loved us so wondrously, may we pray that we be enabled to love our fellow man and our brethren just a wee bit. May our soul taste from time to time, a little bit of the sweetness to such extent that we may sing: WHAT WONDROUS LOVE IS THIS, O MY SOUL?

E. J. Lambert

PSALM 5:11.

But let all those that put their trust in thee rejoice: let them ever shout for joy, because thou defendest them: let them also that love thy name be joyful in thee.

HOSEA II. 14, 15.

“Therefore, behold, I will allure her, and bring her into the wilderness, and speak comfortably unto her. 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.”

God never forgets his people, but it cannot be said that they never forget him. They are full of waywardness and rebellion, which call forth his fatherly chastisements to reprove and correct them. It seems incredible that the people especially blessed with the presence of the Lord, and who had witnessed again and again his omnipotent power and omniscient oversight working in their behalf, could ever forget him or grow cold and indifferent toward him; not only so, but that they should give themselves over repeatedly to the foolish vanities and idolatries which they had before learned could bring them naught but shame and sorrow, seems far more incredible; but of all this was national Israel guilty at the time of the prophecy quoted above. This nation so singularly chosen of God from among all nations of the earth, whereby it pleased him to show forth his honor and glory, was seen lusting after heathenish idols, forsaking the law of her Maker and all

his holy ordinances as prescribed by Moses, to seek the satisfaction of her natural inclinations in bowing the knee unto the gods of the Gentile nations about her. She had forgotten God's wonderful deliverance of her from Egyptian darkness and bondage, of his parting the Red Sea waters that she should pass through dryshod, and had entirely lost sight of his guidance of her, through the forty-year wilderness journey in the cloud by day and fire by night. In the time of great thirst he caused the rock to be smitten, that it should pour forth a stream for her sake; but it was forgotten, together with that time of great hunger when he sent manna from heaven for food. The service of the holy temple, the intercession of the high priest and the offering for sin were all forgotten. God brought her safely through Jordan's swelling flood into the promised land (Canaan) flowing with milk and honey, gave her the victory over her enemies and established her in that country which he gave her for her own. What more evidences could the require of his faithfulness? And how did she requite Him? Her answers were rebellion, pride, depravity and idolatry. At the time of the prophet Hosea, Israel was steeped in national corruption and was standing on the verge of the Babylonian captivity, and in all this was an ensample unto the Israel of the gospel age, not very far distant. These events of national Jewish history typify spiritual truths imparted

unto the gospel church at the present time. There is a proneness to wander felt by the child of God that often gives him great concern, and this very concern, so long as it is present, is in itself a safeguard against yielding to temptation, but when one comes to that state wherein his wanderings do not cause anxiety, he is treading very near Babylon's captivating lure. When in the christian experience one passes from law to gospel, nature to grace, first realizes a hope in the virtues of Jesus' blood and sings for the first time the new song of praise unto God, then in the ardor of his first love is lost entirely to view the weakness of the flesh which will later endeavor to ensnare him into yielding to its temptations. Were the new birth a change wrought in the old man of our Adamic nature, no such danger could exist, nor would one ever wander after the false gods of the flesh. The new birth is the coming into manifestation of a new creature, created in righteousness and true holiness, but it is not a renovation of the old creature of sin and depravity. This makes the subject of grace a dual being experiencing the warfare between the flesh and the Spirit. There are times in the experience of gospel churches, and of individuals, when there seems to be little or no response to spiritual things, and a coldness as of frost seems to nip in the bud every good and beautiful tendency to higher and better things;

accompanying this condition there is also no manifestation of anxiety or grief concerning the matter, but instead an inclination to worldliness is manifested in a careless walk or conversation unbecoming the profession of a disciple of Christ, and a disposition to use the principles of Bible doctrine as a cloak to cover one's actions or utterances. This condition of a church or an individual answers to the condition of national Israel in the type at the time of Hosea's prophecy. The remedy for this condition is not in our hands, but in God's hand, and he will distribute to us of reproof and correction that we shall be ashamed before him for all our ways, and confessing our sins, be brought unto repentance and forgiveness. The child of God that hugs some fleshly idol to his heart is sowing to the flesh; and will of the flesh reap corruption. Do any of us ever strive to lay up for ourselves treasures on the earth? Scarcely any are guiltless on this score, but labor and sorrow are all we get for our pains. This state of affairs cannot long exist with the Lord's people, for he is a jealous God and will not give his glory to another, nor his praise to graven images. *"Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve,"* is a command that must be fulfilled, and as surely as God has determined it, so shall they most certainly be brought to serve him to the exclusion of all things else.

"I will allure her, and bring

her into the wilderness.” To allure is to attract and entice. In being thus drawn into a snare one is not conscious of his danger, nor that he is being tempted. Our slight indulgences of fleshly impulses unconsciously lead to more and more ungodliness, until we are enmeshed in a web from which we are unable to extricate ourselves. The wilderness referred to in the text is the utter worldliness of Babylon, and represents the wilderness of total depravity. It is waste howling. “Waste” because it is entirely destitute of any spiritual qualities wherewith to satisfy the desires of the new creature, and “howling” because it is full of the wild beasts of our nature, prowling around seeking what they may devour. When dominated by the flesh a child of God is drawn away by the lusts thereof and enticed. He is led into the wilderness, but when, within him, the motions of eternal life manifest themselves, total depravity becomes a mightily oppressive burden; then one knows the panting of the soul after God and what it is to be as a pelican in the wilderness, or as a sparrow alone upon the housetop; this is the depth of woe and the pit of miry clay. One deeply questions whether the Lord has forgotten to be gracious, and if his mercy is clean gone forever. I trust I do no violence to the text when I say that our fleshly lusts are those principles which allure us toward Babylon, although the pronoun “I” in the text refers to God. Our heavenly Father

not only takes cognizance of our fleshly wanderings, but ordains them, not as an end in themselves, but as evil out of which good shall come. We, his people, are not at liberty to do evil that good may come, but God has a perfect right to appoint such a path for us if he so chooses, and that without in the least impeaching any of his divine attributes. Whatsoever he does is right, because he does it. By causing his wayward children to realize the bitterness of the fruits of their idolatries, they are brought into that attitude of soul towards him of which he says: I “*will speak comfortably unto her.*” Words able to comfort must be spoken by one fully acquainted with the needs of the case. Herein does the repentant child touch the Daysman, the Mediator, Christ Jesus, who was tempted in all points like as his people are, yet without sin, and is able to succor them when tempted, for he is touched with the feeling of their infirmities. He is the speaker of the comfortable words. Thus amidst the shattering of one’s idolatries there arises a blessed communion with Christ as he comes near to comfort her who had wandered from her true Husband after false lovers.

“*I will give her her vineyards from thence.*” The fruitfulness of the church arises from her realization of the vanities of the flesh and of the value of Christ to her. When mindful of her inherent weakness and infirmity, and aware that without

him she can do nothing, she is not in danger of being taken captive by unbelief, but treads softly and humbly, leaning upon the staff of his precious promises. It is in her high-mindedness and self-confidence that temptation lurks, and until the Husbandman prunes these dead twigs the fruit of the vine will not come to perfection. It is in being made to realize the utter spiritual destitution of the wilderness of the carnal mind and heart that the soul is prepared for the growth of those vineyards whose grapes are the fruits of the Spirit enumerated by the apostle Paul in his letter to the Galatian Church. (Gal. v. 22, 23.)

“And the valley of Achor for a door of hope.” This is the valley wherein Achan, he that troubled the peace of Israel with his relics of Jericho’s corruption, was stoned to death with all his house. It is the valley of purging or of purification, and is the place wherein we are made to fellowship the sufferings of Jesus, who purged away all our dross and tin and purified us of unrighteousness. The golden wedge of self-confidence is often buried in our tents, but when the light of Jesus’ truth discovers its hiding-place, a sense of guilt fills us with anguish, and we are found crying, *“Lord, save us: we perish.”* This is the fiery trial wherein is wrought the refinement of faith’s gold and the destruction of unbelief’s wood and stubble. This deep distress which serves to tear our idols from us and turns our

faces toward the temple again, is the door of hope, or that by which hope enters anew and afresh into our souls. When we were drifting idly and calmly upon the smooth surface of fleshly security, we lost sight of our hope or any necessity for such an anchor. But in the midst of the storm its *“anchor pull”* is felt, for the severity of the tempest tests its security. If our hope were centered in some earthly thing, it could not endure the tempest’s rage, but the christian’s hope, though lost sight of in times of fleshly ease, is anchored in heaven above, in God’s love and power and infinite mercy. The higher we are tossed on the billows of trouble, the nearer we approach unto our anchor (hope), which is never so precious as when earth and its idols perish.

“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.” She shall sing *“there;”* in that very place where has been witnessed her humiliation and distress she is made to sing; not in some other place, but there, where she has experienced so much hunger and thirst of spirit, shall she rejoice unspeakably. The very wilderness wherein her entanglement caused shame and sorrow shall be glad for her with the rising of the Sun of righteousness. The desert wherein her strength utterly failed shall blossom as the rose with the presence of Him, the Bridegroom of her soul. God does not need to

remove us from amid desolate conditions in order to make us happy in him. A prison is just as good to dwell in as a palace if Jesus dwells with us there. God does not wait until our bodies die to impart unto us the doctrine of the resurrection and its experimental comforts and benefits, but while yet in this time state we come forth from death in Adam unto life in Christ, and, like Paul, die daily, but nevertheless live by the life of Christ, which dwells in us. Though the experience of the wilderness causes repentance in sackcloth and ashes, yet it is where Jesus speaks comfortable words to his tried ones, and when he has revived their hope from the valley of trouble they find again that song in their heart which was theirs in the days of their spiritual youth, when in their first love and first enjoyment of a hope in the virtues of Jesus' blood. This song of praise, yea, even God's praise, testifies to the victory which God through Christ has given the church over all enemies of righteousness.

Unto all those that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity and truth, I affectionately tender the above message, I trust, in the fear of God.

Yours in gospel bonds,
HORACE H. LEFFERTS.

Warwick, N.Y.,
Dec. 11, 1907.

ROMANS VIII. 28.

"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God."

These words bring to our minds solemn thoughts and reflections, of the ground they cover, and the real true meaning of the words here spoken by the apostle, under the inspiration of the holy Spirit of God. How hard it is for poor insignificant creatures to understand or comprehend the working of his almighty power, as he (God) works all things after the counsel of his own will. As we contemplate the majesty and glory of our God in all his works let us ever remember that *"as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts."* It seems to me that Paul was here contemplating the work of God from the beginning to the end, from creation to the final glorification of all the redeemed, and not a single link in the chain of God's providence could be left out and his most holy will and purpose accomplished for his dear saints and his glory. We poor finite creatures cannot sit as judges of what our God should do or not do, or divide between the good and the bad, from our viewpoint. It has often been said that God predestinated the good things, but not the bad. Who of us is able to sit as judge and draw the dividing line; place the

good things on the right, the bad on the left? Let us examine a few things left on record for our learning. God created Adam upright, a good created being, gave him a law. He broke that law and fell under its curse: sin and death upon all his posterity. Now we all know that our God could have made Adam strong enough to have withstood the temptation, but in the purpose of God, with an end in view in the far future, he made Adam just as he was. We would place this evil step on the left, not comprehending the thing to be accomplished: the glorification of our God and his only beloved Son Jesus, the Savior of sinners. But I want it distinctly understood that God is not the author of sin; man is wholly responsible for all his sins and misdeeds. We note again among the "*all things*" the selling of Joseph. Joseph had a dream. (Read the narrative.) Was it a mere chance dream, or did the God of heaven inspire it? He had a purpose in it, therefore it was a link in the chain. Joseph told it to his brethren and they put their interpretation upon it (and a correct one).

The evil of their corrupt nature arose and they conspired against Joseph and sold him to merchantmen, who carried him to Egypt, See the sorrow of poor old Jacob. Would we not all place this on the left, with the bad things, as old Jacob did when he said, All these things are against me Dear reader, how often have we said in our hearts as Jacob did, not seeing the end, But, reader,

follow Joseph in all his career, shut up in the prison cell by evil intention, is this for good? Yes, in the purpose of God, though yet hid from mortals, Pharaoh dreamed a dream, Joseph was there to interpret it. Suppose Joseph had not been there, then what, But he was there to interpret the dream, Seven years of plenty, seven years of famine, Joseph finds favor with the king, and is made head over all, to save much people alive. God sent him there; the end is good, and when made known his brethren bowed to him willingly, and Joseph told them, Ye meant it for evil, but God meant it for good. Again, the betrayal of Christ by Judas. Where in all the history of the world was there a blacker or more heathenish crime, yet it was all in the fixed, predestinated purpose of our God. Suppose there had not been a Judas; then what? The Scriptures would not have been fulfilled, nor the purpose of God. It is written, "*As Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.*" When Jonah took ship it was evil upon his part, but God meant it for good. He was to learn obedience by the things he suffered, The storm came. Was it by chance? certainly not. They cast lots, and it fell upon Jonah, the guilty one, and they cast him overboard. Then what? Our God was superintending it all, and had prepared a great fish to swallow him up and carry him to

the place appointed, ordained or fixed. Had our God control of that fish! Most assuredly he had, and when the three days and nights were up he was delivered. So they *“were gathered together, for to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done.”* Now how any true believer can repudiate and hold up to ridicule this blessed doctrine I cannot understand. I am satisfied many are prejudiced by wrong interpretations of evil doers. I have heard of some, in trying to refute the doctrine of predestination, taking up some atrocious crime of murder, and holding it up in all of its most heinous nature, crying out with a loud voice, Tell me that God made that man do this awful deed ! Now that is a false statement. I have traveled extensively in twenty-two states, and Canada, and have never heard any one ridicule such an idea, and I could not fellowship anyone who did. God is not the author of sin, neither tempteth he any man, man of his own lust is tempted. I know of one man who thus tried to justify himself in an evil deed, but the church excluded him, and did right in so doing.

I have never favored setting this up as a standard in church fellowship, but have opposed it. I have full fellowship for those who do not see this as I do, and can stand hand in hand and fellowship with them, but cannot fellowship those who hold it up to ridicule. In all my travels I have

met but one man who favored it as a standard. I opposed it, and do yet. For the elect's sake the world stands, and many of the dark scenes that take place, that are beyond our comprehension, will be among the *“all things”* in the providence of God, and in one was, though remote, be for the good of his people, individually or collectively. The wrath of man shall praise God, the remainder of wrath will he restrain. The wicked are his sword for the chastisement of his people. What a sweet comfort when we can rest all in his blessed hand and power, and know that the darkest scene is as necessary as the brightest one. Darkness and light are alike with the Lord. He dwells in the thick clouds; he maketh the clouds his chariot. Truly it is a day of darkness. Darkness has covered the earth, and it truly seems gross darkness the people, and I sometimes wonder why his wrath is not poured Out; but for the elect's sake will the world stand until the last one for whom Jesus died be made manifest.

*“Chained to his throne, a volume lies, With all the fates of men,
With every angel's form and size, Drawn by the eternal pen.”*

What a blessed comfort to feel that

“The steps that I tread, and the station I fill,

My Father determined and wrote in his will."

Dear reader, I trust you may be favored to gather a few crumbs of comfort from these scattered thoughts, for there has been a little comfort to my soul as I have penned them, and a relief to an exercised and burdened mind. The dear Lord bless you all, and lead and guide us all in the pathway of peace and righteousness.

Yours in sweet gospel fellowship, though the least and poorest in my Father's house,

P. W. SAWIN.
SHELBYVILLE, Kentucky.

"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly In all wisdom." 1 Colossians iii. 16.

This surely means something more than merely reading the word in a careless, formal manner. It is "to dwell in us," that is, take up its firm and lasting abode in our heart, and that "*richly*;" not poorly and niggardly, but copiously and abundantly, unfolding to us and putting us into possession of the wealth of its treasures; and that in "*all wisdom*," making us wise to salvation, opening up to us the manifold wisdom of God, and how it displays itself in the great mystery of godliness. Now we shall not attain to this rich and heavenly wisdom unless we search and study the Scriptures with prayer and sup-

plication to understand what the Holy Ghost has revealed therein, and what he is pleased to unfold therefrom of the will and way of God for our own personal instruction and consolation. We very easily fall off from abiding in Christ; nor can we expect to keep up sensible union and communion with the Lord Jesus if we neglect those means of grace which the Holy Ghost has provided for the sustentation of the life of God in the soul. When we get cold, sluggish, and dead, to read the word of God is a task and a burden; but not so, when the life of God is warm and gushing in the soul. Then, to read his holy word with prayer and supplication, entering by faith into its hidden treasures, and drinking into the mind of Christ as revealed therein, is a blessed means of maintaining the life of God in the heart, and keeping up union and communion with Christ.

Elder J.C. Philpot

CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR AUGUST 2010

Gerald Pickral, VA	5.00
Cleo Underwood, VA	5.00
Glenna Link, TN	20.00
Brandon Lane, NC	10.00
Gene Howard, AL	5.00
Ruby Queen, KY	10.00
Robert Newsom, FL	30.00
Douglas Hodges, VA	10.00

MEETINGS

**CONTENTNEA
ASSOCIATION 2010**

The Lord willing, the 180th session of the Contentnea Association will convene with North River Primitive Baptist Church located in Carteret County, NC on October 9-10, 2010.

The Church is located a short distance off highway US 70 on Gillikin Road in Otway, NC.

We invite all our Brethren and friends to come worship with us.

Elder Gene Lupton
Association Clerk
252-745-0441

**SOUTH OUACHITA
ASSOCIATION**

The South Ouachita Association will be held, the Lord willing, on Saturday and Sunday, September 25 & 26, 2010.

Union Church, located about five miles Southeast of Marion, Louisiana, will host the Association. All lovers of the truth are invited to come and be with us.

Ned Barron
Association Clerk
318-778-4217

**STAUNTON RIVER
UNION MEETING**

The Staunton River Union meeting will be held the Lord willing on Saturday, October 30th, 2010, before the 5th Sunday at Malmaison Primitive Baptist Church.

Song service begins at 10:00 a.m. preaching at 10:30. An invitation is extended to all our ministers, brethren and friends.

Peggy Wells, Clerk

WEST COUNTRY LINE UNION

Dan River Primitive Baptist Church will host the next West Country Line Union. The fifth Sunday, October 31, 2010. We invite all lovers of the truth to come and be with us. Especially ministers of our correspondence.

Church is located on Highway 700 between Eden, North Carolina and Danville, Virginia.

Love and Fellowship,
R. Allen Carroll, Clerk

PSALM 119:165.

Great peace have they which love thy law: and nothing shall offend them.

OBITUARIES

SHIRLEY B. CARROLL

It is with a sad heart that I attempt to compose these lines of the obituary of my dear wife, Shirley B. Carroll. Shirley was born on the 31 st day of August in the year 1935. She departed this life on the 1st day of July 2010, at about 7:30 AM.

Shirley was received by Little Creek Primitive Baptist Church near Clayton, North Carolina and was baptized by the late Elder T. F. Adams.

I first met Shirley in 1966 and in a trance I believe that I was showed that I would marry a woman from the household of faith. That is the same faith that I have been given to believe. Shirley was a firm believer in the doctrine of unconditional election and predestination. Shirley was loved by Primitive Baptists from the mountains to the sea shore. Today would have been her 75th birthday if she had lived.

Shirley was born in Johnson County and her parents were Brother Joe Brady and Mrs. Ada Brady. They were from the Brogden community. They preceded her in death some years ago.

Shirley and I were married on October 15, 1972, at the Little Creek Primitive Baptist Meeting House,

where she was a member, by the late Elder T. F. Adams.

In May 1973, we moved our membership to Newport Primitive Baptist Church where Elder H. A. Young was pastor.

Shirley leaves to mourn a sad husband J. C. Carroll; a daughter, Linda Hallman of Pine Level, NC; a brother, Thomas O Brady of Princeton, NC.

Shirley's funeral was held at the Newport Primitive Baptist Church, Newport, NC, on Sunday the 4th of July 2010, by Elders Melton Lupton, Gene Lupton, Tom Thompson, Steven Lawrence and Virgil Davis. Her body was laid to rest in the family plot in Cedar Grove Cemetery, Newport, NC, there to await the second coming of Jesus who will call for the sleeping dust of his little children to come forth on that resurrection morning.

Shirley lived as a Christian and died as a Christian. For it is written *"by their fruits, ye shall know them. I do believe that she will hear that welcome applaud"* *"come in ye blessed of my father and inherit the kingdom prepared from and before the foundation of the world."*

Dear Readers, when you are brought down to the throne of grace, please remember me.

Respectfully submitted,
J. C. Carroll

NANCY TATE WALTON

I feel that I am inadequate to write a memoriam of Sister Nancy Walton but as I have been requested to do so, I will attempt to comply. I realize God can qualify any human that is given a spiritual mind for any task according to his will.

Malmaison Church was blessed with a sister with a deep conviction of her faith in the Lord. During the last eighteen months of her life, she was afflicted with cancer and at times she, as well as her family and brethren, felt the end was surely at hand.

After she had improved enough that she could be at home, she related to me an experience of hers, when she was seemingly at the point of her death. She told me that she was feeling that she was dying, but she regained her mental state enough to call her, niece in her room, telling her to hurry and bring pen and paper. She wrote her funeral instructions to her family in great detail. Her niece told me about this at Sister Nancy's visitation at the funeral home. Her nephew also confirmed that he witnessed this, and he said that Sister Nancy's voice was so weak that she could scarcely be heard and that surely the Lord enabled her to do this.

Sister Nancy, telling me of this experience at her home months later, said that she was given to know that one could only leave this life at God's time, not when she felt it was the time to depart this world.

Her belief in the total control of things for all times by God was certain. Only a visitation of the Lord's spirit to her at that time caused these things to happen, we both agreed upon.

She loved her church and the songs of our faith so much and was very gifted in her singing of the hymns. Her countenance showed how much she enjoyed the service.

Sister Walton joined Malmaison Church in September of 1983 and passed from our midst in July 2010. Her pastor, Elder Mark Terry conducted her funeral and her burial was in the Walton family cemetery in Pittsylvania County, Virginia. She was predeceased by her parents, four brothers, and her husband, Brother Smith Walton.

She leaves her son Phillip Walton and a number of other relatives to mourn her loss.

We at Malmaison Church will miss her greatly, not only her presence, but as our church Treasurer and as a gifted singer of hymns. We trust that our God will bless all of us to not grieve her loss as we would one that had not a sweet hope of eternal life. We feel her soul now rests in the paradise of God, never to suffer mortal pain again but to be awakened in his likeness to ever sing a song never heard by mortals, where all is peace eternally.

Written by, I hope, a fellow believer in Christ.

Burnell B. Williams

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 178

HILLSVILLE, VA., NOVEMBER 2010

NO. 11

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

ISSN - 0199 - 0063

Subscription price \$15.00 per year - \$25.00 two years

Published monthly by
SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

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SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

1429 Howlett Street
Hillsville, Va. 24343

SONG

*Twixt Jesus and the chosen race,
Subsists a bond of sovereign grace,
That hell, with its infernal train,
Shall ne'er dissolve, or rend in twain.*

*This sacred bond shall never break,
Though earth should to her centre
shake;
Rest, doubting saint, assured of this,
For God has pledged his holiness.*

*He swore but once, the deed was done;
'Twas settled by the great Three One;
Christ was appointed to redeem
All that the Father loved in him.*

*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 triumph'd o'er his foes,
One when in heaven he took his seat,
While seraph's sung all hell's defeat.*

*This sacred tie forbids their fears
For all he is, or has, is theirs;
With him their head, they stand or
fall,*

Their life, their surety, and their all.

Kent.

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EDITORIALS

Genesis 2:9, "And out of the ground made the Lord God to grow every tree that is pleasant to the sight, and good for food; the tree of life also in the midst of the garden, and the tree of Knowledge of good and evil."



Elder Cleo D. Robertson

The Lord God planted a garden eastward in Eden. This was the planting of the Lord and sets forth His church here in the world. Man had nothing to do with the planting of

these trees in this garden. These were particular trees and included every tree that was pleasant to the sight and good for food. Every child of grace is included in the Lord's garden.

They are pleasant to the sight. There is no greater beauty than that which shines forth from His little children because it is the beauty of Christ that is in them. It is the beauty of holiness. No other people possess this beauty and nothing of the flesh can compare with it. This beauty is manifested in their countenance, walk and conversation. One who has experienced the work of Christ in their heart manifests such a humbleness of feeling so unworthy knowing that they are weak and helpless. These are a poor and afflicted people who look unto the Lord for their help and strength.

These plantings of the Lord are good for food. The Holy Spirit in them produces the fruits of the Spirit, which are love, joy, peace, long suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness and temperance. Against such, there is no law. This is spiritual food that our very souls hunger and thirst after and nothing of the world can satisfy. No flesh can manufacture this food and no amount of money can buy it. The Lord freely and unconditionally gives this fruit of the Spirit unto each little child of grace. O, such comfort and peace that He gives unto His elect!

The Lord had not caused it to rain upon the earth, but there went

up a mist from the earth that watered the whole face of the ground. The world is watered by that which comes from the earthly man or flesh. However, the garden was watered by a river which went out of Eden. So the Lord's people are watered by that *"pure river of water of life, clear as crystal, proceeding out of the throne of God and of the Lamb."* The very spirit of God waters His people this day as it always has. The river went out of Eden and became into four heads. I am made to believe that this sets forth the gospel that went into all the world of believers.

In the midst of this garden were two special trees. One was the tree of life and the other was the tree of knowledge of good and evil. God formed Adam from the dust of the earth and gave him a commandment or law before Eve was made from his rib. Therefore, the law covered all mankind that would ever be born into this world. The commandment or law was *"Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."* This was the law of sin and death. Sin is a transgression of the law. It is anything that is not of faith and it is all unrighteousness. God made man subject to vanity and He created Satan as the tempter. Satan was in the garden in the form of the serpent. Satan always seems to be

present to tempt wherever the children of God are. In the book of Job, each time that the sons of God (His chosen people) came together, Satan came among them. After Christ was baptized, He was led by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. So Satan tempts us; but thanks be unto the Lord, Christ put him behind Him. The church is in Christ and Christ is in His church; therefore Satan is behind it and tempts the Lord's people but cannot destroy them. The Lord made Eve who was a type of the church as she was the mother of all living. According to the Apostle Paul, Adam was a figure of Christ. Satan added one word, "not," to the commandment and the woman was deceived and was in the transgression. She took of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil and did eat and gave to her husband and he did eat. Adam was not deceived; but because of his love for Eve, he went under the transgression with her. This presents a picture of Christ and His bride, the church. *Romans 8:3-4, "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."* Christ came in the flesh, without sin, under the same law as His people to redeem them from the

curse of the law and from their sins. He suffered, bled and died because of the great love He had for His bride. He rose again the third day for her justification.

The tree of the knowledge of good and evil sets forth the law. For the Apostle Paul writes in *Romans 3:20*, "*by the law is the knowledge of sin,*" and again in *Romans 7:7* "*I had not known sin, but by the law.*" When Adam and Eve partook of the fruit of that tree, their eyes were opened and they knew they were naked. They had been naked the entire time but they did not know what nakedness was until then. They tried to do what all of His elect do when the law is applied to them. They tried to cover their nakedness (sin) by the works of the flesh. They made aprons of fig leaves. Their efforts or works were not sufficient to cover their sin. All of our works of the flesh were to no avail as Isaiah 64:6 says "*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.*"

The tree of life was in the midst of the garden and there was no law or commandment forbidding Adam and Eve from eating of this tree. But, they felt no need for this tree until they had experienced the tree of knowledge of good and evil. The tree of life was setting forth Christ. He is our life; but until we experience the law applied to our heart and

indeed our very soul, we do not feel the need of Him. *Galations 3:24*, "*Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.*" As the tree of life was in the garden the whole time, so Christ stood a lamb slain from the foundation of the world. God provided the cure before the disease. Marvelous are His works and ways.

Adam and Eve heard the voice of the Lord God walking in the cool of the day and hid themselves from His presence among the trees of the garden. Was it not your experience when you were shown that you were a sinner and lost without hope that you felt so ashamed of yourself and did not want others to look upon you? You tried to hide as you felt surely those you esteemed as the Lord's people could see your blackness of sin and would want nothing to do with you. But, O dear child of the living God, He would not leave you nor forsake you, but at the ninth hour (the hour of prayer) He came to you in His love and mercy. Adam and Eve experienced the Word which was Christ that came to them in the cool of the day. You can't hide from God because all things are open before Him. The cool of the day is grace.

When the very presence of the Lord is manifested and felt, it is the cool of the day for grace and truth came by Jesus Christ. It is a time of rest and comfort. The Lord called unto Adam and said, "*Where art*

thou?" He was not asking to find out where Adam was. The Lord knew where Adam was, but the question was for Adam's benefit. Adam confessed that he was afraid because he saw that he was naked and he tried to hide. The Lord said, *"Who told thee that thou wast naked? Hast thou eaten of the tree, whereof I commanded thee that thou should not eat?"* The question goes to the very depth of one's soul. Who told you that you were a sinner? Could some man convince you that you were a sinner and lost? NO! Only the Lord applying the law to our heart can do that. The tree of knowledge of good and evil shows us that only the Lord is good and that all flesh is evil. Adam said, *"The woman whom thou gavest me to be with me, she gave me of the tree, and I did eat."* The Lord said unto the woman, *"What is this that thou hast done?"* Again, this question was for the benefit of the woman. She confessed that she was tempted and deceived by Satan and she sinned. There was a death that was experienced on this occasion but not a death of the body. As the Apostle Paul explains in Romans 7:9, *"For I was alive without the law once: but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died."*

The Lord made coats of skins and clothed Adam and Eve. This sets forth a death and shedding of blood and points to Christ. Adam and Eve could not make themselves cover-

ings or clothing sufficient to cover their nakedness. Only the Lord could do that and He did. His people have no" righteousness of themselves, but He cloths them with His righteousness. As with the virtuous woman which was a type of the church, she had no virtue of herself but it was the virtue of Christ. If we are children of the heavenly king, we have no virtue or righteousness of ourselves for our righteousness is as filthy rags. But His people have His righteousness for they have Christ in them, the hope of glory.

The Lord drove out the man and placed at the east of the garden of Eden Cherubims and a flaming sword which turned every way to keep the way of the tree of life. These were not to keep the tree of life, but the way of the tree of life. I am given to believe that this means the gospel of Christ that would go into the world of the Lord's people. Hebrews 1:7 states, *"And of the angels he saith, Who maketh His angels spirits, and His ministers a flame of fire"* and Ephesians 6:17 *"And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the spirit which is the word of God."* Also, Hebrews 4:12, *"For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."* Therefore, I am given to be-

lieve the cherubims set forth angels and the flaming sword set forth the ministers preaching the gospel. It turned every way meaning the gospel went out to His people, wherever they are.

How comforting the words of Jesus when He said in Matthew 28: 18, "*All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.*"

Submitted I hope and trust in love,

Cleo Robertson

CORRESPONDENCE

Enclosed you will find my check for \$15.00 for 1 year subscription to the "Signs of the Times." I really enjoy J.B. Farmer's articles.

God Bless,
Elizabeth Webb

ROMANS 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.

ARTICLES

"And when they were come to the place, which is called Calvary, there they crucified him, and the male factors, one on the right hand, and the other on the left, then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do and they parted his raiment, and cast lots."
(Luke 23:33-34)

This question comes to mind: Was Jesus praying for all of those who killed him?

"I manifested thy name unto the men which thou gavest me out of the world: thine they were and thou gavest them me; and they have kept thy word. Now they have known that all things whatsoever thou hast given me are of thee. For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me. I pray for them. I pray not for the world, but for them which thou has given me; for they are thine" (John 17:6-9) This Scripture shows that Jesus did not pray for the world, but only prays for those that Almighty God had given him out of the world.

Let us quote from John Gill: "*Jesus's prayer was not for those*

who crucified him, but for those who were ignorantly concerned in it, as the next clause shows, even for his own elect, whom the Father have given him out of the world, which were among his crucifiers; for these, and not the world, he prays; and the fruit of this his prayer quickly appeared, in the conversion of three thousand of them under Peter's sermon on the day of pentecost." (See Acts 2:41)

Now let us quote Peter: *"Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made the same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ. Now when they heard this, they were pricked in they heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the Apostles, men and brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the holy ghost, For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call." (Acts 2:36-39)*

"— It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us." (Rom. 8:34) This means that Jesus is on the right hand of God and praying for his people. *"— He maketh intercession for the*

saints according to the will of God" (Rom. 8:27)

May all the honor, praise and glory be given to Almighty God who has saved his people,

Elder W. W. Hudson, Jr.

VOICES OF THE PAST

The following is taken from the book, "A Treasure of Hymns" by Amos R. Wells. Copyright 1945, W. A. Wilde Company.

The book contains brief biographies of one hundred twenty leading hymn writers with their best hymns.

"Rock of Ages."

Augustus M. Toplady.

ROCK OF AGES" and "Jesus, Lover of my soul," are the two favorite hymns of most Christians.

The author of "Rock of Ages," Augustus Montague Toplady, was an Englishman, and was born November 4, 1740. His father, Major Toplady, died in the siege of Cartagena in Colombia, South America, while his boy was only a few months old. Young Toplady was converted when on a visit to Ireland by an itinerant Methodist preacher, a layman, who was preaching in a barn.

His mind was vigorous. but his body was weak, and soon consump-

tion seized upon him. He fought it for two years before it conquered, and it was during this period that he wrote his immortal hymn. It appeared first in the *Gospel Magazine* for March, 1776—a magazine of which he was the editor. It was in the midst of an article in which he tried to figure out the number of a man's sins, and then broke into this hymn, which sets forth our only remedy for sin:--

*Rock of Ages, cleft for me.
Let me hide myself in Thee,
Let the water and the blood
From Thy riven side which
flowed,
Be of sin the double cure,
Cleanse me from its guilt
and power.*

*Not the labor of my hands
Can fulfil Thy law's de-
mands;
Could my zeal no respite
know,
Could my tears forever flow,
All for sin could not atone,
Thou must save, and Thou
alone.*

*Nothing in my hand I bring;
Simply to Thy cross I cling;
Naked, come to Thee for
dress;
Helpless, look to Thee for
grace;
Foul, I to the Fountain fly;
Wash me, Saviour, or I die.*

While I draw this fleeting

breath,

*When my eyestrings break in
death,*

*When I soar through tracts
unknown,*

*See Thee on Thy judgment
throne,.-*

*Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in Thee!*

Toplady's title for the hymn was "A living and dying prayer for the holiest believer in the world." The title fitly expressed the triumphant faith in which he himself passed away on August 11, 1778, saying, "My prayers are all converted into praise." He was only thirty-eight years old. The hymn was actually used as a dying prayer by Prince Albert, the beloved husband of Queen Victoria. It was sung in Constantinople by the Armenians during the fearful massacre. When the steamship London went down in the Bay of Biscay in 1866, the last man to escape from the ill-fated vessel heard the remaining passengers singing this hymn;--

*Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in Thee.*

The hymn was an especial favorite with Gladstone, who was often heard humming it in the House of Commons, and who translated it into Latin, Greek, and Italian. His Latin translation is one of great beauty. Major-General Stuart, the famous Confederate cavalry officer,

sung this hymn as he lay dying after the Battle of the Wilderness. Of many other death-beds this hymn has been the solace and the crown.

The story is told of a Chinese woman who, for the purpose of "making merit" for herself with her heathen gods, had dug a well twenty-five feet deep and fifteen in diameter. She was converted, and a traveler speaks of meeting her when she had reached the age of eighty. She was bent with age, but she stretched out her crippled hands toward her visitor, and began to sing:-

Nothing in my hand I bring, Simply to Thy cross I cling.

The noblest incident connected with this hymn is related of the celebration of the fiftieth year of the reign of Queen Victoria. On this occasion there came an embassy from Queen Ranavalona III., of Madagascar, and in the company was a venerable Hova, who expressed the desires of his people for the prosperity of the Queen, and then asked permission to sing. It was expected that he would render some heathen song, but to everyone's amazement he burst forth with

*Rock of Ages, cleft for me,
Let me hide myself in Thee.*

It was a striking proof of the power of Christian missions.

"Rock of Ages" was often sung by the Armenians at Constantinople during the terrible massacres.

The hymn is given as Toplady

wrote it, and it will be seen that it is often mutilated in our hymn-books. The second line of the last stanza is generally written:-

When my eyelids close in death.

Toplady's line refers to an old belief that, when a person dies, the "eyestrings" snap.

As to the thought of "*Rock of Ages*," it probably sprung from the marginal translation of Isa. 26:4: "*In the Lord Jehovah is the rock of ages*," but Toplady doubtless combined that with such passages as "*I will put thee in a cleft of the rock*" (Exod. 33:22), "*14 Enter into the rock*" (Isa. 2:10), and "*They drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ*" (1 Cor. 10: 4).

Toplady wrote 133 poems and hymns, but nearly all are forgotten except this. One other, however, is a hymn of great beauty, and is cherished by many Christians: --

*Inspirer and Hearer of
prayer,*

*Thou Shepherd and Guardian
of Thine,*

*My all to Thy covenant care
I sleeping and waking re-*

sign;

*If Thou art my shield and my
sun,*

*The night is no darkness to
me;*

*And fast as my moments roll
on*

*They bring me but nearer to
Thee.*

2 KINGS V. 1-14.

WHEN we are reading, commenting or meditating upon any portion of Old Testament Scripture, we should not lose sight of the fact that all Scripture is given by inspiration of God and is for the children of God and for their instruction in righteousness, and that the Old Testament has the New concealed in it. As all the lines of the prophecy and type and shadow of the Old Testament converge upon the Son of God, so in the New Testament we see all lines radiating from him in wonderful beauty and glory. The things that were written afore time were penned for our learning, that through patience and comfort in reading the Bible we might have hope. As a diamond radiates light in various directions, the literal truth of the Old Testament often has more than one spiritual application, all in perfect harmony with the word of God. One historical incident of the old covenant history conceals some striking truth of New Testament application, so that it requires all the Old Testament to declare all that the New Testament demonstrates. A type, cannot be as perfect as the antitype, else it would cease to be a type, and no one incident or figure can set forth all that pertains to Christ in his dispensation of suffering or of glory.

The miraculous cleansing of Naaman the Syrian, captain of the hosts of Benhadad king of Syria, is rich in its typical signification of the

eternal truth of God. Naaman was a man of blameless reputation, faultless in his moral life, honorable in all his dealings, loved by his soldiers, respected and trusted by the king, and doubtlessly envied by many in Syria because of his station in life. He was a mighty man in valor, and by him the Lord had given deliverance to Syria, but he was a leper. After attaining high and deserved rank, with so much naturally to live for, to hope for and expect in life, he was smitten with a foul disease, the dreaded and incurable leprosy, which seemed destined in due course to terminate his life in hopeless despair. As leprosy is so often used in the Bible to represent sin, it naturally follows that the leper represents the sinner. In connection with the foregoing thoughts, we are reminded of Moses when God commissioned him by the burning bush that was not consumed to deliver the Hebrews in Egypt from slavery under Pharaoh. Moses questioned his ability even with God's promise to perform this mission, and was commanded to cast his rod upon the ground. He promptly obeyed, and beheld a serpent before him from which he fled in fright. In obedience to the command of God, Moses seized the serpent by the tail and it became a rod in his hand. This was a sign from God. Then Moses was told to put his hand into his bosom. He complied, and when he withdrew it his hand was leprous, white as snow. Upon the command

of God, Moses again put his hand into his bosom, and withdrew it to find with astonishment that it was turned again healthy like his other flesh. In these two signs we see the serpent representing Satan and the leprous hand representing sin. As the leprosy in this case followed the miracle of the rod becoming a serpent, so sin followed the entrance of Satan into the Garden of Eden. God was in the midst of the burning bush which is a beautiful type of spiritual Israel, and by his power Satan was ordained to tempt our first parents that sin might come into the world, and through the wondrous working of that almighty power Satan's head was bruised by the death of Jesus Christ on the cross, which finished transgression and put an end to sin, as regards the election of grace. Leprosy was considered an unclean disease and resulted in the banishment of the leper from the camp, and the Israelite who was smitten with that disease was not permitted to partake of the holy things until he was cleansed, under the legal dispensation. Leprosy is an intrinsically loathsome disease and all that are aware of its nature shun the afflicted one. So one (and such must be a child of God to apprehend the exceeding sinfulness of sin) shuns sin and flees from it in feelings and effort, even if contaminated with it. When God shines in the heart of a poor sinner and shows him his wretchedness, he loathes himself. In this we see a similitude of leprosy to sin. Appar-

ently it would seem to the natural mind that sin in Eden had a very insignificant beginning in the violation of one commandment. So leprosy is almost unnoticed in its origin. Sin gradually involved all mankind under the curse of a transgressed law, and so leprosy in its inevitable progress involves in time the person of the one afflicted with it. In the human being leprosy tends to make its victim to a large extent insensible of distress as it continues to spread, and so sin continues to make the sinner insensible of his real condition as viewed by God's holy law. Both sin and leprosy can be transmitted to offspring, and both are alike incurable by human means. Under the law given by Moses provision was made for the restoration of a leper to the camp of Israel, consisting of ceremonies in which sacrifices were offered, typifying the life, death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus, as given in detail in the book of Leviticus. As Israel's high priest had an important part in the ritualistic restoration of the leper, so we have indisputable proof of leprosy representing sin, the leper the sinner, and the high priest setting forth in type the work of Jesus in saving the poor sinner. In the case of Naaman, we find that he was incurably afflicted with the terrible leprosy, and that his morality, station in life, reputation, honor and wealth sufficed in no sense to alleviate his condition. And just as fruitless were the best efforts of the most skillful

physicians in all the realm of Syria. All the resources that King Benhadad could command were alike of no avail. Hopelessness and despair had seized him. So it is with a poor sinner condemned by the law of sin and death and guilty in all points as regards keeping the commandments of the decalogue. He finds when he becomes aware of his condition that human efforts will not mitigate the severity of the sentence he is under, deliver him from bondage or afford any relief. He feels that he is daily getting worse. As the doctors of medicine failed to help Naaman, so the doctors of divinity (so called) are powerless to aid the sinking, helpless sinner, who cries in vain and seeks in vain for help by human means. When at last ready to give up, a ray of hope came into Naaman's life from a source that had its origin outside of Syria, just as when the quickened sinner feels the grasp of spiritual death. Hope shines in his soul with a ray of mercy, and this comes from a source outside of and apart from himself. During a war between Syria and Israel, the Syrians had gone out in companies and had brought away captive out of the land of Israel a little Jewish maid, and she waited on Naaman's wife. Kindly treated by her master and mistress, and loyal in her captivity, this maid of Israel had an affectionate regard for her master, and said unto her mistress, Would God my lord were with the prophet that is in Samaria! for he would recover him of his lep-

rosy. And one went in and told his lord the words of the little maid. However, the king of Syria, when informed of the message of the servant in Naaman's household, manifested no direct interest in the prophet Elisha in Samaria, and did not even send a message to him, but instead wrote a letter to the king of Israel, to be delivered by Naaman himself, who took with him ten talents of silver and six thousand pieces of gold and ten changes of raiment. "And he brought the letter to the king of Israel, saying, Now when this letter is come unto thee, behold, I have therewith sent Naaman my servant to thee, that thou mayest recover him of his leprosy. And it came to pass, when the king of Israel had read the letter, that he rent his clothes, and said, Am I God, to kill and to make alive, that this man doth send unto me to recover a man of his leprosy? Wherefore consider, I pray you, and see how he seeketh a quarrel against me." - 2 Kings v .6, 7. In connection with Naaman's visit to the king of Israel, it should be remembered that the laws given by Moses were given unto the Israelites, and not to the Gentiles, that Naaman was a Gentile living in a Gentile country that had been at war with Israel, a foreign country, for the Gentiles were considered by the Israelites as strangers and foreigners, and that the Israelites did not send the maid who waited on Naaman's wife, and that no Syrian Gentile could have borne the message delivered by the little maid

of Israel. Naaman must leave his native land, Syria, and go to another country if he would get physical relief. In all this do we not see that Syria represents the flesh, the state in which we are by nature? Naaman worshipped idols. We have our idols when we are in the flesh, even if they are not idols of wood or stone, they are idols nevertheless. Money or its love is so often an idol. Human ambitions and the vain desires of the mind and the lusts of the flesh are idols in their nature. So in the flesh by nature we are no better than Naaman, which means pleasantness. We are enlightened with this world according to the flesh. But when the arrows from the quiver of the Lord of hosts pierce our hearts and trouble comes and we feel the wrath of God abiding in us and ourselves as fit food for hell, and our natural hopes blasted and sorrows encompassing us round about, we can say with Naomi, as recorded in the book of Ruth, *"Call me not Naomi, call me Mara: for the Almighty hath dealt very bitterly with me."* There is an evident relation in the meaning of the names Naomi and Naaman, both meaning "pleasant," and both characters experiencing pleasant things of this world to be later brought down and humbled in the sight of God. It is also true that when we first feel our sinfulness in a work of grace wrought by the Holy Spirit in our souls that we are at first legalistic and resort to attain unto salvation and resort to the works of

the Jews. As Naaman found that his morality and honor and riches were of no avail to relieve him of his dread disease, we find that our morality, standing among men, works of righteousness under the law are worthless to save us. We have in spirit to leave the state we are in by nature, the flesh, and go to another realm to find deliverance from the leprosy of sin. Morality denotes man's relation to man and his duty towards his fellowman and himself. Piety denotes man's relation to God. One may educate the flesh and refine it and cultivate it as much as possible, it will be flesh still with all its inherited and committed sin. We have to get outside of natural self to get rid of the leprosy of sin. We seek therefore a better and a heavenly country. Like Naaman, we must leave this Syria of the flesh. But how do we learn of that other country, of that place or person to which or to whom we may go for relief? We remember that word came to Naaman through a captive maid of Israel. It was through a Jewish maid in the person of the virgin Mary that the Word of God came into the world by the miraculous birth of Jesus Christ announced by the angel voices. The land of Judea at that time was under the domination of imperial Rome, and the Jews were therefore in captivity, and Mary was among those who were subjects to Rome, she who was the mother of Jesus. We read in John: *"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word*

was God.” And in the same chapter of John we are told that *“the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.”* God was the Word that was manifest in the flesh in Christ Jesus, for it is written, *“woman shall encompass a man.”* Then through a Jewish maid by means of the Word assurance has come to us of our Prophet, Priest and King, our spiritual Elisha, who can heal the leprosy of sin and deliver them who all their lifetime are subject to bondage, and destroy him that hath the power of death, that is, the devil. But we have noted that Naaman went first, not to Elisha, but to the king of Israel. It was Israel that received the law and was its custodian, and to my mind this represents the sinner at first resorting to the law as a means of salvation. We also note that the king of Syria sent him there. So our fleshly spirit, that which rules our carnal mind, sends us to the law for comfort and solace. But Jehoram, king of Israel, rent his clothes and confessed his inability to do Naaman any good or help him in anyway whatsoever, notwithstanding all the wealth that Naaman had. So, regardless of our moral or other wealth, the law cannot save us. It can only condemn with unabated strength and power. I believe that Benhadad, the king of Syria, may represent the prince of this world, as Syria typifies the natural darkness of the flesh,

from which the convicted sinner flees as he is apprehended of the Lord, but from which he can never escape as long as he dwells in a mortal body.

In considering the prophet Elisha, who succeeded Elijah after the latter’s translation, we find a type of Christ suggested by the name Elisha, *“My God is salvation.”* There is a sense in which the work of Elijah typified the ministry of Jesus Christ on earth under the law in the miracles wrought by Elijah. When Elijah’s work was done on earth, he was translated to heaven and immediately Elisha succeeded him, receiving a double portion of Elijah’s spirit. The word *“Elijah”* means *“My God is Jehovah.”* This was exemplified in the honor that Jesus gave the Father in all his earthly ministry under the law. After Jesus finished his work on earth, he ascended to heaven, and in heaven at God’s right hand he is our Mediator, Counsellor and Advocate in his Melchisedec priesthood, as he presents his church faultless before the Father in love, and gives salvation unto all believers. He is our antitypical Elisha, our salvation. *“Jesus is our great salvation, worthy of our best esteem.”* The Melchisedec ministry of Christ in heaven follows his finished work on earth. The work of Elisha followed that of Elijah. So we see that when Elisha heard of the king’s distress and his inability to help Naaman, he sent word for Naaman to come *“now*

to me." Christ sends the Holy Spirit into our hearts, and we are directed to Jesus, and not to the law as our refuge from the leprosy of sin. Having broken down the middle wall of partition that separates Jew from Gentile by his death on the cross, abolishing the handwriting of ordinances and nailing them to the cross, the Lord Jesus saves both Jew and Gentile alike and they are one in him. Naaman was a Gentile, and in his cure of leprosy we see a type of salvation extended to the Gentile. Naaman came and stood at the door of the house of Elisha, but the prophet did not come personally and minister unto him, but sent a messenger instead. May not this messenger represent the Holy Spirit? In the miracles of mercy which Jesus performed in healing the Gentiles while he was in the flesh under the law, he always healed at a distance. He was not in person present when the servant of the centurion was healed, nor when the daughter of the Syrophonecian woman was delivered from the torments of a devil, so in this healing of leprous Naaman, Elisha did not appear in person. So Jesus does not appear to us in this gospel dispensation in the flesh as he ministered to Jews in healing miracles before he went to the cross as the Lamb that taketh away the sins of all believers (the world in the sense of Jew and Gentile believers). Naaman stood at the door of the house of Elisha, and so every child of Jeho-

vah stands at the door of the church, in which dwells Jesus, before he enters into a fuller knowledge of salvation in the revelation of Jesus Christ. Naaman was hidden to go and wash in Jordan seven times and be clean. But Naaman, like all sinners saved by grace, looked for salvation to come in a way of his or her own choosing. The Lord's ways are not our ways, and the more a subject of divine mercy leans upon self or the imaginations of the heart or the works of the law, the more he will be humbled. The carnal mind is ever at enmity with the law of God. So Naaman went away in wrath, in enmity. But this was only temporary. Persuaded by his servants, Naaman came to himself, and in obedience went to the river Jordan and bathed seven times, as the prophet had commanded, and found that his flesh came again, like the flesh of a child, clean and free of disease. The river Jordan has a significance in sacred history. It means Judgment or descender. Jesus was baptized in Jordan. He met the Judgment of God for the sins of his bride, for the whole family of God, and we that believe in him are baptized unto his death, and buried with him in baptism, and live in him in newness of life. But Naaman dipped himself seven times, and Jesus was only once baptized in Jordan. In considering the number seven, we must not forget that in Scripture it is often used to denote completeness, or perfection. God rested the seventh

day from all his work of creation, and blessed that day. The Old Testament Sabbath, or seventh day, was a rest for the flesh, and typified the New Testament Sabbath of rest for the soul, ushered in by the Lord Jesus through his death and resurrection. On the day of atonement blood was sprinkled once upon the mercy seat of the ark of the covenant in the holy of holies, but seven times before the veil. There are many applications of the number seven to denote completeness in the Scriptures, especially in reference to the sabbatic seasons under the law. So the fact that Naaman bathed, or dipped, seven times in Jordan may denote the perfection, or completeness, of his healing. The fact that his flesh came again as a little child is mentioned in the scriptural account of the miracle. It may signify that when we are born in the kingdom of God we must be as little children, for of such is the kingdom of heaven, humble, weak, willing to learn, desiring the sincere milk of the word that we may grow thereby. And the children of God do grow in grace and in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is here a little and there a little, line upon line and precept upon precept. Naaman seemed a new creature in his physical being, and so being born again of an incorruptible seed by the word of God, redeemed sinners are new creatures in Christ Jesus.

The foregoing article has been submitted in much fear and trem-

bling, with the earnest desire that the reader cast over it the needful mantle of charity.

ARNOLD H. BELLOWS.
WEST HURLEY, N. Y.,
June 8, 1937.

THE HEART AWAKE

As I write this heading several things throng through my mind, all bordering upon my subject, so that I scarcely know just how to begin. However, we will catch at one of these many threads and start to unravel our skein and see where it leads us. The years have rolled backward, and we stand on the wayside beside a country road in the land of Palestine, about the year 33 of our Lord. The road is one leading out of Jerusalem toward the setting sun, over the mountains of Ephraim, to a village situated some miles distant, called Emmans. Up the road toward us, coming from Jerusalem, walk two men with heads bowed down, speaking together almost in whispers, so that we can scarcely hear what they are saying. Occasionally they turn and look back toward the city whence they have come; now they point their fingers toward the east, in the direction of the Mount of Olives; again they halt, and with faces turned thither they silently stand, gazing toward that summit as though expecting someone. Altogether their actions are so mysterious that we join ourselves to them,

resolved to keep them in view and see what all this may mean. As they get farther and farther from the city their conversation grows louder, so we can now hear plainly all that they are saying. They seem to be discussing the events which have just transpired behind them, and conjecturing with regard to what it all may mean. It seems that they have been deeply in love with one who has proven himself many times to be their friend. They call this friend Jesus. They had expected this Friend to one day come to the throne of Israel and rule all the land wherein we now are. Contrary, however, to these expectations, his enemies through jealousy and hatred of him had contrived to gain the ascendancy over him, and had hurried him into the presence of the Roman governor, Pontius Pilate, who, though he could find no fault in the man, nevertheless delivered him over to his enemies to be crucified, which crucifixion had but just taken place. Our companions are much discouraged at the outcome of events, and seem inclined to doubt the good intentions of their Friend, and even seem ready to forget, if they can, many promises which their Friend made them while alive and walking with them; and now occurs the strangest thing of all this journey. These two men after a time cease talking with one another, and take to acting in a very peculiar way, and uttering very strange things. From their talk any ordinary mortal would

think them mentally deranged, for now, instead of talking with each other, they seem to be communing with a third person whom we cannot see. They ask question after question and frequently they break forth in amens. Their faces shine, they look to be supremely happy. Thus talking and communing with this personage they come into Emmaus, and having come to their house they bid their companion abide with them, as the night is at hand. Thus constrained, he tarries with them, and even sits at meat with them. As he breaks the bread, instantly a look of remembrance mingled with surprise flashes over their faces, followed by a look bordering on disappointment, for their visitor has gone from them as mysteriously as he came. Now they doubt not, nor question with regard to the meaning of the events of the last two days, for they say, "*Did not our heart burn within us, while he talked with us by the way, and while he opened to us the Scripture?*" From this expression we comprehend that Jesus is their heart within them. The bride in the Song of songs, which as Soloman's, says, "*I sleep, but my heart awaketh.*" The bride is the church; the heart of the church is Christ. What our heart is to our natural body, even that and more also is Jesus to his body, the church. If our natural heart should cease its action, our natural life would cease also. We may and do lie down upon our beds at night and lose ourselves

in slumber, but though our bodies sleep, not once through all the silent watches does the heart cease its action. There has never been a time in all the history of this old world of ours that the testimony of Jesus was not in the earth; the heart of the church is ever and will ever be awake. The church may be, and has often been, asleep, but not once has the eye of her Maker slumbered and slept. Through all the tortuous windings of Israel's backsliding way, Jesus had his witnesses in her, and though they persecuted them sorely and cast them into the dungeons, yet, was Christ preached. Even in those days, when God saw that wickedness had multiplied upon the earth, and it repented him that he had made man, even then Noah was a preacher of righteousness; and in those days of wicked Queen Jezebel, who put to death numbers of the Lord's prophets, Elijah was kept from her snares; he defied her in the name of his God, he triumphantly cast the lie in the teeth of the prophets of the false god and preached "*Jesus and him crucified,*" the immortal theme of all ages. Even though Israel forgot her God went astray again and again in the satisfaction of her lusts, Jesus, the heart of the church, was awake, his testimony was ever in her midst; he is her life, her sole dependence. She may grow weary many times, and fall asleep from sheer weakness of the flesh, but Christ never; he is always on the alert, and his prayers are for

the prevalence of her faith. Though the night before the crucifixion the disciples might sleep Jesus in agony prayed for them. He knew their weakness, they were yet to learn it. I have heard individuals, believers in Christ, tell of being cold and indifferent to all spiritual things. It may be so, but their heart is awake. If this is not the case, I would like to know how they would know they are cold and indifferent? How could they thus pass judgment upon themselves if Jesus was not alive within them? Do you ever commit an act which you know to be wrong at the time you commit it, and yet you go right on and do it. In other words, do you ever sin "*willfully*"? I am sure you do. Well, how do you know you are doing wrong? Because your heart is awake. You yourself are asleep, and thus slumbering fall into temptation. But what about the time when you yourself wake up and find out where you have fallen to, then how do you feel? I will tell you: "*If we sin willfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries.*" Our organized churches sometimes fall asleep and yield to temptation, even though there may be evidence of their heart being awake. In such a church there may be one or two alert brethren who are much exercised about the conduct of the

church, who realize the danger ahead, but who are unable to cause the church to heed their warning. In these one or two alert brethren the wakefulness of Christ is evidenced. O that God would give us more such, and give us also therewith strength to heed their cry before the danger is upon us. When will we ever learn to behave ourselves in the house of our God? A church may become over confident as to her soundness, and then beware! Along comes a wolf in sheep's clothing, Satan as an angel of light; he gives us a strange mixture of gospel and law, so subtle that it soothes our senses, puts us to sleep, and though one or two staunch brethren raise their voice in alarm, we say, "*O don't be so foolish, he's all right.*" But some day the church will wake up, and what then? there will come divisions, pain and great sorrow, repentance will come upon that church, the tares which sprang up in the night will be uprooted, but great will be the anguish of that purification. False doctrine is not the only thing to be feared, however. What a confusion it makes in the order of our little church to wake up sometimes and find a dear, good brother has joined a secret society. Instantly the question is asked, Why did he do it? Go ask him, he will doubtless say, as not aware this thing was contrary to your practice. He did it to increase his worldly prosperity. The brethren never told him they did not sanction such things, he never heard the Elder say

a word about it, not a question concerning it was asked him when he joined the church. I wonder who is asleep in this case? The church, of course; it never mentioned such things because they were unimportant, non-essentials if you please; but thus it is always these non-essentials that cause the most of our trouble. However, the heart of the church is not asleep, and you may be sure that your sin will find you out. "*For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ; that every one may receive the things done in his body, according to that that he hath done, whether it be good or bad.*"

Much more might be said along this line, but because I cannot say it all I may as well stop now as any time.

Yours in desire of the "heart's" animations,

Horace H. Lefferts
Philadelphia, Pa.

St. Matthew 3: 16-17.

And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him:

And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

“Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which cannot be moved, let us have (margin, let us hold fast) grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear.”- HEBREWS xii. 28.

GRACE is the very foundation of the kingdom which cannot be moved. It is all of grace, from first to last. By grace we are saved; by grace we are called; by grace we are what we are. In order, therefore, to maintain our interest clear in the kingdom which cannot be shaken, we must hold grace fast; for directly we cease to do this, we lose our comfortable prospects of this kingdom, and of our own participation in it and its heavenly blessings. It is a kingdom of present grace and of future glory, therefore built wholly upon grace and not upon merit; wholly upon the favour of God and not upon the works of the creature. As long, then, as we hold fast grace, we hold the kingdom; for the kingdom stands in grace.

But why should this exhortation be needed? Is it not very easy to hold fast grace? Yes, very, when there is nothing to try it; and that is the way that most hold it—in the head, not in the heart. But the real partakers of the life of God are tempted on every hand to renounce their hold of grace, through the power of the world, the strength of sin, the

subtlety of their unwearied adversary, the unbelief, infidelity, and dependency of their wretched heart. Thus sometimes we are tempted to look away from the kingdom which cannot be shaken, and descend to lower things; to stand either upon that earth which has been shaken under our feet, or that heaven, that Pharisee’s heaven which has been shaken over our heads, and thus get lost and bewildered among the wreck and ruin of those things which have been shaken and are removed. The Apostle therefore exhorts us to hold fast that grace whereby in the first instance we came to have an interest in the kingdom not to be shaken; whereby we were introduced into an experimental knowledge and possession of it; and whereby alone we can maintain a firm hold of it to the end. Whatever you do, then, however low you may sink and fall, never relinquish your firm hold of grace. It will never be more precious than when clasped by a dying hand, and clung to with expiring breath.

Elder J. C. Philpot

**IS IT TIME TO RENEW
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CONTRIBUTIONS

FOR SEPTEMBER 2010

Oscar Pickral, VA	5.00
Elder Raymond Goad, VA	15.00
Glenford Sigmon, VA.....	5.00
Hazel Garland, MD	25.00
Billie Freeman, AL	25.00
Gradie Strader, NC.....	5.00
Elder Ralph Gaines, NC	5.00
Donald Agee, VA	5.00
Jim Campbell, CO	5.00
Jerry Somers, VA	10.00
Raymond Wimmer, WV	5.00
Doris Giles, VA	5.00

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.

OBITUARIES

Pleasant Ridge Church is saddened by the death of Brother Dan Anders. Brother Dan was a devoted member of Pleasant Ridge Church and a supporter of all the churches of the Buttahatchie-Hopewell Association.

Brother Dan was born November 3, 1920 and passed away on September 10, 2010, being 89 years old.

Brother Dan served four years in the Army during WW II, nine years with Southern Natural Gas, 16 years with the Alabama Dept. of Agriculture, and was a life long farmer.

Brother Dan is survived by his wife of 64 years Sister Agnes Anders, who is also a member of Pleasant Ridge, two sons Dan (Connie), and Joe (Donna), four grandchildren and four great-grandchildren and one sister Merrill Rudowski (Russell).

Brother Dan was a firm believer in Salvation by the Sovereign Grace of God and the Predestination of all things.

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

Brother Dan Anders will be missed by all of us, but we believe that our loss is his eternal gain. May God reconcile us to his will.

Elder James Pugh, Moderator
Sister Agnes Sullivan, Clerk

JAMES LEWIS (J. L.) CASSELL

At the request of the Smith River Primitive Baptist Association it is with much sadness, that I attempt to write an obituary of our friend and beloved brother in Christ, Elder James Lewis (J. L.) Cassell.

Brother Cassell was born at Vesta, Patrick County, Virginia, on July 8, 1922, to the late John Henry Cassell, Sr., and Penceanna Jane Conner Cassell. In addition to his parents he was predeceased by Sisters Eva Cruise and Evelyn Vaughn, and Brother Leonard Cassell.

He passed peacefully from this life on Monday August 16, 2010, after a short illness. He leaves to mourn, his wife of 65 years, Euna Harris Kemp Cassell, sons Carlyle Kemp, Doug Kemp, Jimmy Cassell, and daughter Frankie Martin. He also leaves one brother John Henry Cassell, Jr., 12 grandchildren 10 great-grandchildren, and numerous nieces and nephews.

He was a master carpenter in life. He built many homes in Virginia and other states. He was a charter and life member of the Cave Spring Rescue Squad in Roanoke, Virginia.

His funeral was conducted August 21, 2010, at Oakey's South Chapel in Roanoke, Virginia, by Elders Alan Terry, Junior Conner, and W. T. Conner. He had requested congregational singing from the Goble Hymn Book of #43, #189, #216, led by Elder John Wingfield and Elder

Paul Hopkins. Also hymn #175 and #275 was sung at the cemetery. He was laid to rest at Cedar Lawn Memorial Park in Roanoke, Virginia, to wait the resurrection morning of the Saints of God.

I have known Brother J. L. all my life and having attended meetings at various Primitive Baptist Churches where I saw him in the congregation as a troubled man, carrying a burden, not knowing to what extent. After service at New Dan River Church on Sunday June 24, 1990, at age 67, he asked for a home and was warmly received.

Several years before, a friend of his, Perry Stone, told of a strange dream, in which he saw Bro. Cassell being baptized by two deacons. He pondered on this dream wondering under what circumstance this would happen. In 1990 New Dan River Church was found to be without a pastor and was setting as an independent church with two deacons. As the scripture relates, Phillip was a deacon when he baptized the eunuch.

The baptism was held on the fourth Sunday in July 1990 at 10 o'clock in the pond behind the New Dan River Church by Deacons Raymond Vipperman and Donald Scott.

On the fourth Saturday in May 1991, Deacon Raymond Vipperman asked the church if anyone objected to Bro. J. L. Cassell offering prayer and speaking to the church, no one

objected. After praying he related some of his experiences and those of his father and grandfather and how that they were connected. He spoke of his love for the church that had been with him for over 40 years, and was shown that he would have to stand in the pulpit and serve the church.

Shortly before his passing, Bro. J. L. Cassell related a dream to me, in which he found himself in a pit in front of New Dan River Church "I was near the road, and spring from where water was used in past years. Looking out of the pit at ground level I knew I couldn't get out on my own. I saw Elder Bennie Clifton coming toward me Elder Clifton was a strong man, who could have pulled me out of the pit by himself. I realized" Elder Clifton walked in front of the pit, that I had been lifted out, not knowing by whom. Elder Clifton tied a golden cord around my wrist and we walked up the hill and went into the church. I was led to the pulpit and Elder Clifton tied the other end of the cord around the pulpit. The next thing I realized was that I was in the pulpit looking out into the church.

The first few times that Bro. Cassell went into the pulpit he removed his shoes, for he felt that he was standing on Holy ground. He was shown that he had to be shod with the preparation of the Lord or he could not speak. The fourth Saturday in Jan. 1992, New Dan River Church granted liberty to Bro.

Cassell to exercise his gift among our correspondence. At the time Dan River Church was associated with the Smith River Association.

The fourth Saturday in August 1993, the church called for a presbytery to look into the qualification, of Bro. J. L. Cassell, and if found qualified, ordained to the full work of the ministry. The date of the ordination was set for Saturday October 30, 1993, at 10 o'clock. After being questioned by the presbytery and answering to their satisfaction the laying on of hands by the Elders and Deacons was performed. There were 8 Elders and 18 Deacons that took part in his ordination.

During his life he visited many Primitive Baptist Churches and Associations in several states. He served New Dan River Church as Pastor and Trustee for 19 years.

He was given a gift with a deep understanding of the scriptures and the ability to present in a manner that was well received and understood. His family stated that he studied the bible, and had read it through 34 times during his life. He was given many dreams to show him the path he had to walk in serving God. He is and will be greatly missed by all who knew and loved him. May God reconcile us to His will in that our loss is Bro. Cassell's gain.

Written by one who loved him,
James L. Shelor



Statement of Ownership, Management, and Circulation
Periodicals Publications Except Requester Publications

1. Publication Title: Signs of the Times
 2. Publication Number: 01191910063
 3. Filing Date: 8-27-2010
 4. Issue Frequency: Monthly
 5. Number of Issues Published Annually: 12
 6. Annual Subscription Price: 15.00
 7. Complete Mailing Address of Publisher (Not printer) (Street, city, county, state, and ZIP+4®):
1429 Howlett St. Hillsville, VA. 24343
 8. Complete Mailing Address of Headquarters or General Business Office of Publisher (Not printer):
1429 Howlett St. Hillsville, VA. 24343
 9. Full Names and Complete Mailing Addresses of Publisher, Editor, and Managing Editor (Do not leave blank):
 Publisher (Name and complete mailing address):
Tony R. Horton / 1429 Howlett St. Hillsville, VA. 24343
 Editor (Name and complete mailing address):
Kenneth R. Key / 721 Wyland St. Greensboro, NC. 27405
 Managing Editor (Name and complete mailing address):
Tony R. Horton / 1429 Howlett St. Hillsville, VA. 24343

10. Owner (If not known, give the name and address of the corporation, give the name and address of all stockholders owning or holding 1 percent or more of the total amount of stock, if not owned by a corporation, give the name and address of the individual owner; if the publication is published by a partnership or other unincorporated firm, give its name and address as well as those of each individual owner; if the publication is published by a proprietor, give the name and address):
 Complete Mailing Address:
Signs of the Times Inc. 1429 Howlett St. Hillsville, VA. 24343
No stockholders

11. Known Bondholders, Mortgagees, and Other Security Holders Owring or Holding 1 Percent or More of Total Amount of Bonds, Mortgages, or Other Securities. If none, check box.

Name	Address	Amount
None		

12. Tax Status (For completion by nonprofit organizations authorized to mail at nonprofit rates) (Check one):
 Has Not Changed During Preceding 12 Months
 Has Changed During Preceding 12 Months

13. Publication Title: Signs of the Times
 14. Issue Date for Circulation Data Below: September 2010
 15. Extent and Nature of Circulation:
 a. Total Number of Copies (Net press run):
 (1) Mailed Outside-County Paid Subscriptions Shipped on PS Form 3841 (Include paid distributor advice non-rate rates, advertiser's proof copies, and exchange copies) 596
 (2) Mailed In-County Paid Subscriptions Shipped on PS Form 3841 (Include paid distributor advice non-rate rates, advertiser's proof copies, and exchange copies) 0
 (3) Paid Distribution Outside the Mail, including Sales Through Dealers and Carriers, Street Vendors, Counter Sales, and Other Paid Distribution Outside USPS® 0
 (4) Paid Distribution by Other Classes of Mail Through the USPS® (e.g. First-Class Mail®) 1
 Total Paid Distribution (Sum of 1b(1), 2(1), 3(1), and 4(1)) 597
 b. Total Free or Nominal Rate Distribution (Sum of 1b(2), 2(2), 3(2), and 4(2)):
 (1) Free or Nominal Rate Outside-County Copies Included on PS Form 3841 0
 (2) Free or Nominal Rate In-County Copies Included on PS Form 3841 0
 (3) Free or Nominal Rate Copies Mailed at Other Classes Through the USPS® (e.g. First-Class Mail®) 0
 (4) Free or Nominal Rate Distribution Outside the Mail (Carriers or other means) 0
 Total Free or Nominal Rate Distribution (Sum of 1b(2), 2(2), 3(2), and 4(2)) 0
 Total Distribution (Sum of 1b(1) and 1b(2)) 597
 c. Copies not Distributed (See instructions to Publishers #4 (page 43))
 Total (Sum of 1b and c) 597
 d. Total (Sum of 1b and c) 597
 e. Total Paid (7c divided by 1c times 100) 100%
 f. Total Free or Nominal Rate (7d divided by 1c times 100) 100%

16. Publication of Statement of Ownership:
 If this publication is a general publication, publication of this statement is required. Will be printed in the October 2010 issue of this publication.
 Publication not required.
 Signature and Title of Editor, Publisher, Business Manager, or Owner:
Tony R. Horton
 Date: 8-25-2010

PS Form 3526, September 2007 (Page 1 of 3) Instructions (Page 3)

Signs of the Times

DEVOTED TO THE OLD SCHOOL BAPTIST CAUSE

"The Sword of the Lord and of Gideon"

VOL. 178

HILLSVILLE, VA., DECEMBER 2010

NO. 12

SIGNS OF THE TIMES

SONG

ISSN - 0199 - 0063

Subscription price \$15.00 per year - \$25.00 two years

Published monthly by
SIGNS OF THE TIMES, INC.

Tony R. Horton
Circulation Manager and Treasurer
1429 Howlett Street, Hillsville, Va. 24343
Phone (276) 728-5651

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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 Kenneth R. Key, 721 Willard Street, Greensboro, N.C. 27405

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

Come, Holy Spirit, heavenly Dove!

***With all thy quickening powers,
Kindle a flame of sacred love
In these cold hearts of ours.***

***Look! how we grovel here below,
Fond of these trifling toys;
Our souls can neither fly nor go
To reach eternal joys.***

***In vain we tune our formal songs;
In vain we strive to rise;
Hosannas languish on our tongues,
And our devotion dies.***

***Dear Lord, and shall we ever live
At this poor, dying rate?
Our love so faint, so cold to thee,
And thine to us so great?***

***Come, Holy Spirit, heavenly Dove,
With all thy quickening powers;
Come, shed abroad a Savior's love,
And that shall kindle ours.***

Watts.

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EDITORIALS

For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also In power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance: As ye know what manner of men we were among you, for your sake. (1 Thes. 1:5)



Elder R. H. Campbell

declaring the way and manner that all

of the saints of God are brought into the fold. It is accomplished not just by the hearing of the word, because the word even though it is the truth, is foolishness to the natural man and until this same special miracle of grace is wrought in their heart they cannot believe it. This truth was demonstrated, most vividly, to the apostle in his experience on the road to Damascus, and to a certain degree, in the experience of all as they are brought from out of nature's darkness into the marvelous light and liberty of the gospel. Most all of the apostle Paul's writings are based upon his own experiences even as Jesus told him (Acts 26: 16) *"But rise and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee."*

This is the complete foundation upon which the whole gospel, which Paul preached was based, and is because as Jesus told him (Acts 18: 10) *"For I am with thee,"* and therefore we know that what he preached was the truth.

Our gospel came unto you not in word only, but in power: You will remember, that he was struck down, blinded and heard a voice that came to him with such force and power, that this former blasphemer and persecutor of the way of truth, was astonished and made to tremble as he meekly asked, *"Lord what wilt*

thou have me to do?" He was no longer the proud boaster of his heritage as a Jew: he no longer boasted that he was of the stock of Abraham, 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, because he was made to realize that these things had nothing to do with his change. On a later occasion he declared that he counted all of these things, which he had claimed as blessings in the Jewish religion, he counted but dung that he might know this one who was speaking to him, on this occasion. This is power that made him declare, in the above text, that it came to him, not in word only, but also in power, which power made him a different man when he arrived in Damascus, from the one who left Jerusalem. He later referred to this in his writings as being, a new creature in Christ, whose old ways are passed away and behold all things have become new, the natural had given way to the spiritual. (1 John:4:4) *"Ye are of God little children, and have overcome them (the antichrist) because greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world."*

I have always felt that, in this experience, the same lesson was being taught as when Moses was told to take his shoes from off his feet, at the burning bush, because he was standing on holy ground. God appeared to Moses, and told him that

He was going to send him in ways that he had never traveled before, he was being called from being a shepherd, to contending with the Pharaoh over the captivity of the children of Israel, and who would eventually deliver the children of Israel out of the hand of the Pharaoh. He told Moses that he was going to lead the Lord's children out of their bondage in the land of Egypt. The apostle Paul was also being sent in a new direction, unto the Gentiles, to lead them in ways that they had not previously known, and teach them the things that Jesus had made known unto him.

A man's feet represent his walk, and Moses was being sent on a mission by God, to go and tell Pharaoh to let his people go, so that they might serve the Lord their God. Paul was to go unto the Gentiles; to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God. This similarity is in the fact that Moses and Israel, and Paul and the Gentiles were made to experience a great change in their lives because of their calling of God. Moses' immediate response was that he could not do it because he was of a stammering tongue and could not speak to Pharaoh, he said, (Exo. 3:11) *"And Moses said unto God, Who am I, that I should go unto Pharaoh and that I should bring forth the children of Israel out of Egypt?"* This has been the response of all when they are called upon to serve

the Lord in a work which is beyond their abilities in the flesh: they do not feel up to the task, and in and of themselves they are not, but Paul was made to say because of the power of the Holy Ghost, (Phil 4:13) ***“I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me. and he boldly proceeded to do as his heavenly Father told him to do, and this same power enables all of his children to perform deeds of greatness because of this same gift, the gift of faith.”***

I have always felt that Jesus' washing the feet of his disciples denoted a change in their walk, as he said on one occasion, because I go unto my Father, and their way was to be in ways that they had never known. I know that Jesus' washing the disciples demonstrates humility, which is to be a basic characteristic of the saints of God, and that they are to serve their brethren, but I also believe that it goes further than that, in that he is cleansing their walk which is accomplished by the indwelling of the Holy Ghost. Just prior to his leaving them, here on the earth, he told them (Matt. 28: 19- 20), ***“Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.”*** As we said above, a man's feet repre-

sents his walk, and Jesus is preparing them to go forth, and perform those greater works that he referred to in (John 14:12). He was cleansing their walk as they were to go forth, in the Spirit, proclaiming the gospel to all who were given eyes to see and ears to hear and hearts to understand. Their commission was not to go forth and make sheep, but rather, go forth feeding the sheep and the lambs, making manifest who are the sheep and who are the goats, and to comfort all that mourn because of their sins.

Our gospel came unto you by way of the Holy Ghost: (John 14:26) ***“But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.”*** If you have any understanding of spiritual matters it is because that it was given of God, and was not as a result of your studying, meditating on the scriptures, or making a decision to accept the scriptures as the word of God. A man cannot make a decision to believe a thing; for you to believe it, there must be solid evidence, over which you have no control, and in spiritual matters, this evidence must be given of God, by revelation. This is the results of the operation of the Holy Ghost, as Christ told his apostles, (John 16: 15) ***“Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall***

not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will shew you things to come. He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you."

Jesus referred to this change as being born again into a new life, a spiritual life where there was no condemnation to them that are blessed therewith. The law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has made them free from the law of sin and death, as Paul recorded in the eighth chapter of Romans. You will say immediately, well, I am afraid that this cannot be said of me, because I am still a sinner in this body of flesh. That is true, and you will still walk in sin, in the flesh, but you will not serve sin, because now your whole desire is to walk after the Spirit because that is the yearning of your whole heart and soul, and you mourn the weakness and inability of the flesh to accomplish this. You will never attain the state of perfection in this life that you desire, but you will always be seeking to follow along in the footsteps of the flock, showing forth your calling, and to be found rejoicing in the love and fellowship of those who are partakers of this same heavenly calling, walking after the Spirit.

Have no fear, or distress, over the fact that you do not attain your goal, in this life, because this is true of all. The apostle Paul, who was blessed above most men, in his experiencing and understanding the

truth, left on record his own testimony lamenting this same fact in the seventh chapter of the book of Romans. He said that he was not able to walk as he desired, he said, (Rom. 7:22-23) *"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 of sin which is in my members."* So you see, you are in good company, bemoaning the sin that is in your members, and this testimony was recorded, by the apostle Paul, after he had been made a preacher of the gospel of God. Now this should bring things down to the level on which you can relate, and he is the same one who later declared that he felt to be the chiefest of sinners, (sound familiar) but, then said that he was a pattern to them that should thereafter believe in God to life everlasting, so should we expect anything else. This enables you to rejoice and praise God, for what you believe has been done for you, in bringing you unto the knowledge of this blessed truth, and delivering you from the lost and undone condition, that you were made to realize that you had been in previously. And in much assurance: (Heb. 12:1-2) *"Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, 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. Look-*

ing unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith: who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of God.” We tend to see so much sin in our way that we cannot feel the assurance that we have, actually, in our hope of salvation.

The dark threads are as needful, in the weavers skillful hands.

As the threads of gold and silver,

In the pattern he has planned.

It is the complexity of the colors, shades and shadows, which make the weaving beautiful; and this is where you live for if it was all one color, or hue, there would not be the beauty that the whole weaving portrays: and so it is in the experience of the saints, the evidence is there, but you have to step back, with the leading of the Holy Ghost, and see how it all fits together. It is then that you can say, with the apostle Paul *“All things work together for good for them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.”* The great cloud of witnesses, is the evidence that you have been given, first by your own calling and experience, and then by the empathy for those who have been so exercised in spiritual matters. You have a love and fel-

lowship for them that you did not have before your calling, and yet, you may have known many of them in the flesh, for many years, but there was not the love and fellowship that you now feel. You did not create this love; it came with the calling out of nature's darkness into the light and liberty of the gospel. I believe that this is the one that God created in the beginning, separating the light from the darkness that had prevailed previously, before the light of the sun and the moon: it is the light that shined around the apostle Paul, on the road to Damascus; the light which Jesus told his disciples to let their light so shine that it gives light to all that are in the house, the household of faith that is. It is not seen by the world, because only those who have been given to experience the mystery, beauty and power of that light can understand why this doctrine is so sweet and precious to the saints.

You may spend much time in the darkness, and wonder if you have ever seen the light, but you still keep following along with the flock, because that's where your heart, and your treasure is. The darkness of nature is as perfect and complete, as the light of the liberty of life because they are both the work of God, and he is as perfect in all of his ways. This is true in the experience of those who have been traveling this path for many years, they are just as helpless in the matter as the novice, man does not exercise the gift; the

gift exercises the man. You will try, but, you will find that your best efforts avail you nothing, and then suddenly you are being exercised, and are amazed that you could not before, when you desired it so much. This is why the apostle Paul said in the above verse of scripture, *“run with patience the race that is set before you”*, it is even as the children of Israel, at the Red Sea; they were in extreme trauma, at the time, and wanted help, right now, but they were told to stand still and see the salvation of the Lord. At his own time, deliverance will come, (Eccl. 3:1) *“To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under heaven”*, you cannot hurry it up, nor can you slow it down: so, even as they were told to stand still and see the salvation of the Lord, so must you. This race must be run, with much patience, and endurance, but also, with the assurance that your calling is indeed of God, and that he that hath begun a good work in your life will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. (Psa. 27:14) *“Wait on the Lord: be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart: wait, I say, on the Lord.”*

I knew a sister who followed in this path for sixty years, who had said originally, that if she remained firm in her faith, that she would know that it was of God, because, she was not able to keep herself, even in the things of nature, much less in spiritual matters. She walked by faith all

of those sixty years, and was still fearful that she had run in vain, at the age of ninety. Walking by faith is not seeing your way clearly, for, that would be walking by sight; so, your continuing to walk by faith, exhibits the assurance that you, really have deep down in your heart and soul, that you are in the way.

Jesus said, *“I am the way, the truth and the life, no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.”* And (Isa. 35: 8-10) said, *“and an highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be The way of holiness: the unclean shall not pass over it, but it shall be for those: the wayfaring men, though fools shall not err therein. No lion shall be there, nor any ravenous beast shall go up thereon, it shall not be found there: but the redeemed shall walk there: And 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.”* The blessings of the redeemed, as describe by Isaiah, are contained in this scripture and were fulfilled in Christ and when he said, *“I am the way,”* Christ said, *“I am the way”* not a way, as being one of many, but the way, the only way, and that highway of which Isaiah was speaking, when he said, it shall be called the way of holiness, and nothing except the redeemed shall walk there in THE WAY. There is

nothing unclean, no lion nor ravenous beast shall walk there, and the ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads; there shall be nothing that offends, nothing of this world except the redeemed of the Lord, none of the sorrows, sighing and mourning endured because of sin, but rather joy and gladness of heart.

John describes this scene, as follows, (Rev 14: 1-3) *"And I looked, and, lo, a Lamb stood on the mount sion, and with him an hundred forty and four thousand, having his Father's name written in their foreheads. And I heard a voice from heaven, as the voice of many waters, and as voice of a great thunder: and I heard the voice of harpers harping with their harps: and they sung as it were a new song before the throne, and before the four beasts, and the elders: and no man could learn that song but the hundred and forty and four thousand, which were redeemed from the earth."* The only ones who can sing the song of deliverance are those who have been delivered, even as the children of Israel, who sang the song of deliverance when they saw Pharaoh and his army destroyed by the waters of the Red Sea. They were the sole beneficiaries of the deliverance, and therefore are the only ones who are entitled to sing the song.

This is the eternal hope of those

to whom this gospel comes, and it certainly is not, just in word only, it is in power, because it will not let them go, and it is their assurance as Paul said, (Phil 1:6) *"Being confident of this very thing, that he that hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ."* I like to think of, (Heb 11:1) as saying, *"Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for,"* and I do not think that it does any violence to the scriptures to say it this way. Faith which is given of God, is the blessed assurance that these things are true, and that they do apply to those whom it is given.

May God, through the comfort of his word, and by his mighty power, bless us to live out our lives, and die with the blessed assurance that we will be numbered among that one hundred forty and four thousand, who only can sing the song of deliverance.

In bonds of love;
Richard H. Campbell

NOTICE TO OUR READERS

With much sadness we report the death of our Associate Editor of 40 years, Elder Richard Campbell. Elder Campbell became Associate Editor of the Signs of the Times in 1970 and was blessed to write many comforting and edifying articles over the years. He was sound in the doctrine and order of our faith always

preaching and writing of the sovereignty, election and predestination as well as the love and mercy of our gracious Lord. His articles and sermons always abased man and praised God from whom all blessings flow. He was widely known, loved and respected among Primitive Baptists as he traveled to different parts of the country. We will miss him, but our loss is his gain. Our sincere condolences go out to his dear wife, Betty, as well as to all the family. May the Lord comfort those that grieve.

Editors

CORRESPONDENCE

Elder James C. Young
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September 17, 2010

SIGNS OF the TIMES, INC.

Tony R. Horton
Circulation Manager and Treasurer
1429 Howlett Street
Hillsville, VA 24343

Spiritual greetings in the most holy Name of our lord Jesus Christ, to the glory of our Heavenly Father, manifest to His children by the ministry of the Holy Spirit.

Please find a check (#2906) in the amount of \$35.00—\$25.00 is to be applied to a 2-year subscription of the Signs of the Times—the remaining amount to be used as you prayerfully may find.

Even though I am not of your particular order ... but you may be surprised should we ever have a conversation ... almost 40 years ago I came among the Progressive (so-called) Primitives.

A dear brother, Elder James Poole from Salisbury, Md and pastor of the Welsh Tract Primitive Baptist Church. We never met in person, I talked only one time after his wife and I talked only one time after his wife and treasure the number of years we corresponded and I have some of his sermons on tape.

Please forgive me for taking your time. May God continue to bless you and the "Signs." I pastor a relatively small congregation in Cooper City which gravitated from North Miami. Pray for us when you may think of us.

Sincerely in Christ,
James C. Young

IS IT TIME TO RENEW

YOUR SUBSCRIPTION?

IF YOUR EXPIRATION DATE

IS 12 / 10

IT EXPIRES WITH THIS ISSUE

Dear Sir,

Oct. 11, 2010

I enjoy reading the Signs. I have lots of old ones starting in 1914. My dad was W. T. Clayton; he was an old "Hard Shell" Primitive Baptist Preacher. He passed away in 1954 and I took the Signs until 1997. I am a "Young Boy" born 5-22-18 that makes me "29".

Thanks,
Raymond

Dear Brother Horton,

Please find enclosed my check for two years subscription to the Signs of the Times. I had requested back issues from January 2010 which I have received already. For the prompt attention given my request I give my thanks and will assume the small additional remittance will cover the cost of mailing.

I enjoy reading the editorials, sermons and announcements contained therein and am often struck by the dates assigned to some of the older writings as they seem so relevant to present circumstances.

I look forward to the next volume (November) as I have read the first ten and have passed them on to a brother to read. I hope this is acceptable.

In bonds of love and fellowship,
James A. White

Dear Mr. Horton,

Enclosed is my check for 2 years renewal to the "Signs." It is a wonderful magazine and I enjoy reading all the articles each month. So many good editorials, and "Voices of the Past." I especially enjoyed the one by Elder Lefferts in the October issue.

May the Lord bless your efforts to choose articles which will continue to feed the children of the living God. They are sweet crumbs from the masters table for such as I feel to be.

In hope,
Caroline Martin

10-18-2010

Dearest Brother Horton,

Sorry I have let this subscriptions go over due. I sure enjoy the Signs of the Times. In the Signs the month of Oct. there was an article of the ordination meeting written by Elder E. J. Lambert he was my Pastor at Hawkins, Tx. for so many years when you put his articles in the Signs it always cheers my heart. He was so blessed to preach God's riches. Use the extra money for what ever.

Thanks so much,
In bonds of love,
Flora Stutts

VOICES OF THE PAST

As I WALKED along to my appointment yesterday morning I felt for a little while very clearly my earthiness, my separateness from spiritual things; not that my thoughts and feelings were sinful, foolish, lustful after worldly things, as at other times, but simply earthy. I was thinking of the relationships of this life with the anxieties, cares and pleasures that are connected with them, of sicknesses of dear ones with the dreads that attend them; of worldly needs and how they will be supplied; of the green grass in lawns and fields, and the beauty of flowers; of *"the things that are seen"* connected with churches, meetings and preaching, and of my own duty to preach that morning, the time of which was so near at hand, and whether I could think of a suitable text that I knew anything about, and whether I knew anything about any Scripture as I ought to know, and whether I could preach so as to do myself any justice, and whether I should be able to preach so as to interest the people, and even if I did interest them whether it would do them any spiritual good. And then it seemed as though all my thoughts and feelings were simply *"of the earth earthy,"* and that I was *"looking at the things that are seen,"* and not thinking of the glory of God, and that I had no power to

think of that and desire that alone.

I saw that in nature the heavens touch the earth and communicate with it, and give to it of their blessings, the sunshine, the rain, the dew, and the elements of the air which call forth the herbs and grass and flowers and fruits, and I said in my mind, *"Can the spiritual heavens ever touch me again and communicate with me, and give me to feel their power, and to receive of their goodness? Will they come down to me ever again?"* Then I think my soul cried unto the Lord that the heavens might touch me, that I might feel their holy power controlling me, and that I might receive once more their pure and sweet communications. Thus the earth cried unto the heavens, where the blessed Sun of Righteousness has his tabernacle, (Psalms xix. 4,) and the heavens heard the earth, and sent down into my poor, darkened and hungry soul some precious healing and reviving beams of light, some sweet promises, and some of that doctrine which drop's like the rain, and this gave me spiritual power to hear the corn and the wine and the oil which God, I humbly trust, had long ago sowed within me, and now these tokens of heavenly blessing heard obediently *"Jezreel,"* (God boweth) and came into manifestation for my present help and comfort. *"And it shall come to pass in that day, I will hear, saith the Lord, I will hear the heavens, and they shall hear the earth, and the earth*

shall hear the corn and the wine and the oil; and they shall hear Jezreel."- Hosea ii. 21, 22.

"And I will sow her unto me in the earth." Thus it is in the flesh that our God is manifest, and down in what sometimes seems to be the dark depths of our hearts the wonderful and mysterious exercises go on, which are the experience of our betrothal unto Christ as our heavenly Husband. Thus we feel from time to time the vileness and nothingness of the flesh, and seem to hear the Lord saying unto us, *"You are not my people."* Then we cry and mourn, until in the Lord's good time the mystery which was hidden from ages and from generations, is anew made manifest unto us in the riches of its glory, which is, *"Christ in you the hope of glory."*- Col. i. 27. So in the very place where it was said unto us, *Ye are not my people,* there it is said, *Ye are sons of the living God.* (Hosea i. 10.)

I read that morning to the people the second chapter of Paul's letter to the Philippians, and felt glad to see and to speak of how in this chapter, as in all the Scriptures, the inspired writer shows the heavens constantly and always touching and communicating with the earth.

Here in our flesh, in a world of sin and sorrow and sickness, in the midst of cares and pain and grief, the holy communications of heavenly favor and love come to us, the laws and ordinances of our heavenly Husband are felt to be over, around

and upon us, as the heavens are over, around and upon the earth, and our responses to these sweet commands and promises and assurances of love are called forth in prayers and praises and thanksgiving.

Elder Silas H. Durand

WATER

Water is essential to natural life as well as spiritual. It is one of the greatest covenant or spiritual blessings mentioned in — the Bible. It is likewise an essential in the natural realm of existence. It is necessary in both kingdoms. The inhabitants of either commonwealth must have it or they soon perish. It is not something that can be produced by either an inhabitant of the kingdom of heaven, or of the earth. To both earthly and heavenly citizens, it is a gift from a beneficent Benefactor.

It cannot be handled by the inhabitants of either country. Without it those that are spiritual and those that are natural will die of thirst. In connection with that thought, let me say no man can stay the terror of thirst in either kingdom, therefore, there is not such a thing as a conditionalist where there is not water to alleviate that thirst. Ever so often water, both spiritual and natural, is mentioned in the Bible. You can not do without it. Also you can

easily drown in too much of it in a natural way. I am well aware that to an extent God gave man the ability to bring water under subjection to him. However, God also gave man dominion over tigers and lions, but do not try to carry that subjection too far.

In nature men have thought that they had control over water, being able, as they thought to make it do what they thought. They were not able to do so. A man does not have water under subjection in the ocean nor on the desert. Dry hole after dry hole has been dug. Many people have drowned in what was thought to be shallow water.

Jacob had a well used well of water. It was the only supply for a lot of people. However, the case that we wish to notice is a peculiar one. The Master met one of His sheep there. She thought to need that water, but her mind was distracted away from what she thought that she needed the water that she did not know existed.

The Saviour knew before hand why He had to go through the country where this well was. He knows the need of His people whether bond or free, Jew or Gentile. It is a joy to think that in His relation to His mother, to His people, that He became tired at the time that He did. He needed the natural rest, but a poor sinner stood in need of living water. His becoming tired when He did was because of His relationship with this woman, and because that He was

the son of Mary as well as the Son of God. His arrival at the well before she did was purposed from all eternity, accidental though it may appear to men.

She came, as she thought, for natural water. According to covenant arrangements, she came for living water. She did not understand at the beginning, neither did any of us, but, if not deceived, we, as did she, receive that teaching that stems from heaven. The meeting of the two had been seen and declared before times curtain was let down. Here is conclusive proof that all of God's children are taught of the Lord to know Him whom to know is life eternal.

Happy is that people whose God is the Lord. Ah, how empty and barren we are as we go out, and how joyful we are as we are brought in. How full her time was in rites and legal ceremonies; how absorbed she was in going to Jacob's well when she left her home on that day, and how completely her day and her mind was changed when she met the Man at places of drawing waters that are so satisfying that she forgot home ties, legal customs, earthly drinking water, forgot her earthen pitcher, and yet was so carried away in the Spirit of Him that she had newly met that she was filled with an overflowing well of living water springing up into everlasting life.

Let us remember that we are writing about water in our life as a follower of the Lamb of God. There

are, in our pathway, two kinds of water. There are bitter waters and sweet waters. These two are one over against the other. This is by purpose of He that calleth His children to take their cross and follow Him. These waters will be in the hands of the Shepherd, and they will become as His wisdom dictates.

This poor sinning woman had never been anywhere for water save to Jacob's well. After meeting the Saviour she had no need for this water anymore as a follower of the Man she met, for the water which He gave her, and which He gives all those that meets Him at Jacob's well, is in her, a living stream flowing upward, even springing up out of dry ground a living stream, as living waters, causing the tender plants to revive, the tender herbs to come under the night much of the time, but having the distilling quietness and strength of the dew.

Christ Jesus the lord was baptized in water. I will never forget the day when I was blessed to follow my lord and Master in baptism. I have oftentimes wished for brighter evidence of being an humble follower of Him in that lovely ordinance. To me, water is the only element in which a child of God can follow His Master in the ordinance. There is not any way in which a baptism can be finished except in enough water for the applicant to be carried down into the water, and raised up out of it. Any commandment of the Saviour must be full consummation to be com-

plied with. Down into and up out of is in compliance; anything short of that is not water baptism, be it performed by whosoever takes it upon himself to perform it. The baptism of the Saviour was in keeping with gospel directions, all baptisms since then have been in compliance with the gospel rule, if thus complied with. We are dealing with only the mode. For a baptism to admit one into the church of Jesus Christ, there are other things necessary in order for it to be legal baptism. However, I am only dealing with water baptism, with the mode of legal baptism at this time. The Lord willing, perhaps later other phases of it will be considered. In passing, let it be noted that all of the water in the universe will never cleanse a soul from sin. Only the blood of Christ will do that.

The cleansing foundation of water was opened in eternity in the purpose of God. It was for sin and uncleanness figuratively speaking, and it is a spiritual work, and men do not have anything to do with its flowing. God opened this foundation, and He did not have a single contribution of help in time or money or creature effort. The manifestation of the opening of that fountain shall be at the time that the sword of justice shall be called upon to smite the shepherd. The time of the opening of this fountain ushers in one of the most important links in the history of salvation. First, it does away with prophets, and it does away with legalism. It comes with great wonders

and things hard to be understood, and yet it comes as a new and living way, and it comes altogether as a gift of God. It is not the forethought of man; men have nothing at all to do with it coming. It was conceived in the eternal mind of a covenant keeping God, and its coming is to be attributed to Him that made heaven and earth.

Water is intermingled in many, if not all, of the acts of salvation. Sometime the waters are bitter, even mingled with gall; sometimes they are sweet to the soul, making the heart beat with joy and keen anticipation. There is not any question about waters flowing to every inhabitant of Zion. Let us begin with the 16th verse of the 34th chapter of Isaiah, Seek ye out of the book of the Lord, and read, no one of these shall fail, none shall want her mate; for my mouth it hath commanded; and his spirit it hath gathered them, and he hath cast the lot for them, and his hand hath divided it unto them by line; they shall possess it forever; from generation to generation they shall dwell therein. (now chapter 35). The wilderness and the solitary place shall be glad for them; and the desert shall blossom as the rose. It shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice even with joy and singing, the glory of Lebanon shall be given unto it, the excellence of Carmel and Sharon, they shall see the glory of the Lord and the excellency of our God. Strengthen the weak hands, and confirm the feeble knees, Say

unto them that are of a fearful heart, Be strong, fear not: behold your God will come with vengeance, even God with a recompense he will come and save you. Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf shall be unstopped. Then shall the lame man leap as the hart, and the tongue of the dumb sing; for in the wilderness shall waters break out, and streams in the desert (Isa. 34:16, 17 and 35: i, 6). There isn't any likelihood of any of these covenant blessings failing.

These promises are those of a covenant keeping God, and He will do them. As God blesses us with a retrospective review of His promises, let us remember His promise to Jacob. He finds every Jacobite in a waste howling wilderness, and in a desert land. Right in those two needy places the text takes on grandeur and beauty and everlasting hope for the poor and needy. If that is your status before God, do not hesitate, but let us, as blessed with faith to draw near in faith and to say, He is mine, and I am His.

Do not fear dear reader, this living water will be springing up as you travel heavenward. That is His promise. What does it matter what reformers say; what does it matter what challengers of your faith and of your order say. The Lord is on your side (Psa. 124). It is not a problem for earthly engineers to tanker with bringing in a well in a desert. God has engineered the whole order of business in saving sinners. He does not

get angered at them and turn His back upon them, but He ever is at their side, and even though Peter denied Him, and Judas betrayed Him, and the woman at Jacob's well at first challenged Him to draw water when He had nothing to draw with, He still displayed mercy upon those that call upon His name.

The Lord loved Jacob. He loved him. Not with this kind of love that hangs to your coat tail one day, and persecutes you the next. Other people delight in a text (if it is man made), like unto that. But He is not a man as we are. God loved Jacob, not in six troubles, nor not even just in seven, but He loved Him with an everlasting love. But now thus saith the Lord that created thee, O Jacob, and that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not; for I have redeemed thee, I have called thee by thy name; thou art mine. When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame be kindled upon thee.

I am not telling you that you will not have deep and threatening waters to wade through. No, no, my soul knows that right well our blessed Saviour measured the depth of those cruel waters of death, even measured the depths for an unbelieving bride, and unfaithful bride, for, as one has well said, No woman ever had as faithful a Husband as did the Church of God, and

no Husband ever had as faithless a wife. Yet He measured His waters of sorrow, that had to be waded for you to arrive safe at home, and what a sad lonely walk it was that He had to go it alone, but how good it is to be up and about and physically able and a mind well enough to comfort you that He walked the depth of them for you alone that you might have Him to walk those waters of death with you.

I hope that I write
in brotherly love,
Elder W. D. Griffin

- Experience of -
Elder J. P. Helms

Dear Brother Berry: I believe the things I do, not because I willed it so, not because I was brought up in a Primitive Baptist home, and was taken to their services from babyhood. As I grew up, I respected them for their simplicity and honesty, but I verily believed they were wrong. I believed in the free will of the creature, and was in full accord with the doctrine that a man carved out his own destiny, and that Primitive Baptists would soon disappear from the face of the earth. As I read the Bible, I was more established in this way. I marked out my life, and of all of the things I would not do, I would never belong to the Primitive Baptist Church; for this was the church of the poor, and

was too far behind the times or me. I did not attend a Sunday School for two reasons. First of all, I was equal to any that did go, and much better than many of them. Second. I did not want to hurt my parents. I fully expected, and was determined to "get up" in the world, get all the education I could, and then acquire enough of this world's goods to be secure and then get right with God. This, to me, was a simple enough matter. All that was necessary was to join any church, but the Old Baptists, and then it was up to God to accept me, or He would be unjust. Then, if I would be particular and not fall, I would in the end, get to heaven. Was I the biggest fool that ever lived on earth? I would not argue this question.

So I lived, so I believed until I was seventeen years old. I was not disturbed; God is my witness, but as I lay in sleep, I saw the day of judgment, and in the east was a light, and in it, a Being who spoke and the graves gave up their dead. I stood amazed, for some were sheep and some were goats, and I was a goat. There was a smile on the face of this Being for some were sheep, and some were goats and I was in tears, and in fear. I saw that I was lost, for all I ever did, said or thought came up before me, and I promised prayerfully, and felt I was able to live a better life, and could, by so doing, please God. In other words, I could change myself from a goat to a sheep. I was very particular for some

time, and was well pleased with my efforts. I was making progress, but all at once, my promises were broken, my good intentions gone. I had done worse than ever, making prayerful promises, seemed to help some, but all I wanted was another chance, and I could be a better man. Needless to say, I failed again and again, and I know I grew worse and worse. Still in all the years of my early life I was sure of one thing, that I would not be an Old Baptist.

These promises continued until my thirty-third year. I came to the end of promises. It came as part of me that I could not keep one promise, and there was only one thing that could reach my case. That was the mercy of Jesus. In all of this, I read my Bible, and finally every time I picked it up, I found something that condemned me. I finally saw clearly that I was lost. I had sinned away the day of grace, for I was not only a lost sinner; I was a blasphemer, and there was no forgiveness for me in this world or the world to come. I would plead my cause no more; no more prayer, no more promises. But in spite of all this determination, my cry by day and by night was for mercy. I decided that the end of life was near and that hell was my portion. Again, God is my witness, I confessed the justice of God in all things. I saw that God had determined the destiny of all men in eternity, and I knew that it was right and righteous, and that Jesus came a Savior and saved His people from

their sins with an everlasting salvation. But I am lost, I am a goat, was my cry.

Now I come to the year of 1914, and a day well marked in my life. As I lay on the floor at my home to die, as I believed. I went in the cabin from the field late in the day as the sun set, perfectly reconciled to die and meet my doom. Everything was covered with gloom, and there, while prostrate, I heard a voice speak: *"I created heaven and earth, and I am your Savior."* I say there was power in those words, there was life in those words. I was lifted to my feet, and I went out of the house, and Lo, everything had put on a new appearance. I know that it is unusual for birds to sing at sunset, but there were some there that evening, and they were singing. Then I started to the kitchen to tell my wife what had come to me, and then I heard this: Better not do this - you may be deceived. So I did not go. Then I cried, Lord, if I am deceived, undeceive me. On the third day following I had come to the place to say that I was deceived, that I was losing my mind, but all the time, crying and begging. I was alone in the highway near my home when something seemed to say. Wait. Of course, I stopped. I heard singing. It was coming from the east, and as it came closer and closer, I could hear the words of the song. It was, "How Firm a Foundation." The singing came to me, and then in me. At the words, *"Fear not, I am with thee"* I joined in the song.

I suppose men would have said I was crazy. But I was so convinced then that I said, I will never doubt any more. But I did, and still do. The Old Baptists seemed different to me. Their doctrine was not so bad after all. But being a member of them or any other church was not in my mind.

Soon a burden came on me, *"You go tell My people."* I said, no as determinedly as anything of my life. Then I began to question, Who Are Your People. Some I knew living, and some who were dead; many I did not know, but all were dressed in white, and I was given to know that they were all Old Baptists, and I loved them. The same voice said, *"These are My people."* To this day, I believe I know where the true church is. I know where His witnesses are. But at this time I decided I would never unite with the Church. I would not preach. I knew nothing; it would interfere with my life; I could not make a living and preach and I would not. So I went for a few months. One Sunday afternoon. I went to my father's home. There were several Elders and members there on the porch. I remember placing my foot on a stone, and my mind was taken from me literally. How much time elapsed I cannot tell. What I said, I cannot tell. The thing I heard that brought me to my senses were the words of my grandfather: *"I move we receive him in the Church."* At that time I was glad and thankful that they could receive such

as I, but before I reached home, I vowed I would not preach, and poorfool! I finally decided I would die before I would even let anyone know anything about this matter, and I emphatically denied to the deacons and pastor that I was burdened to preach. But affliction came in my home, to my children, and I promised that if the Lord would spare the child I would go. This child was restored to health. Then I rebelled again. Then another of the children was touched, and again I was compelled to beg for mercy again, and to promise, and again the Lord heard me. Then it was different, I said, I will go, but Lord show me, lead me, instruct me. I don't know anything! I don't know anything about the doctrine. Soon afterward the deacons and pastor called me to the stand and there I was in the place I had declared I would never be! There I was a member of the Church I had declared I would never join, and there I am to this day, and I can say, *"That I received it not of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ."* This is the cause of my belief, and I can assure you and all that I am set in this, if this is what Primitive Baptists believe, I am one of you. I know I tried to believe something else. I tried to be something else, and I tried to keep from preaching, and I failed in it all. What little I know of doctrine or order, I have experienced it. In no sense would I detract from the Bible, or the study of it; in no

sense would I say that a church can live without gospel practice. But administer all you can unto me, in one dose, or in broken doses, of *"You can if you will,"* and it will not affect me. Have I learned of Jesus? Have I Christ, then I have all. For He is the teacher of His children, and He does all things for them. Some of the things that I have written have never been written of me before, a poor hint at best, poorly expressed, but I am not ashamed to tell all what I believe. I may be mistaken in the whole matter, but I say not to all, this is what Primitive Baptists ought to believe, and stand for in practice. Yes, the revelation of Jesus Christ, to whom be glory and honor forever and ever. Amen.

Your brother,
Elder J. P. Helms

PSALM 104:1-5.

Bless the Lord, O my soul. O Lord my God, thou art very great; thou art clothed with honour and majesty.

Who coverest thyself with light as with a garment: who stretchest out the heavens like a curtain:

Who layeth the beams of his chambers in the waters: who maketh the clouds his chariot: who walketh upon the wings of the wind:

Who maketh his angels spirits; his ministers a flaming fire:

Who laid the foundations of the earth, that is should not be removed for ever.

OUR INHERITANCE.

The Lord's people are endowed with a possession which belongs not to this world, it is the gift from our heavenly Father, by and through which we are made joint-heirs with our Lord Jesus Christ in an inheritance of priceless value, which is eternal life. This inheritance embraces first the love of God, which he hath vouchsafed unto the children whom he hath chosen in his Son Jesus Christ. It is declared, "*For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*" It embraces also all of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God. The apostle speaks in wonder and astonishment when he says, "*O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!*" We also partake of the mystery of the divine nature, which mystery is wrought out and rules manifest in us through an experience of the grace of God, as we are exercised by the Spirit of holiness and righteousness unto all good works; this is the divine nature. The apostle Peter speaks of the inheritance on this wise: "*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, to an inheritance incor-*

ruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time." Therefore the inheritance is secure for time and eternity.

The foundation which establishes our claim to the sure mercies of David, in our relationship to the Father through our Lord Jesus Christ; we are heirs of God and joint-heirs with his Son Jesus Christ because we are his children. Those who claim to be children of God because they have established certain reforms in their daily life, are sadly mistaken in their reckonings. One cannot make himself a child of God by anything that he can do, any more than one can make himself the child of a natural father. A natural father may disinherit his child, but the act makes him no less child. Our inheritance does not depend upon the uncertainties of a finite mind, or of the faulty temperament of an unwise father. "*For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him Amen, unto the glory of God by us.*" His love toward us is an everlasting love, and like his promises, cannot be changed. In nature we are creatures of time, and all time things and time conditions are subject to change and decay; but when the promise of the Father that we shall inherit eternal life, has been fulfilled in the Son, then with us time shall be no longer. Our inheritance is se-

cure, it is founded upon the wills and shalls of our covenant-keeping God. *"Yet he hath made with me an everlasting covenant, ordered in all things, and sure."* The most important chattel in the inheritance which comes to us is the love of God which is bestowed abundantly upon each one of the heirs. If by reason of weakness in the flesh, the lusts thereof temporarily superabound, then do we die, and as the salt which has lost his savor, *"It is neither fit for the land, nor yet for the dunghill; but men cast it out."* This is the beginning of great tribulation; the poor soul is lost to all the comfort and consolations of the gospel, he cannot go back into the world, he is trodden under foot of men: therefore is he stranded and stands alone, desolate and in despair; yet he is still a child, and the loving Father still loves him and is faithful in his love, and has provided some good thing for him. As the man who was traveling from Jerusalem to Jericho fell among thieves, and was left half dead, was visited by the good Samaritan, (as he journeyed) and who helped him on his way, so to this poor, desolate, suffering child the Father sends the Spirit of his Son in answer to his despairing cry; oil is poured into his gaping wounds, and now where sin abounded grace doth much more abound, and the dear little one is ushered back into the family circle with his heart filled to overflowing with the love of God. Upon one occasion during the min-

istry of our Lord, a certain lawyer of the pharisees in order to tempt him, said: *"Master, which is the great commandment in the law. Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. This is the first and great commandment. And the second is like unto it, Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets."* But now that we have entered richly into our inheritance, these two commandments are engraven upon our hearts; this precious love is the incentive and the principle by which we walk in the fear of the Lord. It is also the rule of our deportment in life, the subject and inspiration of our conversation, and a lamp to our feet. All the riches of our inheritance, the wisdom and knowledge of God are entwined about with the endless chain of God's boundless love. The children of the Most High also inherit the earth, for *"The earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein."* As joint-heirs with Jesus Christ, the earth is also ours and all its fullness, the world and all that therein is. All things in the earth and in the world work harmoniously together for the fulfillment of the whole way of salvation according as the Lord has appointed before the mountains were brought forth. Again, we inherit the earth, inas-

much as our natural bodies are of the earth, and are nourished and sustained thereby. Again, we inherit the earth in the sense that the church of Christ was planted in the wilderness place of this world, and in that wilderness does she travel throughout all time; for did not the Lord say unto Jacob when he arose from his pillow of stones in the wilderness, where he saw the heavens opened, *"The land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed?"* Our inheritance therefore embraces all things, both the heavens and the earth. The experience of the saints which includes the travel both in the light and in the darkness. Tribulation is an essential part of the inheritance, persecutions also are our portion in this life. Jesus said, *"Verily I say unto you, there is no man that hath left house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake, and the gospel's, but he shall receive an hundred fold now in this time, houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions; and in the world to come eternal life."* Notwithstanding the fact that trials and afflictions and persecutions are a part of the pilgrimage life of the saints, yet they gladly and willingly endure all things for the joy that is set before them.

Let us now concentrate our minds upon the source and fountain of our precious inheritance. Jesus,

the beloved Son of God, is the gift of the Father unto his children; he is the author and finisher of our faith; he is our life; he gave his precious life-blood that we might enter upon the inheritance of the elect of God; he is the Mediator of the new covenant, by which we are made kings and priests unto God; he is the High Priest of our profession, by which we enter into the holy of holies by a new and living way, with whom we are bound together in the most holy bonds of husband and wife, and jointly possessing the inheritance. May we all sweetly enter into the earnest of our inheritance while here in these low grounds of sorrow.

B. F. COULTER.

Philadelphia, Pa., Feb. 13, 1905.

"Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" - ROMANS vii, 24.

If the Lord the Spirit has implanted that piteous cry in our soul, *"O wretched man that I am!"* this will follow as a necessary consequence - *"Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"* Where shall I look for deliverance? From what quarter can it come? Shall I look to the law? O no! that curses and condemns me, because I am continually breaking it. Can I

look to friends? They may pity and sympathize; but they cannot remove the body of sin and death; it is too fast linked on for them to remove. Shall I go to ministers of truth? I may hear what they say with approbation; but there is something more wanted to remove this chilling embrace of the body of sin and death. Shall I look to the Scriptures? They contain the remedy; but I want that remedy to be sweetly applied—*“Who then shall deliver me?”* What refuge can I look to? Whither can I go, or whither shall I turn? From what quarter can help or deliverance come? See the embarrassment! view the perplexity of an exercised soul - looking here, and looking there; turning to the right hand and turning to the left. Yet from one quarter only can the deliverance come. And thus, when the Apostle was brought here when he was sunk down to a low spot, and anxiously turning his eyes to every quarter to see whence deliverance could come God blessed his soul with a view of his precious Son. God the Spirit wrought in his heart that living faith whereby he saw Jesus, and whereby there was a communication of the blood and love of the Lamb to his conscience.

Elder J.C. Philpot

CONTRIBUTIONS

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Mary Hawkins, NC	25.00
<i>In memory of Elder Hale Terry</i>	
Flora Stutts, TX	5.00
Tim Barron, TX	10.00
Algje Martin, VA	5.00
Raymond Clayton, KY	5.00
Elizabeth Hedrick, VA	5.00
James White, AL	10.00
Elser James Young, FL	10.00
Caroline Martin, WA	5.00

OBITUARIES

DORA ELLEN HOLLAND VICK
January 6, 1938 To
December 17, 2009

Dora Ellen was born in Johnston County to the late Gurney Leland and Peircy Davis Holland.

Surviving are her husband Elder Garlon Vick, one daughter Phyllis Jo Waiters, two sons Jeffery Vick, and Richard Vick, two sisters Udell Young and Edith Beasley, one brother Celion Holland, six grand children and three great grand children.

Funeral services were held Sunday December 20th at Minshew-Coley funeral home Chapel Elder Harold Pittman officiating. Other speakers were Wanda Gurley, Jake Star, and Elder Garlon Vick. Burial was in Evans Cemetery behind Pittmans Grove Church where she was a faithful member for 57 years. She was blessed to join Pittmans Grove in November, 1952 at the age of 14.

We were blessed to be married September 21, 1956 by the late Elder W.E. Turner, her pastor at the time and until he passed away.

She had heart blockages in the 80's, cancer twice in the 90's and in April 2008 we were told she had ALS, also known as Lou Gehrig's disease. We knew that there was not any medicine that could help her, but we also knew that she had just as many days now as were given her in the beginning. She never asked why me Lord, but why not me from the day we were told. She said we are going to smile and laugh when we can, cry when we have to. She adopted smiley face pins to wear at all times. She wanted people to smile and not feel sorry for her when they came for a visit.

She was blessed to miss very few church meetings during her sickness. She was blessed to be with me at our home church on Saturday before passing from this life on Thursday to her eternal life. I was blessed to be with her when God called the breath of life from her. She

died in my arms for which I am thankful. Her death was extremely peaceful as she just stopped breathing. I believe with all my heart she is resting in her Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. She will always be a part of me. I can't tell you how much I miss her but I hope that I am truly thankful for our life together.

Written by Her Husband,
Elder Garlon Vick

TO THOSE WE LOVE

When I am gone release me and let me go to my heavenly home that I have a precious hope for. Shed tears if you must, but be happy that my trials and tribulations are over. Be happy for the many years we shared; the love I gave you and the love you gave me in happiness over the years. So grieve for me for a while then let your grief be comforted with trust in an all powerful God that holds all things in his hands. My journey is over but you have a while left on yours. Trust in God for he has promised never to leave nor forsake one of his children but will be with you to the end. My prayer would be that He might reveal some of the things to you that was reveal to your mother and I. We were blessed to have you and loved you so much.

God bless you